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THE ROOTS AND CAUSES
OF THE WARS (1914-1918)

Volume I

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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“THE KINGDOM OF CANADA AND OTHER ESSAYS”

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THE ROOTS AND
CAUSES OF THE WARS
(1914-1918)

BY
JOHN S. EWART, K.C. LL.D.

IN TWO VOLUMES
Volume I

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THE ROOTS AND CAUSES OF THE WARS: VOL. I



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TABLE OF PERSONAGES

ABD-UL-AZIZ	Sultan of Turkey.
ABD-UL-AZIZ	Sultan of Morocco.
ABDUL HAMID II	Sultan of Turkey.
ABEKEN, HEINRICH	Prussian officer in attendance on King at Ems.
ACLAND, FRANCIS	British Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
AEHRENTHAL, COUNT	Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.
ALEXANDER I	Czar of Russia.
ALEXANDER II	Czar of Russia.
ALEXANDER III	Czar of Russia.
ALEXANDER OF OBRENOVITCH DYNASTY	King of Serbia.
AMERY, RT. HON. L. S.	British statesman.
ANDRASSY, COUNT JULIUS	Hungarian Prime Minister.
ANTOINE, PRINCE	Of the House of Hohenzol- lern. Father of Prince Leopold.
APPONYI, COUNT ALBERT	Hungarian Prime Minister.
AVARNA, DUKE D'	Italian Ambassador at Vienna.
BALFOUR, RT. HON. ARTHUR	British statesman.
BALLIN, ALBERT	Director-General Hamburg- American Line.
BARCLAY, SIR THOMAS	British journalist and author.
BARNARDISTON, COLONEL	British Military Attaché at Brussels.
BARRERE, CAMILLE	French Ambassador at Rome.
BARTHOUS, LOUIS	French Prime Minister.
BASILI, NICOLAS-ALEXANDRO- VITCH	Vice-Director in Russian Foreign Office.

BAX-IRONSIDE, SIR HENRY	British Ambassador at Sofia.
BEACONSFIELD, LORD	British Prime Minister.
BEAUMONT, MR.	British Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople.
BENCKENDORFF, COUNT	Russian Ambassador at London.
BENEDETTI, COUNT	French Ambassador at Berlin and Ems.
BERCHTOLD, COUNT LEOPOLD VON	Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister.
BERNHARDI, GEN. FRIEDRICH VON	German military officer and author.
BERTHELOT, PHILIPPE	French Political Director.
BERTIE, SIR FRANCIS	British Ambassador at Paris.
BETHMANN-HOLLWEG, TH. VON	German Chancellor.
BEUST, COUNT F. F. VON	Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister.
BEYENS, BARON	Belgian Ambassador at Berlin
BIEBERSTEIN	See Marschall von Bieberstein.
BIENVENU-MARTIN, M.	French Acting-Minister for Foreign Affairs.
BILINSKI, DR. RITTER VON	Austro-Hungarian Minister of Common Finance.
BILLY, M. DE	French representative at Tangiers.
BISMARCK, PRINCE	German Chancellor.
BOGITSHEVICH, DR. M.	Serbian diplomat.
BOISDEFFRE, RAOUL	Chief of French General Staff.
BOLLATI, R.	Italian Ambassador at Berlin.
BOMPARD, LOUIS MAURICE	French Ambassador at Constantinople.
BOPPE, M.	French Minister at Belgrade
BOSCHKOVITCH, M.	Serbian Minister at London.

BOULANGER, GENERAL	French Minister for War.
BRATIANO, ION	Roumanian Prime Minister.
BRÉMONT, COMMANDANT	French officer employed in Morocco.
BRIAND, ARISTIDE	French Prime Minister.
BRIDGES, COLONEL	British Military Attaché at Brussels.
BRYCE, VISCOUNT	British diplomatist and writer.
BUCHANAN, SIR GEORGE	British Ambassador at St. Petersburg.
BÜLOW, PRINCE	German Chancellor; afterwards at Rome.
BUNSEN, SIR MAURICE DE	British Ambassador at Vienna.
BURIAN, BARON	Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister.
CABRINOVICH, NEDELJKO	One of the assassins of Franz Ferdinand.
CADORE, M.	French Minister at Munich.
CAILLAUX, JOSEPH	French Minister of Finance; afterwards Prime Minister.
CAMBON, JULES	French Ambassador at Berlin.
CAMBON, PAUL	French Ambassador at London.
CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, SIR HENRY	British Prime Minister.
CAPRIVI, COUNT	German Chancellor.
CARLOTTI, MARQUIS	Italian Ambassador at St. Petersburg.
CAROL	King of Roumania
CARTWRIGHT, SIR F.	British Ambassador at Vienna.
CASTLEREAGH, VISCOUNT	British statesman.
CECIL, LORD HUGH	British statesman.
CECIL, LORD ROBERT	British statesman.

CHAMBERLAIN, AUSTEN	British statesman.
CHAMBERLAIN, JOSEPH	British statesman.
CHARLES	King of Roumania.
CHIROL, SIR VALENTINE	Journalist and author.
CHURCHILL, WINSTON S.	First Lord of the British Admiralty.
CLEMENCEAU, GEORGES	French Prime Minister.
CONSTANTINE I.	King of Greece.
CORTI, COUNT L.	Italian Ambassador at Constantinople.
COX, SIR PERCY	British Minister at Teheran.
CRACKANTHORPE, D.	British Chargé d'Affaires at Belgrade.
CREWE, MARQUESS OF	British statesman.
CRISPI, FRANCESCO	Italian Prime Minister.
CROMER, LORD	British representative in Egypt, and author.
CRUPPI, M.	French Foreign Minister.
CURRIE, LORD	British Ambassador at Rome.
CURZON, LORD	British statesman: Viceroy of India; Minister for Foreign Affairs.
CZÉCSEN, COUNT	Austrian Ambassador at Paris.
CZÉGYENY, COUNT	Austrian Ambassador at Berlin.
CZERNIN, COUNT	Austro-Hungarian Minister at Bucarest; afterwards Foreign Minister.
DANEFF, DR. S.	Bulgarian statesman.
DAVIGNON, J.	Belgian Foreign Minister.
DELCASSÉ, THÉOPHILE	French Foreign Minister; Ambassador at St. Petersburg; again Foreign Minister.

DERBY, LORD	British statesman.
DERNBURG, DR.	German Colonial Secretary.
DILKE, SIR CHARLES	British statesman.
DILLON, DR. E. J.	British journalist and author.
DIMITROCOPOULOS	Greek Prime Minister.
DJAVID BEY	Turkish Minister of Finance.
DJEMAL PASHA	Turkish Minister of Marine.
DOUMERGUE, GASTON	French Prime Minister.
DUCARNE, GENERAL	Chief of Belgian General Staff.
DUMAINE, A. CHILHAUD	French Ambassador at Vienna.
DURAND, SIR H. MORTIMER ..	British Ambassador at Washington.
ECKARDSTEIN, BARON VON	German Ambassador at London.
EGGELING, MAJOR VON	German Military Attaché at St. Petersburg.
EL GLAOUI	Moroccan Grand Vizier.
ELLIOTT, SIR HENRY	British Ambassador at Constantinople.
EL MOKRI	Moroccan representative at Paris.
ENVER PASHA	Turkish Minister for War.
ESCAILLE, BARON DE L'	Counsellor of Belgian Legation at St. Petersburg, and Chargé d'Affaires.
ESSAD PASHA	Albanian Chief.
EUGENIE	Empress of the French.
FAVRE, JULES	French statesman.
FERDINAND	King of Roumania.
FERDINAND OF SAXE-COBURG-GOTHA	King of Bulgaria.
FERRY, JULES	French Prime Minister.

FISHER, LORD	First Sea Lord of the British Admiralty.
FLOTOW, DR. H. VON	German Ambassador at Rome.
FORGACH, COUNT	Austrian Ambassador at Belgrade; afterwards Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister
FOURNET, DARTIGE DU	French Admiral at Athens.
FRANCIS FERDINAND	Heir to Austro-Hungarian throne.
FRANCIS JOSEPH	Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary.
GAILLARD, M.	French representative at Fez.
GAMBETTA, LEON	French statesman.
GEORGE I.	King of Greece.
GEORGE, DAVID LLOYD	British statesman.
GEORGEVITCH, M. M.	Serbian Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople.
GIERS, MICHEL N. DE	Russian Ambassador at Constantinople.
GIESL, BARON	Austro-Hungarian Minister at Belgrade.
GILINSKI, GENERAL	Chief of Russian Military Staff.
GIOLITTI, GIOVANNI	Italian statesman.
GIULIANO, MARQUIS	See San Giuliano.
GLADSTONE, W. E.	British statesman.
GLAOUÏ, EL	See El Glaoui.
GOLTZ, BARON VON DER	Prussian organizer of the Turkish army.
GORKY, MAXIM	Pen name of Russian writer.
GORTCHAKOFF, PRINCE	Russian Prime Minister.
GOUNARIS	Greek Prime Minister.
GRAMONT, DUC DE	French Foreign Minister.

GRANVILLE, LORD	British statesman.
GREINDL, BARON	Belgian Minister at Berlin.
GRENVILLE, LORD	British Foreign Minister.
GREY, EDWARD, VISCOUNT	British statesman.
GRIERSON, GENERAL	Of the British General Staff.
GUESHOFF, I. E.	Bulgarian Prime Minister.
GUILLAUME, BARON	Belgian Minister at Berlin.
GUIAUD, M.	French Minister at Berne.
GWINNER, A. PH. F.	Director of the Deutsche Bank.
HALDANE, VISCOUNT	British statesman.
HALIL BEY	Turkish Foreign Minister.
HANOTAUX, GABRIEL	French statesman and author.
HARDINGE, SIR CHARLES	British diplomat; afterwards in British Foreign Office.
HARTWIG, D. DE	Russian Minister at Teheran; afterwards Minister at Belgrade.
HAYASHI, COUNT	Japanese diplomat.
HEYMERLE, BARON	Counsellor to the Austro-Hungarian Embassy at Berlin.
HERTLING, COUNT	Bavarian Foreign Minister.
HIRST, FRANCIS W.	English publicist and author.
HOHENLOHE, GOTTFRIED, PRINCE	Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Berlin.
HOLSTEIN, BARON	Director in German Foreign Office.
HÖTZENDORFF, BARON CONRAD VON	Chief of Austro-Hungarian General Staff.
HOYOS, ALEXANDER, COUNT	Chief of the Cabinet of Foreign Affairs of Austria-Hungary.

HUGUET, MAJOR	French Military Attaché at London.
HUTZFELDT, COUNT	German Ambassador at London.
IGNATIEFF, COUNT	Russian Military Chargé d'Affaires at Paris.
IMPERIALI, MARCHESE	Italian Ambassador at London.
ISHII, VISCOUNT	Japanese Foreign Minister; afterwards Ambassador at Washington.
ISVOLSKY, ALEXANDRE-PETROVITCH	Russian Foreign Minister; afterwards Ambassador at Paris.
JAGOW, GOTTLIEB E. G. VON JANUSKEVITCH, GENERAL	German Foreign Minister. Chief of Russian Military Staff.
JONESCU, TAKÉ	Roumanian statesman.
JONNART, A. M.	French Foreign Minister; afterwards Franco-British representative in Greece.
JUNGBLUTH, GENERAL	Belgian General.
JUSSERAND, J. J.	French Ambassador at Washington.
KALNOKY, COUNT GUSTAV	Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister.
KALOGEROPOULOS	Greek Prime Minister.
KÁROLYI, COUNT ALOYS	Austro-Hungarian diplomatist.
KATO, BARON	Japanese Foreign Minister.

KAUTSKY, KARL	Appointed, in Nov. 1916, by German Government, to collect documents of the Foreign Office for publication.
KERR, MARK	British Rear Admiral.
KIAMIL PASHA	Turkish Grand Vizier.
KIDERLEN-WACHTER, ALFRED VON	German Foreign Minister.
KITCHENER, LORD	British Commander-in-Chief.
KOKOVTSSEF, V. N.	Russian President of Council.
KUHLMANN, R. VON	Counsellor of German Embassy at London.
LAGUICHE, GENERAL DE	French Military Attaché at St. Petersburg.
LALAING, COUNT DE	Belgian Minister at London.
LAMBROS	Greek Prime Minister.
LANSDOWNE, MARQUIS OF	British statesman.
LANSING, ROBERT	United States Secretary of State.
LAYARD, SIR AUSTEN HENRY	British Ambassador at Madrid.
LEBŒUF, GENERAL	French Minister for War.
LECOFFRE	British official in Persia.
LEE, ARTHUR, LORD	British Civil Lord of the Admiralty.
LEOPOLD, PRINCE	Candidate for the Spanish throne.
LICHNOWSKY, PRINCE	German Ambassador at London.
LIMAN VON SANDERS, OTTO	Prussian General: Chief of Military Staff in Turkey.
LIMPUS, ADMIRAL	British Admiral in command of Turkish fleet.

LIVEN, PRINCE	Russian Chief of Naval Staff.
LOFTUS, LORD AUGUSTUS	British Ambassador at Berlin.
LOUIS, GEORGES	French Ambassador at St. Petersburg.
LOWTHER, SIR GERARD	British Ambassador at Constantinople.
LUDENDORFF, ERICH VON	German General.
LVOFF, PRINCE	Russian statesman.
LYONS, LORD	British Ambassador at Paris.
MACCHIO, BARON VON	Chief of section of Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
MALLET, SIR LOUIS	British Ambassador at Constantinople.
MANGIN, COLONEL	French officer employed in Morocco.
MARGERIE, M. DE	Director of French Foreign Office.
MARGUTTI, BARON VON	For many years a close attendant upon Francis Joseph.
MARSCHALL VON BIEBERSTEIN, BARON ADOLF	German Ambassador at Constantinople; afterwards Ambassador at London.
MAUDE, SIR F. S.	British general.
McKENNA, R.	British statesman.
MÉLAS, MAJOR G. H.	Secretary to King Constantine of Greece.
MENSENDORFF, COUNT ALBERT	Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at London.
MÉREY, HERR VON	Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Rome.
MICHAILOVITCH, LJUB	Serbian Minister at Rome.

MILAN OBRENOVITCH IV	Prince, afterwards King, of Serbia.
MILLERAND, ALEXANDRE	French statesman.
MILNER, VISCOUNT	British statesman and author.
MILOVANOVITCH, MILOVAN G.	Serbian Prime Minister.
MOHAMMED V.	Sultan of Turkey.
MOHAMMED ALI	Sultan of Persia.
MOKRI, EL	Moroccan representative at Paris.
MOLTKE, COUNT	Prussian Field Marshal.
MOINIER, GENERAL	French General employed in Morocco.
MONIS, M.	French statesman.
MONTGELAS, COUNT MAX	One of the editors of the Kautsky documents.
MOREL, EDMUND D.	British statesman and author.
MORLEY, LORD	British statesman and author.
MOTONO, VISCOUNT	Japanese Foreign Minister.
MOULAI-ABD-UL-AZIZ	See Abd-ul-Aziz.
MOULAY HAFID	Sultan of Morocco.
MOULAY YOUSSEF	Sultan of Morocco.
MOULAY ZIN	Moroccan Pretender.
MURRAY, PROFESSOR GILBERT	British classical scholar and author.
MUSTAPHA KEMAL PASHA	Head of Turkish National Government at Angora.
NAPOLEON III.	Emperor of the French.
NEKLUDOFF, A.	Russian diplomat.
NELIDOFF	Russian Ambassador at Constantinople.
NERATOFF, A.	Deputy of the Russian Foreign Minister.
NICHOLAS II	King of Montenegro.
NICOLAS I	Czar of Russia.

NICOLSON, SIR ARTHUR	British Ambassador at St. Petersburg; afterwards Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
NIETZSCHE, FRIEDRICH WILHELM	German poet-philosopher.
NITTI, FRANCESCO	Italian Prime Minister.
O'BEIRNE, MR.	British Chargé at St. Petersburg.
OKUMA, COUNT	Japanese Prime Minister.
OLLIVIER, EMILE	French Prime Minister.
OLOZAGA, SEBASTIANO	Spanish representative at Paris.
OMAN, SIR CHARLES	Author of the semi-official pamphlet: <i>The Outbreak of the War of 1914-18.</i>
OSTEN-SACKEN, COUNT	Russian Ambassador at Berlin.
PAGE, THOMAS NELSON	American Ambassador at Rome.
PAGE, WALTER HINES	American Ambassador at London.
PAGET, SIR AUGUSTUS	British Ambassador at Vienna.
PALÉOLOGUE, MAURICE	French Ambassador at St. Petersburg.
PALMERSTON, VISCOUNT	British Prime Minister.
PANARETOFF, STEPHEN	Belgian Minister at Washington.
PASCHITSCH, NIKOLAS P.	Serbian Prime Minister.
PEARS, SIR EDWIN	British lawyer and author.
PETER, OF KARAGEORGEVITCH DYNASTY	King of Serbia.

PICHON, STEPHEN	French Foreign Minister.
PIGGOTT, SIR FRANCIS	Lord Chief Justice of Hong Kong.
PLICHON, M.	French statesman.
POINCARÉ, RAYMOND	French statesman.
POLIVANOV, GENERAL	Russian Minister for War.
POURTALÈS, COUNT	German Ambassador at St. Petersburg.
PRIM, JUAN, MARQUIS DE CASTILLEJOS	Head of Spanish Revolutionary Government.
PRINETTI, MARQUIS	Italian Foreign Minister.
PRINZIP, GAVRILO	One of the assassins of Franz Ferdinand.
RADOLIN, PRINCE	German Ambassador at Paris.
RADOSLAVOFF, DR. V.	Bulgarian Prime Minister.
RADZIWILL, PRINCE	Aide-de-Camp to William I, King of Prussia.
REPINGTON, COLONEL	British journalist and author.
RIBOT, ALEXANDRE F. J.	French statesman.
RIFAAT PASHA	Turkish Ambassador at Paris.
ROBERTS, LORD	British Field Marshal and author.
RODD, SIR J. RENNELL	British Ambassador at Rome.
ROON, COUNT VON	Prussian Field Marshal, and Secretary of State for War.
ROOSEVELT, THEODORE	President of the United States.
ROOT, ELIHU	American statesman.
ROSE, DR. J. HOLLAND	Reader in Modern History to the University of Cambridge, and author.
ROSEBERY, EARL	British statesman.

ROUVIER, MAURICE	French Prime Minister.
RUMBOLD, SIR HORACE	Counsellor at the British Embassy at Berlin, and at various times Chargé d'Affaires.
RUSSELL, LORD JOHN	British statesman.
RUSSELL, ODO (LORD AMPHILL)	British Ambassador at Berlin.
SAID HALIM PASHA	Turkish Grand Vizier.
ST. AULAIRE, M. DE	French Ambassador at London.
SALANDRA, ANTONIO	Italian Prime Minister.
SALAZAR, DON EUSEBIO DE	Spanish Envoy at Paris.
SALISBURY, MARQUIS OF	British statesman.
SAN GIULIANO, MARQUIS DI	Italian Foreign Minister.
SARRAIL, MAURICE P. E.	French general commanding Allied army in Greece.
SAZONOFF, SERGIUS	Russian Foreign Minister.
SCHÉBÉKO	Russian Ambassador at Vienna.
SCHOEN, BARON VON	German Ambassador at Paris.
SCHOULAVOFF, COUNT	Russian Ambassador at London; represented Russia at Berlin Conference.
SELVES, M. DE	French Foreign Minister.
SEVASTOPOULO, M.	Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris.
SHUSTER, W. MORGAN	An American engaged in the reorganization of Persian finances.
SIEBERT, B. DE	Secretary to Russian Embassy at London.
SKOULODIS, S.	Greek Prime Minister.
SONNINO, BARON	Italian Foreign Minister.

SOREL, ALBERT	Author of <i>Histoire Diplomatique de la Guerre Franco-Allemande</i> .
SPECK VON STERNBURG, BARON	German Ambassador at Washington.
STANLEY, LORD	British statesman.
STOKES, MAJOR	British Military Attaché at Teheran.
STRANTZ, COLONEL C. VON . . .	Prussian diplomatic agent.
STRAT	Roumanian Chargé at Paris.
STREIT, G.	Greek Foreign Minister.
STUMM, GUILLAUME VON	Director of the Political Division of the German Foreign Office.
STÜRGGH, COUNT K. VON	Austrian Prime Minister.
SUKHOMLINOFF, VLADIMIR . . .	Russian Minister for War.
SWERBEIEF, S. N.	Russian Ambassador at Berlin.
SZÁPÁRY, COUNT	Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at St. Petersburg.
SZÉCSÉN, COUNT	Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Paris.
SZOGYÉNY, COUNT	Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Berlin.
TAILLANDIER, SAINT-RENÉ . . .	French Envoy at Fez.
TAKÉ JONESCU	Roumanian statesman.
TALAAAT BEY	Turkish Minister of the Interior.
TANKOSITCH, MAJOR VOISLAV	Serbian military officer.
TARDIEU, ANDRE	French statesman and author.
TATISCHTSHEW	Russian Military Attaché at Berlin.
TATTENBACH, COUNT	German Envoy to Morocco.
THEOTOKY, N.	Greek Minister at Berlin.
THIERS, LOUIS-ADOLPHE	French statesman.

THILE	Prussian Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
THURN, COUNT	Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at St. Petersburg.
TIRPITZ, ALFRED VON	German Grand Admiral; Secretary of State for Navy.
TISZA, COUNT	Hungarian Prime Minister.
TITTONI, TOMASSO	Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs; afterwards Ambassador at Paris.
TORNIELLI, COUNT	Italian Ambassador at Paris.
TREITSCHKE, HEINRICH VON	German historian and political writer.
TSCHIRSCHKY, HEINRICH VON	German Ambassador at Vienna.
TYRELL, SIR WILLIAM	British Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
URUSOFF	Russian Ambassador at Vienna.
VENIZELOS, ELEUTHERIOS	Greek statesman.
VESNITCH, DR. M. R.	Serbian Minister at Paris.
VILLIERS, SIR FRANCIS	British Minister at Brussels.
VIVIAN, LORD	British diplomat.
VIVIANI, RENE	French statesman.
VOLKOFF, CAPTAIN	Russian Naval Attaché at London.
WADDINGTON, WILLIAM HENRY	French Foreign Minister.
WANGENHEIM, HANS	German Ambassador at Constantinople.
WILLIAM I	King of Prussia and German Emperor.
WILLIAM II	German Emperor.

WILLIAM OF WIED	Prince of Albania for a few months.
WILSON, SIR HENRY	Director of British Military operations.
WILSON, WOODROW	President of the United States.
WITTE, COUNT	Russian statesman.
ZAIMIS, A.	Greek Prime Minister.
ZIMMERMANN, ARTHUR	German Under-Secretary of State.

TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

Am. Hist. Rev.:	<i>The American Historical Review.</i>
Am. Jour. Int. Law:	<i>The American Journal of International Law.</i>
Am. Soc. Int. Law, Procdgs.:	<i>Proceedings of the American Society of International Law.</i>
Andriulli, <i>op. cit.</i> :	Giuseppi A. Andriuli: <i>Documents relating to the Great War.</i>
Ann. Reg.:	<i>British Annual Register.</i>
Ashley, <i>op. cit.</i> :	The Hon. Evelyn Ashley: <i>Life of Lord Palmerston.</i>
Asquith, <i>op. cit.</i> :	H. H. Asquith: <i>The Genesis of the War.</i>
Aus. Red Bk. (First):	Austro-Hungarian Red Book, 1914: <i>Diplomatic Documents preceding the War.</i> English translation reproduced in <i>Coll. Dip. Docs.</i>
Aus. Red Bk. (Second):	Austro-Hungarian Red Book: <i>Diplomatic Documents concerning the Relations of Austria-Hungary with Italy from 20 July 1914 to 23 May 1915.</i>
Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I:	Austrian Red Book: <i>Official Files pertaining to Pre-war History, Part I.</i>
Aus. Red Bk., O. F., II:	Austrian Red Book: <i>Official Files pertaining to Pre-war History, Part II.</i>
Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III:	Austrian Red Book: <i>Official Files pertaining to Pre-war History, Part III.</i>
Barclay, <i>op. cit.</i> :	Sir Thomas Barclay: <i>Thirty Years' Anglo-French Reminiscences.</i>
Barker, <i>op. cit.</i> :	J. Ellis Barker: <i>The Foundations of Germany.</i>
Bausman, <i>op. cit.</i> :	Frederick Bausman: <i>Let France Explain.</i>
Begbie, <i>op. cit.</i> :	Harold Begbie: <i>The Vindication of Great Britain.</i>
Belg. Grey Bk., 1914:	Belgian Grey Book, 1914: <i>Diplomatic Correspondence respecting the War, 1914.</i> English translation reproduced in <i>Coll. Dip. Docs.</i>
Belg. Grey Bk., 1914, App.:	Belgian Grey Book, 1914: Appendix: <i>Documents regarding the Relations between Great Britain and Belgium previously to the outbreak of War</i> — printed as Appendix to British publication of the Belgian Grey Book, 1914, in <i>Coll. Dip. Docs.</i> , pp. 350-367.
Belg. Grey Bk., 1915:	Belgian Grey Book, 1915: <i>Correspondence Diplomatique Relative à la Guerre de 1914-15.</i> The English translation contains only those portions of the book which are material to the position of Great Britain, namely, the whole of the First

Part and Section 10 of the Second Part, which deals with the accusations brought against Belgium of having concluded a military agreement with Great Britain.

- Belg. Grey Bk., 1919: Belgian Grey Book: *Diplomatic and Political Correspondence Relative to the War in Africa.*
- Benedetti, *op. cit.*: Count Benedetti: *Ma Mission en Prusse.*
- Bernhardi, *op. cit.*: General E. von Bernhardi: *Germany and the Next War.*
- Bethmann-Hollweg, *op. cit.*: Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg: *Reflections on the World War.*
- Beyens, *op. cit.*: Baron Beyens: *L'Allemagne avant la Guerre.*
- Biankini, *op. cit.*: Dr. Ante Biankini: *Austro-Magyar Judicial Crimes* (pamphlet).
- Bishop, *op. cit.*: Joseph Bucklin Bishop: *Theodore Roosevelt and his Time.*
- Bismarck, *op. cit.*: Prince Bismarck: *Reflections and Reminiscences.*
- Blunt, *op. cit.*: Wilfrid Scawen Blunt: *My Diaries.*
- Bogitshevich, *op. cit.*: M. Bogitshevich: *Causes of the War.*
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THE ROOTS AND CAUSES
OF THE WARS (1914-1918)

Volume I

THE ROOTS AND CAUSES OF THE WARS 1914-1918



CHAPTER I INTRODUCTORY

- PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS, 1.—Merits of the Quarrel, 3.—A Suggested View, 3.—Responsibility, 4.—The Roots of the War, 4.—Precipitating Causes of the War, 5.
- VARIOUS OPINIONS AS TO "THE CAUSE OF THE WAR," 5.—Why the United Kingdom entered the War, 15.—Confusion, 16.—Better Opinions, 16.
- MISREPRESENTATION A DUTY, 19.—Propaganda in the United Kingdom, 22.—Propaganda in the United States, 24.—Concealment in Canada, 24.—Concealment in the United Kingdom, 26.
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PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

BEFORE attempting to deal with the customary questions, Who was responsible for the war? and What was the cause of the war? we must analyse a little.

I. The war was, in reality, a number of wars among nations who may be classified as follows:

- (1) Principals — Austria-Hungary and Serbia.
- (2) Accessories — Russia, France, United Kingdom, and Germany.
- (3) Associates (omitting the non-combatants) —
 - Belgium, who entered the war on 4 August 1914;
 - Japan, who entered the war on 23 August 1914;
 - Turkey, who entered the war on 29 October 1914;
 - Italy, who entered the war on 23 May 1915;
 - Bulgaria, who entered the war on 11 October 1915;
 - Roumania, who entered the war on 27 August 1916;
 - United States of America, who entered the war on 6 April 1917;
 - Greece, who entered the war on 27 June 1917.

II. Disregarding, as immaterial for the purposes in hand, wars produced by conflicting assertions of rights in connection with some specific

and well-defined situation,¹ causes of war may be divided and subdivided as follows:

(1) Predisposing causes — in this work called roots — are of two kinds —

(A) Natural, or, as otherwise expressed, popularly-inherent roots — for example, race or religious antipathy.

(B) Provocative roots; subdivided into —

(1) Situations arising out of peacefully pursued imperialisms.

(2) Situations arising out of tendential international activities — for example: the Berlin treaty of 1878; the Balkan wars of 1912-13; and the Bucarest treaty of 1913.

(3) War preparations.

(2) Precipitating causes.

III. Omitting, as sufficiently understood, the popularly-inherent roots of war, there were, among the Principals and Accessories, as roots of the hostilities of 1914-18, conditions which may be treated under the following eight headings:

As between Austria-Hungary and Serbia:

(1) The Bosnia-Herzegovina Root — chapter XXIII.

(2) The Balkan Map Root — chapter XXIV.

As between Austria-Hungary and Germany, on the one hand, and Russia, on the other:

(2) The Balkan Map Root — chapter XXIV.

As between Germany and France:

(3) The Alsace-Lorraine Root — chapter XVIII.

As between Germany and the United Kingdom:

(4) The German Rivalry Root — chapter XIX.

(5) The German Menace in the West Root — chapter XX.

(6) The German Menace in the East Root — chapter XXI.

(7) The Morocco and Persia Root — chapter XXII.

And spreading its influence over all combatants was

(8) The Imperialism and Fear Root — chapter XXV.

IV. With the exception of Belgium, Turkey, the United States, and Greece, each of the Associates commenced hostilities for the purpose of acquiring territory belonging to some other nation. Each took advantage of the war-engrossment of the Accessories to further its own imperialistic propensities — to achieve its "legitimate aspirations."

¹ Persons who anticipate that the establishment of a perfectly functioning world court of justice would supersede appeals to arms have not sufficiently observed that wars are seldom the product of disagreement upon disputed points, whether "justiciable" or "non-justiciable."

V. The precipitating causes of the war between the Principals and among the Accessories are to be found in —

- (1) The assassination of Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian crown, which brought to climax in June 1914, the tension between the Principals — chapter XXVI;
- (2) And, in a certain sense, the failure of the negotiations for adjustment of the quarrel — chapter XXVII.

Merits of the Quarrel. There are two ways in which the fighting may be regarded. We may look upon it as a war between the Principals in which the Accessories and the Associates sided according to their respective views of the merits of the contending parties. But that, of course, will not square with the facts. A survey of the reasons which actuated the various nations in entering the war, and of the periods at which they commenced hostilities, makes impossible the theory that the merits as between the Principals had any influence in determining the action of the other belligerents. Indeed, the subject is almost universally regarded as one of no importance. Among the scores of books about "the war," there is none which contains any pretence of adequate presentation of the merits of the quarrel from the Serbian point of view.

The other, and the true way in which the fighting may be regarded, is that based upon the previous existence of two great military combinations, ready to engage in death grapple upon the arising of some — possibly some insignificant incident, the merits of which were immaterial. It was not by accident, nor by curious coincidence, nor through investigation of merits, that Russia, France, and the United Kingdom espoused the cause of Serbia, and that Germany co-operated with Austria-Hungary. Alignment of the military forces of the Accessories had been previously settled, and could have been confidently predicted. Nor did judgment upon the merits of the quarrel between the Principals actuate any of the Associates. Right or wrong (as between Austria-Hungary and Serbia) was, in all cases, immaterial. Self-interest was the exclusively dominating factor. The first few chapters of the present book will be devoted to proof of these assertions.

A Suggested View. It may be suggested that "the war" (for the sake of convenience, the phrase may be allowed) ought to be regarded, not as one between the Principals in which other nations joined, but as, in its origin, a war involving both Principals and Accessories. It may be contended that when Austria-Hungary declared war upon Serbia, she necessarily made the Accessories parties to it — indeed, that there were no Accessories, but Principals only (including the so-called Accessories). For that view little can be said. Austria-Hungary did not know that other Powers would intervene. She sincerely hoped that they would not. And, for present purposes, it would be immaterial

if she did know: for that knowledge would not alter the fact that her war was against Serbia; that she did not want war with any other Power; and that it was by intervention that others became involved. Whether Russia had a right to intervene will not be discussed in this work. That is a subject to which a separate volume might well be devoted.

Responsibility. It is very clear, then, that the questions, Who was responsible for the war? and What was the cause of the war? — as though there were some one criminal and some one causality — are, when speaking of the totality of the fighting, quite inappropriate. For it is impossible to declare that, for all the roots of the war, any particular nation was alone to blame. Responsibility for the precipitation of hostilities is less distributed: As between the Principals, it rests upon either one or other of them — Austria-Hungary or Serbia;² while among the Accessories, blame attaches to Russia. For either she had no right to intervene in the quarrel, or, if she had, it was she who, by her mobilization against Germany, interrupted the negotiations for a peaceful solution which were proceeding with some hope of success.³

The Roots of the War. The roots of the war between Principals and among Accessories, although little understood and never adequately discussed,⁴ are of infinitely greater importance than are the library-laden debates as to the precipitating causes. For the map of Europe was radically objectionable to most of the nations, and the objections could be removed only by war. France, wanting territory from Germany; Italy, Serbia, Roumania, and Russia, each wanting territory from Austria-Hungary; Roumania wanting territory from Russia; Russia wanting control of Constantinople and chief influence in the Balkans; Germany wanting chief influence at Constantinople, a railway route through the Balkans, and economic development in Asia Minor; Austria-Hungary wanting re-arrangement of the map as settled at Bucarest, and control of a route to Salonica; Jugo-Slavs, Czechs, and Slovaks wanting release from Austria-Hungary; each nation waiting, and watching, and preparing at eventually unsustainable rates of expenditure; and no one of the "legitimate aspirations" or the "historic missions" being realizable by argument or Hague Court reference, war, at some period, was inevitable. What would be the

² See cap. XXVI.

³ See cap. XXVII.

⁴ What is meant is that, among the tons of war-books, in those relating to general history only necessarily inadequate reference may be found; and in those specially devoted to the subject the writers display inadequate conceptions. In such a work, for example, as *The Diplomatic Background of the War* — useful in many respects — by Professor Seymour (Yale), Germany's acts with reference to Morocco in 1905 and 1911 are described as "blows" struck by her "to reinforce her prestige and destroy the Triple Entente" (pp. 246, 247, 285). The present attempt is, admittedly, far from complete.

precipitating cause was a matter of date and accident. For observe that, of the sixteen years which preceded the great war, there were only three — 1903, 1907, and 1910 — in which there was no crisis that might well have developed into European war. In each of the other thirteen years, war was with increasing difficulty avoided, and the ever-recurrent imminence of peril made its menace more real and more unmistakably vivid — made the accumulation of explosive material vaster and more momentous. Culmination happened in 1914.

Precipitating Causes of the War. The roots of wars have almost always been of far greater importance than the precipitating causes. Examining the reason for British wars with France, Seeley tells us that the explanation of the hostilities of the second hundred years of fighting is to be found, not in precipitating incidents, but in the rivalry "for the possession of the New World," "for a prize of absolutely incalculable value," although that was scarcely perceived at the time.⁵ Look back, and be persuaded that the chance incident — be it the lopping of Jenkins' ear, the custody of the Holy Places, the candidature of Prince Leopold for the Spanish throne, the blowing up of the *Maine*, or the assassination of Prince Ferdinand — was nothing more than one of the many incidents which might have precipitated the respectively developing conflicts.⁶ Observe, too, how these chance incidents, outstandingly important for the moment, are afterwards remembered only as what they were — the accidents which introduced overdue hostilities.

Lastly, observe that of the two precipitating causes of the recent war, the character of the quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia (brought to climax by the assassination of Franz Ferdinand) is of far greater importance than the other precipitating cause — the failure of the negotiations for adjustment. For, although the success of these might have postponed war (as had previously happened in 1909), the cause of the quarrel — the Bucarest treaty on the one hand, and the unredeemed Serbo-Croats on the other — would have remained unsettled and, like many other "legitimate aspirations," incapable of settlement, save by war.

VARIOUS OPINIONS AS TO "THE CAUSE OF THE WAR"

Experience of previous wars ought to have induced scholarly investigation of the roots and causes of this last — this greatest of all wars. That they have received little consideration may be seen by observing (1) that not only are the libraries without a book upon the subject, but (2) that of forty-nine representative opinions as to "the cause of the war," the following observations are well justified:

1. They disclose the widest divergence of opinion.

⁵ *Expansion of England*, pp. 29, 31.

⁶ Cf. J. A. R. Marriott: *The European Commonwealth*, p. 158.

2. Their common error is the assumption that "the cause of the war" can be stated in a single sentence.

3. In none of them is there any indication of the distinction between roots and causes.

4. None refers to a precipitating cause.

5. Only one refers to one of the chief roots — namely, Alsace-Lorraine.

6. Of the twenty which refer to roots, each (with a single exception) refers to one only of them.

7. Of these twenty, five refer to popularly-inherent roots; seven to provocative roots arising from peacefully pursued imperialisms; five to provocative roots arising out of tendential international activities; and three to the provocative root of war-preparations.

8. The remaining twenty-nine opinions are purely fanciful.

Following the classification of roots of war above referred to, observe that the five opinions which relate to the sub-division styled "popularly-inherent roots" are as follows:

1. *The Round Table* selected nationalism as the root of the war: "Selfish nationalism is the real cause of modern war. Selfishness leads to anger, hatred, and quarrels between individuals. It leads to party strife and civil war within the state. It is no less bound to lead to conflicts between states, for, so long as they think first of themselves, they will neither forego the use of force to defend or promote what they believe to be their own vital interests, nor will they use it, however noble the cause and however great the need, when, from a purely selfish point of view, they need not intervene. Nationalism, therefore, in its modern bigoted form, is the enemy to be destroyed, for it justifies the use of armaments and war mainly for ignoble or worthless ends."⁷

2. Lord Bryce posited races and religions in the Balkans and nationalism in France:

"the present war has sprung from the strife of races and religions in the Balkan countries, and from the violence done to the sentiment of nationality in Alsace-Lorraine which made France the ally of Russia."⁸

3. Sir Percy Fitzpatrick contented himself with racialism:

"Racialism has been an immensely strong factor in bringing about this world-wide war. Racial arrogance and ambition have blinded and intoxicated a united Germany. Racial feeling has paralysed and shattered Austria. The ties and claims of race have made Serbia the centre of unrest. And it was race that gave Russia her status in the quarrel — giving her opportunities which she could use, but also putting on her risks and responsibilities which she could not escape."⁹

⁷ Dec. 1915, pp. 8-9.

⁸ *Essays and Addresses in War Time*, p. 154.

⁹ *The Origin, Causes, and Object of the War*, p. 13.

4. Mr. H. N. Brailsford asserted that German fear of Russia produced the war:

"For Englishmen this war is primarily a struggle between Germany and France. For the Germans it is emphatically a Russo-German war. . . . If we are to understand why the war was made at all, if we are to grasp the reasons which will make it on the German side an obstinate and determined struggle, if we are to think out with any hope of success the problem of shortening it, we must realize that it is the fear of Russia which drove German diplomacy into a preventive war, and in the end mobilized even the Social Democrats behind German diplomacy."¹⁰

5. "Pan-Germanism constituted the sole reason for the war," in the opinion of M. André Chéradame.¹¹

The seven opinions based upon "provocative roots arising from peacefully pursued imperialisms" are as follows:

1. M. Také Jonescu blamed Anglo-German rivalry:

"Once more, I assert it, the prime cause of the events which have led to the war is the Anglo-German rivalry."¹²

2. In the opinion of Mr. David Jayne Hill:

"No one aware of the origin of the present world-war can doubt for a moment, when the drapery of excuse and explanation is swept aside, that it is fundamentally a war for trade and for trade routes, in which the resources of industry and the possession of markets play the conspicuous rôle."¹³

3. To somewhat the same effect, Mr. Woodrow Wilson, when President of the United States, said:

"Peace? Why, my fellow citizens, is there any man here or any woman — let me say, is there any child — who does not know that the seed of war in the modern world is industrial and commercial rivalry? The war was a commercial and industrial war. It was not a political war."

Insisting upon his point, Mr. Wilson said:

"The real reason that the war we have just finished took place was that Germany was afraid her commercial rivals were going to get the better of her; and the reason why some nations went into the war against Germany was that they thought that Germany would get the commercial advantage of them. The seed of the jealousy, the seed of the deep-seated hatred was hot, successful, commercial and industrial rivalry."¹⁴

¹⁰ *Contemporary Rev.*, Sept. 1914, pp. 334-5. See also his pamphlet, *The Origins of the Great War*, pp. 1, 2.

¹¹ *The Nineteenth Century*, April 1917, p. 710.

¹² *The Origins of the War*; a pamphlet published by the Council for the Study of International Relations — Foreign Series, No. 6, p. 8.

¹³ *Am. Soc. Int. Law Proc'dgs.*, April 1916, p. 148.

¹⁴ Speech at St. Louis, 5 Sept. 1919. Quoted in *The Nation*, 6 Oct. 1920.

4. Dr. J. Holland Rose, in one of his books, expressed the opinion that

“ . . . over-speculation and over-production in Germany probably prompted the mad plunge of July 1914.”¹⁵

5. In curious contradiction of this, Dr. Rose, in another of his books, said:

“ The longing for World-Policy (*Weltpolitik*) is merely a modern expression of an old Teutonic instinct. In this sense our war with Germany is one of people against people. The fact must be faced. It has been asserted that the war was due to the Kaiser, or to a few wicked persons at Berlin. That is incorrect. At least, it is only half the explanation. At bottom, the war is a determined and desperate effort of the German people to force its way through to more favorable political conditions.”¹⁶

6. In the opinion of Mr. A. H. E. Taylor, Germany's pressure toward the East — *drang nach Osten* — was “ the real cause of the present war.”¹⁷

7. A Congress of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies of all Russia declared (27 June 1917):

“ The present war arose in consequence of the aspiration of imperialists prevailing among the ruling class of all countries.”¹⁸

The five opinions based upon “ provocative roots arising from tendential international activities ” are as follows:

1. In the opinion of Dr. E. J. Dillon:

“ The weakening of Turkey by her two unsuccessful campaigns, the unsteadiness of Roumania, the sudden increase of Serbia's strength and prestige, and the correspondingly greater self-reliance of the Slavs of the Hapsburg Monarchy were the proximate causes of the war.”¹⁹

2. Dr. Dillon has also said:

“ The pristine formal object of the war was to defend Serbia against the inordinate ambition of the Central Empires, which were planning to exclude Russian influence in the Balkans. For it was felt that if they succeeded in establishing the masked protectorate for which they were striving, the balance of European power would be upset to the detriment of the Entente States, and German hegemony become a grim reality within a few brief years.”²⁰

It will be observed that in the first of Dr. Dillon's statements, one of the causes of the war is said (in effect) to have been the recently increased danger to Austria-Hungary from Serbia and the Slavs on her

¹⁵ *Nationality in Modern History*, p. 191.

¹⁶ *The Origins of the War*, p. 49. The meaning is not very clear.

¹⁷ *Contemporary Rev.*, Oct. 1917, p. 424.

¹⁸ *North American Rev.*, Sept. 1917, p. 390.

¹⁹ *Contemporary Rev.*, Sept. 1916, p. 298.

²⁰ *Fortnightly Rev.*, Jan. 1918, p. 17.

west; whereas, in the second, the object of the Entente Allies is declared to have been the necessity of defending Serbia "against the inordinate ambition of the Central Powers."

3. Quite contrary to the line of Dr. Dillon's second statement is the opinion of Mr. A. D. Lindsay:

"This war has largely been brought about by Germany's efforts to correct the balance of power which the Balkan wars had disturbed to her disadvantage."²¹

4. Noel and Charles R. Buxton attribute the outbreak of the war to Serbian "restlessness."²²

5. In the opinion of Mr. Arthur D. Innes, the historian:

"Apparently, nobody wanted war, but every one was to be dragged into war by treaty obligations because Serbia fostered conspirators."²³

The three opinions based upon the "provocative root of war-preparations" are as follows:

1. Mr. Lloyd George has said that:

"the terrible race for armaments" "had more to do with the war than almost any other individual cause."²⁴

2. That German militarism was the cause of the war is the opinion of very many people,²⁵ and of it General Smuts said:

"And when we talk about our war aims, to my mind there is one great dominating war aim — the end of militarism, the end of standing armies."²⁶

3. Mr. Clarence H. Gaines embodied that view in peculiar form. Referring to the Zabern affair of 1913, he said:

"What was obvious in this affair was the ultimate triumph of militarism: what was studiously concealed was the alarm felt by the Imperial Government lest the German people were getting ready to demilitarize themselves. It was this alarm, our former Ambassador [Gerard] fully believes, which determined the Emperor and the ruling classes for war."²⁷

Passing to the twenty-nine "purely fanciful" but, in many instances, very widely accepted assertions as to "the cause of the war," note the following:

1. M. Yves Guyot, the French economist, has said:

"But the cause of . . . the present war is the autocracy of the

²¹ *Oxford Pamphlets*, IV: *War against War*, p. 20.

²² *The War and the Balkans*, p. 103.

²³ *A History of England and the British Empire*, IV, p. 561.

²⁴ At luncheon of the Empire Parl. Assn., 29 Dec. 1920. Cf. *The Round Table*, Dec. 1915, p. 3.

²⁵ See *post*, cap. XVI.

²⁶ *The Times* (London), 25 Oct. 1917.

²⁷ *North American Rev.*, Dec. 1917, p. 938. See an account of the Zabern Affair in *The Round Table*, March 1915, p. 415.

German Emperor, and that of the Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary." ²⁸

2. President Wilson has said:

"The object of the war was to destroy autocratic power; that is to say, to make it impossible that there should be anywhere, as there was in Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin, a little group of military men who could brush aside the manufacturers, brush aside the Emperor himself, and say: 'We have perfected a machine with which we can conquer the world; now stand out of the way, we are going to conquer the world.'" ²⁹

3. The Rev. Dr. Herridge (Ottawa, Can.) has said:

"The struggle is between a mad autocracy and a sane democracy." ³⁰

4. The draftsmen of the *Reply of the Allied and Associated Powers to the Observations of the German Delegation on the Conditions of Peace* made curious application of the "struggle for democracy." At one place they said that:

"Germany has stood athwart the whole current of democratic progress and international friendships throughout the world. Germany has been the principal mainstay of autocracy in Europe. And in the end, seeing that she could attain her objects in no other way, she planned and started the war which caused the massacre and mutilation of millions and the ravaging of Europe from end to end." ³¹

On the same page, the draftsmen made clear that the object of their animadversion was not "Germany," but "the rulers of Germany," who, in order that they might dominate the world, suppressed their own people:

"It was the fear of the rulers of Germany lest their plans for universal domination should be brought to nought by the rising tide of democracy, that drove them to endeavor to overcome all resistance at one stroke by plunging Europe in universal war."

5. Inasmuch as this indictment would fit Russia much better than Germany, ³² "the Imperial War Cabinet," with finer discretion but as little truth, postponed the democratizing object of the war until after the abdication of the Czar. In the report of 1917 was the following:

"Finally, the overthrow of the Russian autocracy, coupled with the entry of the United States into the war and the adhesion of Greece, Brazil, China, and other neutrals to the Allied cause, widened the war . . . into a world-wide struggle for the triumph of a free civilization and democratic government." ³³

²⁸ *Nineteenth Century*, Sept. 1916, p. 442.

²⁹ Speech at Minneapolis, 9 Sept. 1919. Quoted in *The Nation*, 6 Oct. 1920.

³⁰ *The Citizen*, Ottawa, 16 Feb. 1918.

³¹ P. 29.

³² Cf. *Ann. Reg.*, 1917, p. [245; Prof. Gilbert Murray, *Faith, War, and Policy*, p. viii.

³³ P. v.

That Japan, the most autocratic Power in the world, that Greece, who had been forced into the war by the British fleet and the French and British armies, and that Brazil and China were engaged in a struggle for the triumph of "democratic government" was an audacious suggestion.

6. Still more curious was the statement in the same report that in "the struggle for democracy" the first victory was the overthrow of autocracy in — in Russia! The revolution there — "was welcomed in a telegram from the Prime Minister as representing the first great victory won during the war for liberty against absolutist autocracy."³⁴

7. *The Round Table* declared that "the ultimate cause" of the war "is to be found in the character of the German Government."³⁵

8. In the opinion of the "Imperial War Cabinet," the war was originally "a battle for the liberty of small nations."

9. Lord Bryce, in an interview (18 July 1915) with a representative of the Associated Press, quite forgetting his statement as to "races and religions" in the Balkans and nationalism in France, said:

"If this war means anything, it means that a group of great States are banded together in protecting the small States against absorption and annihilation."³⁶

10. A writer in the *Fortnightly Review* said:

"The Great Powers are at grips — for the destinies of the small. Broadly viewed, no doubt, the issue is that of national license *versus* international law: the assertion of eternal Justice against organized brute force. In a special sense it is to settle, once for all, the question, whether the mere fact of proximity of a Great Power to a Small is to imply for the latter domination, absorption and final extinction and for the world a continually imperilled peace. If the future can hold for the small nation no guarantee of a separate existence, Armageddon will have been fought in vain, and the day when wars shall cease will not have dawned."³⁷

11. President Wilson, in an address to Congress, 12 February 1918, said:

³⁴ P. 13. Cf. Sir Geo. Buchanan: *My Mission to Russia and Other Memories*, II, p. 93.

³⁵ Sept. 1917, p. 667. On the other hand, Dean Inge, speaking at a conference of the British Council for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches (14 Dec. 1917), said: "The German people believe in their form of Government. They like it better than any other. They are willing to die for it. It is not an ideal form of Government — very far from it — but the Germans would not change with us. It is indeed the deepest tragedy of modern history that every civilized nation seems compelled to choose one of two forms of government, both so bad that it is not easy to see which is the worst": *The Times* (London), 15 Dec. 1917.

³⁶ *N. Y. Times*, 1 Aug. 1915.

³⁷ July 1916, p. 45.

"This war had its roots in the disregard of the rights of small nations and of nationalities which lacked the union and the force to make good their claims to determine their own allegiances and their own forms of political life."³⁸

12. In the opinion of a vast number of people, the preservation of civilization was the great object of the war. Mr. Harding, the President of the United States, for example, was not ashamed to say (23 May 1921):

"These heroes . . . saw democracy challenged and defended it. They saw civilization threatened and rescued it."³⁹

On the other hand, *The Round Table*⁴⁰ suggested that the civilization for which we were fighting appeared to be of the sort which ought to be dispensed with. And in the "Report on Reconstruction" prepared for submission to the Labor Conference at Nottingham (June 1918) was the following:

"We of the Labor Party . . . recognize in the present world catastrophe, if not the death, in Europe, of civilization itself, at any rate the culmination and collapse of a distinctive industrial civilization which the workers will not seek to reconstruct."⁴¹

The "Imperial Cabinet" asserted (as above quoted) that the struggle for "a free civilization" commenced only after the fall of autocracy in Russia.

13. Germany's determination to dominate the world was, in the opinion of very many people, the cause of the war. Mr. Robert Lansing, until recently United States Secretary of State, has said:

"In the light of events, we could read the past and see that for a quarter of a century the absorbing ambition of the military oligarchy which was the master of the German Empire, was for world-dominion. Every agency in the fields of commerce, industry, science, and diplomacy had been directed by the German Government to this supreme end."⁴²

³⁸ James Brown Scott: *President Wilson's Foreign Policy*, p. 369.

³⁹ *New York Times*, 1 June 1921.

⁴⁰ Sept. 1918, p. 746.

⁴¹ *The Nineteenth Century*, March 1918, p. 473. Dean Inge has recently published the following: "A Russian . . . has lately suggested that the psychological cause of the war is that people were 'stifling under the burden of civilization, compelled to make, to buy, and to consume countless unnecessary articles which were of use neither to him who made them, nor to him who sold them, nor even to him who bought them'" (*Quarterly Rev.*, April 1921, pp. 254-5).

⁴² *War Information Series*, No. 5. Published by the Committee on Public Information, Aug. 1917. Mr. Lansing's statement ought to be accompanied by the following extract from the Washington despatch to the U. S. Ambassador at Berlin, 13 May 1915: "Recalling the humane and enlightened attitude hitherto assumed by the Imperial German Government in matters of international right, and particularly with regard to the freedom of the seas; having learned to recognize the German views and German influence in the field of international obliga-

14. In the "Reply" already referred to, the assertion was limited to dominion over Europe:

"For many years the rulers of Germany, true to the Prussian tradition, strove for a position of dominance in Europe. They were not satisfied with that growing prosperity and influence to which Germany was entitled, and which all other nations were willing to accord her, in the society of free and equal peoples. They required that they should be able to dictate and tyrannise over a subservient Europe, as they dictated and tyrannised over a subservient Germany."⁴³

15. In Brassey's *Naval Annual* for 1915, the war is attributed to Germany's desire to crush Russia (pages 3, 4).

16. Upon a later page (6) of the same publication the cause of the war is attributed to Germany's hatred of England.

17. In the "Reply" above referred to was the following:

"There is nothing in it [the German memorandum] which shakes their conviction that the immediate cause of the war was the decision deliberately taken by those responsible for German policy in Berlin, and their confederates in Vienna and Budapest, to impose a solution of a European question upon the nations of Europe by threat of war, and, if the other members of the concert refused this dictation, by war itself instantly declared."⁴⁴

18. Mr. J. A. R. Marriott, the historian, says that recently acquired experience has convinced him:

"that the contest in which we are involved represents not a mere clash of interests but a conflict of moral ideals. . . ."

"This, then, is the first great issue which the sword has now to decide. Is Europe and is the world to be permitted to proceed along the path, tortuous and difficult though it is, which was leading towards the goal of a genuine internationalism; is it to be allowed to emerge from that state of nature in which the life of men (and of nations) is 'nasty, brutish and short,' and to establish among nations a rule of law; or must the path of progress be permanently obstructed, and the ultimate goal denied, by a Power which derides the rule of law and believes only in the reign of force."⁴⁵

At another place, Mr. Marriott said:

tion as always engaged upon the side of justice and humanity. . . . Long acquainted as this Government has been with the character of the Imperial German Government and with the high principle of equity by which they have in the past been actuated and guided, the Government of the United States cannot believe that the commanders of the vessels which committed these acts of lawlessness did so except under a misapprehension of the orders issued by the Imperial German Naval authorities" (James Brown Scott: *Dip. Correspondence between the United States and Germany, 1914-17*, pp. 44, 6.

⁴³ P. 2.

⁴⁴ P. 26.

⁴⁵ *The Nineteenth Century*, April 1917, pp. 709, 714.

"This war is, then, primarily a war of creeds. It is not a conflict between ecclesiastical formulæ, but between contrasted spiritual ideals." He indicated his meaning by a quotation from M. Emile Hovelague:

"Her [Germany's] militarism is consequently a *spiritual* force opposed to the spiritual force of the Allies."⁴⁶

19. Somewhat varying his idea, Mr. Marriott, on another page, says:

"The Allies are in arms to inaugurate and to enforce a new standard of international morality."⁴⁷

20. Lord Shaw of Dumfermline has said that:

"we were fighting in defence of a moral order in the world."⁴⁸

21. General Smuts, with somewhat the same idea, declared that:

"The true cause, the true issues, are the great principles on which human society and progress rest—the British principle of 'self-government,' and the German principle 'to develop power, to make the human individual serve the State.' . . . This is a spiritual war; it is a moral war."⁴⁹

22. Mr. A. G. Gardiner thought that the issue was:

"the spiritual governance of the world. Someone—I think it was Sir Robertson Nicoll—has expressed it in the phrase, 'Corsica or Calvary.'"⁵⁰

23. The ex-Kaiser was inclined to agree with much of the foregoing, but has given to it a different application. In a speech at Army Headquarters on the thirtieth anniversary of his accession (15 June 1918), he said:

"It was a matter of the struggle between two conceptions of the world. Either the Prussian-German-Germanic world conception of right, freedom, honor, and morals is to be preserved, or the Anglo-Saxon one is, that signifies the sinking into the idolatry of money. The peoples of the world toil like slaves for the Anglo-Saxon ruling race that subjects them. These two views are in conflict with each other, and, therefore, the one must be unconditionally defeated; and this is not to be done in days and weeks, nor even in a year."⁵¹

⁴⁶ *The European Commonwealth*, p. 113. The word "spiritual" is italicized in the original.

⁴⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 115.

⁴⁸ *Contemporary Rev.*, Aug. 1920, p. 194. Lapse of four years after the war was not sufficient to restore Lord Shaw's equanimity. At the meeting of the Canadian Bar Association in September 1922, he said: "Unless the Great War has taught men to abjure the vulgar and false Imperialism of selfish ambition and to cherish the noble, sane, powerful, and consecrated Imperialism of service, distinguishing fair from foul, and foul from fair, law is a dead force and the war has been fought in vain" (*The Canadian Bar Rev.*, Jan. 1923, p. 26).

⁴⁹ Speech at Tonypanda, Wales, 29 Oct. 1917.

⁵⁰ *Daily News* (London).

⁵¹ *N. Y. Times*, 28 July 1918.

24. Sharply disagreeing, the Editor of the *Contemporary Review* said:

"The war is being waged by Belgium and her Allies as one united Christian Commonwealth determined, once and for all, to destroy the forces of materialism."⁵²

25. Privately, and just prior to the outbreak of the war, the Kaiser wrote (30 July 1914):

"The whole war is plainly arranged between England, France, and Russia for the annihilation of Germany, lastly through the conversations with Poincaré in Paris and Petersburg, and the Austro-Servian strife is only an excuse to fall upon us! God help us in this fight for our existence, brought about by falseness, lies, and poisonous envy."⁵³

26. Mr. J. Saxon Mills said:

"It was the pressure of population against its barriers which more than anything else caused the European War of 1914-18."⁵⁴

27. Not markedly less sensible than many of the foregoing opinions was that of Dr. Kunz, who said that "Germany's barbaric birth-rate was the cause of the war."⁵⁵

28. Sir Auckland Geddes, while British Ambassador to the United States, was tactless and foolish enough to say to an American audience, with reference to the export of foodstuffs to Europe:

"And as this country opened, your increasing industrial development had produced here a vast increase of population which was beginning to intercept that food, and, believe me, I have gone into this thing fairly carefully, and I think that it is not very difficult to show that the development of your population here was the principal cause in making the European war inevitable."⁵⁶

29. Ranking with almost any of the foregoing imagination-products, Mr. Asquith, in a speech at Edinburgh on 18 September 1914, after asserting that Germany had believed the the British Empire was: "so insecurely founded and so loosely knit together that, at the first touch of serious menace from without, it would fall to pieces and tumble to the ground"; and that "we, the people of the United Kingdom, were riven by dissension so deep and so fierce that our energies, whether for resistance or for attack, would be completely paralysed," declared that "in this vast and grotesque and yet tragic miscalculation is to be found one of the roots, perhaps the main root, of the present war."⁵⁷

Why the United Kingdom Entered the War. If we turn from

⁵² Sept. 1916, p. 407.

⁵³ Kautsky Docs., No. 402.

⁵⁴ *Contemporary Rev.*, March 1922, p. 316.

⁵⁵ *N. Y. Times*, 27 Sept. 1916.

⁵⁶ *N. Y. Times*, 17 June 1920.

⁵⁷ *Current History*, I, pp. 317-8.

these divergencies of opinion as to "the cause of the war" to the narrower and, one might imagine, the much more easily solved question as to the reasons which induced the United Kingdom to join in the hostilities, we shall meet with parallel surprise and disappointment:

1. In his speech of 6 August 1914, Mr. Asquith declared that fulfillment of "a solemn international obligation" — meaning an obligation to defend the neutrality of Belgium — was one of the reasons for the United Kingdom joining in the war.

2. In the same speech, Mr. Asquith said that vindication of: "the principle that smaller nationalities are not to be crushed, in defiance of international good faith, by the arbitrary will of a strong and overmastering Power," was the second reason.

3. Echoing these unveracious assertions, the forty-two British theologians and others, headed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, in their reply to a manifesto issued by German theologians, asserted that:

"We have taken our stand for international good faith, for the safeguarding of smaller nationalities, and for the upholding of the essential conditions of brotherhood among the nations of the world."⁵⁸

4. In later speeches, Mr. Asquith, abandoning his earlier reasons, declared that the war was one against war; that it was waged for the purpose of securing peace and the establishment of a League of Nations.⁵⁹

5. Mr. Lloyd George has declared that:

"Self-determination was one of the principles for which we entered the war. That is a principle from which we have never departed since the beginning of the war. It is a principle we hope to be able to enforce at the Peace Conference."⁶⁰

None of these statements is true — as we shall see.⁶¹

Confusion. The divergencies in opinion noted on the foregoing pages are instructive. They evidence, in the first place, the existence of the greatest confusion upon a subject which, one might be inclined to say, could not possibly admit of difference of view. They illustrate, in the second place, the (supposedly patriotic) indifference to truth on the part of men who were perfectly familiar with the facts, and the surpassing credulity of the uninitiated crowd. And, in the third place, they furnish renewed evidence of the effect, even upon educated men, of environment.

Better Opinions. Much closer to the truth than any of the opinions quoted is that of Mr. Elihu Root, who, in an address to the American Society of International Law, at Washington (28 December 1915),

⁵⁸ *The Times* (London), 30 Oct. 1914.

⁵⁹ Quotation may be seen upon subsequent pages.

⁶⁰ See pp. 9, 112.

⁶¹ Chapter V will be devoted to elucidation of the subject.

avoiding all attempt at particularization, formulated a widely inclusive generalization:

"Law cannot control national policy, and it is through the working of long-continued and persistent national policies that the present war has come. Against such policies all attempts at conciliation and good understanding and good-will among the nations of Europe have been powerless."⁶²

That statement, coupled with the following from the Hon. Bertrand Russell, supplies an epitome of the impulses and motives which enter into the story of the roots of the war:

"It is the universal reign of Fear which has caused the system of alliances, believed to be a guarantee of peace, but now proved to be the cause of world-wide disaster. . . . And this universal Fear has at last produced a cataclysm far greater than any of those which it was hoped to avert."⁶³

An opinion expressed by Sir Auckland Geddes, quite contrary to one already quoted from him, is worth consideration:

"I believe that the war was a product of existing world unrest rather than the cause; for the war, if you cast back your memories, will appear as the climax of a period in which the relations between the nations were growing more difficult, and you will find also, associated with that period of international unrest, a period of unrest within the countries."⁶⁴

M. Bogitshevich has offered a noteworthy, but not quite accurate, summary, including both predisposing and precipitating causes:

"The French thought of revenge, the Anglo-German, and the Russo-Austrian antagonism with respect to Balkan problems, these were the

⁶² *Proceedings*, p. 7. That was prior to the United States entering the war. After that event, Mr. Root indulged in "patriotic," and, for that reason, very foolish language. At a conference of Bar Association Delegates (3 September 1917), he said: It has become perfectly evident that this is a conflict between two opposed, and inevitably opposed, systems of governments, of policy, of politics, of human society. It has become perfectly evident that our war was brought on with a purpose to establish a military autocracy. It has become perfectly evident that more than a generation of careful preparation had been made for this very thing, and that the democracies of the world, rejoicing in peace and prosperity, in political freedom, and in individual liberty, were in great measure and in differing degree unprepared to meet this attack upon them. Slowly they have gathered to the support of the principle of their lives, the principle upon which they live, against the adverse attack upon this principle, the domination of which means the death of democracy and the everlasting destruction of the system of individual liberty of which we are the high priests of the bar. So long as there exists a great and powerful military autocracy which has the purpose to secure domination by military force, so long republics, democracies, countries which preserve individual freedom, must be at the mercy of autocracy. As well go to sleep with a burglar sitting in your front hall as to talk about the peace and security of a democracy with Germany still competent to pursue its career of domination" (*N. Y. Times*, 4 Sept. 1917).

⁶³ *War, the Offspring of Fear*, p. 9. Quoted by Morel, *Truth and the War*, p. 161.

⁶⁴ Address to Canadian Bar Assn. at Ottawa, 2 Sept. 1920.

three political problems which have for years menaced the European peace. The Russo-Austrian antagonism was the inducing cause of the European war."⁶⁵

Mr. Lloyd George's best explanation was the following:

"The more one reads memoirs and books written in the various countries of what happened before the first of August 1914, the more one realises that no one at the head of affairs quite meant war at that stage. It was something into which they glided, or rather staggered and stumbled, perhaps through folly; and a discussion, I have no doubt, would have averted it."⁶⁶

That was said, of course, after the war was finished. Somewhat to the same effect is the opinion of Mr. G. P. Gooch, the eminent British historian:

"We have now discovered that the Great War was caused by the bungling of a handful of highly placed individuals in different countries.⁶⁷ There is, in my opinion, no ground for the belief that the Kaiser deliberately planned or desired a world war."⁶⁸

Rabbindranath Tagore expressed a truth somewhat too widely when he said that:

"The deeper source of all the historical calamities is misunderstanding. For we can never be just when we do not understand."⁶⁹

Very frequently, but by no means always, is it true, as Normal Angell declares, that war is "the failure of human understanding"⁷⁰ — unless, indeed, he means that war is the failure of human beings to be anything but what they are.

From the totality of causes must not be omitted that which produced the Hispano-American and various other wars, namely, the influence in every country of "patriotic" persons and press. On 1 April 1909, Mr. Winston Churchill said:

"If a serious antagonism is gradually created between the two peoples,⁷¹ it will not be because of the workings of any natural or impersonal forces, but through the vicious activity of a comparatively small number of individuals in both countries and the culpable credulity of larger classes."⁷²

To some extent, that was true.

⁶⁵ *Causes of the War*, p. 5.

⁶⁶ *Empire Parliamentary Assn.*, 23 Dec. 1920.

⁶⁷ *Contemporary Rev.*, Aug. 1921, pp. 181-2.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁶⁹ *Socialist Rev.*, XVIII, p. 221.

⁷⁰ *America and the New World State*, p. 11. And see pp. 68-91. Cf. *Europe's Optical Illusion*, by the same author, *passim*; and see also *United Empire*, Sept. 1918, p. 401, where the writer says that the school histories, even in secondary schools, deal with no event subsequent to 1815.

⁷¹ Those of the United Kingdom and Germany.

⁷² Quoted by Dickinson: *The Choice Before Us*, p. 241, from Mr. Churchill's letter of 14 April 1909 to the Chairman of the Liberal Association at Dundee.

MISREPRESENTATION A DUTY

The chief reason for all this confusion is the practical impossibility (from a war point of view) of permitting investigation and discussion during hostilities. In the opinion of M. Ollivier (whose government was responsible for plunging France into war with Prussia in 1870), when war has become inevitable, "notre devoir est de la rendre populaire."⁷³ For that purpose, debate must be silenced; dislike must be whipped into hatred;⁷⁴ suggestion as to possible legitimacy in the attitude of the enemy must be suppressed; argument raising suspicion as to the correctness of your own action must be stifled; escaped facts must be distorted or denied; favoring facts must be invented; millions of dollars must be spent in the effort to make people believe not that which is true, but that which will inflame their passions.⁷⁵ Assertion during the war of the righteousness of your country's action, and condemnation of the villainy of your enemy's, being essential, and the truth being unknown or, if known, incommunicable, "patriotism" was left free to fulminate as it pleased. And methods of expression of feeling being infinite, the forty-nine above quoted varieties, and many others, appeared — some honest, and others framed in pursuance of "duty." Queen Victoria perfectly agreed with Ollivier. During the Crimean war, on 19 June 1854:

"Lord Lyndhurst, speaking in the House of Lords, in the course of a conventional philippic against Russia, declared that the Russian Empire had doubled itself within the previous fifty years. This so nettled Lord Aberdeen that in his reply he laid stress on the fact that at the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829, when the Russians were within fifty miles of Constantinople, Russia acquired not an inch of Turkish territory in Europe, nor had she in the subsequent twenty-five years. His speech, though an admirable one in other respects, ran so counter to the anger of the hour that the Queen wrote to remonstrate."⁷⁶

⁷³ "Our duty is to make it popular" (*L'Empire Liberal*, XIV, p. 382).

⁷⁴ During the war, Lord Denbigh did his share in this respect. In a letter to *The Times* (London) of 24 May 1918, he said: "All the miserable gush about forgiveness is only calculated to have the opposite effect. I have a letter to-day from a correspondent whose courage evidently failed him for he cuts out his signature and address. He says reproachfully that it is people like me who are causing our men in the street to reply to 'Gott strafe England' with 'Damn the Germans.' I am delighted to hear that that sentiment is becoming more prevalent, and I only hope it will become general and permanent, unless and until the 'reasonable people' in Germany should become strong enough to take matters into their own hands."

⁷⁵ Mr. Rowell, speaking in the Canadian House of Commons, 1 June 1920, said: "So far as I am aware there was no country at war, the Government of which did not have some kind of an organization or department for the purpose of keeping the people of the country informed as to the war efforts of that Government, in order to sustain the courage and patriotism of the people and assist in the prosecution of the war."⁷⁶ Farrer: *The Monarchy in Politics*, p. 233.

The letter was as follows (*italics as in original*):

"The Queen has not yet acknowledged Lord Aberdeen's letter of the 24th. She is glad to hear that he will take an opportunity to-day of dispelling misapprehensions which have arisen in the public mind in consequence of his last speech in the House of Lords, and the effect of which has given the Queen great uneasiness. She knows Lord Aberdeen so well that she can fully enter into his feelings and understand what he means, but the public, particularly under strong excitement of patriotic feelings, is impatient and annoyed to hear at this moment the first Minister of the Crown enter into an *impartial* examination of the Emperor of Russia's character and conduct. The qualities of Lord Aberdeen's character which the Queen values most highly, his candor and his courage in expressing opinions even if opposed to general feelings of the moment, are in this instance dangerous to him, and the Queen hopes that in the vindication of his own conduct to-day, which ought to be triumphant, as it wants in fact *no* vindication, he will not undertake the ungrateful and injurious task of vindicating the Emperor of Russia from any of the exaggerated charges brought against him and his policy at a time when there is enough in it to make us fight with all might against it." ⁷⁷

William Pitt held the same view. When he saw, in 1793, that war with France had become inevitable, he exploited British revolt at the execution of Louis XVI for the purpose of making the war popular. As Lecky has said:

". . . If, as Pitt believed, the war had become inevitable, it was a matter of high policy to enter into it supported by a strong wave of popular feeling. Nothing could be more certain than that neither the murder of the King nor any other change in the internal government of France would have induced him to commence it; but when, for other reasons, it had become unavoidable, he naturally sought to carry with him the moral forces of indignation and enthusiasm which might contribute to its success." ⁷⁸

In formulating the reasons for the United Kingdom entering the war, Mr. Asquith did his "duty," as thus understood. And the statements in the French Chamber, on 4 August 1914, of the President and Prime Minister were framed with strict regard to Ollivier's dictum, and quite regardless of the facts. ⁷⁹

Sir Thomas Barclay has recounted a conversation with General Ludendorff relative to Lloyd George and Clemenceau, which, upon this subject, is illuminating.

"I lift my hat to both" (said Ludendorff). "They understand what our mean-spirited civilian ministers did not: that in war the moral

⁷⁷ *Letters of Queen Victoria, 1837-61, III., pp. 34-5.*

⁷⁸ *History of England in the Nineteenth Century, VII, pp. 157-8.*

⁷⁹ *Post cap. IV.*

of the non-combatant is almost as important as that of the combatant. You cannot in modern warfare separate the one from the other. Just as you must discourage your enemy and the whole population of your enemy, you must encourage your own men, and uplift the population behind you. The Statesman at the back must be the supporting moral reserve of the General at the front.'

" 'Concoct encouraging news?'

" 'With discretion.'

" 'Sham victories?'

" 'At any rate not advertise defeats.'

" 'And communiqués?'

" 'Communiqués must be plausible and well engineered; they are an arm of war.'

" 'Lloyd George and Clemenceau [he went on] knew the psychology of public opinion, which in war-time droops at the slightest suggestion of doubt as to ultimate victory. They spurned all offers of peace. We made them publicly under the mistaken impression that refusal would put our enemies in the wrong. The consequence was just the reverse. Our enemies treated our offers of peace as 'camouflage,' kicked them into the gutter, and the German people was so impressed by the enemy's confidence of victory that its effect on us was as bad as a defeat.

" 'There is only one way of making war [said he]. It is to concentrate all the national energy and effort on victory. Any waste of effort is criminal. Opposition or criticism must be ruthlessly suppressed. The mere possibility of leakage is a sufficient justification for the suspension of guarantees of personal freedom. Suspicion in war has the importance of proof.'

" 'There is no room [asked Barclay] for justice, generosity, or indulgence?'

" 'Nor for the useless. Every General in command is sole judge of what he regards as useful for victory. He is not likely to waste time or energy on anything he regards as useless. Lloyd George and Clemenceau represented us as guilty of gratuitous illegalities and brutalities of all kinds. That again is an arm of war. British propaganda spread its ramifications through the neutral area with such consummate success that it affected all Germany, and our statesmen lent themselves to it by allowing English and French newspapers to circulate freely throughout the country. Everybody could read what English and French statesmen were saying, and, when they talked, they talked to us as much as to you. Propaganda pamphlets found their way freely into the hands of the German public. Our statesmen did nothing to stop them or counteract their influence. Clemenceau said "Je fais la guerre." He did, and I lift my hat to him.'"⁸⁰

⁸⁰ *The Nineteenth Century*, April 1920, pp. 621-2.

Propaganda in the United Kingdom. In the spring and summer of 1917, the British people became somewhat tired of the war. As Mr. Lovat Fraser said in *The Daily Mail* (London):

"It is time to point out that the pacifists are stealthily making some amount of headway in this country, and that the Government show no appreciation of the position which is being created. The pacifists' efforts would not matter very much were it not that a combination of factors is giving them an increasing chance of sowing tares. Though the national will to victory remains resolute, it is not just now a burning and intense conviction, but has become a commonplace of everyday life. An unwholesome lassitude seems to prevail, and, underneath, there smoulders vague dissatisfaction of which this Government had better take heed."⁸¹

War-propaganda had not hitherto been entirely neglected by the government. As Sir Edward Carson said in the House of Commons:⁸²

"There are several of these bodies: there is a large propaganda department of the War Office, another has its headquarters at the Foreign Office, and other committees were in existence, and I have been doing my best to effect some organization with a view to prevent overlapping."

The work of these committees not being satisfactory, *The War Aims Committee* was formed, with the purpose, as Captain Guest, its chairman, said, of making reply to "pacifist propaganda" by means of "machinery of an educative character," in order that there might be "a more highly instructed and intelligent determination to prosecute the war to its conclusion, than would have been possible if the campaign had never been undertaken."⁸³

Supporting Captain Guest, Sir Edward Carson said that the work of the Committee was:

"a necessary part of war organization — and it is just as necessary as foreign propaganda, perhaps more necessary in some cases, and certainly more necessary as the strain of war becomes more and more prevalent."⁸⁴

On another occasion, Sir Edward said that:

"Expenditure on propaganda was as essential as expenditure on munitions."⁸⁵

Some of the work done by *The War Aims Committee* may be illustrated by the addresses of Mr. Asquith, then Prime Minister. In his speech of 6 August 1914 (two days after the declaration of war), Mr. Asquith, as above stated, had said that the United Kingdom

⁸¹ *N. Y. Times*, 17 Sept. 1917.

⁸² *The Times* (London), 15 Dec. 1917.

⁸³ *The Times*, 14 Dec. 1917.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *The Times*, 15 Dec. 1917.

entered the war in loyal fulfillment of its treaty obligation to Belgium, and, apart from treaty, in defence of the "small nationalities." That was not true; and for contradiction of it we need not go outside the addresses which Mr. Asquith himself (speaking at the request of the Committee) made at Leeds and Liverpool, in September and October 1917.⁸⁶

"This, as you know," (he said), "is one of a series of meetings which are being held in our centres of population to make clear, both to ourselves and to the rest of the world, just what it is we have been, and still are, fighting for. . . . First, that it is a war of peace, and next, that it is a war against war."⁸⁷

The highly ethical and philanthropical war-motives of August 1914, would, after three years of war, have fallen upon very impatient ears. People now wanted peace, and Mr. Asquith told them that that was precisely what they were fighting for. Speaking afterwards in the House of Commons, on 20 December of the same year, Mr. Asquith assigned, as the reason for entering the war, the establishment of a League of Nations — that, and "nothing more than that." He said:

"The League of Nations is no new thing, engendered in the stress and strain of the war. It is no belated afterthought of statesmen who thought it an expedient in order to deceive the world, and to varnish selfish and ambitious purposes with a veneer of idealism. It was nothing of the kind. It was the avowed purpose, from the very first — so far as we here are concerned — of the Government and the people of the United Kingdom, and it was the purpose of the Empire, the purpose for which we entered into the war, and for which we are continuing the war; the purpose, I repeat, for which we shall prosecute the war to its due end. I wish it were possible — and I hope it may be possible — to bring home to the minds of all people, allies and neutrals, and to the enemy, and make them realise that it is for that — but nothing more than that — we are fighting. It is because we know we are fighting for that — neither more nor less — that we are going on with a clear conscience, with clean hands, and with an unquailing heart."⁸⁸

That Mr. Asquith could venture these assertions as to British war-aims, argues the possession of unusual capacity for the allocation of speeches to their appropriate periods of time, and of long experience in crowd-credulity. Had he told the House of Commons on 6 August 1914 that his government had entered the war in order to obtain peace and to establish a League of Nations, he would have been accounted insane. For that period, the Belgian obligation and the protection of

⁸⁶ *The Times*, 27 Sept. and 12 Oct. 1917.

⁸⁷ In the House of Commons, on 21 May 1918, Sir Robert Borden said: "We are fighting in this war in order that war may end."

⁸⁸ *Hansard*, vol. 100, col. 2230.

the smaller nationalities, were the effective fighting stimuli. After the war-fatigue of three years, what could be more comforting and popular than the assurance that we had been, and still were, fighting for peace?

*“It is war for the end of war,
Fighting that fighting may cease.
Why do the cannons roar?
For the thousand years of peace.”*

With preaching of that sort, the existence of popular confusion as to “what we were fighting for” may well be excused. It completely misled the Poet Laureate. In November 1918, Dr. Bridges published a sonnet in the *Times*, in which he alleged (1) that ill-treatment of prisoners was a part of the Prussian war-policy; (2) that no one in Germany protested against it; (3) that the Germans hoped the English would be provoked into similar barbarities.”

In the following February, he recanted. Referring to his three allegations, he said:

“It is plain that the second and third charges fail unless the first be true. And it was not true. But I believed it, having been misled, as most of us were, by the newspapers. And that being so, I am not ashamed of retracting my words and expressing sorrow for having written them. And I can see that, as I was misled by the English press, so the Germans were probably misled by their own, and that they have the same excuse for some of their ill-feeling as I have for mine.”⁸⁹

Propaganda in the United States. Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe has supplied the following view of the American propaganda organization:

“Nowhere in the world has there been any communal enterprise to compare with the offensive alliance entered into three years ago by the Government at Washington with press, platform, and pulpit, with theatre and kinema, business organization and social club. Here was the entire multiple agency of public association and expression exploited in order to drive the 100 millions into thinking, feeling, saying, singing, and doing the one thing at the one time. It will be recognized that the absorption of a whole people in such a movement involves the almost complete suspension of thought and discussion. A nation so engaged could have its mind only on the national job. To suggest that thoughts should be given to war aims seemed, therefore, like a temptation to turn the national effort from the one thing needful.”⁹⁰

Concealment in Canada. Canada acted upon the Ludendorff principle that “opposition or criticism must be ruthlessly suppressed.” By Orders in Council of 2 and 6 August 1914, she provided for control of all communications from overseas. Nothing, from there, dangerous

⁸⁹ *The Chapbook.*

⁹⁰ *Contemporary Rev.*, June 1920, p. 787.

to public opinion was to be published. On 6 November 1914, another Order in Council enacted as follows:

“The Minister may by warrant under his hand direct that any newspaper, tract, writing, or periodical which, in the opinion of the Minister, contains, has contained, or is in the habit of containing articles, correspondence, news, or information, bearing directly or indirectly on the present state of war, or on the causes thereof, contrary to the actual facts, and tending directly or indirectly to influence the people of Canada, or any section of the people of Canada, against the cause of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, or in favor of the enemy, be refused the privilege of the mails of Canada, and be prohibited from circulation in Canada in any way.”

This power was freely exercised. Up to the end of December 1915, no fewer than twenty-five publications were excluded from the mails. On 10 June 1915, a further Order provided:

“for the appointment of a person as censor of publications issued at any printing house,”

and made an offence the:

“printing or circulation” of statements likely “to assist or encourage the enemy, or to prevent, embarrass, or hinder the successful prosecution of the war.”

As the war proceeded, censorship became more drastic, and reached climax in April 1918, when an Order in Council, after reciting:

“Whereas the mind of the entire people should be centred upon the proper carrying out in the most effective manner of that final decision, and that all questioning in the press or otherwise of the causes of that war, the motives of Canada, Great Britain, or the Allies, in entering upon and carrying out the same and the policies of them adopted for its prosecution must necessarily divert attention from the one great object on which it should be so centred, and tend to defeat or impede the effective carrying out of that decision,”

declared that “it shall be an offence:

“to print, publish, or publicly express an adverse or unfavorable statement, report, or opinion concerning the causes of the present war, or the motives or purposes for which Canada, or the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, or any of the allied nations entered upon, or are prosecuting the same, which may tend to arouse hostile feeling, create unrest, or unsettle, or inflame public opinion” —

under penalty of a maximum fine of \$5,000, or of imprisonment for five years, or both. Nobody was permitted to say, for example (as he might have said with perfect truth), that Italy had put herself up at auction as between the two fighting combinations, and knocked herself down to the best bidder. In harmony with this last Order in Council, the Houses of Parliament authorized their Speakers to delete from the official reports of the debates any adverse statement, report,

or opinion concerning the causes of the war, or the motives or purposes for which Canada and Great Britain, or any of the allied nations, had entered upon the struggle.

Concealment in the United Kingdom. Guilty, on one occasion (6 November 1917), of a very serious slip, Mr. Balfour told his audience to read the German newspapers. He was promptly reminded by the Rev. Mr. Morrison and Sir Sydney Low that German newspapers and periodicals were not allowed to enter the country.

"All of them have been summarily stopped," said Mr. Morrison, "and the ordinary citizen of the present moment is completely deprived of the opportunity of forming any judgment whatever as to the movement of opinion in Germany."

Not even the great political clubs, or libraries, were "allowed to receive a single German periodical."⁹¹ As an exception, the London Library was permitted, by special license, to import certain German books, but only upon the undertaking that nobody should be permitted to read them. The librarian, Sir Sydney said:

"was required to give an undertaking that the explosive material shall be stowed away until after the war."⁹²

Autocratic Germany was much more liberal in this respect. In his "5th Article" in the *London Times* (14 October 1916), Mr. D. Thomas Curtis (speaking from personal knowledge) said that the *London Times* was "allowed to be sold freely all over Germany." See also Ludendorff's statement upon a previous page.⁹³

THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

If those persons who, not knowing the facts but making efforts to ascertain them, were unable to make better approach to knowledge of "the cause of the war" than was possible under the circumstances above referred to, and cautiously reserved judgment, the listless, credulous public, on the other hand, based perfectly confident opinion upon what they saw in the newspapers — chiefly in the headlines. The vast majority of the "able-editors" (Carlyle) themselves knew little; made no effort to know more; and were compelled by pressure, legal and social, to refrain from all —

"questioning . . . of the causes of the war, the motives of Canada, Great Britain, or the Allies in entering upon and carrying on the same."⁹⁴

Colonel F. N. Maude has given us a good representation of the situation:

⁹¹ *The Times*, 7 Nov. 1917.

⁹² *The Times*, 9 Nov. 1917.

⁹³ *Ante* pp. 20-1.

⁹⁴ *Ante* pp. 24-6.

“When a nation goes to war it behaves exactly as does its ‘mean’ man when forced into a quarrel — viz., the intellect practically ceases work. Co-ordination and discrimination (except in scientifically-trained boxers or fencers) becomes weak, and emotion — whether of hatred, rage or fear — becomes the dominating element.

“If now, as in our present case, the most virile 25 per cent. of the adult population is segregated out and sent across the seas, the ‘mean’ of the remainder sinks far below the normal in self-control, and falls a ready prey to the lower emotions, especially that of fear. Now when a crowd has, for the time being, suspended intellectual activity, it is no use appealing to its reason — it can only be reached through its emotions; hence, if the daily Press fails to provide emotional headlines, alternating between extremes, its circulation will rapidly dwindle, and its proprietors presently figure in the bankruptcy court, with complete loss of power and prestige. No man, however rich, can run a daily paper at a loss, hence the proprietors have literally no option but to follow the crowd, since they cannot hope to lead it. Some good can always be effected by stimulating leaders, but unless the headlines are calculated to make the flesh creep, their sales will certainly fall. During the last few months this tendency to hysteria in the daily Press has become more and more marked.”⁹⁵

Take two typical cases of the operations of public opinion: On one occasion, *The Times* (London) asserted that the British army was suffering because of lack of munitions. Although officially denied, the statement was perfectly true.⁹⁶ But it was “unpatriotic,” and the Manchester Stock Exchange resolved that no copy of *The Times* should be admitted to its rooms. The little town of St. Catharines in Canada inflicted similar punishment. On another occasion, two days after the British declaration of war, the Montreal *Gazette* made frank announcement of its opinion as to the actions of the British government:

“The Government abdicated its leadership when leadership by men who knew or should have known what conditions were were most needed. Never in England’s history was there another such spectacle. When France chose war, the noise of the yelling London Press was taken for the voice of public opinion, and, as if there was no hand on the helm, the Empire drifted into war. All know the subsequent story.” Subscribers and advertisers would not tolerate opinion of that sort, and the *Gazette* fell into line.

As a general confession of press complicity during the war, we may note that at a meeting of American newspaper managers and editors (New York, May 1920), Mr. Charles Grant Miller, lately editor of the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*, read a paper in which he said:

“Every edition of every newspaper is tinctured with lies, and every

⁹⁵ *The Contemporary Rev.*, May 1918, pp. 495-6.

⁹⁶ Cf. Winston Churchill: *The World Crisis*, II, p. 365.

sensible editor knows it and at heart is sick about it. He cannot see how he can help it. For five years there has been a world-wide famine in facts. Truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, about anything of grave public interest, seems to have disappeared from the face of the earth. The date line is no longer any sign of the real source of news. Assertion is little indication of the truth. The news of Russia, the Balkans, the Bosphorus, and Central Europe mostly originates in London or is trimmed to London's shifting interests; tidings of conditions in England, France, and Italy are carefully strained through the foreign loan centres of Wall Street; and where all the rest of the worldful of interested if not interesting misinformation comes from, the Lord only knows."

Another delegate, Mr. Salmon P. Chase, said:

"Our army of thieves, plundering and profiteering with devilish boldness and activity, have neglected no seductions or expense to make of our newspapers an army of prostitutes."

Commenting upon the proceedings, *The Nation* (New York) said:

"This, we submit, sounds perilously like turning state's evidence. The truth is that the press of the country sold its prestige and degraded its conscience in yielding to Government propaganda, in abandoning throughout the war its critical faculty, in freely taking part in the deliberate deception of the American public. Not even the press can transgress the moral laws without paying a price for it."⁹⁷

The guilt of the Press is, in the above extracts, exaggerated. All that can be said is that editors, like politicians and clergymen, operate under obligation to talk, and under penalty of loss of prestige and profit if they fail to talk "patriotically." They are less able than others, more fortunately situated, to retain their *sang froid*, and are more easily swept, by governmental misrepresentation, into hysterics — honest enough hysterics, but hysterics. The responsibility of the Press for the outbreak of war is referred to in a subsequent chapter.⁹⁸

NECESSITY FOR STUDY

Very evidently, the maintenance of home-moral during war is a work that cannot be efficiently performed by methods defensible upon ethical principles. Just as evidently, the alternative to that maintenance is defeat; for a house is not singular in that if divided against itself it cannot stand. Shall we plead, then, that "necessity knows no law"? Or shall we accept defeat? Or shall we agree with Ollivier, both in his dictum and in his methods? For present purposes, all that need

⁹⁷ *The Statesman* (Toronto), 15 May 1920. A great Liberal paper said the other day: "During actual war we all, to put it bluntly, have to do a good deal of lying, active or passive, of omission if not of commission, in order to save our country from ruin."

⁹⁸ Cap. XXVII.

be said is that, his methods having been diligently pursued throughout the recent war, some correction of inculcated opinion, as to what were its purposes and meaning, is now very necessary.

Scores of thousands have gone to their graves believing that they knew "the cause of the war" and the objects for which they were fighting. Millions remain mired in the morass of contradictory beliefs into which they were flung during the war. The blame is not theirs. They adopted — perhaps too willingly — what appeared to them to have emanated from trustworthy authority. They lived in a certain intellectual atmosphere, and their thought was moulded by it. And now, handicapped as they are by settled conviction, would they know the meaning of the war, they must patiently explore its roots and precipitating causes. Professor Coolidge has well said that:

"Any one who wishes to understand, even in a superficial way, the causes that have brought about the present world conflict should familiarize himself with the history of Europe since the Franco-Prussian war, and should try to grasp the interplay of political forces, the aims of statesmen, and the aspirations of peoples during that period."⁹⁹

In the same sense, M. Bogitshevich has said:

"It is particularly essential that the events which led to the war should not be considered in the light of the developments immediately preceding its outbreak, but should be brought into some kind of organic connection with events lying much further back in the past."¹⁰⁰

We must be able, for example, to understand what Dr. Charles Seymour, Professor of History in Yale College, meant when he indicated that the Young Turk movement in 1908 involved the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria; that the annexation angered Serbia; that Bulgaria saw in the Young Turk movement danger to her schemes in Macedonia; that Greece saw danger from the same source in Crete; that Italy's attack upon Tripoli in 1911 afforded the Balkan League an opportunity to declare war upon Turkey; that the treaty of Bucarest was a mere stop-gap; and that subsequent events were in large measure merely consequential.¹⁰¹

We must understand why it was that, although the United Kingdom and France were historic enemies until 1904, yet in 1914 they fought upon the same side; why it was that, although British foreign policy in the Near and Middle East had for its pivot, until 1907, enmity towards Russia and determination to thwart her approaches to Constantinople and India, yet in 1914 the United Kingdom engaged in colossal conflict in league with Russia, and in aid of her installation in the Turkish capital; why it was that in 1878 the United Kingdom was a party to the practical cession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to

⁹⁹ *The Origins of the Triple Alliance*, p. v.

¹⁰⁰ *Causes of the War*, p. 3.

¹⁰¹ *The Diplomatic Background of the War*, pp. 211-220.

Austria-Hungary, and in 1914 supported a Serbian effort to detach them; why it was that, although, until recent years, the United Kingdom was the principal champion of the independence of Turkey and of her territorial integrity, she fought against Turkey and insisted upon her dismemberment; why it was that Italy and Roumania, for thirty years in defensive war-alliance with Germany and Austria, fought against them; why Bulgaria joined the Central Powers; why Japan, who in 1904 was fighting Russia, entered the war on her side. All these things, and many more, must be understood if we are to understand "the cause of the war."

THE SLAIN

That those participants who survived the war were misled as to its purposes and meanings is sufficiently deplorable, but that millions of the fighting men died under misconception of the object of all their strivings is surely one of the most poignant of all historic tragedies. The Foreign Ministers and the better instructed of the diplomats were aware of the facts, but to tell them was "not in the public interest." Their duty, as they saw it, was to render the war popular, and to assert what, for that purpose, they deemed to be most effective. Thus millions on both sides fought and died in the equal belief that their cause was just, and that freedom was their object. Professor Gilbert Murray, a strenuous and able assailant of the German government, has said:

"Yet I have scarcely met a single person who seems to hate the Germans. We abominate their dishonest Government, their unscrupulous and arrogant diplomacy, the whole spirit of 'blood-and-iron' ambition which seems to have spread from Prussia through a great part of the nation. But not the people in general. They too, by whatever criminal folly they were led into war, are fighting now for what they call 'the Right.'" ¹⁰²

Few verses plumb pathos to profounder depths than were reached by Mr. W. H. Ewers in his *Five Souls*:

FIRST SOUL

*I was a peasant of the Polish plain;
I left my plough because the message ran:
Russia, in danger, needed every man
To save her from the Teuton; and was slain.
I gave my life for freedom — This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.*

¹⁰² Oxford Pamphlets (1914): *Thoughts on the War*, p. 7.

SECOND SOUL

*I was a Tyrolese, a mountaineer;
I gladly left my mountain home to fight
Against the brutal, treacherous Muscovite;
And died in Poland on a Cossack spear.
I gave my life for freedom — This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.*

THIRD SOUL

*I worked in Lyons at my weaver's loom,
When suddenly the Prussian despot hurled
His felon blow at France and at the world;
Then I went forth to Belgium and my doom.
I gave my life for freedom — This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.*

FOURTH SOUL

*I owned a vineyard by the wooded Main,
Until the Fatherland, begirt by foes
Lusting her downfall, called me, and I rose
Swift to the call — and died in fair Lorraine.
I gave my life for freedom — This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.*

FIFTH SOUL

*I worked in a great shipyard by the Clyde,
There came a sudden word of wars declared,
Of Belgium, peaceful, helpless, unprepared,
Asking our aid: I joined the ranks and died.
I gave my life for freedom — This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.*

CHAPTER II

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THE ALLEGED REASON

Protection of Serbia. We have been told that Russia's participation in the war was philanthropic — that, disinterestedly, she was minded to support her little Slav brother, Serbia, as against the depredating purposes of imperialistic Austria-Hungary. That is not true. It is inconsistent with the political character of Russia; with the history of the relations between Russia and the western Balkans; and with the facts. Russia entered the war in pursuance of her own interests. Her record, both in the Balkans and elsewhere, prohibits the attribution to her of a higher standard of international morality than that which obtains elsewhere.

When, in 1877, Russia was contemplating war with Turkey and wanted Austro-Hungarian neutrality and diplomatic support, she had no scruple in handing over to Austria-Hungary the purely Slav provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. By the treaty of Budapest the two Great Powers (15 January 1877), when, regulating: "in advance the territorial modifications which might result from the war, or the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire,"

it was agreed that Austria-Hungary should limit her "eventual annexations":

"to Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the exception of the portion comprised between Serbia and Montenegro,¹ on the subject of which the two Governments reserve the right to reach an agreement when the moment for disposing of it arrives."²

It was in pursuance of this treaty that the Provinces were, by the treaty of Berlin (1878), placed under the domination of the Germans and Magyars of Austria-Hungary — one of the meanest international transactions of modern times.³

Again, in 1908, when Austria-Hungary desired to assume the legal sovereignty over the Provinces, with the certain effect of making more difficult the realization of Serbian "legitimate aspirations," Russia was quite willing to assent, upon condition only of an improvement of her own political position at Constantinople.⁴ Writing, during that crisis, to the Russian Ambassador at Paris, Isvolsky (Russian Foreign Minister) said (5 November 1908):

"Russia is at present not in warlike mood, and, though people like to create difficulties for their Government in questions of foreign politics, they are, nevertheless, not at all disposed to wage war out of love for Serbia."⁵

Once more, when, as a result of the war of the Balkan allies against Turkey (1912-13), Serbia and Montenegro found themselves in possession of territory on or close to the Adriatic — their long desired objectives — and were required by Austria-Hungary and Italy to withdraw from their war-won prizes, Russia gave to them but little diplomatic support; assented to their coercion by an international fleet; and told them to wait for a more auspicious occasion. Heedless in 1878, 1908, and 1913 of the interests of Slav states in the Balkans, it is not probable that in 1914 Russia determined to face Germany merely for the purpose of defending one of them.

The facts just referred to underwent wonderful transformation in *entente* countries during the war. Mr. Lloyd George, for instance, changed them into the following:

"Russia has a special regard for Serbia. She has a special interest in Serbia. Russians have shed their blood for Serbian independence many a time. Serbia is a member of her family, and she cannot see Serbia maltreated. Austria knew that. Germany knew that; and Ger-

¹ That strip was known as the Sanjak of Novibazar.

² Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 201.

³ *Post cap. XXIII. Cf. Hanotaux: Histoire Illustrée de la Guerre de 1914*, p. 10.

⁴ Both incidents will be dealt with in cap. XXIII. Referring to the action of Isvolsky, Poincaré said that he had "committed the fault . . . of desiring to dispose of Slav populations without their consent," *The Origins of the War*, p. 101.

⁵ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

many turned round to Russia and said: 'I insist that you shall stand with your arms folded whilst Austria is strangling your little brother to death.' What answer did the Russian Slav give? He gave the only answer that becomes a man. He turned to Austria and said: 'You lay hands on that little fellow, and I will tear your ramshackle empire limb from limb'; and he is doing it."⁶

Mr. Lloyd George may, possibly, have believed these assertions, but Sir Valentine Chirol, who transferred the words to his pages, would not himself have assumed the responsibility of saying that:

"Russians have shed their blood for Serbian independence many a time."

Poland. Those who are familiar with the treatment by Russia of Poland and the Poles (themselves Slavs) can have little faith in the pretence that the autocrats of imperialistic Russia were actuated, in their attitude toward Serbia, by other than self-serving motives. One of the greatest of her modern statesmen, Count Witte,⁷ only three months before the war made frank admission of what, after all, is common knowledge. He said:

"Do you imagine that Russia can face her Teuton enemies, held back by the drag of a discontented Poland, and seriously pose as the liberator of the Slavs? The thing is inconceivable. If she were the protectress of the Slavs, could she continue to be the persecutor of the Poles, who are Slavs of purer blood than herself? . . . If our love for the Slavs were sincere — nay, if our policy were based on enlightened self-interest, we could have long since treated the Poles of the Empire as full-fledged citizens, and bestowed self-government upon those of the Kingdom of Poland. That was one of my own projects had I remained in office and been able to secure the co-operation of the Duma and the Council of the Empire, but as things are now moving we are heaping coals of fire on the head of the nation. Unless the hideous blot on the pages of our history be removed deliberately, and as an integral part of a coherent policy, it will spread."⁸

The evidence of M. Nékludoff (Counsellor to the Russian Embassy at Paris, 1905-11; Russian Minister at Sofia (Bulgaria) 1912 to end of 1913; then at Stockholm, and afterwards at Madrid) is to the same effect. Referring to the Russian manifesto issued during the recent war:

⁶ Quoted by Sir Valentine Chirol in Oxford pamphlet (1914) No. III, *Serbia and the Serbs*, p. 17. Sir George Foster in Canada made use of somewhat similar language.

⁷ As Minister of Finance (1892-1903), he stopped the fluctuations of currency; resumed specie payments; gave strong impetus to railway expansion; decreased drunkenness, &c. Afterwards he represented his country at the negotiations for peace with Japan (1905).

⁸ Article, "The Polish Problem," by Dr. E. J. Dillon: *Fortnightly Rev.*, March 1917, pp. 375, 6.

“solemnly promising to the Poles a wide autonomy within the compass of the real frontiers of their nationality.” and declaring that the Poles “*did not believe us*,” Nékludoff added (italics as in original):

“Personally — indeed there is nothing Polish about me — I was less sceptical, for I *wished* to believe. At last, I thought, a first decisive blow seems to have been struck at that mass of violence, iniquity, lying, and mutual hatred that dishonor my country, her history and her public life. . . . But for Russia herself, the subjection of Poland and the cruelties and injustices without number which were committed after every Polish rising were a source of *opprobrium, discredit and weakness*. And how could one speak of a *Slav* policy when ten million pure-bred Slavs were being down-trodden? ”⁹

Of Russian government of Poland, Dr. E. J. Dillon, a very competent authority, has said:

“As a matter of fact, the Poles of the Tsardom were dealt with harshly. Their high qualifications for self-government were ignored. Many of the fundamental rights of citizenship which were correlates of their duties towards Russia were denied them systematically. Their affairs were regulated from the Russian capital during a transitional period when centralisation was synonymous with injustice and confusion. The Kingdom of Poland was administered by a set of pushing adventurers whose only object was to win golden opinions at home by severity and coercion in Poland. The people were not allowed to have even such simulacrum of local government as was conferred upon Russian towns and boroughs. A heavy hand was laid on their Press. Their ecclesiastical administration was trammelled by a department of the Ministry of the Interior. A Pole in quest of land was forbidden to purchase it in certain parts of the Empire. He was debarred by his birth from various offices in the State. In a word, he was a second or third class citizen.”¹⁰

While, during the war, Russia, in order to obtain Polish recruits, issued the manifesto above referred to, she, in secret communication with her allies (9 March 1916) stipulated as follows:

“In general . . . we are ready to leave to France and England full freedom to fix the western frontiers of Germany, and we count upon the Allies leaving to us in turn full freedom to fix our boundaries against Germany and Austria-Hungary. It is above all necessary to demand that the Polish question should be excluded from the subjects of international negotiation, and that all attempts to place Poland’s future under the guarantee and control of the Powers should be prevented.”¹¹

⁹ *Diplomatic Reminiscences*, pp. 323, 324-5.

¹⁰ *Fortnightly Rev.*, March 1917, p. 376.

¹¹ Loreburn: *How the War Came*, p. 295. And see p. 302.

Russia's philanthropy was well illustrated, also, by her treaty of 1907 with the United Kingdom, by which the two Powers assumed to assign to one another spheres of influence in Persia, and by her subsequent conduct in her sphere.¹²

THE REAL REASON

Self-interest. The purpose of the foregoing observations is not the disparagement of Russia, but merely the elimination of a frequently asserted motive for her intervention upon the side of Serbia. Philanthropic purposes have never been the reason for undertaking extensive war. Neither the United Kingdom nor France (not less, if not more philanthropic than Russia) would, but for the existence of other reasons, have sent a man to aid Serbia. And it was not for philanthropic reasons that they helped Russia. Russia entered the war in pursuance of her own interests, but fully to appreciate that fact three points must be noted: (1) Russia's traditional ambition with reference to Constantinople; (2) the emergence of Germany as a rival for control of that immensely important city; and (3) the turning of the Austro-Hungarian attention to Salonica as an outlet on the Ægean.

Traditional Policy. The story of the development of Russia's traditional policy with reference to Constantinople (her determination some day to dominate the Straits and with them the eastern Mediterranean) prior to the interposition of German rivalry in that regard, will be referred to in a subsequent chapter.¹³ The continuation of the story will appear upon subsequent pages of the present chapter. For the moment, all that need be said is that the German menace produced the Anglo-Russian treaty of 31 August 1907, and the war-entente between the two countries; complicated British foreign policy by introduction of a necessity for exhibition of sympathy with Russian schemes; furnished Russia with a powerful lever for furtherance of those schemes; and eventually forced British concurrence in the attempted accomplishment of Russia's "historic mission" at Constantinople.

"At the back of it all, in the mind of Russia, is the question of an ice-free port on the open sea. Russia has none. For a century she has been striving to secure one. That aim guides her policy now, just as it was behind the Crimean War, the Russo-Turkish War, and the Russo-Japanese War. In the latter it was Port Arthur, in the others Constantinople, as controlling the Bosphorus and Dardanelles."¹⁴

German and Austro-Hungarian Developments. Until the eighteenthies, British interest had predominated in the Turkish capital. When, however, British forces, in 1882, attacked Egypt (Turkish

¹² The subject is dealt with in cap. XXII.

¹³ Cap. XXI.

¹⁴ Sir Percy Fitzpatrick: *The Origin, Causes, and Object of the War*, p. 23.

territory), an opportunity for ousting that influence was afforded, and Germany proceeded to take advantage of it. In 1888, she obtained a concession for the construction of the Ottoman-Anatolia Railway. In 1888, and again in 1898, the Kaiser visited the East, and at Damascus on the later occasion proclaimed his friendship for the "three hundred million Mussulmans scattered over the earth." In 1903, by the "Bagdad Railway Convention," extension of the line to the Persian Gulf was provided for.¹⁵

Less enterprising than Germany, Austria-Hungary allowed to elapse many years of opportunity for establishing herself at Salonica, and it was not until 1908 that, under the astute and masterful Aehrenthal (1), she announced her intention of constructing a railway through the Sanjak of Novibazar — Turkish territory — to connect with the Salonica-Mitrovitza railway at its northern terminus, and (2) she frustrated (temporarily) Serbia's hopes of expansion to the west by annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Prior to the development of German and Austro-Hungarian activities, Russia's special interest in the Balkan peninsula lay in its eastern States, through which she hoped, at some time, to reach Constantinople. The new movements raised new apprehensions, and interposed new obstacles to the realization of her "historic mission" — as she had come to speak of her traditional policy. The Balkan question had assumed, for her, a new and extremely perturbing aspect. Previously regarding the western States as merely factors in the general problem, now the maintenance of an independent and potent Serbia appeared to be essential as a bar to the ambitions of the Central Powers. Inevitably, there arose the questions which eventually were involved in the war of 1914-1918: Was Russia to make sure her water-route through the Bosphorus? or was Germany to secure a crossing of the Bosphorus on her way to Bagdad and the Persian Gulf? Was Austria-Hungary, for developmental purposes, or was Russia, for thwarting of those purposes, to exercise the chief influence in the Balkans?

Russia's true Plea. Such justification as Russia had for intervention between Austria-Hungary and Serbia in 1914 was derived, not from the existence of any political or paternal or racial relation to Serbia, but purely from the fact that her own interests were in jeopardy in two respects. First, Austro-Hungarian domination in Serbia, the central Balkan state, would have meant Austro-Hungarian predominance in the Balkan peninsula, and the establishment of a new menace to Russian interests and purposes.¹⁶ Sazonoff made this clear to the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg on 25 July 1914, when he said, as reported by the Ambassador:

"Austria's action was in reality directed against Turkey. She aimed

¹⁵ *Post*, cap. XXI.

¹⁶ *Cf. post* cap. VIII.

at overthrowing the present *status quo* in the Balkans, and establishing her own hegemony there. . . . Russia could not allow Austria to crush Serbia and become the predominant Power in the Balkans.”¹⁷ In a telegram to the British King (1 August 1914), the Czar made the same point:

“Object of that action was to crush Serbia, and make her a vassal of Austria. Effect of this would have been to upset balance of power in Balkans, which is of such vital interest to my Empire.”¹⁸

The next day, Sazonoff, the Russian Prime Minister, when referring to the demands made by Austria-Hungary on Serbia, said:

“Russia considered that the humiliation of Serbia, involved in these demands, and equally the evident intention of Austria-Hungary to secure her own hegemony in the Balkans, which underlay her conditions, were inadmissible.”¹⁹

Secondly: The subjection of Serbia would have added enormously to the difficulties in the way of fulfillment of Russia’s “historic mission.” For the same reason that the United Kingdom had for many years withstood the approach of Russia to Constantinople, did Russia now oppose the advance of Germany to the same place. Right or wrong had little to do with the case. Russia, and Germany and Austria-Hungary alike were acting in accordance with their respective interests. Unfortunately, as often theretofore, imperialisms clashed.

WHY DID RUSSIA ENTER THE WAR?

The foregoing observations make certain the following propositions:

1. The merits of the quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia were of no importance in determining Russia’s course of action.²⁰
2. Traditionally covetous of control at Constantinople and of a predominating interest in the eastern Mediterranean, Russia was confronted by somewhat similar ambitions on the part of Germany and Austria-Hungary. Support of Serbia was the best method of thwarting the rivals.
3. The conflict of interests was emphasized, and the rivalry embittered, by racial antipathy.
4. Russia entered the war because urged thereto by her own interests.

We may now pass to the consideration of certain facts, not only corroborative of what has been said, but relevant, also, to the question, Did Russia want war?

¹⁷ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 17.

¹⁸ Coll. Dip. Docs., p. 537.

¹⁹ Russ. Orange Bk., 1914, No. 77.

²⁰ In Sazonoff’s opinion, Austria-Hungary had good cause for complaint against Serbia. See cap. XXVI.

RUSSIA'S "HISTORIC MISSION"

Council of 5 December 1896. Endeavoring to follow the more modern development of Russia's designs with reference to Constantinople, we may (at this place) pass the Reichstadt and Budapest agreements of 1876 and 1877 by which, in order that she might safely attack Turkey, Russia purchased the neutrality of Austria-Hungary,²¹ and the treaty of Berlin (1878) by which Russia was deprived of much of the fruit of her victory,²² and, as basis for comprehension of Russia's activities, commence with Count Witte's report of the Council of 5 December 1896. The Count (then Minister of Finance) relates as follows (*italics now added*):

"In the latter part of the year 1896, there was a massacre of Armenians in Constantinople, preceded by a similar massacre in Asia Minor. In October, His Majesty returned from abroad, and Nelidov, our Ambassador to Turkey, came to St. Petersburg. His arrival gave rise to rumours about various measures which were going to be taken against Turkey. These rumours forced me to submit to His Majesty a memorandum in which I stated my views on Turkey and advised against the use of force. On November 21 (December 3) I received a secret memoir drafted by Nelidov. The Ambassador spoke in vague terms about the alarming situation in Turkey and *suggested that we should create incidents which would afford us the legal right and the physical possibility to seize the Upper Bosphorus.*

"Nelidov's suggestion was discussed by a special conference called two days later and presided over by His Majesty. The Ambassador insisted that a far-reaching upheaval was bound to occur in the near future in the Ottoman Empire, and that, to safeguard our interests, we must occupy the Upper Bosphorus. He was naturally supported by the War Minister and the Chief of Staff, General Obruchev, for whom the occupation of Bosphorus and if possible of Constantinople was a veritable *idée fixe*. The other Ministers refrained from expressing their opinion on the subject, so that it fell to my lot to oppose this disastrous project, which I did with vigour and determination. I pointed out that the plan under consideration would eventually precipitate a general European war and shatter the brilliant political and financial position in which Emperor Alexander III left Russia.

"The Emperor at first confined himself to questioning the members of the conference. When the discussion was closed he declared that he shared the Ambassador's view. Thus the matter was settled, at least in principle. Namely, *it was decided to bring about such events in Constantinople as would furnish us a specious pretext for landing troops and occupying Upper Bosphorus.* The military authorities at

²¹ See cap. XXIII.

²² See cap. XXIII.

Odessa and Sebastopol were instructed immediately to start the necessary preparations for the landing of troops in Turkey. It was also agreed that, at the moment which Nelidov would consider opportune for the landing, he would give the signal by sending a telegram to our financial agent in London requesting him to purchase a stated amount of grain. The despatch was to be immediately transmitted to the Director of the Imperial Bank and forwarded by the latter to the War Minister and also to the Minister of the Navy.

"The minutes of the session were drawn up by the Director of the Foreign Ministry, Shishkin. They presented the decisions of the conference as accepted unanimously. I notified Shishkin that I could not sign the minutes, for the reason that, in my opinion, the decisions of the Conference threatened Russia with disastrous consequences. I requested him to obtain His Majesty's permission either to insert a summary of my view of the matter in the minutes or else to state briefly that I completely disagreed with the conclusions arrived at by the conference. I did not wish, I said, to bear the responsibility for this adventure before history. Shishkin wrote to His Majesty and was instructed to insert the following statement at the beginning of the minutes: 'In the opinion of Secretary of State Witte, the occupation of Upper Bosphorus without a preliminary agreement with the Great Powers is, at the present moment and under the present circumstances, very risky and likely to lead to disastrous consequences.' *His Majesty signed the minutes of November 27 (December 9) and penned on the margin a few words to the effect that he was in complete agreement with the opinion of the majority.*

"Nelidov left for Constantinople eager to carry out his long cherished plan. It was expected that the signal might come at any moment, so that one of the secretaries of the Director of the Imperial Bank kept vigil all night long, ready to receive the fatal telegram and instructed to transmit it immediately to the Director. Fearing the consequences of the act, I could not refrain from sharing my apprehensions with several persons very intimate with the Emperor, notably Grand Duke Vlademir Alexandrovich and Pobiedonostzev. The latter read the minutes of the session and returned them to me with the following note: 'I hasten to return the enclosed minutes. Thank you for having sent them to me. *Alca jacta est.* May God help us!'

"I do not know whether it was the influence of these men or the influence of that Power which rules the whole world and which we call God, only *His Majesty changed his mind and instructed Nelidov soon after the latter's departure for Constantinople to give up his design.* It is significant that for some time after this incident the Emperor bore a grudge against me."²³

Neither "these men" nor God was responsible for that change.

²³ Witte, *op. cit.*, pp. 186-9.

Sazonoff, in his report to the Czar of 23 November 1913 recommending military preparation, recalled that:

"In view of the inadequacy of the means of transport and the defectiveness of land mobilization, we were obliged to renounce this plan."²⁴

1896-1906. For the moment, Russian imperialism found ample opportunity for activity in the Far East. By the treaty of Shiminoseki (16 April 1895) at the close of the war, China ceded to Japan possession of the Liao-tung peninsula, including the important stronghold of Port Arthur. Against this, Russia determined to protest²⁵ and, in conjunction with Germany and France, demanded restoration to China. Japan submitted. Toward the end of 1897, Germany seized the Chinese port of Kiaochou;²⁶ Russia sent her warships to Port Arthur; while the United Kingdom and France were requiring cessions of other territories. China submitted, and, early in the next year, gave to the Powers the demanded areas. Japan tolerated her deprivation of the Liao-tung peninsula installation until, by protecting treaty with the United Kingdom and elaborate military preparation, she felt herself able to contest with Russia the domination of Manchuria and Korea. War commenced 8 February 1904, and was terminated, after the defeat of Russia, by the treaty of Portsmouth, 5 September 1905. That episode finished, Russia once more turned her thoughts to accomplishment of her "historic mission" in the Near East. Let us follow development of the policy.

International Position of the Straits. We shall better appreciate what is to follow if we bear in mind that Russia had always desired free passage for her warships through the Straits—to the exclusion of all others; that by the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi (8 July 1831), she had succeeded in making that arrangement with Turkey; that the other Powers, by the treaty of 1841, had imposed relinquishment of this privileged position; and that the treaty at the close of the Crimean war (30 June 1856) between the United Kingdom, Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, Sardinia, and Turkey had stipulated as follows:

"His Majesty the Sultan, on the one part, declares that he is firmly resolved to maintain for the future the principle invariably established in the ancient rule of his Empire, and in virtue of which it has, at all times, been prohibited for the Ships of War of Foreign Powers to enter the Straits of the Dardanelles and of the Bosphorus, and that so long as the Porte is at peace, His Majesty will admit no Foreign Ship of War into the said Straits.

"And their Majesties the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the Emperor of Austria, the Emperor of the

²⁴ *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 367.

²⁵ Russia took the initiative: Witte, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-5.

²⁶ Count Witte says that Germany acted with the assent of Russia: *ibid.*, p. 101.

French, the King of Prussia, the Emperor of all the Russias, and the King of Sardinia, on the other part, engage to respect the determination of the Sultan, and to conform themselves to the principles above declared." ²⁷

In 1887 (12 December), the United Kingdom, Austria-Hungary, and Italy entered into a treaty, by the fourth clause of which they agreed to the principles of:

"The independence of Turkey, as guardian of important European interests (independence of the Caliphate, the freedom of the Straits, etc.), of all preponderating influence." ²⁸

Negotiations with Austria-Hungary, 1897. The Emperors of Russia and Austria-Hungary, at their meeting at St. Petersburg in May 1897, were able to come to agreement upon some points connected with the future of the Balkans, but the best that they could accomplish with reference to the Straits was to declare that:

"having an eminently European character," it "is not of a nature to be made the object of a separate understanding between Austria-Hungary and Russia." ²⁹

Arrangements with the United Kingdom, 1907. By their treaty of 31 August 1907, the United Kingdom and Russia came to agreement with reference to Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet. No reference was made to Constantinople. No formula could have been agreed to. Both Powers felt the pressure of the German menace, but while Russia regarded it as endangering the accomplishment of her "historic mission," the United Kingdom saw in it merely the greater of two dangers to Turkish sovereignty and independence. Consequent British embarrassment was unavoidable — How was Germany to be thwarted without thereby assisting Russia? How could friendship for Russia be professed while an attitude of hostility to the principal objective of her foreign policy was being maintained? Sir Edward Grey diplomitized as best he could. But events were too powerful for him, and from clever temporizing he was at last driven to concurrence in attempted achievement of Russian desire.

Agreement with Austria-Hungary, 1908. At Buchlau, in September 1908, Isvolsky and Achrenthal entered into the agreement above referred to ³⁰ by which the Russian statesman purchased the assent of Austria-Hungary to furtherance of his designs upon Constantinople.

²⁷ Cf. Article 10 of the treaty of the same date between the same Powers. Both documents may be seen in *British State Papers*, XLVI; in Hertzslet, *Map of Europe by Treaty*, II; and in Oakes & Mowat, *The Great European Treaties of the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 176, 184. See also Article 2 of the amending treaty of 13 March 1871: Oakes & Mowat, *op. cit.*, p. 330.

²⁸ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 125.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

³⁰ *Ante*, p. 33; and see cap. XXIII.

British and French Concessions, 1908. Taking advantage of the crisis caused by Austria-Hungary's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia presented to the United Kingdom a proposal, the principal sentences of which were the following:

"The principle of the closure of the Straits of the Dardanelles and of the Bosphorus is maintained. Exception is made in favor of the warships of the riverain States of the Black Sea."³¹

Sir Edward Grey agreed that the warships of the riverain states should be at liberty to pass the Straits at any time, provided that in case of war all belligerents should have equal rights. He added that the assent of Turkey was a necessary prerequisite, and with that the negotiations dropped.³² About the same time, Russia:

"received from France the most precise assurance that, with reference to the question of the Straits, we could count on her sympathy, but since then we have voluntarily renounced raising that question, in order not to complicate the situation, and not to put in danger the general peace."³³

Arrangements with Bulgaria, 1909. At the outcome of negotiations between Russia and Bulgaria, in 1909, a draft treaty was prepared of which the following was a paragraph:

"*Article 5.* In view of the fact that the realization of the high ideals of the Slavic peoples upon the Balkan peninsula, so near to Russia's heart, is possible only after a favorable outcome of Russia's struggle with Germany and Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria accepts the holy obligation, both in the event mentioned, and also in the event of accession of Roumania or of Turkey to the coalition of the above-named Powers, to make the utmost exertions to avert every provocation to the further expansion of the conflict. As regards those Powers whose relations with Russia are those of allies or friends, Bulgaria will adopt a suitable friendly attitude towards them."³⁴

The first few lines of this article make clear and illuminating revelation of Russia's appreciation of the fact (which thenceforth was never lost to view) that successful war with Germany and Austria-Hungary must precede realization of her "historic mission." It obtained special recognition (as we shall see) in the proceedings of the Russian Council of 21 February 1914.³⁵

Arrangements with Italy, 1909. Progressing with the preparation of "a favorable political ground-work" for the seizure of the Straits,

³¹ *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 457.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 458.

³³ Despatch of Isvolsky, 11 Oct. 1911: *Ibid.*, I, pp. 145-6.

³⁴ Bogitshevich: *Causes of the War*, p. 90. Whether a treaty was signed in these terms appears to be uncertain (*post*, cap. VIII, pp. 284-6), but that is, for present purposes, immaterial.

³⁵ *Post* p. 55-8.

Russia entered into an agreement with Italy (Racconigi, 24 October 1909), the last clause of which was as follows:

"Italy and Russia agree to consider favorably, the one Russian interests in the question of the Straits, the other, Italian interests in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica."³⁶

In making this agreement, Italy made notable departure from the policy indicated in her treaty with the United Kingdom and Austria-Hungary in 1887.³⁷

During the Turco-Italian War, 1911-12. In the pendency of the Turco-Italian war and the Franco-German dispute with reference to Morocco, Russia saw favorable opportunity for taking a step toward realization of her wishes, and commenced to sound the Powers. Writing from Paris on 26 September 1911, Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador, said:

"Now we must interest ourselves not only in maintaining peace and order in the Balkan Peninsula, but also in drawing from the events which are about to follow the greatest profit for ourselves. . . . Further, I take the liberty of remarking that, in any case, under one form or another, we must obtain from Italy a declaration by which, in accomplishing her purpose with reference to Tripolitania provided for in the convention concluded with us, she would continue to consider herself as bound to us for the future in the question of the Straits."³⁸

With Italy, Russia had no difficulty. She was willing to implement her promise.⁴⁰ In the United Kingdom, Russia found sympathy but encountered difficulties.⁴¹ Points of detail were raised.⁴² The subject was international and could be arranged only by agreement among the Powers.⁴³ Sir Edward Grey was ready, he said, to support the suggestion of 18 October 1908.⁴⁴ He would consider the new proposal.⁴⁵ And within a few days, he intimated that he would agree as requested, but subject to a previous arrangement being made with Turkey.⁴⁶ The Sultan, on his part, would agree only upon the condition that the

³⁶ *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 358. The treaty is more fully referred to in cap. VII.

³⁷ *Post*, p. 155.

³⁸ The reference is to the Racconigi agreement of 1909.

³⁹ *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 137.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 142. But see *ibid.*, pp. 149, 151. Cf. *ibid.*, II, p. 468.

⁴¹ A summary of some of the Russian diplomatic correspondence may be seen in *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 467-8.

⁴² Isvolsky to Foreign Office, 12 Oct. 1911: *ibid.*, I, p. 148.

⁴³ Telg. from Paul Cambon, French Ambassador at London, to Foreign Office: *ibid.*, p. 149.

⁴⁴ *Ante*, p. 43.

⁴⁵ Benckendorff to Foreign Office, 23 Oct. 1911: Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 320.

⁴⁶ Neratoff to Benckendorff, 2 Nov. 1911: *ibid.*, p. 326.

United Kingdom, France, and Russia would "give Turkey their support in her peace negotiations with Italy."⁴⁷ And arrangements on that line not being practicable, Russia applied further pressure to Sir Edward Grey, who, now that the Morocco difficulty had been settled, was less tractable. Reporting on 8 November 1911, Benckendorff said:

"Our aim is the free passage through the Straits in both directions. As to this I see no particular obstacle. But to convert the Black Sea into a great port of refuge for the Russian fleet in the event of war — that is another question; in this connection we are sure to encounter difficulties."⁴⁸

The difficulty was to get Sir Edward Grey "to alter his point of view."⁴⁹

France was evasive. Sending instruction on 5 October to the Russian Ambassador at Paris, the Russian acting Foreign Minister said:

"As we are bound to France by specific agreement, and as we have but slight interest in the north-west of Africa, it is evident that we will consent in advance to everything which France will arrange in her negotiations with Germany. But that, as it seems to me, supplies definite reasons that France will consider herself morally obliged on occasion to pay us back in the same coin, and will renounce in advance opposition or interference in questions in which France would be less interested, while we have in them essential interests."⁵⁰

Isvolsky could get little satisfaction: The Foreign Minister, de Selves, was uninformed; was absorbed in the Morocco question;⁵¹ upon the whole, although sympathetic, was unwilling to act except in conjunction with the United Kingdom;⁵² and would agree to the 1908 proposal and discuss further suggestions if necessary.⁵³ Distribution of cash among the Paris newspapers, Isvolsky said, would facilitate negotiations.⁵⁴ The attitudes of Germany and Austria-Hungary appear in the correspondence summarized in *Un Livre Noir*.⁵⁵

Simultaneously with her efforts to obtain the concurrence of the Powers, Russia, profiting by the circumstances above referred to, pressed at Constantinople for concessions. On 1 October, instructions in that regard were sent to the Russian Ambassador there,⁵⁶ and a draft agree-

⁴⁷ Benckendorff to Foreign Office, 8 Nov. 1911: *ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 328-9.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 328. The correspondence is summarized in *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 467-8.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, I, p. 140. See also p. 143; and II, p. 464.

⁵¹ Isvolsky to Foreign Office, 11 Oct. 1911: *ibid.*, I, pp. 144-7.

⁵² Isvolsky to Foreign Office, 26 Oct. 1911: *ibid.*, pp. 150-1.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, II, pp. 464-6.

⁵⁴ Isvolsky to Foreign Office, 12 Oct. 1911: *ibid.*, I, pp. 148-9.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, II, pp. 468-70.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 458-9.

ment followed on the 12th.⁵⁷ The effort ceased when the other Powers ascertained what was going on.⁵⁸

During the Balkan Wars, 1912-13. Pendency of the Balkan wars (8 October 1912 — 29 September 1913) and the consequent danger of general conflagration supplied Russia with various opportunities to renew her efforts. As early as 21 October 1912, Benckendorff, the Russian Ambassador at London, referring to his proceedings there, reported as follows:

“The entire conversation with Grey proves that he has completely veered round in his opinions, in the interests of the maintenance of the Entente, and that he is resolved, for the sake of the Entente, to grant far greater concessions at the cost of Turkey than he was prepared to grant hitherto. I look upon this discussion with Grey as very important.”⁵⁹

On the following day, Benckendorff again reported:

“I have clearly seen that the following dilemma must be settled: A further sparing of the feelings of the Caliph to a degree inconsistent with the Entente with Russia; or, on the other hand, an upholding of the Entente and only a minimum of regard for the Caliph, *i.e.*, the Sultan's remaining at Constantinople. The Entente has carried off the victory. I knew this before my interview with Grey, and it was for this reason that I sent you my confidential telegram, No. 267. I am grateful to Grey for having taken a definite stand to-day while the fight within his own party is still going on, and while the Sultan's cause still enjoys strong sympathies. This evolution of Grey's reveals courage.”⁶⁰

Having convinced himself, as he said (23 October):

“how highly Sir Edward values the Entente and how firmly determined he is to preserve it and to avoid everything that might endanger its existence,”

Benckendorff said to him that:

“He probably would not be surprised to hear that the Russian Government considers the moment to have arrived for establishing better relations between Russia and Turkey than heretofore; that the general situation makes this necessary; and, furthermore, that in case of such a *rapprochement* taking place, the first Powers to profit by it in Constantinople would be England and France. . . . Russia might perhaps go so far as to guarantee the town of Constantinople and the surrounding territory to Turkey. In return for this, Russia would expect the Sultan to allow upon his own authority, once and for all

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 462-4.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 462. A summary of some of the correspondence may be seen *ibid.*, pp. 458-62.

⁵⁹ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 373.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 374.

time, Russian men-of-war free passage through the Straits without these ships being allowed to stop in the Straits. . . . Sir Edward listened to me with visible interest. He answered immediately that he was ready to support in Constantinople the project, as described in the memorandum delivered to M. Iswolsky on October 18, 1908. This project had been approved at the time by the British Cabinet and he would therefore be able to act immediately. Without directly excluding the contents of this memorandum, I remarked that the project which is now mentioned to Sir Edward was different. He answered that he was ready to act in the sense of the memorandum, but that he could not give me an immediate answer on a proposal, since that would have to be examined from the viewpoint of the existing treaties, as well as submitted to the approval of the Cabinet."⁶¹

Eventually, on 2 December 1912, Benckendorff reported another conversation with Sir Edward Grey as follows:

"Alluding to the negotiations of 1908, he told me that the London Cabinet had agreed to our intention to change the status of the Straits, but with the limitation that he, Grey, did not consider the ground sufficiently prepared, nor believed the circumstances to be favorable. He has added that the situation has changed since then."⁶²

Sir Edward's chief aim in foreign affairs, then and throughout his period of office, being the maintenance of the Triple Entente, he was willing to make and did make substantial concessions which he did not like; but he hesitated to agree to such a fundamental reversal of foreign policy as the political establishment of Russia at Constantinople.

Meanwhile, on 28 November 1912, in a very important despatch to Iswolsky, Sazonoff disclosed his views and purposes:

"In your letter of November 27th you touched upon the question, whether it would not seem opportune to establish an understanding with France as to the changes which we would like to introduce into the 'legal' and 'de facto' status of the Straits, in connection with the present crisis in the Balkans. At the same time, the French Ambassador has inquired here what attitude we would assume in the face of possible demands by Bulgaria in this respect. Consequently I think it my duty to acquaint you, above all, with those considerations, which have lately guided our Foreign Office in this important question.

"From the earliest beginnings of the crisis we have kept in mind that the war might result in a change in the status of the Straits. Yet, at the same time, we feared to raise this question too soon before the full success of the Balkan States, the possibility of the occupation of Constantinople by their troops, and the views of the other Great Powers

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 321-3.

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 417-18.

concerning events in the Balkans had clearly revealed themselves. This consideration has forced us to maintain a certain reserve as to the English proposal to discuss the question of an eventual internationalisation of Constantinople, and of new guarantees as to the status of the Straits.⁶³ We believe that the vital interests of Russia in the Straits cannot be protected by any legal guarantees of stipulations, as these could always be circumvented; we always must rather consider the question: By what actual force is it 'de facto' possible to protect a given status of the Straits from infringement?

"As a matter of course, we have shown still more reticence towards suggestions coming from Vienna, to establish a certain parallelism between our interests and those of Austria-Hungary: Russia should declare herself uninterested concerning the western part of the Balkan Peninsula, while Austria would concede to us full freedom of action in Constantinople. Assuming, on the one hand, that any change in the régime of the Straits would take shape only after the termination of the war, and that, on the other hand, we cannot enter into the question of compensations, as this would be harmful to the interests of the Balkan States, we have until now maintained a waiting attitude, without, of course, neglecting to seize the propitious moment to give clear expression to our desiderata.

"Though the further development of the war cannot as yet be foreseen, we may yet take it for granted that the advance of the Allies has now already reached its culminating point."⁶⁴ and that the possibility of an occupation of Constantinople is very remote indeed. Therefore our first assumption remains, that Constantinople and a sufficiently large strip of land in Europe will remain in Turkish possession. It is to be supposed that Bulgaria, even after a victorious war, will require a considerable time to recuperate from her losses and to establish herself finally in the conquered territories. Turkey, weakened and vanquished, must face tasks no less difficult. Russia, having abstained from participating in the war, is now, on the one hand, able to increase her influence over the Balkan States, including possibly also Roumania — on the other hand, to consolidate her position in Turkey, for whom friendly relations with Russia are now more important than ever.

"All this induces us at the present moment to be particularly cautious when answering proposals which might be made to us by other Powers with regard to the Straits. We must beware of agreeing to the establishment of any restrictive guarantees which might in future form a hindrance to a final solution in accordance with our interests. On the other hand, we cannot miss the present favorable opportunity to

⁶³ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 421.

⁶⁴ Attack on the Turkish lines at Tchataldja had commenced on 17 November.

introduce a few less radical but, nevertheless, important modifications of the actual régime. We think it best to deal with the Straits question as in 1908, *i.e.*, to enable the border States of the Black Sea to have free passage for their men-of-war in times of peace under certain conditions which guarantee the safety of Constantinople. Naturally, there is at present no possibility of signing a one-sided agreement between Russia and Turkey on this question; such an agreement would be in contradiction to our relations with the Balkan States. It would also hardly be necessary; for, instead of friendly assurances which remained at the time without result on account of the self-consciousness displayed by the Turks, we now possess more effective means for influencing Turkey, particularly at this moment, when part of the Turkish army has been transferred from our frontier to the theatre of war. We must, naturally, pay the strictest attention to the attitude of the Great Powers, and we can state as a fact, that during recent years the ground has been well prepared for a solution in our favor.

"As you are aware, our wishes in this question cannot surprise any of the European Governments, and all of them have in their time expressed their conditional consent. In no way do we wish to adopt the theory of agreement or compensation, as far as Austria is concerned; but we have never denied that Austrian economic and political interests in the Balkans have to be taken into account. We have, therefore, agreed to the principle of an autonomous Albanian state bordering on the sea.

"As to the question of a Serbian corridor to the Adriatic, we have advised the Belgrade Cabinet to consider the interests of its neighbor. We therefore consider ourselves entitled to expect the Vienna Cabinet to adopt a similar attitude as to our interests in the Straits. At all events, we believe that the opposition of Austrian diplomacy in this question would scarcely be able to form a grave obstacle to the fulfillment of our extremely moderate wishes.

"Such are in general the considerations which guide us in the question of the Straits. In communicating them to you—in case you should speak to Poincaré on this subject, I deem it necessary to add that we do not think it advisable to come forward at present with any independent proposal⁶⁵ since the theory of compensations (as shown above) does not serve our interests. But should circumstances change and this question become part of the order of the day, then it would indeed interest us to learn the point of view of the French Government, in order that we might accurately determine the time and the means for attaining our end."⁶⁶

Read with this, Sazonoff's despatch to the Russian Ambassador at London (1 May 1913) in which, after affirming that Turkey's danger would bring her "closer to us," he added that:

⁶⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 421.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 415-7.

"This does not in the least presume a hostile attitude of Russia towards Bulgaria. The latter knows very well that the Straits belong to Russia's incontestable sphere of interest, and that in this respect any weakness or hesitation on our side is utterly inadmissible."⁶⁷

The more important points in these last two documents are as follows:

1. The effect of the war upon the status of the Straits is being kept in view.

2. The Straits belong to Russia's incontestable sphere of influence.

3. Russia cannot agree to internationalization of them.

4. Nor to agreement with Austria-Hungary for separate spheres of interest.

5. Nor to the:

"establishment of any restrictive guarantees which might in future form a hindrance to a final solution in accordance with our interests."

6. Meanwhile the proposal of 1908 ought to be dealt with.

7. Russia is now able to increase her influence over the Balkan states.

8. Russia is now able to consolidate her position in Turkey, being in possession of military advantage.

9. Concession to Austria-Hungary with reference to Albania, and in connection with Serbia's demand for an outlet on the Adriatic, having been made, Vienna ought to be similarly complaisant with reference "to our interests in the Straits."

10. The present moment is not opportune for insistence upon a change at Constantinople, but meanwhile Russia would like to have the view of the French government.

To these points may be added that Sazonoff desired to see the arrival of circumstances out of which the change might be effected, and that he endeavored to arrange accordingly. Russian policies during the Balkan wars may be summed as follows:

1. Russia endeavored to find opportunity for intervention as against Turkey, but was thwarted by the disinclination — really by the opposition — of the other Powers.

2. As between Bulgaria's and Serbia's opposing claims to part of the territory taken from Turkey, Russia favored Serbia.

3. As between the claims of Bulgaria and Greece to other parts of the territory, Russia favored Bulgaria.⁶⁸

4. Russia wished to preserve Bulgaria's friendship, but not to endow her with predominating strength.⁶⁹

5. Diplomatically, Russia supported the claim of Serbia to an outlet

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 420-1.

⁶⁸ Cavalla was the principal place in dispute. Some of the story may be seen in *Fr. Yell. Bk.: Balkan Affairs*, II, Nos. 392, 395, 403, 438, 440, 441, 456. During the negotiations, Germany supported Greece: *Telg. Constantine to Kaiser*, 7 Aug. 1914, *post cap. X*, p. 320.

⁶⁹ *Fr. Yell. Bk.: Balkan Affairs*, II, No. 428.

on the Adriatic and the claim of Montenegro to Scutari (near that sea), but she refused to engage in war with Austria-Hungary on their account, and counselled them to withdraw.⁷⁰

With the first only of these policies are we at this place interested. The others will be dealt with in subsequent chapters.

Russia and Turkey during the Balkan Wars. From out the Balkan embroglio, an abler man than Sazonoff might well have snatched material Russian advantage. If the "historic mission" could not have been completely realized, some important advance toward it might have been made. Sazonoff, in amateur fashion, did what he could — raised points; urged interventions of various sorts by the Powers; suggested separate action by Russia; and, as the curtain fell, blamed the United Kingdom and France for their lack of support. He failed to recognize that these Powers had more sympathy with Turkey than with the Russian "historic mission," and he failed to force their hands. His points were as follows:

On 31 March 1913, Russia notified the United Kingdom and France that, under certain circumstances, she would send her Black Sea fleet to Constantinople:

"in order to exercise by its presence the desired pressure, and to prevent, with reference to Constantinople and the Straits, solutions incompatible with the interests of Russia."⁷¹

France replied (7 April) that such expedition: "would have for immediate consequence a naval movement by the Triple Alliance in the same localities, if not even military action by Austria-Hungary also. In order to prevent such a redoubtable eventuality, I think that the Powers ought to arrange without delay for simultaneous appearance of their Dardanelles fleets at Rodosto and at Constantinople."⁷²

Russia did not like the suggestion,⁷³ but assented,⁷⁴ and Germany having also agreed,⁷⁵ Sazonoff became aware that separate action depended upon separate action, and not upon consultation with those who did not approve it.

On 23 December 1912, Russia complained to the Turkish Minister that, by refusal to make necessary concessions, Turkey was prolonging

⁷⁰ Some of the story as to Serbia may be seen in *ibid.*, I, Nos. 247, 255, 256, 258, 296; II, Nos. 1, 2, 9, 11, 21, 234; Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 368-9; and as to Montenegro, in *Ann. Reg.*, 1913, pp. [343-5; Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, II, Nos. 178, 181, 184, 185, 186, 191, 192, 196, 199, 201, 203, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 213, 216, 218, 228, 231, 232, 233, 237, 254, 255, 257, 262, 268, 269, 270, 271, 276, 277, 282, 285, 286, 295.

⁷¹ Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, II, No. 193.

⁷² *Ibid.*, No. 220. And see No. 225.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, No. 227.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 230.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 235.

the war — “the neutrality of Russia could be no longer guaranteed.”⁷⁶ To separate announcement of that kind, France made strong objection.⁷⁷ Russia then (16 January) proposed energetic action by the Powers, but succeeded only in arranging for delivery to the Porte (17 January) of a collective note advising (There was no menace in it):

“cession of the town of Adrianople to the Balkan alliance” (which meant to Bulgaria) “and to hand over to them” (the Great Powers) “the right to fix the fate of the islands in the Ægean.”⁷⁸

Turkey determined to submit — 22 January.⁷⁹ But the determination cost the Grand Vizier (Kiamil Pasha) deprivation, by violent means, of his office; and entailed the substitution of Mahmoud Skevket Pasha, and the transmission to the Powers (30 January) of a refusal to comply with their counsels.⁸⁰ Fighting was resumed, but, experiencing further reverses, Turkey surrendered,⁸¹ and on 1 April definitely accepted the terms imposed upon her,⁸² including relinquishment of Adrianople — by that time occupied by the Allies.⁸³ Upon that basis (*inter alia*) was signed the peace treaty of London — 30 May.⁸⁴

But more remained: The Allies quarrelled over the Turkish spoils — Bulgaria against Serbia and Greece.⁸⁵ Bulgaria was rapidly beaten, and, being helpless (Roumania, wanting a slice of Bulgaria, had invaded from the north), Turkey marched up from the south and, flouting the advice of the Powers, retook Adrianople (21 July). Her excuses were: (1) that the Allies themselves had torn up the treaty of London — which was not true; that possession of Adrianople was necessary for the defence of Constantinople; and (3) that the atrocities of the Bulgarians made necessary the occupation of the intervening territory.⁸⁶

The movement furnished Russia with another opportunity for intervention. She proposed (18 July) a naval demonstration by the six Powers.⁸⁷ The United Kingdom and France saw difficulties but agreed,

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, Nos. 33, 37, 76.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Nos. 70, 78, 82. Poincaré had previously insisted upon being consulted (*ibid.*, I, Nos. 16-20, 23, 26, and see No. 82), and repeated his requirements upon a later occasion (*ibid.*, II, Nos. 71, 94, 96).

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 67. Cf. Nos. 64, 69, 70, 71, 72. Afterwards Sazonoff appears to have been of opinion that Turkish possession of Adrianople was desirable, for by it “the direct menace of the capture of Constantinople by the Bulgars is to some extent diminished” (*Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 363).

⁷⁹ Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, 1912-4, II, No. 76.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 92.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, Nos. 137-140.

⁸² *Ibid.*, Nos. 194, 195.

⁸³ It was taken on 28 March.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 306.

⁸⁵ The subject is dealt with in cap. XXIV.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Nos. 408, 409; III, Nos. 5, 24.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, II, Nos. 406, 416, 418.

provided (a safe contingency) "that the Powers would be unanimous."⁸⁸ Germany and Italy at once declined;⁸⁹ and Sazonoff thereupon (23 July) notified the Turkish Ambassador that, in case of refusal of compliance, he would advise the Czar to consider military methods of pressure.⁹⁰

At this stage, the London conference of Ambassadors came to agreement — as far as they could (24 July): (1) They proclaimed "the necessity for the maintenance of the principles" of the treaty of London (which fixed the boundary between Bulgaria and Turkey — assigning Adrianople to the former). (2) They determined to make representation to that effect to the Porte. (3) They declared that, in the interest of Turkey, they were disposed to consider conditions necessary for the defence of Constantinople.⁹¹ Turkey paying little attention to these resolutions (nothing else could have been expected), Russia sought other methods of pressure, for Sazonoff said (9 August):

"Russia cannot resign herself to continuation of the Turks at Adrianople."⁹²

Relinquishing, for the moment,⁹³ separate action, Russia proposed (12 August) the exercise of financial pressure upon Turkey.⁹⁴ France agreed, intimating that, to be effective, all the Powers should concur, — knowing that they would not.⁹⁵ This proposal, not going very well, Russia urged upon the Powers (16 August) "the necessity of new and more energetic pressure on the Porte"⁹⁶ for the purpose, it was said, of preventing the outbreak of war by Turkey against Bulgaria.⁹⁷ And, becoming a little tired of repeated rebuffs, Sazonoff (hinting again at separate action) intimated plainly to the United Kingdom and France (19 August) that:

"Unfortunately, up to the present time, the support of these two Governments has been very insufficient, and each time has been accompanied with observations regarding the danger of such or such other measure, which has contributed to the creation of the present situation, a situation which is in danger of becoming more and more complicated."⁹⁸

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Nos. 415, 417, 421.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Nos. 419, 421. At the same time, Germany counselled Turkey to withdraw: *ibid.*, No. 438.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 419.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, No. 421. Cf. No. 451.

⁹² *Ibid.*, III, No. 3.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, No. 10.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, Nos. 9, 10, 11, 14.

⁹⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 9, 16, 18, 19, 27, 28, 29, 40, 44.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 21.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 32. Cf. Nos. 22, 23, 24.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 26. Cf. No. 28.

Persisting, nevertheless, Russia proposed (the same day) that the United Kingdom, France, and Russia should withdraw their Ambassadors from Constantinople.¹⁰⁰ Nothing came of that. Then a further incident — the crossing by the Turks (of the Maritza) into Bulgarian territory (for protection, it was said, of the inhabitants) — was followed by a Russian communication to the United Kingdom and France (22 August) declaring that:

“the Imperial Government cannot apply to this situation the slower methods which might be sufficient in the question of Adrianople.”¹⁰⁰ And Sazonoff tentatively determined to occupy one of the Turkish ports¹⁰¹ — another purpose from which he was easily turned.¹⁰²

Russian efforts now ceased. Representations of the Powers at Constantinople had met with repeated failure. Russia blamed (as we have seen) the United Kingdom and France; and the French Ambassador explained (6 September) that Germany and Austria-Hungary did not appear to be very serious; that Italy evinced still greater sympathy for the Turks; and that:

“In truth, the Russian Ambassador had been the only one to speak strongly on the subject of the Turkish advance on the Maritza; but the Russian notifications, which, on several occasions during the course of the Balkan conflict, were more than severe, not having had any effect, they have lost to-day their efficacy at Constantinople. Furthermore, the tone of M. de Giers has been sensibly modified in these last days.”¹⁰³

Russia found that the Powers would not agree to collective intervention; and, shrinking from separate coercive action as too dangerous,¹⁰⁴ — the United Kingdom and France gave warning to that effect¹⁰⁵ — nothing remained but to accept the German proposal that the two Powers — Turkey and Bulgaria — should engage in direct negotiations.¹⁰⁶ Well aware that she was helpless, Bulgaria agreed (29 August) to send her delegates to Constantinople.¹⁰⁷ All Russia's efforts to bring the six Great Powers, or the three Entente Powers, into clash with Turkey had failed. The outbreak of another war was a condition precedent to renewed endeavor to accomplish Russia's “historic mission.”

Sazonoff's Mémoire, 1913. Profoundly dissatisfied, as we may well

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 31.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 40.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, No. 42.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, No. 45.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, No. 68.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

¹⁰⁵ In a *mémoire* for the Czar, Sazonoff afterwards (23 Nov. 1913) explained that, from a military point of view, “the operation quite clearly appeared to be unrealizable.” *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 368.

¹⁰⁶ *Fr. Yell. Bk.: Balkan Affairs*, No. 55.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, Nos. 56, 58.

imagine, with the failure of his efforts during the Balkan wars, Sazonoff set himself to study:

"the problem of our own attitude towards the new political conditions," and embodied his reflections in a long and important *Mémoire* for submission to the Czar (23 November 1913): The possibility of the dissolution of the Turkish Empire, he said, explained the activities of Germany, Italy, and Austria, who all wanted some of it. The Bucarest treaty (1913) had added to the instability in the Balkans. The new situation had revived "the historic question of the Straits." The possession of them by another state — by Bulgaria — is inadmissible.

"The State which will have possession of the Straits will hold not only the keys of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. It will have likewise the key of penetration in Asia Minor and that of the hegemony in the Balkans, in consequence of which the State which will have replaced Turkey on the coasts of the Straits will probably aspire to follow the roads traced by the Turks in their time." Neutralized Straits, Sazonoff said, would be neutral only during peace, and would thus fall into the hands of the stronger. In 1895 and 1912, opportunities for occupation of Constantinople found Russia unprepared.

"We cannot be sure that this question may not arise in the near future. . . . It is necessary to study the measures which can be taken to increase our military and naval power in the Black Sea. Is it or is it not possible to assign to our army and our navy, as a task, the forcing of the Straits and the occupation of Constantinople, if circumstances require?"

"It goes without saying that our Department of War, as well as that of the Navy, has the right to interrogate the Minister of Foreign Affairs as to what can be done in order to create for us the most favorable political circumstances, pending events which may require decisive action on our part. Repeating the wish above expressed for the prolongation of the *statu quo* as long as possible, it is necessary also to repeat that the question of the Straits can only with difficulty take a forward step otherwise than by favor of European complications.¹⁰⁸

The Council of 21-22 February 1914.¹⁰⁹ Although the *Mémoire* was presented to the Czar in November 1913, the Council to which the Czar —

¹⁰⁸ *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 363-72. Sazonoff's reference to 1895 was a mistake. He meant 1896: see *ante*, p. 39.

¹⁰⁹ The proceedings of the Council were first published by Maxim Gorky in the *Novaya Zhizn* of Feb. 1918, reproduced in *The Nation* (London), 13 April 1918. The extracts in the text of the present work are translated from the *Remarques de la Délégation Allemande au Sujet du Rapport de la Commission des Gouvernements Alliés et Associés sur les Responsabilités des Auteurs de la Guerre*, no English edition of which is available.

“submitted the questions . . . for the special examination of the authorities particularly interested”¹¹⁰

did not meet until the following 21st February. Possibly, the pendency of the Liman von Sanders affair¹¹¹ may have been the cause of the delay. Sazonoff (in the chair) and nine others—principally naval and military officers—composed the Council.¹¹² In his opening speech, Sazonoff stated that in his Memoire to the Czar he had said that:

“he had deemed it his duty as Minister to lay before the Emperor the following considerations: In regard to the recent modifications in the political situation, it was necessary to take into account, with a view to the perhaps near future, the possibility of events which will change altogether the international question of the Constantinople Straits. It would, therefore, be necessary, with the collaboration of all competent authorities, to proceed without delay to the elaboration of a complete programme of action, in such way as to assure to us a favorable solution of the historic question of the Straits.” “Although, for the present, the Minister of Foreign Affairs deems grave political complications to be very unlikely, he was nevertheless of opinion that no one could guarantee, even for the immediate future, the maintenance of the present situation in the Near East.”

The Council then proceeded to:

“study the question of an army of debarkment, its composition and its mobilization.”¹¹³

Passing, as unimportant here, the technical discussion, it may be noted that to:

“the question whether, in that case [of war], we should be able to count upon the support of Serbia, S. E. Sazonoff replied that one could not suppose that our action against the Straits could be undertaken except in the case of a European war.”

In this opinion, the Cavalry General, Shillinski, concurred, expressing: “the conviction that the fight for Constantinople is impossible outside of a general war,”¹¹⁴

and that appears to have been the general view.

“Having concluded the study of the principal questions which had been shown to be necessary in connection with methodical preparation for taking possession of the Straits in the not distant future, the assembly, on the proposal of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, expressed the general wish that in all its efforts the Government take the measures

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

¹¹¹ *Post*, pp. 60-9.

¹¹² The Council, very probably, had before it the elaborate report (19 Nov. 1913) of Kokovtsef (President of the Council and Finance Minister) of his recent conversations at Rome, Paris, and Berlin: *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 385-417.

¹¹³ *Remarques &c.*, p. 90.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

necessary, from a technical point of view, for the execution of this mission. At the same time, the assembly formulated the following concrete measures, the carrying out of which it deemed desirable."¹¹⁶ These measures related to (1) an increase in the strength of the contingent destined for the first advance on Constantinople; (2) reinforcement of the artillery at Odessa; (3) "energetic and immediate" improvement of methods of transport on the Black Sea; (4) reduction to four or five days of the time necessary for transportation to Constantinople of the army contingent; (5) additions to the Balkan Sea fleet; (6) strategic railway construction at various places.

Basili's Mémoire. Presentation to the Czar of the *procès verbal* of the proceedings of the Council was accompanied by a Mémoire prepared by Basili, Vice Director of Foreign Affairs, in which, after noting, as well understood, that:

"our historic mission concerning the Straits resides in the extension of our dominion over them."¹¹⁶

he pointed to:

"the necessity to proceed immediately to a considerable reinforcement of our military forces, in particular of our Naval Forces in the Black Sea, in order that at the commencement of the expected crisis, we should be able to resolve the question of the Straits according to our desires. At the same time, as it is impossible to foresee the moment when that crisis will break out, which may be very close at hand, it is desirable to reinforce our military power in the region of the Black Sea as much as possible, without delay, and in the following manner."¹¹⁷

Of the two methods of reinforcing the Black Sea fleet — additions from the Baltic and local construction — Basili eliminated the first because of the terms of the treaty of 1856. The other Powers could not, he thought, be persuaded that the Straits should be opened to war-vessels of nations bordering on the Sea only; and to open them to other nations would be to deprive Russia of valued security. "We prefer the closure of the Straits to their free passage,"¹¹⁸ he said. Passing to larger considerations, he declared that:

"We must count only on our own forces in operations leading to occupation of the Straits, and not depend upon any exterior aid. It is very certain that we shall have to solve the question of the Straits in the course of a European war."¹¹⁹

In that conjuncture, the French and British fleets could render valuable assistance, but as to Greece:

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 94. Cf. von Bethmann-Hollweg: *Reflections on the World War*, pp. 83-4.

¹¹⁶ *Remarques &c.* p. 88.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

"Greece has been sensibly strengthened by the last crisis, and her national ideal has been magnified to such an extent that her dream of Constantinople will probably for the future be an obstacle to all *rapprochement* between us and Greece. Moreover, we cannot hope to create a maritime base on the Ægean Sea without raising the most serious international complications. But the possibility of executing the operations in connection with the occupation of the Straits and the success of these operations are, naturally, closely associated with international conjunctures."

Then follows a sentence which may be considered to have been the key to Sazonoff's conduct of Russian foreign affairs:

"The present duty of our Minister of Foreign Affairs is, in view of this end, to prepare, by systematic work, a favorable political groundwork (*terrain*)."¹²⁰

Basili closed with the following:

"In order systematically to prepare the solution of the question of the Straits in the sense which we desire, it is necessary then to arrange a close and lasting collaboration between all the services, and, above all, complete harmony between the labors of the Ministers of War and Marine."¹²¹

The Wars of 1914-18. The quoted documents make very clear that the outbreak of the war of 1914-18 was the occasion to which Russia had looked forward as essential to the accomplishment of her "historic mission." During the first three months of the war, while efforts were being made to secure the neutrality of Turkey, nothing could very well be said about Russia's "legitimate aspirations." But as soon as Turkey had joined the Central Powers (29 October 1914), Russia required endorsement by her allies of her unintermitted policy. Accordingly, Sir Edward Grey instructed the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg (14 November) to say to Sazonoff that the British government recognized that:

"the question of the Straits and of Constantinople should be settled in conformity with Russian desires."¹²²

The assurance was secret, but when the attack of the Allies upon the Dardanelles (commenced 19 February 1915) appeared to offer prospect of the capture of the Turkish capital, Russia required public assurance that it would be hers.¹²³ . . . The United Kingdom and France agreed, and public announcement was made. In one of the secret official documents published in Petrograd in 1917 is the following:

"On February 19 (March 4) 1915, the Minister of Foreign Affairs handed to the French and British Ambassadors a Memorandum which

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² Churchill, *op. cit.*, II, p. 198.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

set forth the desire to add the following territories to Russia as the result of the present war: The town of Constantinople, the western coast of the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmora, and the Dardanelles; Southern Thrace, as far as the Enos-Media line; the coast of Asia Minor between the Bosphorus and the River Sakaria, and a point on the Gulf of Ismid to be defined later; the islands in the Sea of Marmora, and the islands of Imbros and Tenedos. The special rights of France and England in the above territories were to remain inviolate."¹²⁴

On 8 March, the French government expressed its assent to the proposed annexations; and prior to the 18th March:

"the British Government expressed in writing its complete agreement as to the annexation of Constantinople and the Straits to Russia, within limitations indicated by us, reserving therein also a similar benevolent attitude on our side to the political aims of England in other spheres."¹²⁵

The whole agreement appears in a telegram from M. Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London of 20 March 1915.¹²⁶ Its existence was divulged on 2 December of the following year, when the Russian Premier, Trepoff, read in the Duma a proclamation announcing officially as follows:

"For more than a thousand years Russia has been reaching southward toward a free outlet on the open sea. This age-long dream, cherished in the hearts of the Russian people, is now ready for realization."¹²⁷

After referring to the failure of efforts to secure Turkish neutrality, the speaker added:

"We then concluded an agreement with our allies, which establishes in the most definite manner the right of Russia to the Straits and Constantinople. Russians should know for what they are shedding blood, and, in accordance with our allies, announcement of this agreement is made to-day from this tribune. Absolute agreement on this point is firmly established among the allies."

Sir George Buchanan, the British Ambassador at Petrograd, speaking on 1 January 1917, and referring to Trepoff's announcement, said:

"His Majesty's Government, when first approached on the subject early in the spring of 1915, at once expressed its whole-hearted assent."¹²⁸

It was a curious termination of the British historic opposition to Russia's "historic mission." And here (for present purposes) the

¹²⁴ F. Seymour Cocks, *The Secret Treaties*, p. 19.

¹²⁵ *The Times* (London), 26 March 1915.

¹²⁶ Cocks, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

¹²⁷ Canadian Press Despatch, 3 Dec. 1916.

¹²⁸ *The Times*, 12 Jan. 1917.

story ends, for in the Russian revolution, and the renunciation (by those who assumed control of the government) of Russia's interest in territories outside her boundaries, we are not now concerned. That, too, was an unexpected *dénouement*.

THE LIMAN VON SANDERS AFFAIR

Previous Situation. Among the more important incidents which evidenced the existence of international tension during the first few months which preceded the war; which helped to intensify apprehension; and which made manifest Russia's attitude towards Germany, was the Liman von Sanders affair.

For some years Turkey had been accustomed to employ foreigners in the administration of her affairs. A British Admiral, Limpus (and before him, Sir Douglas Gamble), had commanded the Turkish fleet; Sir Richard Crawford had been entrusted with the organization of the Customs Department; Mr. Graves had been engaged in the reorganization of the Civil Service; Sir William Willcocks had been employed in connection with irrigation works; while from France had come Count Léon O. Strerog, M. Rickard, M. Godard, and General Baumann — this last in command of the gendarmerie. Reorganization of the army had been in the hands of a German — General von der Goltz — and some instructors; but their work, as tested by the war of 1912-13, having proved to be ineffective, Turkey proposed¹²⁹ that some other German officer, with headquarters at Constantinople, should take command of the First Army Corps, and should make of it a model for the rest of the army. At Berlin, the request was dealt with as a military affair under the direction of the Kaiser. The Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, heard nothing of it until very shortly before Russia raised objection to the appointment.¹³⁰

After some preliminary interchanges between the two Powers, the matter was fully discussed at Berlin by Kokovtsef (President of the Russian Council), first with the Chancellor and afterwards with the Kaiser.¹³¹ Reporting to the Czar (19 November 1913), Kokovtsef said that he had expressed the wish that (1) either the whole affair should be dropped, or (2) that Liman's activities should be engaged at some point other than Constantinople — Adrianople, for instance.

"The Imperial Chancellor," Kokovtsef said, "in repeated and entirely sincere conversations, did not conceal from me how particularly painful to him was the possibility of the thought that he had taken part in the preparation of a project disagreeable to Russia, and that he had

¹²⁹ So the Kaiser said, but see Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, III, No. 151.

¹³⁰ Report of Kokovtsef to the Czar, 19 Nov. 1913: *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 412, 416. Cf. p. 378.

¹³¹ Kokovtsef's report to the Czar is in *ibid.*, pp. 411-16.

not informed our Minister of Foreign Affairs in time. . . . In any case, I believe that it is a matter of justice to testify again before Your Imperial Majesty that, in all of my exchanges of views, I have not found any reason to accuse the Chancellor of the German Empire of ill-will and lack of frankness with regard to us." ¹³²

The Kaiser did not appreciate the force of Russia's objection but, nevertheless, as Kokovtsef reported:

"he was ready to re-examine the question of the selection of a point other than Constantinople for this corps." ¹³³

The French Ambassador at St. Petersburg understood that the Chancellor had said to Kokovtsef in effect:

"Inasmuch as you attach to this mission an importance which we are unable to comprehend, we will seek a combination which may calm your scruples." ¹³⁴

Sazonoff expressed the Russian view when, in a telegram to London (25 November 1913), he said:

"we have called Germany's earnest attention to the fact, how difficult it would be for us to permit our Embassy to remain in a city in which, so to speak, a German garrison was quartered." ¹³⁵

The German Foreign Secretary, while appreciating that attitude, pointed (26 November) to the difficulty of cancelling the agreement with Turkey, ¹³⁶ and a few days afterwards (1 December), he wrote to Kokovtsef declaring:

"that nobody would be happier than he if General Sanders, after arriving at Constantinople and having again examined the question on the spot, is of opinion that it is possible to give a certain measure of satisfaction to Russia." ¹³⁷

That Sir Edward Grey was satisfied with the correctness of the German attitude appears from a telegram of the Russian Chargé at London, 28 November:

"Grey believes that Emperor William, as well as the Imperial Chancellor, are seeking a pretext to extricate themselves from the situation." ¹³⁸

Grey's Embarrassment. At first, Sir Edward Grey took strong ground against the appointment of the German General; the Russian Chargé stating in the report just referred to that:

"Grey telegraphed to O'Beirne ¹³⁹ yesterday that he is of your opin-

¹³² *Ibid.*, pp. 412, 416. Cf. Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, III, No. 135.

¹³³ *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 415. Cf. Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, III, Nos.

135-137.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 140. France, of course, supported Russia: *ibid.*, Nos. 143, 152.

¹³⁵ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 678.

¹³⁶ Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, III, No. 146. Cf. Nos. 140, 150.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 153.

¹³⁸ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 679.

¹³⁹ British Chargé at St. Petersburg.

ion that we could not permit the garrison of Constantinople to be placed under the command of a German general." ¹⁴⁰

Grey agreed (2 December) that the three Powers should present, but not simultaneously, identical notes at Constantinople, ¹⁴¹ but he objected (9 December) to the Russian draft, which contained a threat. ¹⁴² On the same day, however, Kühlmann (Counsellor at the German Embassy in London) surprised Grey by saying to him that:

"It was a question of a Mission which was analogous to that of the English Admiral."

Grey had not considered that point, and, attempting to distinguish the cases, replied that Limpus was a non-combatant, adding that he would: "re-examine the contract between the Admiral and the Turkish Government, and for that reason he was unable to add any more at present." ¹⁴³

Kühlmann replied that he was convinced that the German General was, like the British Admiral, a non-combatant.

Grey's Retreat. Grey now appreciated his difficulty, and at once (9 December) telegraphed to St. Petersburg that the "communication" to be made to the Porte should be verbal and, in reality (according to a form which he supplied), a conciliatory request that:

"The Sublime Porte communicate with us, concerning the agreement which has been concluded with the German General, in order to be able to define the function he is to perform and the position he is to occupy." ¹⁴⁴

Sazonoff (Russian Foreign Minister) was annoyed (10 December) at: "this change in the attitude of England, in a question of such importance to us. . . . In regard to ourselves, we cannot assent to the new English proposal, for, to our mind, such an empty communication, would be rather harmful than useful." ¹⁴⁵

But Grey was obdurate and right. Benckendorff (Russian Ambassador at London) reported (11 December) that he:

"insists that the first step should above all be an inquiry intended to learn the contents of the contract between the Turkish Government and the German General, so that the three Powers might, in this way, take account of the difference which would exist in the position of this General in the Turkish army and the former position of von der Goltz Pasha. Grey believes that such an inquiry is in itself a serious matter and denotes a warning. According to the answer, the three Cabinets

¹⁴⁰ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 679. See also p. 680. France agreed: p. 678.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 680-1.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 682.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 682-3.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 684.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.* And see p. 687.

must then resolve what further action is to be taken. Only a Turkish answer could furnish the starting point for further negotiations."¹⁴⁶ The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople suggested (10 December) that the "difficult circumstance" of the position of Admiral Limpus: "might perhaps be altered, if England would agree to the British Admiral's being transferred from Constantinople to Ismid, where the dock is being built at present, whereby this Admiral would remain at the head of the entire Turkish fleet."¹⁴⁷

Seeing in this suggestion a possibility of getting rid of both Admiral and General, Sazonoff forwarded it to London (11 December), saying:

"We share our Ambassador's opinion that England could facilitate the solution of the question by explaining in Berlin that she is willing to transfer her Admiral from Constantinople to Ismid if Germany, on her part, agrees to appoint General Sanders to Adrianople. In this way, satisfaction would be done to Germany's *amour propre*. I request you to discuss this question with Grey."¹⁴⁸

The next day Benckendorff reported:

"Grey did not know, until now, exact details of the contract of the British Admiral. He told me yesterday that the contract had been concluded some years ago, and that it defines the position of the various British Admirals, also that of the present one. He is, indeed, the commander of the whole fleet, but under the authority of the Secretary of the Navy; he is also a non-combatant. The position of the British Admiral really furnishes Germany with an argument which is causing difficulties here. Nicolson has spoken to me about it several times."¹⁴⁹

Presentation to the Porte. On the 13th, the Ambassadors of the three Powers presented to the Porte the inquiry suggested by Grey. To the British Ambassador, the Grand Vizier made displeasing reply by comparing:

"the position of the German General, who is placed under the Turkish Government, with the position of the British Admiral."¹⁵⁰

Under these circumstances, Benckendorff reported (17 December) that:

"Nicolson thinks that various points of the Turkish answer are still not clear, among them the difference between von der Goltz and

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 685-6. Afterwards, when asked by the Russian Ambassador why Grey had changed his mind, Nicolson (Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs) replied, 14 December: "that meantime details concerning the position of the British Admiral at Constantinople had come to hand from the British Ambassador in Constantinople which had deprived Grey of every possibility of agreeing to the draft proposed by you" (*ibid.*, p. 689).

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 686. If the British Admiral were withdrawn, France would take analogous measures with reference to the French General who was in command of the Turkish gendarmerie: *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 213.

¹⁴⁸ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 687.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 688.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 689.

Liman, and also between the position of General Liman and Admiral Limpus. Nicolson deems the answer, given to the British Ambassador, to be preparatory in nature. Here, of course, it is thought of modifying the position of the British Admiral in order to use this circumstance during the negotiations in Berlin."¹⁵¹

On the 15th, the Grand Vizier supplied the information required in the following form:

"General Liman has been appointed Chief of the Military Mission, Member of the War Council with the right to one voice only, Inspector of Schools, and Commander of the First Army Corps. The First Army Corps has been selected, because the Secretary of War intends to make it a model army corps, to which the officers of the other army corps are to be sent. Under these conditions, it will be more convenient to concentrate these school sections in the city. The Command over the Army Corps will be purely technical. The Straits, the Fortifications, and the preservation of order in the Capital, are not within the competency of the General. These, as well as the declarations of the state of siege, are directly dependent upon the Secretary of War. In the General's contract, it is not stated that in case of a state of war he will be appointed Commander of the city. Such an appointment will depend upon the Minister of War."¹⁵²

This reply furnished a further difficulty for Grey. Liman's sphere of action was much more limited than had been assumed. At a later date (8 January 1913), the Russian Chargé at London reported:

"In my telegram of yesterday I made no mention of Grey's remark that he had formerly been prepared to direct a joint enquiry to the Sublime Porte, for the reason that he was then convinced that Liman von Sanders, in his capacity as Commander of the Garrison at Constantinople, also united in his hands the defence of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. In his opinion, however, the entire situation had undergone a change as soon as it became known that the Straits did not lie within the competency of the German officers."¹⁵³

But Russia was far from satisfied, and, as support for a purposed separate policy, she now (14 December) contemplated the initiation of preliminary war-preparations,¹⁵⁴ while leaving further diplomacies to the United Kingdom. On 17 December, Sazonoff telegraphed to London:

"We now expect the latter" (the British government) "to take the initiative, as the answer of the Turkish government contains nothing new."¹⁵⁵

Negotiations. Grey meanwhile was endeavoring to arrange the affair with Germany,¹⁵⁶ quite appreciating the fact that (as the Russian Ambassador at London reported 16 and 13 December):

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 692.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 690.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 705-6.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 689-90.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 691-2.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 690-1.

“The general impression made by the action of the three Powers in Constantinople is so great that the position of the German Government may become difficult.”¹⁵⁷

“The latest action of the three Powers in Constantinople has made a deep impression; a repetition in Constantinople would surely be equivalent to a coercion of the German Government which must be avoided now, at the beginning of the negotiations.”¹⁵⁸

On the 20th, the German Ambassador at Constantinople and Liman suggested to the Russian Ambassador there an arrangement which the latter, in a telegram to St. Petersburg, said was, in his opinion:

“acceptable if the number of troops placed at the disposal of Liman will be limited as much as possible.”¹⁵⁹

The arrangement was in accord with a proposal which Liman had made on his arrival at Constantinople. It had been unacceptable to the Turkish War Minister.¹⁶⁰

Proposed Coercion of Turkey. After a telegram from Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople, of 21 December, saying that he saw no necessity for a German General commanding troops at Constantinople, but leaving the Ambassador to arrange “acceptable conditions,”¹⁶¹ a hiatus in the documents occurs. The next of them is a report from the Russian Chargé at London (29 December) indicating that Russia had been proposing drastic action at Constantinople, and that Grey wanted to be clear both as to the nature of the further Russian demands and as to the “coercive” and the “extreme measures” which were to be employed:

“should Turkey stubbornly refuse, and should she be supported by Germany.”¹⁶²

France was equally cautious (30 December): Ought there not to be further elucidations of the situation? — she queried. What was the nature of:

“the claims to which the three Powers are to refer, and finally, the decisions which Russia believes she must propose to the French and British Governments, in case their common action at Berlin, and at Constantinople, should not have found the peaceful solution which they seek?”

Was not it to be feared, moreover, that an inquiry at Berlin might intensify the situation?¹⁶³

Tentative Settlement. At Berlin, on 5 January 1914, between the

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 691.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 693. Cf. *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 217.

¹⁵⁹ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 694.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 695.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 696.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 697-8; *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 218-9, 223.

Foreign Secretary and the Russian representative, a basis of settlement was tentatively reached: General Liman was to receive such an elevation in rank as would render his continuation of the command of a single corps irregular, and his resignation would remove Russia's objection. He would remain, nevertheless, in Constantinople, and be employed in the more important work of reorganizing the whole of the Turkish army. To make that concession easier, announcement of the change was to emanate from Constantinople, and the date for the General's resignation was left somewhat indefinite.¹⁶⁴ In accordance with the suggestion, the General was made a "Turkish Field Marshal and Inspector General of the Turkish Army,"¹⁶⁵ and a German General of Cavalry:

"a quite unusual occurrence, since he had no claims to an advance in rank before the expiration of a year."¹⁶⁶

Sazonoff's Opposition overruled. Sazonoff did not approve the proposed solution. On 7 January, he submitted to the Czar a memorandum in which, declaring that the affair was an attack upon the Triple Entente, and that, although in principle Russia could not object to a German military mission in Turkey, yet it was contrary to her interests. He proposed that a Council of State should consider the advisability of preparation for military action, and the securing of the co-operation of the United Kingdom and France in putting pressure upon Turkey by occupation of some of her ports.¹⁶⁷ Three days afterwards (10 January), the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg reported a long conversation with Sazonoff in which various objections to the proposed solution were insisted upon.¹⁶⁸ Whether, to consider the question, the Council of State was again summoned, and, if so, what it did, has not been revealed.¹⁶⁹ In some way Sazonoff was overruled, for at the New Year reception (14 January), the Czar observed to the German Ambassador that the smoothing of the affair was a happy commencement of the New Year.¹⁷⁰

Curb on Russia. Throughout the correspondence, there is recurrent

¹⁶⁴ *Remarques &c.*, pp. 81-2. And see Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 703, 705, 706; *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 217; Fr. Yell. Bk., Balkan Affairs, III, Nos. 167-170.

¹⁶⁵ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 706; Fr. Yell. Bk., Balkan Affairs, III, Nos. 176-8.

¹⁶⁶ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 707. Djemal Pasha, one of the three most influential men of the hour in Turkey, has declared that the change in the General's employment was due to the suggestion of Enver Pasha, and "not under pressure from the Russians, French, and English" (*Memories of a Turkish Statesman*, p. 68), but Djemal is not always a safe guide.

¹⁶⁷ *Remarques &c.*, pp. 80-1.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-5. Cf. Fr. Yell. Bk., Balkan Affairs, III, Nos. 174, 175.

¹⁶⁹ *Remarques &c.*, p. 86.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

evidence of the truth of the view (above quoted) that Germany was seeking "a pretext in order to extricate" herself "from this situation," and that retreat was being made more difficult by pressure from Russia. Grey deprecated this obstruction. He was of opinion (2 December 1913):

"that Russia ought to confine herself to continue her friendly negotiations with the German Government, more especially with the German Court, the *amour propre* and sensitiveness of the latter having to be especially considered."¹⁷¹

France was equally careful. On 30 December, the Russian Ambassador at Paris reported:

"that an enquiry in Berlin, on the part of the three Entente Powers, even though this should be put in a wholly friendly form, might intensify the situation still more, and that, in particular, the participation of France in such a step might hurt the *amour propre* of Germany."¹⁷²

On the same day, the Russian Ambassador at Berlin sent similar counsel to St. Petersburg:

"The German Ambassador" (from Constantinople), "whom I found peace-loving and conciliatory, told me that the Berlin Cabinet sincerely desired to come to an acceptable compromise with us, and was seeking a suitable means to this end. He himself, Wangenheim, is always prepared to work in this sense in Constantinople. Russia, however, must facilitate Germany's task by not presenting an ultimatum to her, nor demanding the fixing of any kind of time-limit."¹⁷³

Again on 5 January 1914, the same Russian Ambassador advised St. Petersburg that:

"Goschen" (British Ambassador at Berlin) "expresses the hope that we will refrain from exerting any pressure upon the sensitive German Government, until one is able to see to what results the present negotiations, which are to establish a suitable formula, will have led."¹⁷⁴

About the same time, von Jagow (German Foreign Minister) said to the French Ambassador:

"that he frankly desired to do away with the incident, but if the matter were to be given a 'European character,' then Germany would not be in a position to adopt a yielding attitude. Jagow also spoke to the British Ambassador in a similar sense."¹⁷⁵

After the close of the incident, the Russian Ambassador at Berlin cordially acknowledged the conciliatory attitude displayed by Germany, saying (16 January):

¹⁷¹ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 680.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 698. Although tendering advice, France gave repeated assurances of support in case of trouble: *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 207-8, 212, 218, 223, 229-231.

¹⁷³ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 698-9.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 703.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 704.

"I must needs declare that the Berlin Cabinet has actually done everything in its power in order to fulfill our justifiable wishes, and this has not been easy for it, in view of the newspaper campaign directed against the government."¹⁷⁶

Comment. Sazonoff's real reasons for objecting to Liman's appointment can be easily understood. They were: (1) fear of German influence and power interrupting the fulfillment of Russia's "historic mission" at Constantinople; and (2) fear of improved efficiency in the Turkish army. Unable to raise such points as these, Sazonoff rested his case, originally, upon the narrow ground of the difficulty of maintaining an embassy in a city "in which, so to speak, a German garrison was quartered." This ground of complaint having been removed, Sazonoff, in counselling the Czar, insisted upon pursuing policy based upon Russia's interests. Accordingly he raised other points, proposed coercive measures, and contemplated an appeal to arms.¹⁷⁷ Had Russia's allies been willing, war would, in all probability, have ensued. That the German Emperor and Chancellor were "seeking a pretext to extricate themselves" from a situation created by little more than an inadvertence would have been deemed to be immaterial.

Almost trifling, as the whole incident appears, in Sir Edward Grey's opinion (16 December 1913):

"Since his being in office, no occurrence had made so deep an impression on Russia."¹⁷⁸

And if there was not much merit in Russia's original objection, and none at all (as far as we know) in those afterwards raised, there was little in the nature of the settlement to which Sazonoff could point in justification of his truculent attitude. The comment of the Russian Ambassador at Berlin (16 January 1914) was as follows:

"One must, however, not lose sight of the fact that General Liman's relinquishment of the command of the First Army Corps is only a formal concession. The General retains his decisive influence upon the military questions of Turkey. But this was clear from the beginning, for according to my opinion, we have now to deal with the fact, that during von der Goltz Pasha's time, nobody in Turkey desired serious military reforms — whereas now, after the failures of the last war, all have recognized the necessity of re-organizing the Turkish army, in order to protect Turkey in the future from further conquests and ultimate collapse. If this, however, be the real sentiment of Turkey, then General Liman will naturally succeed, no matter what position he may occupy, in concentrating the entire military power in his hands."¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 707.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Bethmann-Hollweg, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-3.

¹⁷⁸ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 691.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 707-8.

The French Ambassador at Constantinople also pointed to the ineffectiveness of the change. Reporting on 10 January, he said:

"Moreover, these are chiefly questions of form. Whatever may be their title and their official attributions, General Liman and his collaborators will have all the authority which Enver Pasha, absolute master of his ministry, will wish to recognize in them. Already several of them have gone to visit the fortifications of Adrianople and of Kirk-Kilissé. And the official communications have in vain repeated that the defences of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles are under the direct control of the Minister of War. One cannot see how he can be prevented from seeking German advice with regard to their reorganization."¹⁸⁰

The first army corps was still to be the model corps, and, although a Turkish officer was given the command, the second in authority was to be an officer of the German General Staff.¹⁸¹

The incident ended (as above noted) in January of the year in which the great war commenced. If exception be made of the Russian "press campaign" of the following March, it was the last of the series of incidents which between 1904 and July 1914 might have been, but were not "the cause of the war."¹⁸² Only when it appears against the background (1) of the preceding ten years of diplomacies; (2) of the "historic mission" of Russia; (3) of the German rivalry in Constantinople and the Near East; (4) of the Austro-Hungarian rivalry in the Balkans; (5) of the concurrent stupendous preparations for war; (6) of the existing tensivity of international feeling; and (7) possibly of Sazonoff's declaration that it was his duty to prepare "a favorable political groundwork [terrain]" for anticipated "political conjunctures," can the Russian attitude with regard to the incident be understood.

THE RUSSO-GERMAN "PRESS CAMPAIGN" — 1914

In considering the precipitating causes of wars, the evil influence of the "patriotic" press must not be overlooked; for newspaper gibes, flouts, misrepresentations, and erroneous attributions of motives and purposes are usually much more provocative of war than the machinations of the militarists. But for the press, Ollivier would probably have been able to avoid war between his country and Prussia in 1870.¹⁸³ But for the press, there would have been no war between the United States and Spain in 1898. And but for the Russo-German "press-

¹⁸⁰ Fr. Yell. Bk., Balkan Affairs, III, No. 171.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

¹⁸² In the opinion of Mr. H. N. Brailsford, the Russian protest against the Liman von Sanders mission "was really the overture of the coming world-war": Pamphlet, *Turkey and the Roads of the East*, p. 6.

¹⁸³ *Post* cap. XVIII.

campaign" (as it was called) in March of 1914, there might have been no world-war in the following August. It may be that but for the tensivity of feeling which it provoked, Sazonoff, Sukhomlinoff,¹⁸⁴ and Januskevitch¹⁸⁵ — working through or in defiance of the Czar — would not have interrupted the pending negotiations for a peaceful solution by precipitating mobilization as against Germany.¹⁸⁶ Sir Edward Grey's experience justified him in saying, at a Foreign Press Association dinner, a few weeks before the commencement of the great war, that the press:

"controlled the atmosphere; and the temperature of the atmosphere would decide what policy it would be possible for the Governments to carry out."¹⁸⁷

And we may well believe that the Slav-Teuton "press-campaign," by intensifying the feeling of suspicion, apprehension, and hatred which normally but quiescently existed, made more difficult the work of the diplomats in late July and early August.

The "campaign" commenced shortly after the meeting of the Russian Council above referred to, with the publication in the *Kölnische Zeitung* (Cologne Gazette) of an article from its St. Petersburg correspondent (2 March 1914) which told of Russia's intention to add vastly to her army (she made an annual addition of 130,000 men¹⁸⁸ at a capital cost of £50,000,000 spread over three years),¹⁸⁹ and declared that, although there was no immediate danger, yet the preparations which were being pressed would be complete in 1917, when trouble might be expected. In that news, German editors descried a renewal of the pan-Slav menace; the fatherland was in danger; Russia must be counselled to drop her chauvinistic designs. The radical and pacifically inclined *Berliner Tageblatt*, for example, on 9 March published an article declaring that Germany's conciliatory methods must be changed. "Thus far and no farther" must be substituted. English people ought to observe:

"the distinction between Germany pursuing her peaceful aims and the strivings of the Russian Empire, which are directed towards expansion in all directions and in all circumstances."¹⁹⁰

The Russian papers were not less provocative. They pointed to the expansion in German military preparations of the previous year, and

¹⁸⁴ Minister for War.

¹⁸⁵ Chief of the General Staff.

¹⁸⁶ See cap. XXVII.

¹⁸⁷ Quoted by Neilson: *How Diplomats Make War*, p. 228. Some reference to the power of the press, and to the methods by which sometimes it was inflamed may be seen in *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 159, 208, 212, 213, 217, 287, 390, 416, 521, 564.

¹⁸⁸ *Remarques &c.*, p. 99.

¹⁸⁹ *Ann. Rège.*, 1914, p. [337. The Duma also sanctioned an expenditure of £10,000,000 for the construction of warships on the Black Sea.

¹⁹⁰ *The Times* (London), 10 March 1914.

asserted a right to follow the example. On 7 March, the *Novoe Vremya* said:

"The hour is approaching. . . . It is necessary to work on the army from top to bottom, day and night."¹⁹¹

On 12 March, the *Golos Moskvy* said:

"The hatred towards Austria which has accumulated in the hearts of the Russian nation has long been seeking an outlet in war, and is only being kept back within the limits of the last degree of patience by the Russian Government with the utmost difficulty. But there is an end to all things. A moment may arrive when even the Russian Government will prove impotent to fight down the hatred towards Austria-Hungary which fills the Russian people, and then the crossing of the Austrian frontiers by the Russian Army will become an unavoidable decision."¹⁹²

On the same day, *The Times* (London) published in its correspondence from St. Petersburg the announcement that:

"large extraordinary military and naval credits have been discussed in a secret session of the Duma."¹⁹³

On the same day, the *Birshewija Viedomosti* (the Bourse Gazette) of St. Petersburg published a sensational article vaunting the preparation and power of the Russian army, and ending with the words:

"Like her Sovereign, Russia desires peace, but in case of necessity she is ready for war."¹⁹⁴

The article was generally and rightly attributed to the chauvinistic Minister for War — General Sukhomlinoff — one of the three gentlemen who were instrumental in instituting mobilization against Germany on the 29th July.¹⁹⁵ Sukhomlinoff had previously obtained the assent of the Czar to the publication of a much stronger article in the *Russkoje Slovo* — a more important journal. But the editor declined to publish it. When amended for the *Birshewija Viedomosti*, it was accompanied by the authorization of Sukhomlinoff over his own signature."¹⁹⁶

The Times letter from St. Petersburg of 19 March was entitled *Russia's Giant Army*, and asserted that it had attained "an effective numerical strength hitherto unprecedented." In June, *The Times* correspondent said:

"There are signs that Russia is done with defensive strategy. The increased number of guns in the Russian Army Corps, the growing efficiency of the Army, and the improvements made or planned in strategic railways are, again, matters which cannot be left out of ac-

¹⁹¹ Quoted by Morel: *Truth and the War*, p. 145.

¹⁹² Quoted *ibid.*

¹⁹³ Quoted *ibid.*; and in *Pre-War Diplomacy*, p. 34.

¹⁹⁴ *Remarques &c.*, pp. 95-6.

¹⁹⁵ See cap. XXVII.

¹⁹⁶ *Remarques &c.*, pp. 95, 96, 97, 98.

count. These things are well calculated to make the Germans anxious." ¹⁹⁷

After an interval, the *Birshewija Viedomosti* re-opened the campaign — 13 June, fifteen days before the assassination of Franz Ferdinand — with an article (inspired by General Sukhomlinoff) headed "RUSSIA IS READY: FRANCE OUGHT TO BE READY ALSO." After reference to a ministerial crisis in Paris, the article proceeded as follows:

"Russia has done everything required of her by the French alliance; she therefore expects that her Ally will perform her duty. The enormous sacrifices which Russia has made in order to render adequately effective the Franco-Russian Alliance are known by everybody. The reforms of the Russian Military Department, with a view to the formation of strong Russian armies, surpass everything that has been known. The contingent of recruits for this year, according to the last ukase, has been raised from 450,000 to 580,000 men, and the term of service has been prolonged by six months.

"Thanks to this measure, there are each winter in Russia four contingents of recruits under arms, that is to say, an army of 2,300,000 men. Great and powerful Russia alone can indulge herself in this luxury. Germany has about 880,000, Austria about 500,000, and Italy about 400,000 men. It is natural, therefore, that Russia expects of France 770,000 men, which is possible only with the introduction of the three years' service. It may be observed that this augmentation of the armies in times of peace has for its object merely prompt mobilization. Russia is proceeding with new reforms with a view to the construction of a network of strategic railways, in order to concentrate with the greatest possible rapidity her army in time of war.

"Russia desires that France do likewise, but she can do it only by means of the three years' service. Russia and France do not desire war, but '*Russia is ready, and France ought to be ready also.*'" ¹⁹⁸

The special significance of this article was that since the previous publication of 12 March, Sir Edward Grey, in conferences in Paris (21 April), had deeply committed his country to the support of France and Russia in case of war with Germany; that he had afterwards made denial of commitment in the House of Commons; and that Sukhomlinoff, the Russian Minister of War, was well aware not only of the truth in that regard, but of German apprehension because of doubts as to Sir Edward Grey's sincerity.

The effect in Germany of the publication may easily be imagined. Referring to it, the German Chancellor wrote to the German Ambassador at London (16 June) as follows:

"It will not have escaped Your Excellency that the article in the

¹⁹⁷ Morel: *Pre-War Diplomacy*, p. 34.

¹⁹⁸ Kautsky, *Does*, No. 2. *Cf. Remarques &c.*, pp. 99-100; Morel, *Pre-War Diplomacy*, pp. 28-9.

Birschewija Viedomosti, rightly attributed to the Minister of War, General Sukhomlinoff, has provoked a lively sensation in Germany. In truth, no article of semi-official inspiration has ever revealed the warlike tendencies of the military party in Russia with as little circumspection as has this press article."

After referring to the opinion in Germany that Russia meditated offensive war, and stating that the effect would be renewed agitation for further additions to the German army, the Chancellor added:

"But she [Russia] desires, and one could not begrudge her, that, should a new explosion of the Balkan crisis be produced, to be able, thanks to her considerable military armaments, to adopt an attitude more energetic than at the time of the last Balkan troubles. The question as to whether in such case a European conflagration will result depends entirely upon the attitude of Germany and England. If we act together as guarantors of the European peace, and if, from the outset, we pursue this object after a concerted plan which would not be in opposition to either the obligations of the Triple Alliance or those of the Entente, war will be avoided. Otherwise, a conflict of interests, altogether secondary, between Russia and Austria-Hungary will light the brands of war. A precautionary policy ought to consider this eventuality in time. . . . One can only rejoice that Sir Edward denied categorically in the House of Commons rumors of an Anglo-Russian maritime convention, and that he emphasized his denial in the 'Westminster Gazette.' If these rumors had been confirmed, even under the form that the English and Russian navies were organized for co-operation in case they might have to fight together in a future war against Germany—like the agreements that England made with France at the time of the Morocco crisis¹⁹⁹—not only would the French and Russian chauvinisms have been strongly super-excited, but public opinion with us would have experienced legitimate alarms which might have manifested themselves in a navy scare, and in a new envenoming of our relations with England which were slowly improving. In the state of nervous tension in which Europe has been these last years, it would have been impossible to foresee the consequences. And in any case the thought of a joint mission of England and Germany guaranteeing peace in the complications which might supervene would have been compromised in dangerous fashion.

"I pray Your Excellency to be good enough to express my sincere thanks to Sir Edward Grey for his frank and loyal declarations, and to disclose to him in unconstrained and prudent form the general considerations which I have here developed."²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁹ In truth, similar arrangements were at the moment under negotiation between the United Kingdom and Russia: See *post cap.* XVII.

²⁰⁰ Kautsky Docs., No. 3.

DID RUSSIA WANT WAR?

If by the question, Did Russia want war? one means, Did a majority of the Russian people want war? the answer is undoubtedly in the negative. But if the question refers to those in authority — to those who exercised the chief influence in the formation and guidance of Russian foreign policy, the answer is debatable. The foregoing pages have supplied some of the material facts necessary for consideration in arriving at judgment upon the point. These, adding those which will be established in subsequent chapters,²⁰¹ may be summarized as follows:

(1) Russia considered that her "historic mission" entitled her to a position of domination at the Straits.

(2) She watched carefully for the arrival of an opportune moment for their seizure.

(3) In the Russian Council of State of 5 December 1896: "it was decided to bring about such events in Constantinople as would furnish us a specious pretext for landing troops and occupying the Upper Bosphorus."

(4) Prosecution of the design was postponed because of military unpreparedness.

(5) After Europe had become divided into two opposing war-combinations, Russia realized that her object could be secured only as a result of a general European war.

(6) By friendly pressure on her *entente* associates, she endeavored, on various occasions, to improve her position at the Straits.

(7) In 1909, in a draft, if not a finally completed treaty between Russia and Bulgaria, was stated:

"the fact that the realization of the high ideals of the Slavic peoples upon the Balkan peninsula, so near to Russia's heart, is possible only after a favorable outcome of Russia's struggle with Germany and Austria-Hungary."

(8) In the same year, Russia secured a pledge that Italy would: "observe a benevolent attitude. . . toward the interest of Russia in the question of the Straits."

(9) In the same year, during the international crisis provoked by Austria-Hungary's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, being unready for war,²⁰² counselled Serbia to observe:

"a calm attitude, military preparation, and watchful waiting," saying "that a conflict with Germanism is unavoidable in the future and that preparations should be made for it."²⁰³

(10) In 1911, taking advantage of the pendency of the Italo-

²⁰¹ Caps. 23, 24, 26, and 27.

²⁰² She had not yet recovered from her defeat by Japan.

²⁰³ See the quotations in cap. XXIII.

Turkish war and the Franco-German quarrel over Morocco, Russia made further effort to improve her position at the Straits.

(11) In 1912-13, taking advantage of the pendency of the Balkan wars, Russia renewed her effort, she refused to consider any suggestion — internationalization or other:

“which might in future form a hindrance to a final solution in accordance with our interests”;

and she asserted, with reference to the pretensions of Bulgaria, that she: “knows very well that the Straits belong to Russia’s incontestable sphere of interest, and that in this respect any weakness or hesitation on our side is utterly inadmissible.”

(12) During the negotiations consequent upon the Balkan wars of 1912-13, she counselled Serbia to:

“feel satisfied with what we” (Serbians) “were to receive, and consider it merely as a temporary halting place on the road to further gains,”

telling her that she:

“should strengthen herself and gather herself together in order to await, with as great a degree of preparedness as possible, the important events which must make their appearance among the Great Powers.”

(13) At the end of 1913 and the commencement of 1914, Russia anticipated the early outbreak of general war.

(14) During the same months, her provocative action in connection with the Liman von Sanders affair nearly precipitated war. Disinclination of her friends, France and the United Kingdom, postponed the outbreak.

(15) Nevertheless, regarding war as imminent, she made special preparations for the seizure of Constantinople.

(16) In his address to the Council (21 February 1914), Sazonoff said:

“Although for the present the Minister for Foreign Affairs deems grave political complications to be very unlikely, he was nevertheless of the opinion that no one could guarantee, even for the immediate future, the maintenance of the present situation in the Near East.”

He further said that:

“one could not suppose that our action against the Straits could be undertaken except in case of a European war.”

(17) Basili, the Vice Director of Foreign Affairs, when reporting to the Czar after the meeting of the Council, said:

“our historic mission concerning the Straits resides in the extension of our domination over them”; that “it is impossible to foresee the moment when that crisis will break out, which may be very close at hand. . . . We must count only on our own forces in operations leading to occupation of the Straits, and not depend upon any exterior aid. It is very certain that we shall have to resolve the question of the Straits

in the course of a European war. . . . The present duty of our Minister of Foreign Affairs is, in view of this end, to prepare, by systematic work, a favorable political groundwork [terrain]."

(18) During the Russo-German "press campaign" (March-June 1914), General Sukhomlinoff (Russian Minister for War), with the assent of the Czar, contributed two extremely provocative articles to the *Birshewija Viedomosti*.

(19) It was no doubt because, as Sazonoff said, that:
 "no one could guarantee, even for the immediate future, the maintenance of the present situation in the Near East,"
 and because of his duty:

"to prepare, by systematic work, a favorable political groundwork" (*terrain*),
 that he turned to good account the important meeting at Paris (21-24 April 1914) of King George V and Sir Edward Grey with the French Minister and the Russian Ambassador. Russia was much encouraged by Sir Edward Grey's cordiality.

(20) In the course of a noteworthy statement (1916), Sazonoff said:

"Herr Bethmann Hollweg maintains that France and Russia would never have dared to accept the challenge of Germany if they had not been sure of the support of England. But the real political situation was the following, even if the Chancellor will not admit it: In reality, France and Russia, notwithstanding their profound love for peace and their sincere efforts to avoid bloodshed, had decided to break the pride of Germany at any price, and to make her stop, once for all, treading on the toes of her neighbors."²⁰⁴

(21) In a subsequent chapter,²⁰⁵ we shall see that Sukhomlinoff (Russian Minister of War) and Januskevitch (Russian Chief of Staff), contrary (perhaps) to the specific directions of the Czar, but with the connivance of Sazonoff, ordered, on 29 July 1914, mobilization against Germany; that the Czar sanctioned the mobilization (if he was not already a party to it) on the 30th; and that, in consequence, the negotiations for a peaceful solution, which had taken a favorable turn, were interrupted and war was precipitated.

(22) The anticipated European war having arrived, Sazonoff required and obtained, from the United Kingdom and France, a promise that, at its close, Russia should see the accomplishment of her "historic mission."²⁰⁶

These facts appear to point strongly to an affirmative answer to our question. But it makes a *prima facie* case only. Very much more evidence upon the subject exists, and Russia is entitled to be heard. *Audi*

²⁰⁴ *Post cap.* V, p. 154.

²⁰⁵ XXVII.

²⁰⁶ *Ante*, pp. 58-9.

alteram partem is a good maxim, although sadly disregarded during the war. Among other things, it may be well to note that the German Chancellor would, on the 30th July 1914, have acquitted Russia of the charge. Speaking in the Prussian Council on that day, he said: "that all the Governments, including Russia, and the great majority of peoples were in themselves pacific, but that control was lost and the machine put in motion."²⁰⁷

The machine — the military machine (like the unloosed deck-cannon of Victor Hugo's *Quatre vingt treize*) interjected its apparently devilishly conceived purposes, and, this time, too strong for its creator, set the world ablaze.

²⁰⁷ Kautsky Docs., No. 456. Bethmann subsequently changed his view: See his *Reflections on the World War*, pp. 106, 130-7.

CHAPTER III

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WHY DID GERMANY ENTER THE WAR? 93.

DID GERMANY WANT WAR? 94.

LEAVING for refutation in later chapters the assertion that the war was due to German militarism or to German desire to dominate the world,¹ and postponing discussion of Germany's responsibility for the outbreak of hostilities,² it is here asserted that Germany's motives for entering may be summed in two words — security and imperialism. Discussion of the first of these will fill the present chapter. The second will be discussed in the chapter entitled *The Balkan Map Root*;³ a few lines only will, at this place, relate to it. In other words, the larger part of the present chapter will be devoted to a historical exposition of the military dependence of Germany upon Austria-Hungary — of the German necessity, at the outbreak of the war, for the continuation of an unweakened Austria-Hungary as an "ally upon whom we could depend." In the latter part of the chapter will be found some observations upon Germany's imperialistic projects.

Germany's Statement. The statement issued by Germany shortly after the commencement of the war⁴ may be taken as an introduction of the first of these subjects:

"This crime" [the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand] "must have opened the eyes of the entire civilised world, not only in regard to the aims of the Servian policies directed against the conservation and integrity of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, but also concerning the criminal means which the pan-Serb propaganda in Serbia had no hesitation in employing for the achievement of these aims. The goal of these policies was the gradual revolutionising and final separation of the south-easterly districts from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and their union with Servia."

Russia had plotted that:

¹ Caps. XV and XVI.

² Cap. XXVI.

³ Cap. XXIV.

⁴ Coll. Dip. Docs., pp. 405-6.

“ a new Balkan union under Russian patronage should be called into existence, headed no longer against Turkey, now dislodged from the Balkans, but against the existence of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. . . .

“ Under these circumstances it was clear to Austria that it was not compatible with the dignity and the spirit of self-preservation of the monarchy to view idly any longer this agitation across the border. The Imperial and Royal Government apprised Germany of this conception and asked for our opinion. With all our heart we were able to agree with our ally's estimate of the situation, and assure him that any action considered necessary to end the movement in Servia directed against the conservation of the monarchy would meet with our approval.

“ We were perfectly aware that a possible warlike attitude of Austria-Hungary against Servia might bring Russia upon the field, and that it might therefore involve us in a war, in accordance with our duty as allies. We could not, however, in these vital interests of Austria-Hungary, which were at stake, advise our ally to take a yielding attitude not compatible with his dignity, nor deny him our assistance in these trying days. We could do this all the less as our own interests were menaced through the continued Serb agitation. If the Serbs continued, with the aid of Russia and France, to menace the existence of Austria-Hungary, the gradual collapse of Austria and the subjection of all the Slavs under one Russian sceptre would be the consequence, thus making untenable the position of the Teutonic race in Central Europe. A morally weakened Austria under the pressure of Russian pan-slavism would be no longer an ally on whom we could count and in whom we could have confidence, as we must be able to have, in view of the ever more menacing attitude of our easterly and westerly neighbors. We, therefore, permitted Austria a completely free hand in her action towards Servia, but have not participated in her preparations.”

The noteworthy points of this declaration are as follows:

(1) There existed a Serbian agitation aimed at the separation of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia, and other Slav territories from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

(2) The result, if successful, would be:

“ the gradual collapse of Austria, and the subjection of all the Slavs under one Russian sceptre. . . . thus making untenable the position of the Teutonic race in Central Europe.”

(3) “ Under these circumstances it was clear to Austria that it was not compatible with the dignity and the spirit of self-preservation of the monarchy to view idly any longer this agitation across the border.”

(4) Germany's “ own interests were menaced,” for:

“ A morally weakened Austria under the pressure of Russian pan-slavism would be no longer an ally on whom we could count, and in whom we could have confidence.”

The existence of the Serbian agitation, and the responsibility for it of Serbia as a state, will be dealt with in a later chapter.⁵ The present chapter will be devoted to other points of the declaration.

GERMAN ALLIANCES

Preliminary. That the effect of the annexation by Serbia of the Slav territories of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy would have been a heavy blow to Germany's ally, is indisputable. Indeed, that was the attitude of the United Kingdom herself at the Berlin Conference of 1878, when, having in view the maintenance of the Turkish supremacy in Macedonia, she deprecated the establishment of "a chain of Slav states . . . across the Balkan peninsula," and joined in the placing of Bosnia and Herzegovina out of harm's way by handing them over to Austria-Hungary.⁶ And that, between 1871 and 1914, Germany's policy was based upon the necessity for upholding Austria-Hungary, will be made clear by a review of the alliances and counter-alliances which perturbed Europe during these years.⁷

Preliminarily, two declarations of German policy may with advantage be quoted — one from Bismarck, who inaugurated the Dual Alliance, and the other from Jagow, who was German Foreign Minister when commenced the war which, in its results, made further continuation of the alliance impossible. In his *Reflections and Reminiscences*, Bismarck said:

"In the interest of the European political equilibrium, the maintenance of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy as a strong independent Great Power is, for Germany, an object for which she might, in case of need, stake her own peace with a good conscience."⁸

Prior to the recent war, Jagow, in writing to the German Ambassador at London (18 July 1914), said:

"The preservation of Austria, and indeed of an Austria as strong as possible, is, from considerations of an order both exterior and interior, a necessity for us. I readily agree that one might not always be able to preserve her, but in the meantime, one may perhaps find combinations. . . . If it is not possible to localize the conflict and if Russia attacks Austria, the *casus federis* arises, and we must not sacrifice Austria. We should in that case find ourselves in an isolation of which we could not be proud. I am not anxious for a preventive war, but if combat is presented to us, we cannot draw back."⁹

The Dreikaiserbund. Prussia's victories of 1866 and 1870-1 left an aftermath of diplomatic difficulty.

⁵ Cap. XXVI.

⁶ See cap. XXIII.

⁷ Most interesting light upon the subject has recently been supplied by Professor Pribram's volumes, *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary — 1879-1914*.

⁸ V. II, p. 274.

⁹ Kautsky Does., No. 72. Cf. von Bethmann-Hollweg's *Reflections*, pp. 112, 113, 115-7, 119.

“We had,” Bismarck said, “waged victorious wars against two of the European Great Powers; everything depended on inducing at least one of the two mighty foes whom we had beaten in the field to renounce the anticipated design of uniting with the other in a war of revenge. . . . This situation demanded an effort to limit the range of the possible anti-German coalition by means of treaty arrangements placing our relations with at least one of the Great Powers upon a firm footing. My choice could only lie between Austria and Russia.”¹⁰ That was the choice, if arrangements were to be confined to one of the Powers. Bismarck, however, throughout his chancellorship, managed to maintain satisfactory relations with both. He commenced with the *Dreikaiserbund* of 1872 — an agreement between the German, Russian, and Austro-Hungarian monarchs,¹¹ designed, as he relates: “for the struggle which, as I feared, was before us; between the two European tendencies . . . which I . . . should designate, on the one side, as the system of order on a monarchical basis, and, on the other, as the social republic, to the level of which the anti-monarchical development is wont to sink.”¹²

In this view, the *Bund* was of somewhat the same order as the Holy Alliance of earlier date.¹³ Its purpose, Bismarck relates, was first clouded in 1875:

“by the provocations of Prince Gortchakoff, who spread the lie that we intended to fall upon France before she had recovered from her wounds.”¹⁴

Russia or Austria-Hungary. In July 1876, Russia and Austria-Hungary came to agreement at Reichstadt as to the territorial effects of the war then pending between Turkey and some of the Balkan states.¹⁵ Circumstances having made probable that Russia might join in the war as against Turkey, the Czar asked (autumn, 1876) for German neutrality in case Austria-Hungary should enter the war on the side of Turkey. Bismarck was now in trouble. He wished to maintain his affiliations with both his allies; and, temporizing, he replied in effect (as he relates) that Germany’s desire was to remain at peace with both Russia and Austria-Hungary, but:

¹⁰ *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, pp. 252-3.

¹¹ The *Bund* — a mere verbal understanding — was arranged in September 1872, at a meeting of the three Emperors in Berlin. It was supplemented at Schönbrunn by a written agreement (25 May 1873) between the Emperors of Russia and Austria-Hungary to which, on the following 22 October, Germany acceded: Pribram, *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary*, II, pp. 183-7.

¹² *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, p. 248.

¹³ Cf. C. Grant Robertson’s *Bismarck*, pp. 398 ff.

¹⁴ *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, p. 249. Whether Gortchakoff was not right is a disputable point.

¹⁵ Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 184, 189-90. The treaty was arranged without the knowledge of Germany: Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, p. 252.

"If, to our sorrow, this was not possible between Russia and Austria, then we could endure, indeed, that our friends should lose or win battles against each other, but not that one of the two should be so severely wounded and injured that its position as an independent Great Power, taking its part in the Councils of Europe, would be endangered."¹⁶

Not finding the answer satisfactory, Russia made a further agreement with Austria-Hungary at Budapest (15 January 1877) by which she (Russia) was given a free hand as against Turkey, Austria-Hungary to be compensated by the virtual annexation of the Turkish territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina, except the Sanjak of Novibazar.¹⁷

Dual Alliance, 1879. To some extent, the creation of the Dual Alliance of 1879—the war-treaty between Germany and Austria-Hungary—was an outcome of the Berlin Conference of 1878, which deprived Russia of the advantages secured by her success in war against Turkey, and of the Budapest agreement.¹⁸ The enmity between Bismarck and the Russian Prime Minister, Gortchakoff, which had commenced in 1875,¹⁹ was deepened by the discourtesies of the Berlin meeting, and the Czar blamed Bismarck, not only for "the unsuccessful issue of the war," but for the failure of the Russian representatives both at the Conference and in the conduct of the subsequent subsidiary proceedings.²⁰ Couching a letter to the German Emperor in menacing phraseology, he complained that "Your Majesty's Chancellor has forgotten the promises of 1870."²¹ Relations with Russia having, in this way, become less secure, Bismarck turned to Austria-Hungary.

"So cogent," he said, "seemed to me the considerations which in the political situation pointed us to an alliance with Austria that I would have striven to conclude one even in the face of a hostile public opinion."²²

The ensuing treaty between the two Powers (7 October 1879) was directed against both Russia and France. Its principal provisions were as follows:

Article I.: Should, contrary to their hope, and against the loyal desire of the two High Contracting Parties, one of the two Empires be attacked by Russia, the High Contracting Parties are bound to come to the assistance one of the other, with the whole war strength of their Empires, and, accordingly, only to conclude peace together and upon mutual agreement.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

¹⁷ Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 190-203. Cf. Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, p. 232. And see *post* cap. XXIII.

¹⁸ Cf. Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, p. 252.

¹⁹ *Ante*, p. 81.

²⁰ Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 232-47.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 236-7; 255-7. Cf. Dawson, *The German Empire*, II, pp. 136-8.

²² Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, p. 257; and see p. 253.

“ *Article II.*: Should one of the High Contracting Parties be attacked by another Power,²³ the other High Contracting Party binds itself hereby not only not to support the aggressor against its high Ally, but to observe at least a benevolent neutral attitude towards its fellow Contracting Party.

“ Should, however, the attacking Power in such a case, be supported by Russia, either by an active co-operation or by military measures which constitute a menace to the Party attacked, then the obligation stipulated in Article I of this Treaty, for mutual assistance with the whole fighting force, becomes equally operative, and the conduct of the war by the two High Contracting Parties shall in this case also be in common until the conclusion of a common peace.”

The latter part of Article IV was as follows:

“ The two High Contracting Parties venture to hope, after the sentiments expressed by the Emperor Alexander at the meeting at Alexandrovo, that the armaments of Russia will not in reality prove to be menacing to them, and have on that account no reason for making a communication at present; should, however, this hope, contrary to their expectations, prove to be erroneous, the two High Contracting Parties would consider it their loyal obligation to let the Emperor Alexander know, at least confidentially, that they must consider an attack on either of them as directed against both.”²⁴

This treaty constituted the Dual Alliance. In a letter to the King of Bavaria (10 September 1879), written prior to the signing of it, Bismarck said:

“ In the course of the last three years this problem has increased in difficulty, as Russian policy has come to be entirely dominated by the partly warlike revolutionary tendencies of Panslavism. Already, in the year 1876, we received from Livadia repeated demands for an answer, in such form as might be binding upon us, to the question whether the German Empire would remain neutral in a war between Russia and Austria. It was not possible to avoid giving this answer, and the Russian war-cloud drew for a time Balkanward. The great results which, even after the congress, Russian policy reaped from this war have not subdued the restlessness of Russian policy in the degree which would be desirable in the interests of peace-loving Europe. Russian policy has remained unquiet, unpacific; Panslavistic Chauvinism has gained increasing influence over the mind of Czar Alexander; and the serious (as, alas, it seems) disgrace of Count Shuvaloff has accompanied the Czar's censure of the Count's work, the Berlin Congress.”

“ In this situation of affairs Russia has, in the course of the last few weeks, presented to us demands which amount to nothing less than that we should make a definite choice between herself and Austria.”

²³ Meaning France.

²⁴ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 29-31.

"If Russia compel us to choose between her and Austria, I believe that the disposition which Austria would display towards us would be conservative and peaceable, while that of Russia would be uncertain."²⁵

Referring to the treaty, shortly after its signature, Bismarck said:

"I have thus succeeded in carrying out the first stage in my political policy — that of placing a barrier between Austria and the Western Powers. . . . I do not despair of realizing the second, that of the reconstruction of the Drei Kaiser Bund . . . an idea that I have followed all my life . . . they will never devise a political system offering greater guarantees for safeguarding all the Conservative elements in the modern world."²⁶

The treaty remained unaffected by any of the subsequent treaties with Italy and Roumania. By protocol of 22 March 1883, it was extended to 21 October 1889, and for a further period of three years unless interrupted by notice.²⁷ By a further protocol of 1 June 1902, it was agreed:

"that the duration of the treaty shall automatically be prolonged from three to three years for so long as the two Contracting Parties do not within the interval agreed upon in Section 2 of the Protocol of March 22, 1883, before the expiration of one of these three-year periods, enter into negotiations over the question whether the conditions serving as the basis for the treaty still prevail."²⁸

The treaty was in force at the outbreak of the war in 1914. Although the precise terms of it were not published until 3 February 1888, its existence was known, and, in it, British statesmen of the time saw a guarantee of peace.²⁹

League of the Three Emperors, 1881. The Dual Alliance provided for the neutrality of Austria-Hungary in case Germany were attacked by France, but Bismarck wanted the neutrality of Russia also, and that he secured by an agreement between the three Sovereigns (18 June 1881), which may be called *The League of the Three Emperors*, by way of distinguishing it from the *Dreikaiserbund* of 1872. Article I of the agreement was as follows:

"In case one of the High Contracting Parties should find itself at war with a fourth Great Power, the other two shall maintain towards it a benevolent neutrality, and shall devote their efforts to the localization of the conflict."³⁰

It may safely be said that the Czar would not have signed this treaty

²⁵ *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, pp. 258, 260, 262. And see pp. 256-7.

²⁶ Bismarck to Prince Sabouloff, Sep. 1879: Quoted by C. Grant Robertson in *Bismarck*, p. 397, note. See also the *Nineteenth Century*, Dec. 1917, pp. 1116-7.

²⁷ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 75.

²⁹ See *post cap.* XX.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 217, 219.

³⁰ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 37.

had he been aware of the terms of the Austro-German Dual Alliance of two years before. The Central Powers, in persuading him to agree to maintain "benevolent neutrality" in case either of them should find itself at war with France, could hardly have revealed to him the fact that they (Germany and Austria-Hungary) had agreed that if one of them should "be attacked by Russia," the other would co-operate in the war. They did not tell him, either, that just before signing the treaty with him, they had exchanged declarations to the effect:

"that the prospective Triple Agreement can under no circumstances prejudice their Treaty of Alliance of October 7, 1879; the latter, on the contrary, remains binding as if the former did not exist, and shall be executed according to its contents and the intentions of the two treaty-making Powers:

"that the treaty of October 7, 1879, therefore continues to determine the relations of the two Powers without undergoing limitation or alteration in any point whatsoever through the prospective new Treaty with Russia"

— declarations which, of course, "shall be kept secret."³¹ Bismarck was now very comfortable. If Germany should be attacked by Russia, Austria-Hungary would aid the defence. And in the event of a French war, Russia and Austria-Hungary would be benevolently neutral.

The Reinsurance Treaty, 1887. That situation continued until 1887, when the League of the Three Emperors expired. Then came the turn of Austria-Hungary to be kept in ignorance of what the other two were doing. She knew that her treaty with Germany of 1879 was yet in full force, but she did not know that, once more escaping from his principal difficulty, Bismarck was arranging with Russia separately for continuation of the obligations of the League by what has been termed the "Reinsurance Treaty" of 18 June 1887, the first article of which provided:

"In case one of the High Contracting Parties should find itself at war with a third Great Power, the other would maintain a benevolent neutrality towards it, and would devote its efforts to the localization of the conflict. This provision would not apply to a war against Austria or France, in case this war should result from an attack directed against one of the two latter Powers by one of the High Contracting Parties."³²

Bismarck was again comfortable: By the treaty of 1879, if attacked

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-5.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 275-7. Art. 2 of the treaty contained very important recognition of Russia's pre-eminence, as against Austria-Hungary, in the Balkans. It was as follows: "Germany recognizes the rights historically acquired by Russia in the Balkan Peninsula, and particularly the legitimacy of her preponderant and decisive influence in Bulgaria and in Eastern Rumelia. The two Courts engage to admit no modi-

by Russia he was assured of the co-operation of Austria-Hungary. And, by the reinsurance treaty, if attacked by Austria-Hungary or France, he was assured of the "benevolent neutrality" of Russia. Russia did not know the terms of the German treaty with Austria-Hungary; and Austria-Hungary was not aware of the new German treaty with Russia.³³ The two treaties, however, did not, in terms, impose incompatible obligations. They merely gave to Germany, in case of war between Russia and Austria-Hungary, the privilege of determining, as her interests might dictate, which of the belligerents was the attacking Power. Bismarck felt that he could depend upon Germany taking a view favorable to itself of any circumstances which might arise. The treaty terminated in 1890.

The Triple Alliance, 1882. Meanwhile, on 20 May 1882, Germany and Austria-Hungary had entered into an agreement with Italy known as the Triple Alliance. By its third article, the three Powers agreed that:

"if one, or two, of the High Contracting Parties, without direct provocation on their part, should chance to be attacked, and to be engaged in a war with two or more Great Powers non-signatory to the present treaty, the *casus fœderis* will arise simultaneously for all the High Contracting Parties."³⁴

The treaty, in varying form, was renewed 20 February 1887; 6 May 1891; 28 June 1902; and 5 December 1912.³⁵ It was in force at the outbreak of the war of 1914-18.

The Quadruple Alliance, 1883. By treaty of 30 October 1883, Austria-Hungary and Roumania agreed to certain terms of war-alliance, in only one of which we shall be interested, namely, that if Austria-Hungary were attacked, without provocation on her part:

"in a portion of her states bordering on Roumania, the *casus fœderis* will immediately arise for the latter."³⁶

Germany became a party to this treaty on the day of its execution. Italy acceded to it, with certain limitations, on 15 May 1888.³⁷ And thus was formed the Quadruple Alliance. It was renewed in July/November 1892;³⁸ 30 September 1896 May 1899; 17 April/25 July/12 December 1902;³⁹ and 5 February/26 February/5 March 1913.⁴⁰ It, too, was in force at the outbreak of the war of 1914.

fication of the territorial *status quo* of the said peninsula without a previous agreement between them, and to oppose, as occasion arises, every attempt to disturb this *status quo* or to modify it without their consent." *Ibid.*, p. 277.

³³ C. Grant Robertson: *Bismarck*, pp. 502-3.

³⁴ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 67, 153, 223, 247.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 105, 151, 221, 245.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 167, 205, 263.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-9.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 175-183.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 165-173.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 203-15.

Germany and Italy — Military Convention, 1887. In October 1887, shortly after becoming Prime Minister of Italy, Crispi, in the course of a conversation with Bismarck at Friedrichsruh, proposed the creation of a military convention between the two countries, saying:

“After all, a military convention is the proper complement of a treaty of alliance.”⁴¹

Bismarck having assented, a document was signed (28 January 1888) indicating the disposition to be made of the joint forces in case of the Triple Alliance being engaged in war with France and Russia. It provided, among other things, for the transport of Italian troops through Austria with a view to incorporation in the German army.⁴²

Russia and France, 1891–4. The reinsurance treaty with Russia expired in 1890. Bismarck had retired in 1888. His policy was not approved by the Kaiser. Russia was willing to renew the treaty, but Germany refused.⁴³ She remained linked with Austria-Hungary and Italy; the United Kingdom was linked with the same Powers;⁴⁴ and isolated Russia turned to isolated France. The Franco-Russian *entente*⁴⁵ of 1891–94 was the logical result.⁴⁶ From that time — from the alignment of Russia as a potential enemy of Germany, rather than as a treaty-friend — an unimpaired Austria-Hungary, as “an ally upon whom we (Germany) could count,” became more, and ever more, an essential of German security. From that time, upon the new path of countervailing combinations, “the logic of history” (as Bismarck phrased it) pursued its relentless course. To that time we look back as the birthday of all that followed. There needed but the development of inevitable inflammatory processes, and an incident.

Italian Fidelity. But what had Germany to fear? Had she not for allies, not only Austria-Hungary, but Italy also and Roumania? She had. But could she trust them? Was she sure that in the day of trial they would not side with her enemies? Note, first, that, from the beginning, the fidelity of Italy was under suspicion. Bismarck, as early as 1881, warned Kálnoky, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, that any agreement with Italy —

⁴¹ *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, p. 217.

⁴² Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 85–7, note.

⁴³ The *Hamburger Nachrichten* of 24 October 1896, the journal in which Bismarck, after his retirement, published what he wanted to say, had the following: “This understanding was not renewed after the retirement of Prince Bismarck; and if we are rightly informed as to what took place in Berlin at that time, it was not Russia, irritated at the change of the Chancellors, but Count Caprivi, who declined to continue the policy of mutual assurance, although Russia was ready to do so.” Quoted in *Fortnightly Rev.*, 1896, p. 905.

⁴⁴ See *post cap.* V, pp. 155–6.

⁴⁵ It was really an alliance: See *cap.* IV.

⁴⁶ Manifestations of British friendship with the Triple Alliance contributed to the result. See *post*, *cap.* IV, p. 96.

“would in reality be always a one-sided affair, to Italy’s advantage,⁴⁷ all the more so because the unsettled and untrustworthy character of the Italian policy could easily embroil Italy’s friends in difficulties.”⁴⁸

During the negotiations for renewal of the treaty (20 February 1887), Bismarck and Kálnoky, in conversation (August 1885), recognized that Italy:

“could not be regarded as a significant factor in any possible combination”;⁴⁹

and they agreed to continuation of the relationship only for the sake of keeping her under some moral constraint. The opinion of the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Rome was (26 February 1889):

“In the case of a war between France and Germany, the Italians will probably wait to see how the first battles turn out; only then will they decide whether to participate actively, or to assume a passive attitude. There will probably be much noise and little action.”⁵⁰

He was right. In 1806, actuated by friendship toward France and perceiving a certain tenseness in the relations between Germany and the United Kingdom, Rudini, the Italian Foreign Minister,⁵¹ sent, as Pribram relates:

“to Vienna and Berlin the draft of a note which he proposed formally to submit in the event that the Central Powers gave their assent. This note stated that in case England and France were to join forces with hostile intent against one of Italy’s allies, Italy would not regard the *casus foederis* as established, since in view of her geographical position and the inadequacy of her fighting forces, she would be in no position simultaneously to take the field against both of these adversaries. The Italian government emphasized the fact in Berlin that it expected no answer from Germany — that it would be satisfied with an official acknowledgment of its communication on the part of the German government. This declaration left no room for doubt in Berlin that, in the event of France and England becoming the adversaries of Germany, Italy wished to be relieved of the obligations which, according to the treaty, she would be obliged to assume if Germany were involved in war on two fronts.”⁵²

⁴⁷ Judged by the terms of the various treaties, that statement is inaccurate (*Cf.* Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 29, 30). Its justification depended upon the belief that Italy probably would not implement her promises.

⁴⁸ Telg. Bismarck to Prince Henry VII of Reuss, German Ambassador at Vienna, 28 Dec. 1881: *ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 82, note; and pp. 86-7, note.

⁵¹ Rudini was a Francophile, while his predecessor, Crispi, had been a warm friend of Bismarck: *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi, passim.*

⁵² Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 110-11. The Central Powers did not assent, and the proposal was withdrawn. In Dec. 1912, the Italian General Staff notified Berlin that in the event of war with France they had renounced the original plan of

In 1902, Italy entered into a secret war-treaty with France, in terms somewhat similar to her treaty with Germany and Austria-Hungary. As her friendship with France deepened, her intervention in Balkan affairs became more pronounced.

“Every step taken by the Austro-Hungarian government in Albania was watched with jealousy and distrust. Politicians and journalists warned the government not to allow itself to be hoodwinked by promises or agreements, and kept endlessly repeating that the Dual Monarchy intended to swallow up Albania, just as it had engulfed Bosnia and Herzegovina. Then, too, there was the Macedonian question, which was continually giving rise to fresh complaints and recriminations. Especially since the convention of Mürzsteg, in the fall of 1903, when Russia and Austria-Hungary had agreed jointly to undertake administrative reform and the restoration of order in Macedonia, the fear of coming away empty-handed from the division of spoils had driven the Italian politicians and publicists to attack their Danubian ally with ever increasing violence. At the same time the chorus of demands for the liberation of the ‘unredeemed’ territory kept swelling. This Irredentist movement received fresh impetus from the clashes between German and Italian students at the University of Innsbruck. In 1905, Marcora, President of the Italian Chamber, spoke of ‘our Tyrol.’”⁵³

At the date of the automatic prolongation of the Triple Alliance treaty⁵⁴ in 1908:

“The governing circles in Vienna and Berlin were facing the reality that the Triple Alliance was in a bad way; but they were still determined to block Italy’s open defection to the side of their adversaries as long as possible.”⁵⁵

Professor Pribram was no doubt right when he said:

“If the government leaders in Berlin and Vienna advocated the continuance of the Triple Alliance, and persisted in their willingness to make fresh sacrifices for the sake of holding their unreliable ally, they did so because they saw in this alliance the only safeguard against Italy’s open defection to the camp of the enemy; and this, for their own interests, they wished to avert as long as possible.”⁵⁶

taking a portion of the Italian army into South Germany and employing it as the left wing of the German army: *Ibid.*, pp. 174–5, note. New arrangements were made in 1913.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

⁵⁴ The renewal of 1902 provided that it should “remain in force for the space of six years from the exchange of ratifications, but if it has not been denounced one year in advance by one or another of the High Contracting Parties, it shall remain in force for the same duration of six more years” (*Ibid.*, I, p. 229).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, II, p. 147.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 143. Cf. Russian Ambassador at Paris to Russian Foreign Minister, 1 April 1909: Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

German and Austro-Hungarian distrust of Italy was increased by the meetings of the Italian sovereign with the British and Russian in 1909. These will be dealt with in a subsequent chapter.⁵⁷ Here it will suffice to say that shortly after the passing of the European crisis (1908-9) inaugurated by the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, King Edward VII visited the King of Italy at Baja with a view to arriving at some friendly understanding with reference to "the attitude of Italy in the event of an Anglo-German war"⁵⁸; and that, a few months afterwards, Italy and Russia came to formal agreement upon various questions, including that of the Straits and Tripoli.⁵⁹ With a view to placating Italy, Austria-Hungary by treaty of 30 November-15 December 1909, agreed with her that article VII of the Triple Alliance treaty⁶⁰ should apply to the Sanjak of Novibazar.

In 1911, Italy became apprehensive of a French attempt to thwart the realization of her proposal to take possession of the Turkish provinces of Tripoli and Cyrenaica, and, for better assurance of security in that regard, proposed a premature renewal of the Triple Alliance treaty.⁶¹ During the negotiations, Aehrenthal (Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister) expressed his dissatisfaction with Italy's "see-saw policy" in a despatch to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Rome (19 December):

"The Italian government should value more highly the advantages which the alliance with us has secured it, and should show its gratitude by abandoning its see-saw policy between the Triple Alliance and the powers of the Entente. Since their notorious escapade⁶² the Italians have been counting overmuch on the indulgence of their allies, and attempting to protect themselves on all sides by all sorts of liaisons. They depend on the Triple Alliance, and realize that they are protected to the rear; they would also like to use the alliance to help them out of their momentary embarrassment by means of Austro-Hungarian and German pressure on Constantinople, and to bait us into exerting such pressure by pretending that they will undertake naval operations as a last resort. On the other hand, the Italians are afraid of France and England; they also feel, and with justice, that an attack on the Dardanelles might break up the agreement they reached with Russia at

⁵⁷ Cap. VII.

⁵⁸ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

⁵⁹ *Un Livre Noir*, I, pp. 357-8.

⁶⁰ The new clause provided that if "Austria-Hungary should be compelled by the force of circumstances to proceed to a temporary or permanent occupation of the Sanjak of Novibazar, that occupation shall be effected only after a previous agreement with Italy, based on the principle of compensation." Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 241, 257; *Aus. Red Bk. (Second)*, App. No. 2.

⁶¹ *Cf.* von Bethmann-Hollweg: *Reflections &c.*, pp. 68-71. He speaks of 1913 instead of 1912.

⁶² The military failure in Abyssinia.

Racconigi. From these diverse considerations arises a state of mind which makes a clear policy impossible, and which calls forth small confidence on the part of Italy's allies. If Italy wishes to enjoy still further advantages from the Triple Alliance she must give proof of the fact not only in words, but in the attitude of her government. The more clearly and coherently she expresses this desire, the more intimate and cordial will be our relations with her. In a word, she must put an end to this flirting in all directions, with its consequent vacillation of Italian policy, which awakes distrust in us and has encouraged nationalistic aspirations to lift their heads once more in Italy. Will there be an Italian government with sufficient clearness of vision and courage of its convictions to do this?"⁶³

Berchtold, Aehrenthal's successor, took the same view, and privately expressed the opinion (1912) that Italy's "questionable" alliance was not worth the price of further concessions.⁶⁴ Afterwards, in a letter to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Berlin (8 May 1912), he said that recent action in Italy:

"makes one involuntarily doubt the practical value of an alliance in which one party seeks to set aside its obligations whenever it finds it convenient to do so, and the other party is expected to give its approval merely for the sake of holding its unreliable partner in the alliance."⁶⁵

In Berchtold's view, the policy of Berlin was being:

"guided by the fixed idea of Italy's defection to the Western Powers."⁶⁶

In April 1912, the German Foreign Minister — von Kiderlen-Wächter — held very much the same opinion as had the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Rome in 1889⁶⁷ with reference to Italy's probable action in case of a Franco-German war. He said:

"I do not now believe that Italy will simply tear up the treaty of the Triple Alliance; the personality of the King offers security against that. I believe, rather, that Italy will slowly mobilize and play the waiting game, so to speak. If the first battle with France should turn out favorably to Germany, Italy will coöperate against France. If, however, France should score a great initial victory, Italy's attitude toward us might possibly become alarming."⁶⁸

This was precisely the view, during the same year, of the French government. On 5 December, Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador at Paris, wrote to Sazonoff as follows:

"It is thought here, in a general way, that neither the Triple Entente

⁶³ Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 158-9.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

⁶⁷ *Ante*, p. 88.

⁶⁸ Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 165-6.

nor the Triple Alliance can count upon the loyalty of Italy. The Italian Government will employ all its efforts to maintain peace, and in case of war it will commence by adopting an attitude of expectancy, and afterwards will adhere to the camp towards which victory will lean."⁶⁹

Notwithstanding all this, the Triple Alliance was renewed on 5 December 1912, but with little hope, on the part of Germany and Austria-Hungary, of Italian support in case of war with France, and none at all in case of war with France and the United Kingdom.⁷⁰

The other side of the story — Italy's approachment toward France — is related in a later chapter.⁷¹ All that need be observed here is that both sides of the story make clear that Italy, as an ally of Germany, was "undependable"; that in time of war she might even turn against her long-time treaty-friends; and that that fact made all the more necessary for Germany the maintenance of an unimpaired Austria-Hungary as "an ally upon whom we could count."

Roumanian Fidelity. Germany and Austria-Hungary had more, but not much more, hope of Roumania than of Italy. King Carol was a member of the Sigmaringen branch of the Hohenzollern family, and was strongly pro-Austrian. But his people, for the most part, regarded Austria and Hungary as countries in which were situated territories that were rightfully Roumanian. The subject is fully dealt with in a later chapter.⁷² It is sufficient at this place to say that Roumania was "undependable," and that, for that reason, maintenance of Austria-Hungary as "an ally upon whom we could count" was the more necessary. It will be remembered that during the war both Italy and Roumania took arms against the Central Powers.

GERMANY'S IMPERIALISTIC PROJECTS

To the reason assigned by Germany for entering the war, namely, the necessity for "an ally on whom we could count," must be added the fact that Germany had direct interest in the secular Russo-Austrian rivalry, for chief influence in the Balkans.⁷³ Bismarck had said that the Balkans were not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian soldier,⁷⁴

⁶⁹ *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 365. And see p. 361.

⁷⁰ Cf. Bismarck-Hilffing, *Reichstag*, II, pp. 16, 70.

⁷¹ Cap. VII.

⁷² Cap. IX.

⁷³ See caps. VIII, IX, XXIII, XXIV.

⁷⁴ As late as 11 January 1887, at the time of the negotiations for the first renewal of the Triple Alliance, Bismarck indicated his attitude toward Balkan problems by saying in the Reichstag: "The whole problem of the Orient involved no question of war for us. We shall allow no one to put a leading-rope about our necks and embroil us in difficulties with Russia" (Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 66-7). In his *Reflections and Reminiscences* (II, p. 285), Bismarck wrote: "I believe that it would be advantageous for Germany if the Russians in one way or another,

but, since his day, there had arisen in Germany a strong national desire for expansion in Asia Minor (expressed popularly in the phrases *Drang nach Osten* and *The Berlin to Bagdad railway*), and the route to the Near East lay through the Balkans. By this new development, the vital interests of Slav and Teuton were brought, as never before, into portentous clash. Overlordship in the Balkans ceased to be regarded as merely a matter of Russo-Austrian contention. To the rivalry in Europe was added the Russo-German at the Dardanelles and beyond. The prediction of Skobelev, the Russian "White General," the preacher of a military pan-Slavism, was approaching realization:

"The struggle between the Slav and Teuton, no human power can avert. Even now it is near, and the struggle will be long, terrible, and bloody; but this alone can liberate Russia and the whole Slavonic race from the tyranny of the intruder. No man's home is a home till the German has been expelled and the rush to the East, the '*Drang nach Osten*,' turned back forever."⁷⁵

WHY DID GERMANY ENTER THE WAR?

1. Support of Austria-Hungary. As Germany asserted: "a morally weakened Austria under the pressure of Russian pan-Slavism would be no longer an ally upon whom we could count, and in whom we could have confidence."⁷⁶

The success of Serbia would have meant the territorial disintegration of Austria-Hungary, and her disappearance as a first-class Power.

2. Opposition to Russia. The success of Russia would have meant her achievement of a notable advance toward the fulfillment of her "historic mission," and the establishment of an important obstruction to the realization of German purposed expansion in the Near East.

3. In other words, Germany entered the war for the same reason as actuated Russia — consideration of her own interests.

physically or diplomatically, were to establish themselves at Constantinople and had to defend that position. We should then cease to be in the condition of being hounded on by England and occasionally also by Austria, and exploited by them to check Russian lust after the Bosphorus, and we should be able to wait and see if Austria were attacked and thereby our *casus belli* arose." Kaiser William II was not of that opinion.

⁷⁵ Quoted by Prof. J. A. Cramb: *Origins and Destiny of Imperial Britain*, pp. 255-6. The day after Austria-Hungary's declaration of war (29 July 1914), Sir Edward Grey said: "In the present case the dispute between Austria and Serbia was not one in which we felt called to take a hand. Even if the question became one between Austria and Russia, we should not feel called upon to take a hand in it. It would then be a question of the supremacy of Teuton or Slav — a struggle for supremacy in the Balkans: and our idea had always been to avoid being drawn into a war over a Balkan question": Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 87.

⁷⁶ *Ante*, p. 79.

DID GERMANY WANT WAR?

1. From the commencement of the diplomatizings prior to the war, Germany's chief effort was to "localize" the war — that was, to confine it to a duel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. Germany did not want a wider — a European war.⁷⁷

2. When Serbia made humble reply to the Austro-Hungarian demands, the Kaiser declared that there was "no longer any cause for war." Thenceforward, until the mobilization of Russia against Germany, the German Chancellor did what he could to avoid all war.⁷⁸

3. It was Germany's forty-three years of peace which had made possible her wonderful development. Her economic prosperity could not have been enhanced by war. Defeated or victorious, she would have suffered.

4. For Germany there was no "unredeemed territory" — no French Alsace-Lorraine; no Italian Trieste or Trentino; no Serbian Bosnia and Herzegovina; no Bulgarian Macedonia; no Turkish Thrace; no Roumanian Bessarabia, Transylvania, and Bukovina; no Russian Constantinople. Unlike other continental Powers, Germany sought no territorial expansion in Europe, and the acquisition of territory elsewhere was less a desideratum in 1914 than some years previously.

5. If it be said that Germany was willing to face enormous loss and to risk defeat in order that she might dominate the world, the answer may be seen in a subsequent chapter.⁷⁹

6. Apart from the maintenance of Austria-Hungary as an effective ally, and opposition to Russian aggression, Germany had no object in undertaking war.

⁷⁷ *Post*, cap. XXVII.

⁷⁸ *Post*, cap. XXVII.

⁷⁹ Cap. XV.

CHAPTER IV

WHY DID FRANCE ENTER THE WAR?

FRENCH ALLIANCES, 95.—Alsace-Lorraine, 95.—The Quadruple Alliance, 95.—France and Russia—Entente, 1891, 96.—France and Russia—Military Convention, 1893-4, 97.—France and Russia—Naval Convention, 1912, 98.—France and Russia—Exchange of Information, 1912, 99.—France and Russia—Mobilization and War, 99.—France and Italy, 99.—France and the United Kingdom, 100.—Effect upon France, 101.

WHY FRANCE ENTERED THE WAR, 102.—Inception of the War, 102.—No Interest in Serbia, 103.—French Assertions, 103.—*Notre Devoir*, 107.—Comment, 107.—Later Acknowledgment, 108.—Why did France enter the War? 109.

FRENCH ALLIANCES

Alsace-Lorraine. The relevant facts with reference to the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1 will be referred to in a later chapter.¹ It is sufficient at this place to say that France cannot fairly assert that that war was forced upon her by Prussia, or that the cession of Alsace-Lorraine to Prussia was other than the natural result of defeat. The points which we must now notice are that the transfer of the Provinces necessitated Prussian precaution against a war of *révanche*; induced the ensuing alliances and counter-alliances; and thus became, indirectly, the principal reason for the junction of France with Russia in a quarrel in which France had no interest.

The Quadruple Alliance. The chapter entitled *Why did Germany enter the War?*² contains a short summary of the treaties by which Germany endeavored to secure herself against attack from both east and west. Of that story, all that is here necessary to recall is as follows: The war-association of Germany and Austria-Hungary in 1879 was the result of Bismarck's fear of a French attempt to regain Alsace-Lorraine, plus the increasing unreliability of Germany's relations with Russia.³ The junction of Italy with the two Central Powers was caused by the seizure of Tunis by France, and Italian fear of further French enterprises in North Africa.⁴ The adhesion of Roumania in 1883 (completing the Quadruple Alliance) was motivated by

¹ XVIII.

² III.

³ See *ante* cap. III. It was furthered by the change which had taken place in the personal relations of the Russian and German monarchs. The rivalry between Bismarck and Gortchakoff had cooled the almost filial feelings with which Czar Alexander II regarded his uncle, Kaiser Wilhelm I; and between 1881 and 1894, the Russian throne was occupied by a ruler, Alexander III, whose dislike of Germany was unconcealed.

⁴ Cap. VII.

resentment against Russia. Bismarck had contrived to maintain treaty relations with Russia. But in 1890 the last of the treaties terminated; the Bismarckian policy of comfortable arrangements with both Austria-Hungary and Russia came to an end. Russia became isolated in the east, even as France had for twenty years been isolated in the west.

France and Russia—Entente, 1891. The two reasons for the formation of the Dual Entente—France and Russia (1891-4)—were those stated by M. de Giers, Russian Foreign Minister, in the letter (9-21 August 1891) which formulated the terms agreed to:

“The situation created in Europe by the open renewal of the Triple Alliance, and the more or less probable adhesion of Great Britain to the political aims which that alliance pursues.”⁵

At that time, France and Russia were the traditional opponents of the United Kingdom, while the friendship between the United Kingdom and the two Central Powers had been marked in a variety of ways. Indeed the United Kingdom in 1887 had entered into treaty agreements with Austria-Hungary and Italy (approved by Germany) aimed at both France and Russia.⁶

The Dual Entente was really an “alliance,” and a French Yellow Book has so described it.⁷ The agreement (27 August 1891), contained in two letters,⁸ was as follows:

“1. In order to define and consecrate the cordial understanding which unites them, and desirous of contributing in common agreement to the maintenance of the peace which forms the object of their sincerest aspirations, the two governments declare that they will take counsel together upon every question of a nature to jeopardize the general peace.

“2. In case that peace should be actually in danger, and especially if one of the two parties should be threatened with an aggression, the two parties undertake to reach an understanding on the measures whose immediate and simultaneous adoption would be imposed upon the two Governments by the realization of this eventuality.”

The agreement was supplemented by frank discussion of policies with reference to Turkey, Bulgaria, Roumania, Egypt, China, Tripoli, and

⁵ Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 209; Fr. Yell. Bk., *Franco-Russian Alliance*, No. 17, Annex. “The irregularity of England’s action in Egypt hampered her international relations at many points; and it may be assigned as one of the causes that brought France into alliance with Russia.” J. Holland Rose, *The Development of the European Nations, 1871-1914*, p. 458.

⁶ The arrangements are referred to in cap. V, pp. 155-6.

⁷ Fr. Yell. Bk., *Franco-Russian Alliance*, No. 102, quoted *passim* p. 98. The word *alliance* was well used. Entente was not accurate. It is, nevertheless, retained in the text of this work, first in deference to public understanding; second, to distinguish the Franco-Russian combination from the Triple Alliance; and third, because of the propriety of the phrase Triple Entente after the United Kingdom became associated with France and Russia.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Nos. 17, 18. In Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, the letters appear at pp. 207-15.

the Holy Places in Palestine.⁹ Afterwards (23 June 1892), in writing to the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg, the French Foreign Minister said that the second clause of the agreement:

“plainly implied the reciprocal engagement of the two governments to sustain each other with all their forces in case of aggression against one of them.”¹⁰

In his reply, the French Ambassador said (16 July):

“The Emperor and the two Ministers consider this agreement as irrevocable, as involving on both sides a formal engagement; it would now be proper to carry out by a military convention the arrangement contained in the second paragraph.”¹¹

France and Russia — Military Convention, 1893–4. After long and, to France, tedious negotiations,¹² expedited at last by the passage of the German military law of 1893,¹³ and a visit of the Russian fleet to France,¹⁴ a military convention was agreed to by exchange of letters — 27 December 1893 and 4 January 1894.¹⁵ Its terms were as follows:

“France and Russia, being animated by an equal desire to preserve peace, and having no other object than to meet the necessities of a defensive war, provoked by an attack of the forces of the Triple Alliance against the one or the other of them, have agreed upon the following provisions:

“1. If France is attacked by Germany, or by Italy supported by Germany, Russia shall employ all her available forces to attack Germany.

“If Russia is attacked by Germany, or by Austria supported by Germany, France shall employ all her available forces to fight Germany.

“2. In case the forces of the Triple Alliance, or of one of the Powers composing it, should mobilize, France and Russia, at the first news of the event and without the necessity of any previous concert, shall mobilize immediately and simultaneously the whole of their forces, and shall move them as close as possible to their frontiers.

“3. The available forces to be employed against Germany shall be, on the part of France, 1,300,000 men; on the part of Russia, 700,000 or 800,000 men.

“These forces shall engage to the full, with all speed, in order that Germany may have to fight at the same time on the East and on the West.

“4. The General Staffs of the Armies of the two countries shall co-

⁹ Fr. Yell. Bk., *Franco-Russian Alliance*, Nos. 21, 22, 24, 25, 29.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 35.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, No. 42.

¹² France blamed the timidity of the Czar (*ibid.*, Nos. 55, 71), and the Czar was afraid of ministerial instability in France: *Ibid.*, Nos. 53, 90.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Nos. 87, 88.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 89.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Nos. 91, 92.

operate with each other at all times in the preparation and facilitation of the execution of the measures above foreseen.

"They shall communicate to each other, while there is still peace, all information relative to the armies of the Triple Alliance which is or shall be within their knowledge.

"Ways and means of corresponding in times of war shall be studied and arranged in advance.

"5. France and Russia shall not conclude peace separately.

"6. The present Convention shall have the same duration as the Triple Alliance.

"7. All the clauses above enumerated shall be kept rigorously secret."¹⁶

In 1899, the political arrangements were amended by declaring that, in case of crisis, agreement would be arrived at not only:

"with reference to every question of a nature to put the general peace in danger," but also with reference to "equilibrium among the European forces."

It was also arranged that the military convention should not terminate with the Triple Alliance, but should endure "as long as the diplomatic concord" of 1891.¹⁷

France and Russia — Naval Convention, 1912. On 16 July 1912, a naval convention between France and Russia was signed providing as follows:

"*Article I.*: The naval forces of France and Russia shall co-operate in every eventuality where the alliance contemplates and stipulates combined action of the land armies.

"*Article II.*: The co-operation of the naval forces shall be prepared while there is still peace,

"To this end the Chiefs of General Staff of the two Navies are authorized from now on to correspond directly, to exchange any information, to study all hypotheses of war, to consult together on all strategic problems.

"*Article III.*: The Chiefs of General Staff of the two Navies shall confer in person at least once a year; they will draw up minutes of their conferences.

"*Article IV.*: As to duration, effectiveness, and secrecy, the present Convention is to run parallel to the Military Convention of August 17 1892, and to the subsequent Agreements."¹⁸

The purpose of the convention, as appears from a report of M. Sazonoff, was the:

¹⁶ Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 215-7, and see pp. 217-21; Fr. Yell. Bk., *Franco-Russian Alliance*, No. 71.

¹⁷ Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 218-21; Fr. Yell. Bk., *Franco-Russian Alliance*, Nos. 93-5.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 102. The military convention of 17 August 1892 (*ibid.*, No. 71) did not become effective until the exchange of letters of 1893-4, above referred to.

“safeguarding of our [Russian] interests at the southern scene of war, in that it would prevent the Austrian fleet from breaking through into the Black Sea.”¹⁹

Simultaneously, naval arrangements between the United Kingdom and France were completed.

France and Russia — Exchange of Information, 1912. The last of the series of agreements between France and Russia was the Convention for the Exchange of Information (16 July 1912), the principal clauses of which were as follows:

“1. Dating from 1/14 September 1912, the Chief of the General Staff of the Imperial Russian Navy and the Chief of the General Staff of the French Navy shall exchange all information as to their respective navies, and regularly every month, in writing, any information which these two countries may obtain; telegraphic cipher may be used in certain urgent cases;

“2. In order to avoid any indiscretion or any disclosure relative to this information, it is indispensable to adopt the following procedure in transmission.”²⁰ (The method prescribed is not important.)

France and Russia — Mobilization and War. During the course of the negotiations of the Military Convention above referred to, General de Boisdeffre, the French military representative, reported a conversation with the Czar (18 August 1892) as follows:

“The Emperor then spoke to me with reference to mobilization as provided in article 2.

“I remarked to him that mobilization was a declaration of war; that to mobilize was to oblige one’s neighbor to do the same; that mobilization made necessary the execution of measures of strategical transports and of concentration. Otherwise, to permit the mobilization of a million men on his [the Emperor’s] frontier, without doing the same thing simultaneously, was to prevent all possibility of future movement, and to place him in the situation of an individual who, having a pistol in his pocket, allowed his neighbor to put a weapon to his face without drawing his own. ‘That is the way in which I understand it,’ the Emperor replied.”²¹

The bearing of the agreement, as thus understood, upon the Russian mobilization against Germany in July 1914 is referred to in chapter XXVII.

France and Italy. Completion of the Franco-Russian agreements of 1891-4 placed the Great Powers of the Continent in two opposing combinations — Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Roumania on the one side, and France and Russia on the other; with the United Kingdom more than sympathetic with the Central Powers. With this

¹⁹ *Post*, p. 531.

²⁰ Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 225; Fr. Yell. Bk., *Franco-Russian Alliance*, No. 103.

²¹ *Ibid.*, No. 71.

alignment, Delcassé — the exceedingly able Frenchman, whose foreign policy reveals him as a student of Bismarckian tactics — was far from satisfied. Within little more than four years after becoming Minister of Foreign Affairs (June 1898), he entered into a war-treaty with Italy (November 1902) which placed France (in relation to Italy) on a footing equal with, or even better than that of Germany and Austria-Hungary — a sort of Bismarckian reinsurance treaty. The subject is dealt with in a subsequent chapter.

France and the United Kingdom. Almost immediately after Delcassé's installation in the Foreign Office, a difficult dispute with the United Kingdom arose in connection with territory in the Soudan, where a British expedition under Kitchener had encountered a French under Marchand. Lord Salisbury at once assumed a very stiff attitude. Meditating war, Delcassé:

"appealed," as Count Witte has related, "to Russia for support. We advised France not to bring the matter to a break, and she yielded. Thereupon Foreign Minister Delcassé came to St. Petersburg to devise a means whereby England might be held in check. He urged us to hasten the construction of the Orenburg-Tashkent Railway, which would enable us to threaten India in case of emergency. To this we agreed, and France in return obligated itself to assist us in floating a loan. With the progress of the Russo-Japanese War, Delcassé perceived that France could not rely on Russia and that, under the circumstances, it was no longer safe to have strained relations with both Germany and England. As a result, Delcassé inaugurated a *rapprochement* with Great Britain. With Russia's knowledge he concluded a treaty with Great Britain, which regulated the relations of the two countries in those regions where their interests clashed. Ever since then France has been cultivating England's friendship."²²

Pursuing his new line of policy, Delcassé, during the next year (1899), arranged with the United Kingdom the partition of huge areas in Africa. And in 1904, aided by the rapid development of British dislike of Germany and British desire for a free hand in Egypt,²³ he signed a comprehensive treaty with the United Kingdom by which all outstanding difficulties were settled.²⁴ In 1905, in connection with the first Morocco episode; in 1906, at the Algeciras Conference; in 1908, in connection with the Casablanca incident; in 1911, in connection with a still later Morocco episode; and in 1912-13, in connection with the Balkan wars, the United Kingdom plainly manifested

²² *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, p. 178. Cf. *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, p. 254 and note; and *Ann. Reg.*, 1898, p. 1280. Earlier in the year efforts to arrange an alliance between the United Kingdom and Germany had been made — see cap. V.

²³ André Tardieu: *The Truth about the Treaty*, p. 440; *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, pp. 309, 316.

²⁴ A more complete reference to Delcassé's activities may be seen. *post*, cap. XXII.

her intention to support France as against Germany.²⁵ From 1906 onwards, were held "conversations" between the military officers of the two Powers, at which were discussed and arranged plans of campaign in case of war between Germany and France. In 1912, agreement was reached with reference to disposition of the British and French fleets respectively. In November of that year, contractual letters were exchanged. In the spring of 1914, still closer relations were established.²⁶

To these facts the draftsmen of the *Reply of the Allied and Associated Powers to the Observations of the German Delegation on the Conditions of Peace* paid little deference when they said that:

"It is not the purpose of this Memorandum to traverse the diplomatic history of the years preceding the war, or to show how it was that the peace-loving nations of western Europe were gradually driven, under a series of crises provoked from Berlin, to come together in self-defence."²⁷

The Franco-Russian *entente* was not the result of any crisis, unless it is to be counted the Boulanger endeavor to precipitate war with Germany in 1887. One of the reasons for the *entente* was British association with the Central Powers. The crises which preceded the Franco-British *entente*-treaty of 1904 were: (1) the Fashoda difficulty between France and the United Kingdom; (2) the Anglo-Boer war; and (3) the Russo-Japanese war. Germany was a party to none of them. On the contrary, in 1898, 1899, and 1901, negotiations for alliance between the United Kingdom and Germany were being carried on.²⁸ If it be said that the crises to which the draftsmen referred were those connected with the Morocco incidents, the replies are: (1) that the *entente* relationships between Russia and France and between the United Kingdom and France were arranged prior to these occurrences; (2) that the *entente* relationship between the United Kingdom and Russia was established prior to the second of them; and (3) that provocation of both incidents was properly attributable to the actions of France rather than to those of Germany.²⁹

Effect upon France. Under the influences above referred to — treaty with Russia, treaty with Italy, *entente* relations with the United Kingdom, emphasized by practical support against Germany³⁰ — France commenced to feel that she could, at last, safely disregard the Gambetta injunction as to Alsace-Lorraine — "*N'en parlons jamais.*" Concerning the first of the Morocco affairs, Mr. G. B. Gooch has well said that:

"the events of 1905, mark a turning-point in the evolution of national feeling. 'New France' was born — a France which, strength-

²⁵ See cap. XXII.

²⁶ Cap. XVII.

²⁷ P. 29.

²⁸ See cap. V.

²⁹ See cap. XXII.

³⁰ See cap. XXII.

ened by her friendship with England, was determined to hold up her head in moments of crisis, and to submit to no more humiliations. How far this new orientation was due to German threats, how far to the promises of English support, and how far to the influence of her own orators, journalists, and publicists, need not be discussed here. It is enough for us to note that, in 1905, the period of quasi-indifference to the lost provinces may be said to terminate, and that a spirit of what some would call national self-confidence and others *chauvinism* became more general. The atmospheric change was admirably described, a year or two before the war, in the Abbé Ernest Dimnet's interesting volume, 'France Herself Again.'

"Morocco was the symbol of the 'new France,' the touchstone which separated the school of Delcassé from the school of Jaurès. But the new orientation also opened a new chapter in the problem of Alsace-Lorraine. What had been obviously impossible when France was isolated, might no longer be impossible now that she was the ally of Russia and the friend of England and Italy. It would be untrue to say that anyone in France desired to go to war for the recovery of the provinces; but it was certainly true that a good many Frenchmen were ready to fight if, and when, they thought there was a good chance of victory."³¹

Marcel Sembat's popular book, *Faites un Roi, sinon faites la Paix*, was an appeal to prepare for war, and if not, to cease thinking of Alsace-Lorraine.

WHY FRANCE ENTERED THE WAR

Inception of the War. On 29 July, Russia ordered mobilization, openly against Austria-Hungary and secretly against Germany. Two days afterwards (31st), Russia disclosed the general character of her mobilization. And Germany having replied with a demand for cessation of preparations within twelve hours, the German Ambassador at Paris had an interview (31st) with the French Foreign Minister, who telegraphed its purport to the French representative at St. Petersburg as follows:

"Baron von Schoen finally asked me, in the name of his Government, what the attitude of France would be in case of war between Germany and Russia. He told me that he would come for my reply to-morrow (Saturday), at 1 o'clock. I have no intention of making any statement to him on this subject, and I shall confine myself to telling him that France will have regard to her interests. The Government of the Republic need not, indeed, give any account of her intentions except to her ally. I ask you to inform M. Sazonoff of this immediately."³²

³¹ Article, *Public Opinion in France: A Retrospect in Common Sense*. Among Mr. Gooch's other works is a most useful summary of international relations in his *History of Our Time*, 1885-1911.

³² Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 117.

On the following day (1 August), Germany declared war on Russia, and, on the 3d., having received no communication from the French authorities, declared war on France also. The alleged reason for the declaration was acts of French violation of German and Belgian territory. The real reason was that war with Russia necessarily meant war with France.

No Interest in Serbia. It was not because of any direct interest in the quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia that France entered the war. Writing to the British Ambassador at Paris (29 July), Sir Edward Grey said:

“In the present case the dispute between Austria and Servia was not one in which we felt called to take a hand. . . . If Germany became involved and France became involved, we had not made up our minds what we should do; it was a case that we should have to consider. France would then have been drawn into a quarrel which was not hers, but in which, owing to her alliance, her honor and interest obliged her to engage.”³³

And in his speech in the House of Commons of 3 August, Sir Edward said:

“The present crisis has originated differently. It has not originated with regard to Morocco. It has not originated as regards anything with which we had a special agreement with France; it has not originated with anything which primarily concerned France. It has originated in a dispute between Austria and Servia. I can say this with the most absolute confidence — no Government and no country has less desire to be involved in war over a dispute with Austria and Servia than the Government and the country of France. They are involved in it because of their obligation of honor under a definite alliance with Russia.”

That was perfectly true. French attitude in 1914 was the same as in 1908-9 — no particular interest in the Austro-Serbian quarrel, but determination to aid Russia in case of her engaging in war with Germany.³⁴

French Assertions. These being the circumstances attending the entrance of France into the war, persons unfamiliar with governmental methods would have expected that frank statement of them would appear in the French official declarations. The innocents would have been disappointed. No French statesman would have thought it possible to say to the French nation (in Sir Edward Grey's language) that France was being involved in a war in which she had no interest, and merely because of her “obligation of honor under a definite alliance with Russia.”³⁵ That would not have fitted the occasion. Something inflammatory had to be improvised. And it was. The President

³³ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 87.

³⁴ See *post cap.* XXIII.

³⁵ *Post*, p. 186.

of the Republic, Poincaré, commenced his message to the Senators and Deputies (4 August) by saying:

"France has just been the object of a violent and premeditated attack, which is an insolent defiance of the law of nations. Before any declaration of war had been sent to us, even before the German Ambassador had asked for his passports, our territory has been violated," but immediately passed to what was in the hearts of his audience — Alsace-Lorraine:

"For more than forty years, the French, in sincere love of peace, have buried at the bottom of their heart the desire for legitimate reparation. They have given to the world the example of a great nation which, definitely raised from defeat by the exercise of will, patience, and labor, has only used its renewed and rejuvenated strength in the interest of progress and for the good of humanity."

After denouncing Germany for her actions toward Russia, Luxemburg, and Belgium (not a word about Serbia), and for having —

"attempted treacherously to fall upon us while we were in the midst of diplomatic conversations,"

Poincaré added that France was as "alert as she was peaceful."

"Our fine and courageous army, which France to-day accompanies with her maternal thought (*Loud applause*), has risen eager to defend the honor of the flag and the soil of the country (*Unanimous and repeated applause*).

"In the war which is beginning, France will have Right on her side, the eternal power of which cannot with impunity be disregarded by nations any more than by individuals (*Loud and unanimous applause*).

"She will be heroically defended by all her sons; nothing will break their sacred union before the enemy; to-day they are joined together as brothers in a common indignation against the aggressor, and in a common patriotic faith (*Loud and prolonged applause and cries of 'Vive la France'*).

"She is faithfully helped by Russia, her ally (*Loud and unanimous applause*); she is supported by the loyal friendship of Great Britain (*Loud and unanimous applause*).

"And already, from every part of the civilized world, sympathy and good wishes are coming to her. For to-day once again she stands before the universe for Liberty, Justice and Reason (*Loud and repeated applause*). 'Haut les cœurs, et vive la France (*Unanimous and prolonged applause*).'"³⁶

M. Viviani, the Foreign Minister, commenced his speech with the following:³⁷

³⁶ Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 158; Andriulli: *Documents relating to the Great War*, pp. 77-9.

³⁷ Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 159; Andriulli, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-93; Pamphlet No. 8; of the *International Conciliation* series.

“The German Ambassador yesterday left Paris after notifying us of the existence of a state of war. The Government owe to Parliament a true account of the events which in less than ten days have unloosed a European war and compelled France, peaceful and valiant, to defend her frontier against an attack, the hateful injustice of which is emphasized by its calculated unexpectedness. This attack, which has no excuse, and which began before we were notified of any declaration of war, is the last act of a plan, whose origin and object I propose to declare before our own democracy and before the opinion of the civilized world.”

Omitting all references to his interviews with the German Ambassador, M. Viviani then related some of the circumstances connected with the outbreak of the war — the Austro-Hungarian demands, the Serbian reply, the negotiations for settlement, the mobilizations; declared that German troops had crossed the French frontier at three places on the 2d August, and afterwards at others; announced the receipt of the declaration of war; and proceeded:

“The victors of 1870 have, at different times, as you know, desired to repeat the blows which they dealt us then. In 1875, the war which was intended to complete the destruction of conquered France was only prevented by the intervention of the two Powers to whom we were to become united at a later date by ties of alliance and of friendship (*Unanimous applause*), by the intervention of Russia and of Great Britain (*Prolonged applause, all the deputies rising to their feet*).

“Since then the French republic, by the restoration of her national forces and the conclusion of diplomatic agreements unswervingly adhered to, has succeeded in liberating herself from the yoke which, even in a period of profound peace, Bismarck was able to impose upon Europe. She has re-established the balance of power in Europe, a guarantee of the liberty and dignity of all.

“Gentlemen, I do not know if I am mistaken, but it seems to me that this work of peaceful reparation, of liberation and honor, finally ratified in 1904 and 1907,³⁸ with the genial co-operation of King Edward VII of England and the Government of the Crown (*Applause*), this is what the German Empire wishes to destroy by one daring stroke.

“Germany can reproach us with nothing. Bearing in silence in our bosom for half a century the wound which Germany dealt us, we have offered to peace an unprecedented sacrifice (*Loud and unanimous applause*). We have offered other sacrifices in all the discussions which, since 1904, German diplomacy has systematically provoked, whether in Morocco or elsewhere in 1905, in 1906, in 1908, in 1911. . . . Useless sacrifices, barren negotiations, empty efforts, since to-day in the very act of conciliation we, our allies and ourselves, are attacked by surprise.

³⁸ The reference is to the British treaties with France and Russia.

"Gentlemen, we proclaim loudly the object of their attack — it is the independence, the honor, the safety, which the Triple Entente has regained in the balance of power for the service of peace. The object of attack is the liberties of Europe, which France, her allies, and her friends, are proud to defend (*Loud applause*). We are going to defend these liberties, for it is they that are in dispute, and all the rest is but a pretext.

"France, unjustly provoked, did not desire war, she has done everything to avert it. Since it is forced upon her, she will defend herself against Germany and against every Power which has not yet declared its intentions, but joins with the latter in a conflict between the two countries (*Applause, all the deputies rising to their feet*)."³⁹

In the peroration of a subsequent speech, M. Viviani gave to the French people something much more effective than a reference to treaty obligation to Russia:

"May I be permitted, before I descend from this tribune, to salute the noble nation whose worthy representatives you are.

"I salute also all Parties who to-day are bound together in the religion of the Fatherland (*Loud, prolonged and unanimous applause*).

"I salute our glorious youth who, efficiently organized, are marching to the frontier with heads erect and valiant hearts (*Loud applause*).

"Finally, I salute France! Behold her where she stands! Erect, with arched breast, she bears with untrembling hand the flag that protects our hopes and our pride (*Loud prolonged applause*).

"And now let us rise to the height of the glorious memories of our past; let us face our destiny; let us be men, and on our feet hail immortal France (*Loud prolonged applause: all the Deputies, standing, acclaim the President of the Council*)."⁴⁰

The closing speech of M. Paul Deschanel, President of the Chamber, was as follows:

"The representatives of the nation, a large number of whom are setting forth to fight under her flag and repulse a monstrous aggression, associate themselves with the Government and offer to France in arms their admiration, their steadfast devotion and their trust in her indomitable courage; for never has she risen to defend a juster cause (*Loud and repeated applause*).

"And let our arms on land and sea be blessed for the salvation of Civilization and Right! (*Loud applause*.)

"Long live France our Mother! Long live the Republic! (*Prolonged acclamations, and cries of 'Long live France; long live the Republic!'*)"⁴¹

³⁹ Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 159.

⁴⁰ Andriulli, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-5.

⁴¹ Andriulli, *op. cit.*, p. 95. It is instructive and interesting to contrast with these sensational appeals, the last few sentences of Sir Edward Grey's reasoned

Notre Devoir. The form of these speeches was, no doubt, dictated by the Ollivier injunction that when war has become inevitable, "notre devoir est de la rendre populaire."⁴² For, as M. Georges Demartial has said:

"Without being actually hostile to the Russian alliance the vast majority of public opinion in France only agree to it in the belief that it constituted a guarantee of peace, not that it contained a risk of war; that it was a mutual bond of insurance contracted by two pacific nations, and not a draft to order, for the benefit of Russia, to be made use of when it pleased Russia to do so. If, therefore, the French Government had announced on August 4, 1914, that the reason for France's entry into the war was the obligation she had contracted through the alliance to intervene on behalf of Russia in an Austro-Serbian conflict, there would undoubtedly have been opposition from a notable proportion of public opinion. This is unquestionable."⁴³

Comment. In these speeches there was no reference to the merits of the dispute between Austria-Hungary and Serbia; nor any suggestion of French interest in the quarrel; nor any reference to the assurances of French assistance to Russia prior to the alleged invasion of French territory and the declaration of war; nor any allusion to the refusal to make reply to Germany's request for definition of attitude. Referring to war-preparations, Viviani said that Russia mobilized against Austria-Hungary on the 29th; that on the 31st Germany declared "a state of danger of war" and —

"addressed an ultimatum to the Russian Government under the pretext that Russia had ordered a general mobilisation of her armies, and demanded that this mobilisation should be stopped within twelve hours";⁴⁴

and that on 1 August Germany declared war. The facts that Russia had secretly ordered mobilization against Germany on the 29th; and that Germany's "ultimatum" — a demand for cessation of preparations — was based not upon a "pretext," but upon the fact of Russian mobilization against her and Russia's refusal to cease,⁴⁵ were, of course, suppressed. "Notre devoir" was better discharged by declamatory references to the "attack, the hateful injustice of which is emphasized

statement to parliament on the 3d August: "Sir, I will say no more. This is not an occasion for controversial discussion. In all I have said, I believe I have not gone, either in the statement of our case or in my general description of the provision we think it necessary to make, beyond the strict bounds of truth. It is not my purpose — it is not the purpose of any patriotic man — to inflame feeling, to indulge in rhetoric, to excite international animosities. The occasion is far too grave for that. We have a great duty to perform, we have a great trust to fulfil, and confidently we believe that parliament and the country will enable us to do it."

⁴² See *post*, cap. XVIII.

⁴³ *Foreign Affairs*, Nov. 1919.

⁴⁴ *Fr. Yell. Bk.*, 1914, No. 159.

⁴⁵ See cap. XXVII.

by its calculated unexpectedness"; "the salvation of Civilization and Right"; and "the wound which Germany dealt us."

Later Acknowledgment. Recognizing that, after nearly three years of war, little harm could be done by contradicting the perfervid declamations of 4 August 1914, M. Ribot, Prime Minister of France, in a speech in the Chamber on 22 May 1917, said that France had entered the war "through fidelity to her engagements towards Russia." And on 11 January 1918, M. Pichon, the French Foreign Minister, made still franker declaration when he said that France had stressed her fidelity to these engagements:

"to the extent of an unforeseen duty — to the extent of defending, by the side of Russia, a Slav people."⁴⁶

But these statements were not quite complete, for if France had not been willing to welcome an opportunity of closing "the wound," she would never have stressed, or even acknowledged the existence of obligation to Russia. The circumstances would have been held to afford ample ground for denial of application of the treaty and conventions. Nations do not permit themselves to be plunged into life-and-death struggle by doubtful phraseology. Willing to fight, France could say that Germany was attacking Russia and that, therefore, the *casus foederis* existed. Unwilling, she would have said that Germany, in pursuance of well-known treaty obligation, was defending Austria-Hungary against Russia. The fact that it was Germany, and not Russia, who declared war would, of course, have been said to be immaterial. (The United Kingdom declared war against Germany, but could hardly be said to have been attacking her.) Had there been no "wound," France would not (prior to declaration of war) have given Russia warm assurance of support. And if France had withheld her assurance, Russia, almost certainly, would have remained quiescent. A few days prior to the initiation of hostilities (25 July), the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg reported that the Russian Foreign Minister had said to him:

"that Russia could not allow Austria to crush Servia and become the predominant Power in the Balkans; and, if she feels secure of the support of France, she will face all the risks of war."⁴⁷

In his recent book, *The Origins of the War*, Poincaré made enlightening reply to the speeches of 4 August with reference to the outbreak of hostilities. He relates the interview with the German Ambassador; reveals that French mobilization was ordered three days prior to the speeches;⁴⁸ and admits that the reason for withholding a declaration of war against Germany on that day was a matter of tactics. He says that when the Russian Ambassador, at 11.30 P.M. of the 1st

⁴⁶ *Foreign Affairs*, November 1919.

⁴⁷ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 17.

⁴⁸ Morning of the 1st: p. 248.

August, inquired as to what France was going to do, he (Poincaré) said:

“My government is considering the matter, and I have no doubt that it will be ready to fulfill the obligations imposed upon us by the Alliance. But do not insist that we should declare war against Germany immediately. On the one hand, we have every interest in mobilizing as far as possible before the commencement of the inevitable hostilities; on the other hand, it will be much better that we should not, in adhering to the Alliance, have to declare war. If Germany declares war against us, the people of France will rise with greater ardour to defend its soil and its liberty.”⁴⁹

Why did France enter the War? We may, therefore, say of the reason which actuated France:

1. It was not because of her interest in Serbia, or because of any judgment as to the merits of the Serbian quarrel with Austria-Hungary.

2. It was not, simply, because of war-treaty with Russia.

3. France entered the war because of “the wound”; because the hour of *révanche* had arrived; because she felt confident of her military prowess; and because she deemed that her freedom from future menace could be secured only by the abasement of Germany.

4. In other words, France entered the war because urged thereto by her own interests.

5. As some evidence that France wanted war and incited Russia to adopt war policy, the following report of the Russian Ambassador at London (25 February 1913), written while the Ambassadors in London were endeavoring to settle the Balkan difficulty of that year, has often been quoted:

“Recalling his (M. Cambon’s) conversations with me, the words exchanged, and, adding to that, the attitude of M. Poincaré, the thought comes to me as a conviction that, of all the Powers, France is the only one which, not to say that it wishes war, would yet look upon it without great regret. In any case, nothing has shown me that France has actively contributed in working in the sense of a compromise. Now, compromise is peace; outside a compromise, it is war. . . . M. Cambon has confidential relations with me perhaps unique between Ambassadors. He shows me almost everything, more than I show him. . . . The situation, as I regard it, seems to be that all the Powers are sincerely working to maintain peace. But of all of them, it is France who would accept war the most philosophically. As has been said, France ‘stands erect once more.’ Rightly or wrongly, she has complete confidence in her army; the old ferment of animosity has again shown itself, and France would very well consider that the circumstances to-day are more favorable than they will ever be later.”⁵⁰

The judgment of the Ambassador was, to some extent, ill-founded.

⁴⁹ Pp. 248-9.

⁵⁰ *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 303, 306.

That Poincaré was not only "sincerely working to maintain peace" but was taking a very active part in the endeavor to find some solution of the Balkan affair, is rendered indisputable by the published diplomatic correspondence of the period.⁵¹ And with the exchanges there revealed ought to be read the report to the Czar of Sazonoff after his visit to Paris in September 1912 — prior to the outbreak of the Balkan wars⁵² and the report of Kokovtsef, President of the Russian Council, of 19 November 1913 — after the termination of the wars.⁵³ The Russian Ambassador was probably right in saying that, of all the Powers, France (or rather Poincaré) would have accepted war "the most philosophically," and "without great regret."

⁵¹ See Fr. Yell. Bk., *Balkan Affairs*, I and II.

⁵² *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 356.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 393-4.

CHAPTER V

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CONTRADICTIONARY ASSERTIONS

DIFFICULTY in formulating confident answer to the question, Why did the United Kingdom enter the war? arises (1) from the irreconcilable statements of Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey; (2) from the irreconcilable statements of Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Lloyd George; (3) from the irreconcilable statements of Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Bonar Law; (4) from the irreconcilable statements of Mr. Asquith; and (5) from the irreconcilable statements of Mr. Lloyd George. Observe the following. The proof will follow.

(1) Mr. Asquith asserted that one of the two reasons for entering the war was the existence of treaty-obligation to Belgium. Sir Edward Grey practically denied the existence of the obligation. Mr. Asquith asserted that the other of the two reasons was the protection of the smaller nationalities. Sir Edward Grey declared that he was uninterested in Austria-Hungary's attack upon Serbia, and Germany's invasion of Luxemburg. Sir Edward stressed British interests as the reason for war. Mr. Asquith asserted that "maintenance of its own selfish interests" was not the reason.

(2) Mr. Lloyd George declared that a letter given by Sir Edward Grey to the French Ambassador (22 November 1912) created "an obligation of honor" to France —

"that if she were wantonly attacked the United Kingdom would go to her support."

Sir Edward Grey asserted (3 August 1914) that he had done nothing which could restrict the freedom of the government, or of parliament, to do as it pleased. Sir Edward, with the approval of his colleagues, gave to the French Ambassador on the 2d August 1914 an assurance that the British fleet would protect the French coasts and French shipping as against German attack, thus making British neutrality impossible. Mr. Lloyd George asserted that but for the invasion of Belgium on 4th August the government would not have participated in the war.

(3) Mr. Bonar Law asserted that the United Kingdom was in honor bound to assist France. Sir Edward Grey denied it.

(4) Although, at the outbreak of the war, Mr. Asquith assigned, for British participation in it, the two reasons above mentioned, he afterwards (September and October 1917) asserted that what "we have been fighting for" was "a war for peace" and "a war against war"; and still later (20 December 1917), he declared that "the avowed purpose from the very first" was the establishment of "the League of Nations" — "for that — but nothing more or less than that."

(5) At one time Mr. Lloyd George asserted that his government would not have entered the war unless Belgium had been invaded. At another time, he asserted that the United Kingdom was under "the obligation of honor" above referred to.

Unable to answer, by reference to authority, the question, Why did the United Kingdom enter the war?, we must examine the subject for ourselves and we shall find:

I. Support of Serbia was not the reason, nor one of the reasons.

II. Nor was the "obligation of honor" to France, for that was repudiated.

III. Nor was the alleged obligation under the Belgian treaty, for there was none.

IV. Nor was the vindication "of the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed."

V. Nor was it to secure peace; "a war against war"; a "league of nations."

VI. Nor was it with a view to territorial aggrandisement.

VII. Maintenance of British interests was the sole reason for the United Kingdom entering the war.

I. SUPPORT OF SERBIA

If, in the case of a quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, the United Kingdom made no inquiry as to its merits, the reason is that, no matter where they lay, British interests demanded that the Serbian side — the French side — should be upheld. Sir Edward Grey's pre-war statements make his indifference to the merits clear. At various times within the few days prior to the commencement of hostilities, he said that:

"I hated the idea of a war between any of the Great Powers; and that any of them should be dragged into a war by Serbia would be detestable";¹

"the merits of the dispute between Austria and Serbia were not the concern of His Majesty's Government";² the United Kingdom had "not direct interests in Serbia";³ he did not "consider that public opinion here would, or ought to sanction our going to war over a Servian quarrel";⁴ he felt that he "had no title to intervene between Austria and Serbia."⁵ "In the present case, the dispute between Austria and Serbia was not one in which we felt called to take a hand."⁶

Sir George Buchanan, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, said to the Russian Foreign Minister (24 July) that:

"Direct British interests in Serbia were *nil*, and a war on behalf of that country would never be sanctioned by British public opinion."⁷ In the "Introductory Narrative of Events" in the *British White Book*, 1914, is the following:

"The dispute between Austria and Serbia . . . was a dispute between two Governments with which Great Britain had nothing to do. Sir E. Grey, therefore, consistently stated that he had no concern in the dispute; that he had no title to intervene between Austria and Serbia; that he would express no opinion on the merits of the ultimatum."⁸

Sir Edward carried his indifference to the merits of the quarrel to the extent of refusing to discuss them. In a despatch of 29 July, he said:

"The Austrian Ambassador told me to-day he had ready a long memorandum which he proposed to leave, and which he said gave an account of the conduct of Serbia towards Austria, and an explanation of how necessary the Austrian action was. I said that I did not wish to discuss the merits of the question between Austria and Serbia."⁹

¹ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 1.

² *Ibid.*, No. 5.

³ *Ibid.*, No. 10.

⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 24.

⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 25.

⁶ An interview with the French Ambassador: *ibid.*, No. 87.

⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 6.

⁸ P. v.

⁹ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 91.

British official opinion, as far as expressed, was sympathetic with Austria-Hungary. The British Ambassador at Vienna, reporting (on the very day upon which hostilities commenced) a conversation with the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, wrote to Sir Edward Grey:

"In taking leave of his Excellency, I begged him to believe that, if, in the course of present grave crisis, our point of view should sometimes differ from his, this would arise, not from want of sympathy with the many just complaints which Austria-Hungary had against Serbia, but from the fact that, whereas Austria-Hungary put first her quarrel with Serbia, you were anxious in the first instance for peace of Europe."¹⁰

In his final report (1 September 1914), several weeks after the outbreak of war, the Ambassador, referring to his conversation with the Austro-Hungarian Minister, said:

"I disclaimed any British lack of sympathy with Austria in the matter of her legitimate grievances against Serbia."¹¹

Referring to the state of public opinion in Austria, the Ambassador said:

"So just was the cause of Austria held to be, that it seemed to her people inconceivable that any country should place itself in her path, or that questions of mere policy or prestige should be regarded anywhere as superseding the necessity which had arisen to exact summary vengeance for the crime of Serajevo."¹²

Sir Edward Grey himself said (29 July 1914):

"There must of course be some humiliation of Serbia."¹³

When urging Austria-Hungary to accept mediation of the Powers, Sir Edward said (on the same day) to the Italian Ambassador, that:

"there would be no question of a humiliating retreat by Austria, as the Serbs would, in any case, be chastised, and, with Russia's approval, forced to subordinate themselves to Austria's wishes. Austria could thus obtain guarantees for the future without a war which would put the peace of Europe in danger."¹⁴

Just complaints in the one scale, British interests in the other. Which were the weightier? The present writer intends no condemnation. In support of the interests, much can be said. Some of it will subsequently be noted. All that is necessary to observe, at this point, is that protection of "a wantonly-attacked Serbia" was not the reason, or a factor in the reason, for the United Kingdom entering the war.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 62.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, No. 161.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*, No. 90.

¹⁴ Kautsky, *The Guilt of William Hohenzollern*, pp. 172-3; Kautsky Docs., No. 368.

II. THE REPUDIATED OBLIGATION TO FRANCE

The question as to the existence of an obligation to France depends upon the view to be taken of three factors: (1) long-standing friendship; (2) military and naval "conversations"; and (3) Sir Edward Grey's written engagement.

(1) **Long-standing Friendship.** Sir Edward Grey in his speech of 3 August 1914, referring to the "long-standing friendship with France," said:

"But how far that friendship entails obligation — it has been a friendship between the nations, and ratified by the nations — how far that entails an obligation, let every man look into his own heart, and his own feelings, and construe the extent of that obligation for himself. I construe it myself as I feel it, but I do not wish to urge upon anyone else more than their feelings dictate as to what they should feel about the obligation. The House, individually and collectively, may judge for itself. I speak my personal view, and I have given the House my own feeling in the matter."

Note that Sir Edward, for himself, derived obligation, as a matter of feeling, merely from the existence of "long-standing friendship."

(2) **Military and Naval Conversations.** In the same speech, Sir Edward, for the first time, permitted the public to know something of the nature of the assurances given to France and of the inception of the "conversations." Referring to an interview with the French Ambassador (probably early in January 1906), Sir Edward said:

"I — spending three days a week in my constituency and three days at the Foreign Office — was asked the question whether if that crisis developed into war between France and Germany we would give armed support. I said then that I could promise nothing to any foreign power unless it was subsequently to receive the whole-hearted support of public opinion here if the occasion arose. I said, in my opinion, if the war was forced upon France, then, on the question of Morocco — a question which had just been the subject of agreement between this country and France, an agreement exceedingly popular on both sides — that if, out of that agreement, war was forced upon France at that time, in my view public opinion in this country would have rallied to the material support of France. I gave no promise, but I expressed that opinion during the crisis, as far as I remember, almost in the same words, to the French Ambassador and the German Ambassador at the time. I made no promise, and I used no threats, but I expressed that opinion. That position was accepted by the French Government, but they said to me at the time — and I think very reasonably — 'If you think it possible that the public opinion of Great Britain might, should a sudden crisis arise, justify you in giving to France the armed support which you cannot promise in advance, you will not

be able to give that support, even if you wish to give it, when the time comes, unless some conversations have taken place between naval and military experts.' There was force in that. I agreed to it, and authorized those conversations to take place, but on the distinct understanding that nothing which passed between military or naval experts should bind either Government, or restrict in any way their freedom to make a decision as to whether or not they would give that support when the time arose.

"As I have told the House, upon that occasion a general election was in prospect. I had to take the responsibility of doing that without the Cabinet. It could not be summoned. An answer had to be given. I consulted Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the Prime Minister. I consulted, I remember, Lord Haldane, who was then Secretary of State for War, and the present Prime Minister, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer.¹⁵ That was the most I could do, and they authorized that, on the distinct understanding that it left the hands of the Government free whenever the crisis arose. The fact that conversations between military and naval experts took place was later on — I think much later on, because that crisis passed, and the thing ceased to be of importance — but later on it was brought to the knowledge of the Cabinet."

In making these statements, Sir Edward Grey was far from frank, either as to the impossibility of consulting the Cabinet, or as to the full extent of his commitments. Mr. Balfour's government resigned on 4 December 1905; it was immediately succeeded by that of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman; the ensuing election campaign was commenced at once; and was practically completed on 30 January 1906. The weekly Cabinet meetings were held regularly in December. One was held on 3 January, and another on 31 January, after which regular meetings were resumed. With these facts in mind, observe the following:

1. Sir Edward did not say whether his interview with the French Ambassador was in December or January. If in December, a Cabinet sat on 3 January. If in January, a Cabinet sat on the last day of the month.

¹⁵ In selecting Mr. Asquith and Mr. Haldane for consultation, Sir Edward chose the men who, with himself, belonged to the group known as "Liberal Imperialists" — a group which had approved the South African war. The Prime Minister was not of that group, and of him Lord Loreburn says: "Some of those who knew Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and were in close confidential relations with him in December 1905, will not believe that he understood the scope and significance of what was in fact done, unless some evidence of it is given" (*How the War Came*, p. 105). Probably as reply to this statement, Viscount Haldane has said: "Sir Edward Grey consulted the Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Asquith, and myself as War Minister" (*Before the War*, p. 30).

2. Lord Loreburn, who was a member of the Cabinet, has told us that:

"There was no difficulty whatever in summoning the Cabinet during the election to consider so grave a matter. A good many members of the Cabinet were in London or within an hour of it, while those whom he consulted were at a distance. And there are railways and post offices in Great Britain."¹⁶

The Morocco crisis did not pass until April, and, prior to that time, many Cabinet meetings had been held. Lord Loreburn says:

"This concealment from the Cabinet was protracted, and must have been deliberate. Parliament knew nothing of it till 3rd August 1914, nor anything of the change in policy which the suppressed communications denoted."¹⁷

Joint preparation for co-operation with France in war against Germany was much more elaborate than Sir Edward indicated. From January 1906 on, it was pursued without interruption, and military and naval conventions were signed relating to the number and character of British troops to be contributed; ports of landing; places of destination; concentration of the larger ships of the British navy in the North Sea and neighboring waters, and for commitment of the spécial charge of the Mediterranean to the French navy. Nevertheless, Sir Edward held that no obligation of honor to send assistance to France had been assumed. One would have imagined that if, in his view, "long-standing friendship" created some sort of obligation, the same friendship *plus* preparation for war-co-operation, and *plus* agreed distribution of the respective fleets, would have imposed an obligation both obvious to everybody and categorical. Sir Edward did not think so.

Sir Edward Grey's First Letter. In the same speech, Sir Edward said that, in the British Cabinet, in 1912:

"It was decided that we [the United Kingdom and France] ought to have a definite understanding in writing . . . that these conversations . . . were not to be binding upon the freedom of either government,"

and accordingly (22 November 1912) he handed to the French Ambassador a letter which he read to the House:

"My dear Ambassador, — From time to time in recent years the French and British naval and military experts have consulted together. It has always been understood that such consultation does not restrict the freedom of either Government to decide at any future time whether or not to assist the other by armed force. We have agreed that consultation between experts is not and ought not to be regarded as an engagement that commits either Government to action in a contingency

¹⁶ Loreburn, *op. cit.*, p. 80, and note.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

that has not yet arisen and may never arise. The disposition, for instance, of the French and British Fleets respectively at the present moment is not based upon an agreement to co-operate in war.

"You have, however, pointed out that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, it might become essential to know whether it could in that event depend upon the armed assistance of the other.

"I agree that if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, or something that threatened the general peace, it should immediately discuss with the other whether both Governments should act together to prevent aggression and to preserve peace, and, if so, what measures they would be prepared to take in common."

Not wishing to disclose the fact that the consultations had resulted in written conventions, Sir Edward refrained from reading the last sentence of his letter. It was as follows:

"If these measures involved action, the plans of the General Staffs would at once be taken into consideration, and the Governments would then decide what effect should be given to them."¹⁸

The plans were elaborated in lengthy documents signed by the Chiefs of the two Staffs.¹⁹

Observe that the obligation of the letter may be reduced to this:

(1) "If either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, it might become essential "for the party expecting attack" to know whether it could, in that event, depend upon the armed assistance of the other."

(2) For the future, therefore, there shall be, upon the happening of that (or another) contingency, an obligation to discuss "whether it could . . . depend upon the armed assistance of the other."

A promise to "discuss" co-operation in war carries with it, as is well known, an obligation to endeavor to arrive at agreement with a view to the indicated action, and thus Major-General Sir George Aston, when referring to the letter, said:

"Although, technically, it may be true that these words bound us only to 'discuss,' they could be read only in one way in the controversy which arose. We were in honor bound to stand by France, and France by us, if either should be wantonly attacked by Germany without provocation."²⁰

For example, the war-agreement between France and Russia of 21-27 August 1891 has no more obligatory words than "qu'ils se concerteront"

¹⁸ The next day, M. Viviani read the letter in full to the French Chamber of Deputies: *Fr. Yell. Bk.*, 1914, No. 159.

¹⁹ *Cf.* Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff, 23 May 1914: Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 721-2.

²⁰ *Nineteenth Century*, Nov. 1918, p. 819.

in one clause, and "les deux parties conviennent de s'entendre" in the other, but both Powers understood that these words imposed obligation to agree. By a clause, too, of the Triple Alliance, Germany engaged, only after "a formal and previous agreement," to support Italy. Such promises either include an undertaking to arrive at agreements, if at all possible, or they mean nothing at all. Other examples could be cited.

Existence of Obligation. Notwithstanding all these factors — the long-standing friendship; the co-operation in military preparation; and the letter — Sir Edward maintained stoutly, both in the diplomatic exchanges prior to the war and in his speech in the House of Commons, that nothing had occurred which limited in any way the perfect freedom of the government to do as it pleased. In the course of the speech, he said that:

"as regards our freedom to decide in a crisis what our line should be, whether we should intervene or whether we should abstain, the Government remained perfectly free, and, *a fortiori*, the House of Commons remains perfectly free . . . we do not construe anything which has previously taken place in our diplomatic relations with other Powers in this matter as restricting the freedom of the Government to decide what attitude they should take now, or restrict the freedom of the House of Commons to decide what their attitude should be."

For condemnation of this assertion, one need not depend upon one's own view. The opinions of Mr. Lloyd George, the Marquess of Crewe, and Mr. Winston Churchill (all members of the government) and of Lord Lansdowne, Mr. Bonar Law, and Mr. Austen Chamberlain (the leaders of the opposition) may well be regarded as conclusive. Mr. Lloyd George said (7 August 1918) in the House of Commons, that, when the war began:

"we had a compact with France that if she were wantonly attacked the United Kingdom would go to her support."

Mr. Herbert Samuel having challenged the statement, Mr. Lloyd George referred to Sir Edward's letter of 22 November 1912 to the French Ambassador, and said that:

"it was an obligation of honor. . . . I think the phrase 'obligation of honor' would be a more correct description of what actually took place than the word 'compact,' and certainly it was not a treaty. I had nothing in my mind except the letter when I spoke, and I think the matter ought to be put right at once."

The Marquess of Crewe (another of Sir Edward's colleagues), speaking in the House of Lords, on 6 August 1914, said:

"But when the understanding with France came about, the position to a certain extent automatically changed. The direct effect of that understanding was the weakening of the French maritime defence in the Channel, and the corresponding weakening of our maritime defence in the Mediterranean. Your Lordships will see that that result was

inevitable, without any formal arrangement between the two Powers that each should fill the gap left by the other. Moreover, there was no formal arrangement of that kind. We had no arrangement with France to defend France in the Channel; she had not agreed to take our place in the Mediterranean. But that position was the inevitable result of the friendly agreement between the two Powers, since neither kept a large force in a place at which it could only be directed against the other. That was the effect of our friendship upon the distribution of the fleet."

Mr. Churchill held the same opinion. In the first volume of his book *The World Crisis*, he writes as follows:

"From the moment that the Fleets of France and Britain were disposed in this new way our common naval interests became very important. And the moral claims which France could make upon Great Britain if attacked by Germany, whatever we stipulated to the contrary, were enormously extended."²¹

"It is true that our *entente* with France and the military and naval conversations that had taken place since 1906 had led us into a position where we had the obligations of an alliance without its advantages. An open alliance, if it could have been peacefully brought about at an earlier date, would have exercised a deterring effect upon the German mind, or at the least would have altered their military calculations. Whereas now we were morally bound to come to the aid of France, and it was our interest to do so, and yet the fact that we should come in appeared so uncertain that it did not weigh as it should have done with the Germans."²²

In a memorandum which Churchill sent to Sir Edward Grey on 23 August 1912, with reference to the agreed disposition of the two fleets, was the following:

"Every one must feel who knows the facts that we have the obligations of an alliance without its advantages, and above all without its precise definitions."²³

Sir Edward Grey's letter of 22 November²⁴ was written after this date.

The Marquess of Lansdowne (the leader of the Opposition), on 6 August 1914, said:

"Under one category there fall our treaty obligations to Belgium, and I am sure your Lordships must have observed with admiration the gallant attempt which the Belgian army has made to stand up against the overpowering odds in the defence of the City of Liège. To the other category belong our obligations to France — obligations of honor which have grown up in consequence of the close intimacy by which the two nations have been united during the last few eventful years. I say un-

²¹ Pp. 114-5.

²² P. 217.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

²⁴ *Ante*, p. 117-8.

hesitatingly that if the Government of this country had ignored either one class of obligations or the other, we should never have been able to look either friends or enemies in the face again.”²⁵

Mr. Bonar Law held the same view. In his speech of 6 August 1914, when approving of the war, he said:

“What other course was open to us? It is quite true, as the Foreign Secretary explained to the House the other day, that we were under no formal obligation to take part in such a struggle, but every Member in this House knows that the *Entente* meant this in the minds of this Government and of every other Government, that if any of the three Powers was attacked aggressively the others would be expected to step in to give their aid.”²⁶

That Mr. Bonar Law believed his country to be under an obligation of honor to assist France is also apparent from his letter to Mr. Asquith of 2 August 1914 — that is, prior to any suggestion of a German invasion of Belgium:

“Dear Mr. Asquith, — Lord Lansdowne and I feel it our duty to inform you that in our opinion, as well as in that of all the colleagues whom we have been able to consult, it would be fatal to the honor and security of the United Kingdom to hesitate in supporting France and Russia at the present juncture; and we offer our unhesitating support to the Government in any measures that they may consider necessary for that object.”²⁷

Lord Loreburn — Lord Chancellor in the Asquith administration until his resignation in June 1912 — after referring in his book *How the War Came* to Mr. Lloyd George’s assertion that the government would not have entered the war had not Belgium been invaded, added:

“What he said at this interview²⁸ expresses what a very great number of people would have thought and said if they had really been free to decide what the interest of this country required. But the truth was, as Mr. Lloyd George afterwards discovered, that we were not free to decide. The nation found itself bound by obligations of honor contracted toward France in this war, whether Belgium were invaded or not.”²⁹

After the war-excitement had subsided, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, the leader of the House of Commons, said (8 February 1922):

“We found ourselves on a certain Monday listening to a speech by Lord Grey, at this Box, which brought us face to face with war and upon which followed our declaration. That was the first public

²⁵ Hansard, XVII, cols. 424-5.

²⁶ Hansard, LXV, col. 2084.

²⁷ Loreburn, *How the War Came*, p. 210; Stowell, *The Diplomacy of the War of 1914*, p. 343. For the origin of the letter, see J. L. Maxse in *The National Rev.*, Aug. 1918.

²⁸ Interview published by *Pearson’s Magazine*, March 1915.

²⁹ P. 243.

notification to the country or to anyone by the Government of the day of the position of the British Government and of the obligations which it had assumed. It is true that Lord Grey, speaking at this Box, said that it was for the House of Commons to decide whether they would enter into war or not. Was the House of Commons free to decide? Relying upon the arrangements made between the two Governments, the French coasts were undefended — I am not speaking of Belgium but of France. There had been the closest negotiations and arrangements between our two Governments and our two Staffs. There was not a word on paper binding this country, but in honor it was bound as it had never been bound before — I do not say wrongfully; I think rightly.”

To all this may be added that Sir Edward Grey's explanation in parliament of his reason for giving to the French Ambassador the letter of 2 August 1914 was of itself an admission of the existence of an obligation to France. He said:

“We feel strongly that France was entitled to know — and to know at once — whether or not, in the event of attack upon her unprotected Northern and Western coasts, she could depend upon British support.”

But “France was entitled to know” only because of his letter³⁰ which recited that:

“if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, it might become essential to know. . . .”

That, in Sir Edward's view, created an obligation to give the information. And note that what “France was entitled to know” was not limited to the question of naval support. It was whether she could “depend upon the armed assistance” of the United Kingdom.

Sir Edward Grey's Repudiation. France had been “entitled to know” for several days before she could find out. She made every effort to ascertain whether she could “depend upon British support,” with the following result: On 29 July (the day after Austria-Hungary and Serbia commenced hostilities — when France had “grave reason to suspect an unprovoked attack”) Sir Edward Grey said to the French Ambassador that:

“If Germany became involved and France became involved, we had not made up our minds what we should do; it was a case that we should have to consider.”³¹

On the 30th, the French government pressed for a declaration:

³⁰ *Ante*, p. 117-8. When handling the assurance to the French Ambassador on 2 Aug. 1914, Sir Edward Grey said to him that “it was essential to the French Government, whose fleet has long been concentrated in the Mediterranean, to know how to make their dispositions with their north coast entirely undefended”: *Br. Blue Bk.*, 1914, No. 148.

³¹ *Ibid.*, No. 87.

“that England would come to the aid of France in the event of a conflict between France and Germany.”³²

On the same day, Sir Edward Grey wrote to the Ambassador at Paris:

“M. Cambon³³ reminded me to-day of the letter I had written to him two years ago, in which we agreed that, if the peace of Europe was seriously threatened, we would discuss what we were prepared to do. I enclose for convenience of reference copies of the letter in question and of M. Cambon’s reply. He said that the peace of Europe was never more seriously threatened than it was now. He did not wish to ask me to say directly that we would intervene, but he would like me to say what we should do if certain circumstances arose. The particular hypothesis he had in mind was an aggression by Germany on France. . . . I said that the Cabinet was to meet to-morrow morning, and I would see him again to-morrow afternoon.”³⁴

When the French Ambassador waited upon Sir Edward, in pursuance of the “I would see him again to-morrow afternoon” (the 31st — the day of the Russian announcement of mobilization against Germany; the German demand for cessation; and the German enquiry as to the attitude of France), Sir Edward said, as he himself related:

“I said that we had come to the conclusion, in the Cabinet to-day, that we could not give any pledge at the present time. Though we should have to put our policy before Parliament, we could not pledge Parliament in advance. Up to the present moment, we did not feel, and public opinion did not feel, that any treaties or obligations of this country were involved. Further developments might alter this situation and cause the Government and Parliament to take the view that intervention was justified. . . . M. Cambon repeated his question whether we would help France if Germany made an attack on her. I said that I could only adhere to the answer that, so far as things had gone at present, we could not take any engagement. M. Cambon urged that Germany from the beginning rejected proposals that might have made for peace. It could not be England’s interest that France should be crushed by Germany. We should then be in a very diminished position in regard to Germany. In 1870, we had made a great mistake in allowing an enormous increase of German strength, and we should now be repeating the mistake. He asked me whether I could not submit his question to the Cabinet again. I said that the Cabinet would certainly be summoned as soon as there was some new development, but at the present moment the only answer I could give was that we could not undertake any definite engagement.”³⁵

³² *Ibid.*, No. 99.

³³ French Ambassador at London.

³⁴ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 105.

³⁵ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 119. Cf. Sir Edward’s letter to the British Ambassador at Paris: *Ibid.*, No. 116.

Sir Edward's reference to parliamentary action was mere evasion. The obligation of the letter was to arise in anticipation of trouble, and it provided for the formation of policy by consultation between *governments*. It could not be escaped by saying that "we could not pledge *parliament* in advance." For engagements to foreign countries, the British government does not need the permission of parliament. Nor does it need permission to implement its engagements.

Sir Edward's attitude being extremely unsatisfactory to the French government, the French Foreign Minister made appeal to the British Ambassador at Paris (same day — 31st):

"He is urgently anxious," the British Ambassador telegraphed, "as to what the attitude of England will be in the circumstances, and begs an answer may be made by His Majesty's Government at the earliest moment possible."³⁶

On the same day, the President of the French Republic sent a telegram direct to the British King, in which, after declaring that:

"if . . . Germany were convinced that the *entente cordiale* would be affirmed in case of need, even to the extent of taking the field side by side, there would be the greatest chance that peace would remain unbroken,"

he added, by way of courteous, diplomatic reminder:

"It is true that our military and naval arrangements leave complete liberty to Your Majesty's Government, and that in the letters exchanged in 1912 between Sir Edward Grey and M. Paul Cambon, Great Britain and France entered into nothing more than a mutual agreement to consult one another in the event of European tension, and to examine in concert whether common action were advisable."

Continuing, the President referred to the friendship and confidence between the two countries, which:

"justify me in informing you quite frankly of my impressions, which are those of the Government of the Republic and all France."³⁷

The reply of the King (1 August) was another aggravating evasion, for, while making proper expression of cordial feeling, he said that his ministers would:

"continue to discuss freely and frankly any point which might arise of interest to our two nations with M. Cambon."³⁸

The point for discussion had arisen — the point mentioned in Sir Edward Grey's letter, "whether both governments should act together to prevent aggression." And all possibility of consultation upon that point — the only point — had previously been rendered impossible by Sir Edward Grey's statement that "we could not pledge parliament in

³⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 124. Cf. No. 117.

³⁷ Coll. Dip. Docs., p. 543; Loreburn, *How the War Came*, pp. 205, 206.

³⁸ Coll. Dip. Docs., p. 544; Loreburn, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

advance"; that is by Sir Edward Grey's substitution, in his letter, of *parliament* for "government."

Sir Edward Grey's Second Letter. French anxiety was partly relieved on the first of August when Sir Edward said to the French Ambassador (as the Ambassador reported) that he would propose to his colleagues that the British fleet would:

"oppose the passage of the Straits of Dover by the German fleet, or, if the German fleet should pass through (*venaient à le passer*), will oppose any demonstration on the French coasts. These two questions will be dealt with at the meeting on Monday. I drew the attention of the Secretary of State to the point that if, during this intervening period, any incident took place, it was necessary not to allow a surprise, and that it would be desirable to think of intervening in time."³⁹

On the evening of the same day, Grey said to Churchill:

"You should know that I have just done a very important thing. I have told Cambon that we shall not allow the German fleet to come into the Channel."⁴⁰

Having the next morning (Sunday) obtained the approval of the Cabinet, Grey in the afternoon handed to the French Ambassador the following note:

"I am authorized to give an assurance that if the German fleet comes into the Channel, or through the North Sea, to undertake hostile operations against French coasts or shipping, the British fleet will give all the protection in its power. This assurance is, of course, subject to the policy of His Majesty's Government receiving the support of Parliament, and must not be taken as binding His Majesty's Government to take any action until the above contingency of action by the German fleet takes place."⁴¹

This letter was given five days after the declaration of war by Austria-Hungary; two days after Russian announcement of mobilisation; one day after expiry of Germany's time limit to Russia; at the very moment when the German fleet might have been commencing its "hostile operations against French coasts or shipping"; on Sunday, when immediate submission "for the support of parliament" was impracticable; and in pursuance of the conversation with the French Ambassador on the previous day. It may safely be assumed that orders to the British fleet, in accordance with the assurance given to the Ambassador, were issued on the Sunday morning, if not indeed the previous evening as a consequence of Grey's statement to Churchill. The extent of Sir Edward's real deference to parliament may be judged by these facts and from this also, that in his speech of 3 August (delivered prior to any action by

³⁹ Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 126. Cf. Poincaré, *The Origins of the War*, pp. 251-3.

⁴⁰ Churchill, *op. cit.*, I, p. 231.

⁴¹ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 148.

parliament), after stating (very vaguely) the policy of his government, he added:

“What other policy is there before the House? There is but one way in which the Government could make certain at the present moment of keeping outside this war, and that would be that it should immediately issue a proclamation of unconditional neutrality. We cannot do that. We have made the commitment to France that I have read to the House which prevents us from doing that.”

Moreover, in a conversation with the French Ambassador (the same day, and prior to the speech), Sir Edward said that from the moment of the intervention contemplated by the letter, “Great Britain and Germany would be in a state of war.”⁴² That might have happened at any moment.

The British Cabinet. The perplexities of the British Cabinet, and the consequent embarrassment of Sir Edward Grey, during the ten days preceding the British ultimatum to Germany on 4 August, are now generally understood. Referring to the Cabinet meeting of 26 July, *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy* has the following:

“The Cabinet could naturally choose which it preferred; but, if it chose neutrality, he” (Grey) “was not the man to carry out such a policy. The meeting ended without a decision, and without a clear indication on which side it would ultimately fall. Cabinet discussions and sectional meetings continued throughout the week, Ministers being divided almost equally into interventionists and neutralists, though both sides were equally anxious for the success of the Foreign Secretary’s efforts to avert the dread catastrophe.”⁴³

More authoritatively, but probably not more accurately, Mr. Churchill has said:

“Suppose again that now after the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia” (23 July) “the Foreign Secretary had proposed to the Cabinet that if matters were so handled that Germany attacked France or violated Belgian territory, Great Britain would declare war upon her. Would the Cabinet have assented to such a communication? I cannot believe it.”⁴⁴

“Meanwhile events were influencing opinion hour by hour. When the Cabinet met on Sunday morning” (2 August) “we were in presence of the violation of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg by the German troops.”⁴⁵

“The Cabinet sat almost continuously throughout Sunday, and up to luncheon-time it looked as if the majority would resign. The grief

⁴² Fr. Yell Bk., 1914, No. 143.

⁴³ III, p. 493.

⁴⁴ *The World Crisis*, I, p. 216. See also pp. 228-9.

⁴⁵ P. 234.

and horror of so many able colleagues were painful to witness. But what could any one do? ”⁴⁶

Very clearly, neither the violation of the neutrality of Luxemburg or Belgium, nor the existence of the “obligation of honor” to France would, up to mid-day Sunday, the 2d August, have been regarded by the Cabinet as a reason for entering the war. Mr. Churchill continues:

“In the luncheon interval I saw Mr. Balfour, a veritable rock in times like these, and learned that the Unionist leaders had tendered formally in writing to the Prime Minister their unqualified assurances of support.”⁴⁷

The reference is to the Bonar Law note already quoted.⁴⁸ The German ultimatum to Belgium was delivered on the same day at 7 P.M.; but the fact was not known until the next day (Monday) after Sir Edward Grey had, in the afternoon, finished his speech. Mr. Churchill, continuing his narrative, tells us that:

“Before the Cabinet separated on Monday morning, Sir Edward Grey had procured a predominant assent to the principal points and general tone of his statement to Parliament that afternoon.”⁴⁹

But, beyond the giving of this letter, there was, as yet, no determination as to action or inaction.

Previous Deception. The existence of an “obligation of honor” being (as we may now say) indisputable, one might have imagined, *a priori*, that the present chapter could have been reduced to a single page: The United Kingdom entered the war because of her obligation to France. But no such easy disposition of the matter can be made. For the engagement was repudiated, as we have seen, by the familiar method of falsifying the interpretation of the letter and ignoring the previous course of conduct. The reason for that course of action may have been dissension in the Cabinet, and the dissensions may have been caused by Sir Edward’s concealment of his proceedings from his colleagues.⁵⁰ We do not know. But the fact that he had previously, in the House of Commons, publicly denied the existence of obligation made admission of it, to the House and the public, impossible. Four months after his first letter to the French Ambassador (22 November 1912) had been delivered, Sir Robert Cecil said (10 March 1913) in the House:

“There is a very general belief that this country is under an obligation, not a Treaty obligation, but an obligation arising out of an

⁴⁶ P. 232.

⁴⁷ P. 232.

⁴⁸ *Ante*, p. 121.

⁴⁹ P. 234.

⁵⁰ Concealment similar to that which he practiced upon them in 1906: *Ante* pp. 116-7.

assurance given by the Ministry, in the course of diplomatic negotiations, to send a very large armed force out of this country to operate in Europe. That is the general belief."

Notwithstanding all that had taken place — the assurance of 1905-6,⁵¹ the military and naval "conversations," the strategic dispositions of the fleets, and the letter — Mr. Asquith said, "I ought to say that is not true." Two weeks afterwards (24 March), he said:

"As has been repeatedly stated, this country is not under any obligation, not public and known to Parliament, which compels it to take part in a war. In other words, if war arises between European Powers, there are no unpublished agreements which will restrict or hamper the freedom of the Government or Parliament to decide whether or not Great Britain should participate in a war."

Thirteen months afterwards (April 1914), Sir Edward Grey, at Paris, gave (as we shall see⁵²) ample assurance of support both to Russia and to France. Five days after his return (28 April), he was asked:

"Whether he is aware that demands have recently been put forward for a further military understanding between the Powers of the Triple Entente with a view to concerted action on the Continent in the case of certain eventualities, and whether the policy of this country still remains one of freedom from all obligations to engage in military operations on the Continent."

And he replied:

"The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative, and as regards the latter part, the question now remains the same as stated by the Prime Minister in answer to a question in this House on March 24, 1913."

Rumors of further negotiations having led (11 June 1914) to another interpellation, Sir Edward Grey said:

"The hon. Member for North Somerset asked a similar question last year with regard to military forces, and the hon. Member for North Salford asked a similar question also on the same day, as he has again done to-day. The Prime Minister then replied that if war arose between European Powers, there were no unpublished agreements which would restrict or hamper the freedom of the Government or of Parliament to decide whether or not Great Britain should participate in a war. That answer covers both the questions on the Paper. It remains as true to-day as it was a year ago. No negotiations have since been concluded with any Power that would make the statement less true. No such negotiations are in progress, and none are likely to be entered upon so far as I can judge. But if any agreement were to be concluded that made it necessary to withdraw or modify the Prime Min-

⁵¹ See cap. XVII.

⁵² Sir Edward's commitments to France and Russia are dealt with in cap. XVII.

ister's statement of last year, which I have quoted, it ought, in my opinion, to be, and I suppose that it would be, laid before Parliament." ⁵³

Embarrassed by all these misstatements, Sir Edward felt constrained, in his speech of 3 August 1914, to persist (save in his slip when referring to his letter of 2 August) in the denial of any obligation to France. Mr. J. A. R. Marriott must have overlooked Sir Edward's denials and final repudiation when he declared, with reference to naval support of France:

"That we should have acted otherwise — that we should have accepted the naval assistance of France in the Mediterranean and then have left her northern coast at the mercy of the German marine — is happily unthinkable." ⁵⁴

Until the 2d of August, the British government could not decide whether the "unthinkable" was, or was not, to happen.

"Obligation of honor" or Public Opinion? The question with which we have been dealing cannot be dismissed without reference to the following statement of Lord Loreburn:

"The answer to this question, in a single sentence, is that we were brought into the war because Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey and their confidants, by steps some of which are known while others may be unknown, had placed us in such a position toward France, and therefore also toward Russia, that they found they could not refuse to take up arms on her behalf when it came to the issue, even though, till the end, they denied it to Parliament, and probably even to themselves." ⁵⁵

But if the noble Earl means that but for the "steps" to which he refers the United Kingdom would not have entered the war — that the government wished to remain neutral, but "found they could not refuse to take up arms," he is attributing to the government a perplexity that, for them, did not exist, and overlooking the one that did. For the "obligation of honor" was repudiated; and the difficulty of the government lay not in the "steps," but in uncertainty as to public opinion.

The first of these assertions has already been substantiated. The quotations supplied have made certain that, during the diplomatic interchanges which preceded the war, Sir Edward Grey steadily declined to acknowledge the existence of any obligation to France; and that the Cabinet declined to implement the obligation which, very clearly, did exist. The second of the assertions — that the government was postponing decision until the drift of public opinion had been made sufficiently clear — is unmistakably deducible from several of Sir Edward Grey's diplomatic statements prior to the war. When pressed

⁵³ Hansard, LXIII, cols. 457-8.

⁵⁴ *The European Commonwealth*, p. 159.

⁵⁵ *How the War Came*, p. 183.

by France as to the effect upon British attitude of a German invasion of Belgium, Sir Edward, declining to acknowledge obligation in that respect, invariably referred to public opinion as the determining factor. Quotation of his statements will appear on subsequent pages. Meanwhile an extract from Mr. Lloyd George may be offered. Asserting that prior to the invasion of Belgium ninety-five per cent. of the British electors would have voted against war, while after the invasion ninety-nine per cent. would have voted in favor of it, he said:

"The revolution in public sentiment was attributable entirely to an attack made by Germany on a small and unprotected country which had done her no wrong, and what Britain was not prepared to do for interests political and commercial, she readily risked to help the weak and helpless. Our honor as a nation is involved in this war, because we are bound in an honorable obligation to defend the independence, the liberty, the integrity of a small neighbor that has lived peaceably; but she could not have compelled us, being weak. The man who declined to discharge his debt because his creditor is too poor to enforce it, is a blackguard. . . . But this I know is true — after the guarantee given that the German Fleet would not attack the coast of France or annex any French territory. I would not have been a party to a declaration of war, had Belgium not been invaded, and I think I can say the same thing for most, if not all, of my colleagues. If Germany had been wise, she would not have set foot on Belgian soil. The Liberal Government then would not have intervened. Germany made a grave mistake."⁵⁶

No such guarantee had been given. Germany had offered it in exchange for British neutrality, but Sir Edward Grey had declined to agree. He wanted to give France whole-hearted support, but it was probably only with the help of the Bonar Law letter pledging the support of the Opposition that he was able to prevail upon a majority of the Cabinet to give to France assurance of naval protection.⁵⁷ At that moment, Mr. Lloyd George declares, ninety-five per cent. of the British electors would have voted against war. Change in public sentiment, and not obligation of any kind (there was none to Belgium) was that which harmonized — or rather that which nearly harmonized — the Cabinet.

⁵⁶ An interview with Mr. Lloyd George published in *Pearson's Magazine*, March 1915. Quoted in Loreburn, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-2. Cf. Norman Angell, *The Fruits of Victory*, pp. 103-7. In a despatch from London, the German Ambassador said (4 Aug.): "The news which reached here yesterday with reference to the invasion of the German troops in Belgium has completely turned public opinion against us. The appeal, in moving terms, of the King of Belgium has intensified greatly this impression": Kautsky Docs., No. 820. Cf. Churchill, *op. cit.*, I, p. 215.

⁵⁷ *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, p. 502.

When delivering his speech in the House of Commons on the afternoon of 3 August, Sir Edward hesitated to declare for war. He was waiting for, and endeavoring to evoke expression of favorable public opinion. After the speech, the German Ambassador reported a conversation with Sir W. Tyrrell (Sir Edward Grey's private secretary) in which the latter said:

"that the question whether the entry of German troops into Belgium would lead England to abandon her neutrality was a question which could not for the moment be answered affirmatively or negatively."⁵⁸ The reception accorded by the House to Sir Edward's speech had made war almost certain, but even the secretary still could not be sure of it.

Conclusions. The above recital and some extracts which will shortly follow make clear (1) that an "obligation of honor" to assist France did exist; (2) that, owing to previous misstatements in the House of Commons, and, possibly, Sir Edward's concealment from his own colleagues, the existence of the obligation could not be acknowledged in his speech of 3 August; (3) that it was evaded and, in effect, repudiated; (4) that the hesitation of the government must be attributed not to a doubt as to the existence of the obligation to France, but to uncertainty as to public opinion; and (5) that, consequently, it cannot be said that obligation to France was the reason for the United Kingdom entering the war. For the last of these conclusions, the facts that (1) Sir Edward Grey placed responsibility for British action upon the House of Commons, and (2) that the House was told that it was "perfectly free" to act as it pleased, are alone amply sufficient support.

III. OBLIGATION UNDER THE BELGIAN TREATY

In his speech of 6 August 1914, Mr. Asquith said that one of the two things "we are fighting for" was:

"to fulfil a solemn international obligation, an obligation which, if it had been entered into between private persons in the ordinary concerns of life, would have been regarded as an obligation not only of law but of honor, which no self-respecting man could possibly have repudiated."

Mr. Lloyd George, too, as we have seen, declared that the United Kingdom was:

"bound in an honorable obligation to defend the independence, the liberty, the integrity of a small neighbor."

To these statements, there are at least four lines of reply:

1. The reference in them is to the Belgian treaty (really treaties) of 1839, and it contains (as proved in a later chapter) no obligation to defend Belgium or Belgian neutrality. In his ante-war despatches,

⁵⁸ Kautsky Docs., No. 799.

Sir Edward Grey made clear that in his opinion no such obligation existed.

2. Sir Edward Grey did not desire Belgian neutrality. He refused to agree to British neutrality on condition that Germany refrained from invasion of Belgium; and he urged Belgium to resist.

3. Before the German invasion of Belgium had commenced or been threatened, Sir Edward Grey, by his letter of 2 August, had made neutrality impossible.

4. Although, for rallying purposes, Mr. Asquith told the public that they were fighting in pursuance of high moral duty, the efficacy of that sort of appeal disappeared under the stress of protracted war and was discarded.

1. No Treaty Obligation. Although, in his speech in the House of Commons on 3 August 1914, Sir Edward Grey, by referring to "those obligations of honor and interest as regards the Belgian treaty," paid some kind of indefinite homage to M. Ollivier's dictum that when war has become inevitable, "*notre devoir est de la rendre populaire*," he had previously (in his diplomatic correspondence), made clear that in his opinion no treaty obligation to withstand a German invasion of Belgium existed. On 31 July, in a telegram to the British Ambassador at Paris, he said that he had stated to the French Ambassador at London that he could at the moment make no promise as to intervention.

"Further developments," he said, "might alter this situation and cause the Government and Parliament to take the view that intervention was justified. The preservation of the neutrality of Belgium might be, I would not say a decisive, but an important factor in determining our attitude."⁵⁹

Why it would be an important factor, Sir Edward stated in a telegram (1 August) to the British Ambassador at Berlin:

"I told the German Ambassador to-day that the reply of the German Government with regard to the neutrality of Belgium was a matter of very great regret, because the neutrality of Belgium affected feeling in this country. If Germany could see her way to give the same assurance as that which had been given by France, it would materially contribute to relieve anxiety and tension here. On the other hand, if there was a violation of the neutrality of Belgium by one combatant while the other respected it, it would be extremely difficult to restrain public feeling in this country. I said that we had been discussing this question at a Cabinet meeting, and, as I was authorized to tell him this, I gave him a memorandum of it. He asked me whether if Germany gave a promise not to violate Belgian neutrality, we would engage to remain neutral. I replied that I could not say that; our hands were still free, and we were considering what our attitude should be. All I could say was that our attitude would be determined largely by public

⁵⁹ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 119.

opinion here, and that the neutrality of Belgium would appeal very strongly to public opinion here. I did not think that we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone.”⁶⁰

In other words, “our attitude would be determined,” not by the terms of any treaty, but by “public feeling.”⁶¹ On the next day (2 August), Sir Edward stated, in a telegram to the British Ambassador at Paris, the effect of a conversation with the French Ambassador:

“M. Cambon asked me about the violation of Luxemburg. I told him the doctrine on that point laid down by Lord Derby and Lord Clarendon in 1867. He asked me what we should say about the violation of the neutrality of Belgium. I said that was a much more important matter; we were considering what statement we should make in Parliament to-morrow — in effect, whether we should declare violation of Belgian neutrality to be a *casus belli*.”⁶²

These extracts make clear either (1) that the government did not think that they were under obligation to defend Belgium, or (2) that they were considering whether they would repudiate it. The first of these views may be accepted. That there was, in fact, no such obligation will be proved in a later chapter.⁶³ For the present it will suffice to point out the distinction between an obligation on the part of Germany to respect the neutrality of Belgium, and an obligation on the part of the United Kingdom to compel Germany to respect her promises. The former existed. The latter did not. And it was because Germany’s breach of her obligation gave to the United Kingdom a right to intervene, and not because of the existence of an obligation to intervene that the United Kingdom declared war. The British ultimatum declared:

“that His Majesty’s Government feel bound to take all steps in their power to uphold the neutrality of Belgium and the observance of a treaty to which Germany is as much a party as ourselves”

The King’s speech at prorogation (18 September) contained the following:

“After every endeavor had been made by my government to preserve the peace of the world, I was compelled in the assertion of treaty obligations deliberately set at naught, and for the protection of the public laws of Europe, and the vital interests of my empire, to go to war.”

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 123. See the German Ambassador’s account of this interview in Coll. Dip. Docs., p. 541. It appears also in Kautsky Docs., No. 596, where it carries some interesting annotations by the Kaiser.

⁶¹ The French Ambassador understood that that was Sir Edward Grey’s attitude, and feared the outcome. Reporting on 26 July, he said: “I fear that the final word is that Grey is not sure of his public opinion and dreads that if he engage himself prematurely he might not be sustained”: *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 329.

⁶² Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 148. The French Ambassador gave a very different account of this interview: See Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 137.

⁶³ Cap. XIV.

Breach of Germany's obligation, not the existence of a British is that which is alleged as one of the reasons for declaring war.

Belgian Neutrality not wanted. Sir Edward Grey was not anxious for war, but he was quite determined that if war between Germany and France supervened, the United Kingdom would participate. Of his colleagues in the government, Mr. Asquith, Lord Haldane, and Mr. Churchill were (almost certainly) of the same opinion, but the majority were otherwise inclined. Of public attitude, he was very doubtful; but he was somewhat confident that if Germany were at war with Belgium, opinion would rally to his support. He thought, as he said, that in that case:

"it would be extremely difficult to restrain public feeling in this country."

That he might enjoy that strategic advantage, however, it was necessary, not only that Germany should violate Belgian neutrality, but that Belgium should resist. He desired (1) that Germany should supply him with a popular-appealing argument, and (2) that Belgium should not deprive him of it. The existence of these two desiderata is evidenced by his own statements.

The first of them is evidenced by his refusal to remain neutral even if Germany refrained from crossing the Belgian boundary. On 29 July, the British Ambassador at Berlin telegraphed that the German Chancellor had offered, in exchange for British neutrality, "every assurance" that the German government:

"aimed at no territorial acquisitions at the expense of France should they prove victorious in any war that might ensue";

that the government declined "to give a similar undertaking" with reference to French colonies; that the government would respect the integrity and neutrality of Holland, provided the others did likewise; and that:

"It depended upon the action of France what operations Germany might be forced to enter upon in Belgium, but when the war was over, Belgian integrity would be respected if she had not sided against Germany."⁶⁴

The proposal was peremptorily — almost indignantly refused. Sir Edward said (30 July):

"His Majesty's Government cannot for a moment entertain the Chancellor's proposal that they should bind themselves to neutrality on such terms. What he asks us in effect is to stand by while French colonies are taken and France is beaten so long as Germany does not take French territory as distinct from the colonies. From the material point of view such a proposal is unacceptable, for France, without further territory in Europe being taken from her, could be so crushed as to lose her position as a Great Power, and become subor-

⁶⁴ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 85.

dinate to German policy. Altogether apart from that, it would be a disgrace to us to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France, a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover. The Chancellor also, in effect, asks us to bargain away whatever obligation or interest we have as regards the neutrality of Belgium. We could not entertain that bargain either.”⁶⁵

Why “a disgrace” to stand aside while Germany and France fought? That was precisely what was done in 1870-1. And why not “bargain” with reference to mutual abstention by Germany and France from invasion of Belgium? That, too, was precisely what was done in 1870.⁶⁶ Indeed, the day after his refusal (31 July), Sir Edward Grey asked Germany and France whether they would:

“engage to respect neutrality of Belgium so long as no other Power violates it.”⁶⁷

He would arrange a bargain between Germany and France, but he would not himself bargain. Note, too, the reason, namely, that concern for France made British neutrality (in Sir Edward’s opinion) impossible, whether Belgium were invaded or left untouched. The next day (1 August), Sir Edward telegraphed to the Ambassador at Berlin the purport of a conversation which he had had with the German Ambassador, as follows (already partly quoted):

“He asked me whether if Germany gave a promise not to violate Belgian neutrality we would engage to remain neutral. I replied that I could not say that; our hands were still free, and we were considering what our attitude should be. All that I could say was that our attitude would be determined largely by public opinion here, and that the neutrality of Belgium would appeal very strongly to public opinion here. I did not think that we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone. The Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could not formulate conditions on which we would remain neutral. He then suggested that the integrity of France and her colonies might be guaranteed. I said that I felt obliged to refuse definitely any promise to remain neutral on similar terms and I could only say that we must keep our hands free.”⁶⁸

When asked in the House of Commons (27 August 1914) whether the suggestions thus made to him had been submitted to the Cabinet, and, if not, why they were rejected, Sir Edward Grey replied, in part, as follows:

“These were personal suggestions made by the Ambassador on August 1st, and without authority to alter the conditions of neutrality proposed to us by the German Chancellor in No. 85 in the White Paper—

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 101.

⁶⁶ See cap. XIV.

⁶⁷ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, Nos. 114, 115.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 123. The German Ambassador’s report of this conversation is in Coll. Dip. Docs., p. 541.

Miscellaneous, No. 6 (1914). The Cabinet did, however, consider most carefully the next morning — that is, Sunday, August 2nd — the conditions on which we could remain neutral, and came to the conclusion that respect for the neutrality of Belgium must be one of these conditions.”

The telegram and the speech make very clear that Sir Edward did not treat the Ambassador's suggestion as merely personal and unauthorized. For observe (1) that he made reply to it as though it were authorized; (2) that he considered it of sufficient importance to telegraph it to Berlin; and (3) that it was submitted to and considered by the Cabinet.⁶⁹ But whether the suggestions were or were not of personal character is immaterial, for what is important is that Sir Edward admits having said in reply that he:

“did not think that we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone” —

that is, upon condition of German respect for Belgian neutrality. Upon what ground he based his statement that the Ambassador's suggestion was personal and unauthorized, he did not say. It appears not to have been the fact, for on the 4th August, the German Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, stated in the Reichstag:

“We have informed the British Government that, as long as Great Britain remains neutral, our fleet will not attack the northern coast of France, and that we will not violate the territorial integrity and independence of Belgium. These assurances I now repeat before the world, and I may add that, as long as Great Britain remains neutral, we would also be willing, upon reciprocity being assured, to take no war-like measures against French commercial shipping.”⁷⁰

Commenting upon Sir Edward's reply to the German Ambassador, Lord Loreburn said:

“If language means anything, this means that whereas Mr. Gladstone bound this country to war in order to safeguard Belgian neutrality, Sir Edward Grey would not even bind this country to neutrality in order to save Belgium. He may have been right, but it was not for the sake of Belgian interests that he refused.”⁷¹

In the course of the reply in the House of Commons above referred to, Sir Edward further said:

“The German Ambassador, speaking on his own personal initiative and without authority, asked whether we would formulate conditions on which we would be neutral. We did go into that question, and

⁶⁹ This last point is made more clear in a subsequent part of the speech.

⁷⁰ Ger. White Bk., 1914, App. in Coll. Dip. Docs., pp. 438-9; Andriulli, *op. cit.*, p. 105. Cf. German Chancellor's speech of 9 Nov. 1916: *Current History*, V, p. 459.

⁷¹ *How the War Came*, p. 238.

those conditions were stated in the House and made known to the German Ambassador.”

There is no trace anywhere of communication to the German Ambassador of “conditions on which we would be neutral,” nor were “those conditions . . . stated to the House.” The speeches of Sir Edward Grey on 3d August and Mr. Asquith on the 6th — the only two ministerial speeches prior to the 27th — may be searched in vain for any formulation of the conditions of British neutrality.⁷² The nearest approach to it was Mr. Asquith’s statement of “what we are fighting for”; (1) obligation to Belgium, and (2) “to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed in defiance. . . .” Sir Edward, on the other hand, emphasized the importance of saving France from being crushed; and of that Mr. Asquith said nothing. Formulation of conditions of neutrality, neither of them attempted. They did not want neutrality, upon any terms, if France was to be at war.

The second of the facts above referred to — that if Germany, by invading Belgium, furnished Sir Edward Grey with a popular-appealing reason for entering the war, he was anxious that he should not be deprived of it by Belgian submission — is made clear by his telegram to the British Minister at Brussels of 31 July:

“You should say that I assume that the Belgian Government will maintain to the utmost of their power their neutrality, which I desire and expect other Powers to uphold and observe. You should inform the Belgian Government that an early reply is desired.”⁷³

By urging Belgium to resist the passage through her territory of the German army, and pledging the support of his country,⁷⁴ Sir Edward took great risk and assumed heavy responsibility. His action furnishes a measure of the intensity of his anxiety for the success of his policy. He was well aware how destitute of reason for intervention the submission of Belgium would leave him. He could not admit the existence of obligation to assist France. His previous deceptions had made necessary the denial of such obligation. He could not urge chivalrous assistance to Serbia. He had said that his country had no interest in Serbia, and that personally he thought that that state merited humiliation. He could not plead for aid to Russia in aid of Serbia. He would have been driven to picture the danger of a German victory — an annihilated France; and would have had to discover effective reply to the majority of his colleagues, who would have portrayed the danger of a victorious France — the danger which at present exists. Sir Edward did not desire that Belgium should be neutral.

To Sir Edward’s communication, the Belgian Foreign Minister made

⁷² Sir Edward’s speech is quoted upon subsequent pages.

⁷³ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 115.

⁷⁴ Cf. Belg. Grey Bk., 1914, Nos. 11, 28, 37.

satisfactory reply (31 July): Belgium would resist, and she was convinced:

“that the other Powers, in view of the excellent relations of friendship and confidence which had always existed between us, would respect and maintain that neutrality.”⁷⁵

Sir Edward, therefore, must have been somewhat surprised when, three days afterwards (3 August), the British King received from the Belgian an appeal for “diplomatic” intervention only;⁷⁶ and still more, when, on the same day, he learned that Belgium had declined the French offer of five army corps, saying:

“We are sincerely grateful to the French Government for offering eventual support. In the actual circumstances, however, we do not propose to appeal to the guarantee of the Powers. Belgian Government will decide later on the action which they think it necessary to take.”⁷⁷

The fact that the time-limit for Belgium’s reply to the German ultimatum had already expired, gave special significance to the Belgian attitude as expressed in these ways. Feeling that his plan was miscarrying, Sir Edward, associating himself (for constraining purposes) with France and Russia, renewed his pressure on Belgium by sending to the British Minister at Brussels the following telegram (4 August):

“You should inform Belgian Government that if pressure is applied to them by Germany to induce them to depart from neutrality, His Majesty’s Government expect that they will resist by any means in their power, and that His Majesty’s Government will support them in offering such resistance, and that His Majesty’s Government in this event are prepared to join Russia and France, if desired, in offering to the Belgian Government at once common action, for the purpose of resisting use of force by Germany against them, and a guarantee to maintain their independence and integrity in future years.”⁷⁸

In urging resistance Sir Edward would appear not to have been aware that, at the expiry of Germany’s time-limit (3d, at 7 A.M.), Belgium had replied that:

“the Belgian Government are firmly resolved to repel, by every means in their power, every attack upon their rights.”⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Belg. Grey Bk., 1914, No. 11. Cf. Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 128.

⁷⁶ Belg. Grey Bk., 1914, No. 25.

⁷⁷ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 151. The French Minister at Brussels, in seeking an invitation to intervene, had made use of language bordering on a threat: “if such an appeal were not made, it is probable that — unless, of course, exceptional measures were rendered necessary in self-defence — the French Government would not intervene until Belgium had taken some effective measure of resistance”: Belg. Grey Bk., 1914, No. 24.

⁷⁸ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 155.

⁷⁹ Belg. Grey Bk., 1914, No. 22.

But the Belgian Minister in London had been advised of the resolve early on the previous day,⁸⁰ and there can be little doubt that there would have been no delay in conveying the information to Sir Edward. Indeed, as early as the 31st, the British government had (as above noted) been assured that Belgium would resist. The explanation appears to be that Sir Edward feared that Belgium might elect to fight alone; that she would not make appeal for assistance; and that that element for popular appeal would, in this way, escape him. His fear had some foundation. On 4 August (6 a.m.), Germany notified her intention to cross the Belgian frontier, and immediately did so. During the day, the Belgian Foreign Minister advised London of the German communication, and added:

“The Cabinet is at the present moment deliberating on the question of an appeal to the Powers guaranteeing our neutrality.”⁸¹

Later in the day, the Cabinet determined in the affirmative, and the Foreign Minister sent (4 August):

“appeals to Great Britain, France, and Russia to co-operate as guaranteeing Powers in the defence of her territory.”⁸²

Prior to the receipt of this message, Sir Edward Grey, in pursuance of Belgium’s appeal for diplomatic intervention, had telegraphed to the British Ambassador at Berlin protesting against Germany’s ultimatum to Belgium, and had contented himself with requesting:

“an assurance that the demand made upon Belgium will not be proceeded with and that her neutrality will be respected by Germany.”⁸³

After receiving the Belgian appeal for co-operation, now feeling himself secure, Sir Edward telegraphed (same day) in peremptory terms to the British Ambassador at Berlin to repeat his inquiry of 31 July as to whether the German government:

“are prepared to engage to respect neutrality of Belgium so long as no other Power violates it,”⁸⁴

and to:

“ask that a satisfactory reply to it and to my telegram of this morning be received here by 12 o’clock to-night. If not, you are instructed to ask for your passports, and to say that His Majesty’s Government feel bound to take all steps in their power to uphold the neutrality of Belgium and the observance of a treaty to which Germany is as much a party as ourselves.”⁸⁵

The next day (5 August), at the opening of the House of Commons, the British Prime Minister read the Belgian appeal, and afterwards (6th)

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 23.

⁸¹ Belg. Grey Bk., 1914, No. 38.

⁸² *Ibid.*, No. 40.

⁸³ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 153.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 114.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 159.

when supporting his motion for war-supply, did not omit to refer to Belgium's

"moving appeal to us to fulfill our solemn guarantee of her neutrality. . . . The House has read, and the country has read, of course, in the last few hours, the most pathetic appeal addressed by the King of Belgium, and I do not envy the man who can read that appeal with an unmoved heart. Belgians are fighting and losing their lives. What would have been the position of Great Britain to-day in the face of that spectacle, if we had assented to this infamous proposal?"

Had not Sir Edward succeeded in obtaining the "moving appeal," Mr. Asquith would not have been able to pretend that the two purposes for which:

"we are fighting" were "to fulfill a solemn international obligation" and to protect "small nationalities" from being "crushed in defiance of international good faith by the arbitrary will of a strong and overmastering Power."

What would have been substituted?

3. **Sir Edward Grey's letter of 2 August.** That the United Kingdom did not enter the war because of the invasion of Belgium is amply proved by the fact (already noted) that prior to the invasion — prior even to the demand by Germany on Belgium — the British government had rendered a declaration of neutrality impossible by Sir Edward's letter of assurance to France of the 2d August. In his speech of the 3d (still prior to the invasion) Sir Edward said:

"There is but one way in which the Government could make certain at the present moment of keeping outside this war, and that would be that it should immediately issue a proclamation of unconditional neutrality. We cannot do that. We have made the commitment to France that I have read to the House which prevents us from doing that." In other words, Sir Edward had precluded himself from agreeing to neutrality upon condition that Belgium was unmolested.

4. **Change of Assertion.** Mr. Asquith soon found that while the first of the reasons which, in his speech of 6 August 1914, he assigned for entering the war (defence of Belgium) was a good war-cry, the second of them, that "small nationalities" — Serbia — "are not to be crushed in defiance," &c., was much too romantic. Joining, at the request of the government, in the effort to arouse war enthusiasm, Lord Curzon, in the early part of September (1914), addressed meetings at Hull, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Reading, &c., and, afterwards (14th), in a letter to *The Times*, said:

"I have not found anywhere the slightest misapprehension as to the causes of the war. The fears that were entertained that we should be thought to be fighting on account of Servia or some remote international quarrel, in which we were only indirectly engaged, are groundless. The people realize clearly that we are fighting, not merely for our own

honor and good faith, but for ourselves and our own national existence."

Four days afterwards, speaking in Edinburgh, Mr. Asquith added to his two reasons a third, which took well and acquired wide vogue:

"and in the third place," he said, "to withstand, as we believe in the best interests not only of our own empire, but of civilization at large, the arrogant claim of a single power to dominate the development of the destinies of Europe. [Cheers]."

Even "defence of Belgium," "sanctity of treaties," assertion of (non-existent) legal obligations, and other appeals of that sort, ceased (as time elapsed) to satisfy a war-wearying people. Something else had to be, and was, substituted. *The Times*, for example, of 8 March 1915 had the following:

"Our honor and interest must have compelled us to join France and Russia even if Germany had scrupulously respected the rights of her small neighbors and had sought to hack her way through the eastern fortresses. The German Chancellor has insisted more than once upon this truth. He has fancied apparently that he was making an argumentative point against us by establishing it. That, like so much more, only shows his complete misunderstanding of our attitude and our character. . . . We reverted to our historical policy of the Balance of Power."⁸⁶

Five years afterwards, obligation to join France followed into oblivion the obligation to defend Belgium. In its issue of 31 July 1920, *The Times* printed the following:

"It needed more than two years of actual warfare to render the British people wholly conscious that they were fighting not a quixotic fight for Belgium and France, but a desperate battle for their own existence."⁸⁷

Long prior to that date (September and October 1917), Mr. Asquith (as we shall see) had abandoned every one of the reasons thus far referred to. "It is a war against war," and other fantastic fooleries, had become the bases of his popular appeals.

Conclusion. Basing opinion upon all the foregoing reasons, as well as upon British action in 1887, referred to in a subsequent chapter, we may safely say that the United Kingdom did not enter the war because of obligation to Belgium. Indeed, in *The Genesis of the War*, Mr. Asquith almost concedes the point. For he quotes Sir Edward Grey as saying:

"The preservation of the neutrality of Belgium might be, I would not say a decisive, but an important factor in determining our attitude."⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Quoted by Norman Angell: *The Fruits of Victory*, p. 106.

⁸⁷ Quoted *ibid.*

⁸⁸ Cap. XXVII.

IV. "SMALL NATIONALITIES ARE NOT TO BE CRUSHED"

The second reason assigned by Mr. Asquith, in his speech of 6 August, was:

"to vindicate the principle which, in these days when force, material force, sometimes seems to be the dominant influence and factor in the development of mankind, we are fighting to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed, in defiance of international good faith, by the arbitrary will of a strong and over-mastering Power."

Neither by her history, nor by her actions immediately prior to the war, nor by what she did during the war, is the United Kingdom entitled to pose as the protector of small nationalities. Turn back to 1878, and observe that it was Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury who, at the Conference of Berlin, proposed that little Bosnia and Herzegovina, which, by hard fighting, had just won their freedom from the Turk, should be placed under the domination of the German and the Magyar. That that action was the result of a bargain with Austria-Hungary for the reduction of Bulgarian limits in favor of Turkey, was by no means a mitigation of the offence. Then consider the various occasions upon which helpless China has been compelled to cede slices of her territory to the British crown. More recently (1902), in pursuance of the purest imperialism, the United Kingdom annexed the territories of the two small Boer republics in South Africa, concerning which Mr. L. S. Amery (recently Parliamentary Under Secretary for the Colonies, and now First Lord of the Admiralty) said:

"Much sympathy has been wasted on little peoples 'rightly struggling to be free,' whose chief struggle has been to wreck satisfactory political institutions and create unprovoked discords for the sake of politically isolating some stray fragment from the world's ethnological scrap heap, or of propagating some obscure and wholly superfluous dialect. Little sympathy is bestowed on the great peoples rightly struggling for mastery, for the supremacy of higher civilization and higher political principle."⁸⁰

Still more recently (1904), the United Kingdom bargained for a free hand in Egypt in order that she might consolidate her control there; giving, in return, a free hand to France for similar operations in Morocco. And still later (1907), she agreed to the partition of Persia into spheres of influence dominated by herself and Russia. The engulfment, rather than the protection, of weaker nationalities has been the rôle of all imperialistic nations.

Observe, too, Sir Edward Grey's attitude immediately prior to the war. He would not have moved a finger to help Serbia, although he regarded the Austro-Hungarian claim as the most:

⁸⁰ *The Times History of the War in South Africa*, I, pp. 21-2.

“formidable” he had ever “before seen one State address to another independent State.”⁹⁰

Still more significant was his indifference to the fate of Luxemburg when invaded by Germany,⁹¹ for the United Kingdom was one of the treaty-guarantors of Luxemburg’s neutrality.⁹²

During the war, small nationalities were but pawns and were treated accordingly. Neutral shipping was denied the protection of the plainest principles of international law. The neutral territory of China was invaded by Japanese troops when co-operating with the British. The territory of neutral Greece was treated by the United Kingdom and France as though it were their own. To induce Italy to enter the war, she was promised (by the Pact of London) part of neutral Albania, while other parts were reserved as rewards for Serbia and Greece. To induce Roumania to enter the war, she was promised territory almost entirely occupied by Serbians.⁹³ And to secure the co-operation of Japan, she was enabled to seize the extensive thieveries of Germany in the Chinese province of Shantung. For these latest acts, the necessities of war may be pleaded; but not very well by those who deny the validity of similar plea when offered by Germany.

V. “WAR AGAINST WAR”

In September and October 1917, Mr. Asquith discarded the obligation-to-Belgium and the defence-of-small-nationalities as reasons for entering the war, and asserted that:

“just what it is we have been fighting for” was “first that it is a war for peace, and next that it is a war against war.”⁹⁴

Shortly afterwards (20 December), he declared in the House of Commons most emphatically:

“The League of Nations is no new thing, engendered in the stress and strain of the War. It is no belated afterthought of statesmen, who thought it expedient, in order to deceive the world, to varnish their selfish and ambitious purposes with a veneer of idealism. It is nothing of the kind. It was the avowed purpose from the very first — as far as we here are concerned — of the Government and the people of the United Kingdom, and of the Empire, the purpose for which we entered into the War, for which we are continuing the War, for which, I repeat, we shall prosecute the War to its due end. I wish it were possible — and I hope it may be possible — to bring home to the

⁹⁰ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, Nos. 5, 87.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, No. 148.

⁹² Treaty of 11 May 1867. Prussia was one of the parties to the treaty. It may be seen in Hertslet: *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, III, pp. 1803-5; and in Stowell: *The Diplomacy of the War of 1914*, pp. 603-5.

⁹³ See cap. IX.

⁹⁴ *Ante*, pp. 73, 112.

minds of all people, allies and neutrals, and to the enemy, and make them realize that it is for that — but nothing more or less than that — we are fighting. It is because we know we are fighting for that — neither more nor less — that we are going on with a clear conscience, with clean hands, and with an unfailing heart.”⁹⁵
 Comment is unnecessary.

VI. TERRITORIAL AGGRANDISEMENT

Some of the United Kingdom's enemies have suggested that she entered the war with a conscious view to territorial aggrandisement. That is not true. But the assertion may fairly be made that, very shortly after taking the plunge, territorial and other aggrandisements appeared to her to be a natural, and a very comfortable, result of her efforts. The troops of the Union of South Africa were used not, as were the Canadian, in defeating Germany, but in taking possession of German territory in South West and South East Africa. Australia and New Zealand hurriedly — that the Japanese or the arrival of peace might not forestall them — occupied German New Guinea, Samoa, &c. And it was the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Long, who said to the Dominion Journalists (27 September 1918):

“We did not enter the war for aggrandisement, but I am here to-night to say that if the colonies are returned to Germany all the sacrifices of our heroes will have been in vain.”

The same sentiment was expressed just as frankly in the jocosely remark:

“We went into this war with the most unselfish motives, and it will be blooming hard luck if we do not get something out of it.”

The luck was much better than anyone could have anticipated, for not only were very extensive German territories acquired, but, by the withdrawal of Russia, Constantinople was left in Turkish (afterwards largely in British) hands, and much that might have gone to Russia fell to the United Kingdom. It is not, moreover, unfair to say that British statesmen foresaw that defeat of Germany meant not only relief from anxiety, both west and east, and large territorial expansion, but the reduction of German rivalries in the economic realm. That all these advantages were vividly present in the minds of the British peace-framers, the form of the peace-treaty makes clear, for in it is unmistakably written the determination to eliminate Germany, not only as a military Power, but, to the extent possible, as a producer and trader. Mr. Brailsford has summed the situation as follows:

“We have made ourselves all-powerful at sea. We have confiscated the mercantile marine of Germany. We have suppressed, or taken power to suppress, all the branches of her industrial and commercial enterprises and businesses which competed with our own outside her

⁹⁵ Hansard, vol. 100, col. 2230.

borders. No part of our policy during or after the war was pursued with such thoroughness. Everywhere within the Allied world German businesses, banks, and agencies were closed down and liquidated, so that when at length peace did bring the theoretical possibility of trading, Germany had to start again from the beginning, without connections or openings. The same course was followed also in Africa, where all the wharves, warehouses, and transport material of enemy firms were sold by auction to their competitors. Towards the end of the war, certain of the remoter neutral States, like China and Brazil, were brought into our camp as Allies, though it was never suggested that they should contribute a ship or a battalion to our fighting forces. One of the prime objects of this curious manoeuvre was that in these States, also, the process of uprooting German commerce could be completed by methods possible only in a state of war. Here also German businesses were liquidated, and from China the numerous colony of German residents was expelled. The Peace Treaties put the coping-stone on all this preparatory work. They contained none of the clauses establishing legal and commercial reciprocity usual in all the Treaties which have terminated former wars. They secured for Allied trade and traders in Germany every conceivable right and privilege to reside, to acquire property, to use rivers and railways at the lowest rates, to fly into or over the country, and to enjoy the status of the 'most favored nation' in all tariff regulations. Not a word suggested that any of these rights were to be mutual. The state of peace has not automatically brought back to the German trader any of the usual rights enjoyed in foreign countries by the subjects of every civilised state. In China, the usual customs tariff applicable to the goods of all European States alike has been denied to them. Nor is this all. It remained to acquire their enterprises and concessions, railways, oil-wells and the like, in Turkey, Russia, and China. That is provided for in the Treaty (Article 260). Finally, as an item in the indemnity, their businesses, even in neutral countries, may be liquidated for the benefit of the Allies (Article 235)."⁹⁶

Upon the whole, it may fairly be said that the *mot* of a writer in the *Contemporary Review* with reference to the Balkan war, namely, that it began with "a hymn to 'Liberty' and ended with a howl for 'Loot,'" ⁹⁷ is not altogether inapplicable to the war of 1914-18.

VII. BRITISH INTERESTS

Though usually well hidden beneath many assertions of disinterested motive — hidden sometimes even from the asserters themselves — British interests was the reason why British troops fought in Flanders

⁹⁶ *After the Peace*, pp. 75-7.

⁹⁷ Oct. 1917, p. 386.

and elsewhere. It was not because Serbia was right and Austria-Hungary wrong. The merits of the quarrel between these countries were unconsidered and deemed to be irrelevant. It was not because of obligation to France — although obligation existed. And it was not because of obligation to Belgium — for there was none. It was because British interests were at stake. The subject will be developed in subsequent chapters.⁹⁸ Here it may suffice to say that British interests were involved in three respects: First, by reason of German rivalry in manufactures, commerce, shipping, and navy. Second, by reason of the menace of a too powerful military organization in western Europe. And third, by reason of the menace of the same military organization to Constantinople and India. The reason for British action in 1914 was the same as that which on many previous occasions had dictated the despatch of troops to the continent and elsewhere — namely, British interests. Read carefully the speech of Sir Edward Grey of 3 August 1914. It may be found on subsequent pages of this chapter.

There is in this nothing new and nothing derogatory — the world being organized upon the basis of nationalism. The security of the state, as a dominating principle of state action, may be the reprobated principle of Niccolò Machiavelli, but it is the principle upon which all statesmen act. Palmerston, the greatest figure in British foreign affairs in the mid-Victorian period, for example, after saying (1848):

“We have no eternal allies and no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual — those interests it is our duty to follow,”

indicated agreement with the policy previously declared by Canning, namely:

“that with every British Minister the interests of England ought to be the shibboleth of his policy.”⁹⁹

As for the moralities, it would be unreasonable to expect that they would always coincide with British interests. Over disputes of her own with other Powers, the United Kingdom can exercise control, and can, if she will, be guided by ethical principles. But what is to be done when, in a quarrel between two other nations, justice is on one side and British interests demand the success of the other. *Fiat justitia ut ruat cælum*¹⁰⁰ is, of course the applicable maxim, but it has as little practical application as has the golden rule in the Chicago Wheat Pit or the London Stock Exchange.

For example, for many years, including those of the Crimean war, the United Kingdom supported Turkey as against Russia. That meant, at one time (1878), the indefensible spoliation of Roumania; the

⁹⁸ Caps. XIX, XX, XXI.

⁹⁹ Quoted in *Fortnightly Rev.*, July 1920, p. 20.

¹⁰⁰ Let justice prevail though the heavens fall.

subjection of the Slavs of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the domination of Germans and Magyars; and the reimposition of the tyranny of the Turk over millions of Christians, recently released by the efforts of Russia; but it meant, or was supposed to mean, security for British possessions in the Near East. Freedom and justice were in one scale, and interests in the other.

Lord Curzon, in a speech in the House of Lords (4 August 1920), supplied a good view of the effect upon British (or any other) action of the presence of such conflicting motives. Defending the terms of the proposed dismemberment of Turkey (after the War of 1914-18), he said that his critic:

“would have left Armenia in *statu quo*, putting wholly on one side the long and tragic record of cruelty and bloodshed which has stained the history of the Turkish connection with Armenia during the last half-century.”

The transfer of Palestine, under mandate, to the United Kingdom, Lord Curzon upheld on the ground that:

“Palestine under the Turks for the last 500 years has been one of the great scandals of history. Yet when now, at length, we seize the opportunity of rectifying it . . . the noble Lord . . . sweeps aside our policy and condemns it unstated and unheard. . . The interests of humanity demanded that its power for evil in the future should be curtailed if not destroyed.”

Evidently, according to Lord Curzon, considerations of freedom and justice made necessary the disintegration of the Turkish Empire, and the release from her domination of all subject races; but nevertheless, in the very same speech, he said that:

“in 1914, when the war broke out elsewhere, the allied Powers guaranteed to Turkey the absolute integrity of her territories and the retention of her independence, provided that she would maintain her neutrality.”¹⁰¹

Freedom and justice in one scale, and interests in the other. It was not otherwise when the United Kingdom supported France in the Morocco incidents (1905-6; 1911),¹⁰² and Austria-Hungary and Italy, as against Serbia and Montenegro in 1913.¹⁰³ But of all this there is no use complaining or lamenting. To what extent statesmen ought to be guided by any consideration other than that of the interests of their own country, is frequently a very difficult question — of scholastic character.

The Times. A few days before the outbreak of the war, *The Times* (London) stated, with sufficient correctness, the grounds upon which the United Kingdom ought to participate in the hostilities (*italics now added*):

“England is bound by moral obligation to side with France and

¹⁰¹ Hansard, pp. 734-5.

¹⁰² Cap. XXII.

¹⁰³ See cap. XXIV.

Russia, lest the balance of forces on the Continent be upset to her disadvantage, and she be left alone to face a predominant Germany.¹⁰⁴ A vital British interest is, therefore, at stake. This interest takes two forms — the general interest of European equilibrium, which has been explained, and the more direct interest of preserving the independence of Holland, and particularly Belgium. The Franco-German frontier along the Vosges has been so formidably fortified on both sides that a German or a French advance across it seems improbable. The point of contact between the German and French armies would probably lie in or near Belgium. But a German advance through Belgium into the north of France might enable Germany to acquire possession of Antwerp, Flushing, and even of Dunkirk and Calais, which might then become German naval bases against England. This is a contingency which no Englishman can look upon with indifference. . . . The safety of the narrow seas is a vital, the most vital British national and imperial interest. It is an axiom of British self-preservation. *France does not threaten our security. A German victory over France would threaten it irremediably.* Even should the German navy remain inactive, the occupation of Belgium and Northern France by German troops would strike a crushing blow at British security. We should then be obliged, alone and without allies, to bear the burden of keeping up a Fleet superior to that of Germany, and of an Army proportionately strong. This burden would be ruinous.

“*The instinct of self-preservation, which is the strongest factor in national life, therefore compels us — if the efforts of our government to keep the peace should fail — to be ready to strike with all our force for our own safety and for that of our friends.*”¹⁰⁵

The Manchester Guardian immediately replied, “Away with that foul idol,” the balance of power:

“But if we must worship the idol, how should we serve it better by throwing our influence on the side of Russia than on the side of Germany? Why strengthen the hand which is already beating us in Persia, and which if it triumphed over Germany, would presently be felt in Afghanistan, and in the frontiers of India?”

Fifteen years earlier, that argument would have fallen upon sympathetic ears. For Russia then was the enemy, and Afghanistan and India and Constantinople were the danger points. Since that time, the German peril, in both western Europe and the Near East, had transformed the Russian danger into something of a negligible bogey, and thrown the United Kingdom into co-operative agreement with the Dual Entente. In *The Times* article is to be found the predominating reason for the intervention of the United Kingdom. The invasion of

¹⁰⁴ It is unusual to qualify such an obligation by the adjective “moral.”

¹⁰⁵ *The Times*, in several of its issues, insisted upon the views above expressed.

Belgium provided a comfortable morality motive, and silenced opposition.

Previous Diplomacies. The considerations developed in *The Times* article explain the whole course of British diplomacies in western Europe throughout a lengthened period. They explain the opposition to the France of Louis XIV. They explain British insistence upon the union of Holland and Belgium in 1815. They explain the Belgian treaty of 1839.¹⁰⁶ They explain the settlement of all disputes with France by the treaty of 1904.¹⁰⁷ They explain the attitude during the Franco-Prussian War. They explain the arrangements between the United Kingdom and France for the anticipated war with Germany: (1) the disposition of the fleets — the British concentrating in the North Sea, and the French in the Mediterranean; (2) the protracted consultations ("conversations" they were called) between the military and naval officers of the two countries; (3) the assurances, given by Sir Edward Grey, to France, of assistance on the two occasions of "difficulty" between France and Germany (1905-6 and 1911) in connection with Morocco; the letter which Sir Edward Grey gave to the French Ambassador on 22 November 1912;¹⁰⁸ and the later letter of 2 August 1914.¹⁰⁹ They explain the settlement of all British disputes with Russia by the treaty of 1907. They explain why Lord Haldane reorganized the British army and created an expeditionary force immensely stronger than had ever previously worn British uniform. They explain Lord Haldane's visits to Berlin, and why he could say, and the German Chancellor could understand:

"If Germany really, which I do not at all suppose, intended to crush France and destroy her capacity to defend herself, we in England would have had such a direct interest in the result that we could not have sat by and seen this done."¹¹⁰

They explain why Sir Edward Grey said to the French Ambassador on 29 July 1914:

¹⁰⁶ See *post* cap. XIV.

¹⁰⁷ Of this treaty, Dr. J. Holland Rose has said: "During two centuries and more, the two peoples had been quarrelling about the fish off Newfoundland. For a couple of decades they had been snarling about Egypt, Madagascar, the Niger, and Siam. And then, thanks to the tact of King Edward^{VII} and Lord Lansdowne, they speedily discovered that codfish and fellaheen, Malagasy, Haussas, and Siamese, were not worth a war. But that discovery came about because on both sides of the Channel there existed a latent longing for peace, which, with fostering care, could become vocal and speedily drown or resolve the earlier discords" (*The Origins of the War*, p. 112). The patent need for protection of the North Sea coasts as against Germany, rather than "a latent longing for peace" between the United Kingdom and France (which had not been broken since Waterloo) was the motive which actuated the British king and statesman.

¹⁰⁸ This letter is quoted *ante*, p. 117-8.

¹⁰⁹ This letter is quoted *ante*, p. 125.

¹¹⁰ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 593.

"We were free from engagements, and we should have to decide what British interests required us to do."¹¹¹

They explain why, when Germany made a bid for British neutrality, Sir Edward replied (30 July):

"His Majesty's Government cannot for a moment entertain the Chancellor's proposal that they should bind themselves to neutrality on such terms. What he asks us in effect is to engage to stand by while French colonies are taken and France is beaten, so long as Germany does not take French territory as distinct from the colonies. From the material point of view such a proposal is unacceptable; for France, without further territory in Europe being taken from her, could be so crushed as to lose her position as a Great Power, and become subordinate to German policy."¹¹²

And they explain why Mr. Austen Chamberlain, when speaking as leader of the House of Commons (8 February 1922), said:

"Can we ever be indifferent to the safety of the French frontier or to the fortunes of France? A friendly Power in possession of the British Channel ports is a British interest, treaty or no treaty. Conversations or no conversations, it will always be a British interest, as it has always been a British interest which this Parliament and this country would be prepared to defend."

After referring to the Belgian treaty, Mr. Chamberlain added:

"Had it been France only, we could not have stayed out after the conversation which had taken place. And it would not have been in our interest to have stayed out, and we could not have stayed out without loss of security and honor."

British policy in western Europe had always pivoted upon a determination to maintain freedom from menace on the North Sea coasts, and the arrangements with France were the method by which that policy was to be effectively prosecuted. The United Kingdom, for her own safety, linked herself for future war against the most dangerous aspirant for possession of these coasts. In a policy of opposition to the strongest nation, the moralities are not a factor. Ethical considerations had no place in the formation of either the Quadruple Alliance or the Triple Entente.

BRITISH RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WAR

Before dealing, more directly, with the motive of the United Kingdom in entering the war, it may be of interest to devote a few pages to the assertion of British responsibility for its outbreak. In the opinion of Lord Loreburn:

"A plain, timely statement to Germany that if she attacked France

¹¹¹ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 87.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, No. 101.

we should be on the side of Germany and Russia, would 'for a certainty,' as President Wilson says, have prevented war. The military masters of Germany would not have faced the fearful risk."¹¹³

That the "timely statement" was not made to Germany cannot be attributed to the British government's view of the probable inefficacy of such action; for the government being divided in opinion, it could not determine what it should do, much less whether it should announce its decision.¹¹⁴ Not being able to obtain direction from his colleagues, Sir Edward Grey was forced to temporize, and to permit Germany and Austria-Hungary to retain the belief (until too late) that the United Kingdom would remain neutral.¹¹⁵ Let us look at some of the contemporary opinions upon the point.

(1) On 24 July, the Russian Foreign Minister and the French Ambassador pressed the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg:

"for a declaration of complete solidarity of His Majesty's Government with French and Russian Governments,"

and the Russian Minister added (as the British Ambassador reported) that:

"we [the British] should have rendered war more likely if we did not from the outset make common cause with his country and with France."¹¹⁶

(2) On 25 July, the Russian Minister again urged — in the words of the British Ambassador — as follows:

"He did not believe that Germany really wanted war, but her attitude was decided by ours. If we took our stand firmly with France and Russia, there would be no war. If we failed them now, rivers of blood would flow, and we would in the end be dragged into the war."¹¹⁷

(3) On 27 July, in reply to similar urgings, the British Ambassador took the curious ground that such a British declaration would be a menace to Germany and would stiffen her attitude.¹¹⁸

(4) On 30 July, the French President said to the British Ambassador — as related by the Ambassador — that:

"he is convinced that peace between the Powers is in the hands of Great Britain. If His Majesty's Government announced that England would come to the aid of France, in the event of a conflict between

¹¹³ *How the War Came*, p. 218. And see pp. 186-9, 190, 192, 198, 205.

¹¹⁴ Under very similar circumstances, in 1906, at the time of the first quarrel between France and Germany in connection with Morocco, Sir Edward Grey, without authority from his cabinet, announced to both of the contending parties that, in his opinion, the United Kingdom would side with France. See his speech of 3 August 1914, *post* pp. 183-6.

¹¹⁵ *Ante*, pp. 122-4. And see cap. XXVII.

¹¹⁶ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 6.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 17.

¹¹⁸ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 44.

France and Germany, as a result of the present differences between Austria and Servia, there would be no war; for Germany would at once modify her attitude.”¹¹⁹

Replying to the Ambassador's suggestion of difficulties in the way, the President reiterated that such a declaration:

“would almost certainly prevent Germany from going to war.”

(5) On 31 July, the French President made direct appeal to King George, saying that:

“if . . . Germany were convinced that the *entente cordiale* would be affirmed, in case of need, even to the extent of taking the field side by side, there would be the greatest chance that peace would remain unbroken.”¹²⁰

(6) President Wilson, in a New York address (4 March 1919), said:

“We know for a certainty that if Germany had thought for a moment that Great Britain would go in with France and with Russia, she would never have undertaken the enterprise.”¹²¹

(7) The testimony of Baron Beyens (Belgian Ambassador at Berlin immediately prior to the war) is important. He said:

“Without doubt, if, at the commencement” (of the negotiations), “she” (the United Kingdom) “had openly taken position by the side of the Double Alliance, she would have been able to stay the fatal course of events. Such is, at least, the most general opinion; for a maritime war certainly did not enter the plans of the Emperor and Admiral von Tirpitz, and that was the nightmare of German commerce.”¹²²

(8) The statement of Mr. Bonar Law (House of Commons, 18 June 1918) is also important:

“It has been commonly said — I think it is very likely true — that if the Germans had known for certain that Great Britain would have taken part in the war, the war would never have occurred.”¹²³

(9) In the opinion of Poincaré and Jules Cambon (French Ambassador at Berlin):

“The terror of Germany was that Britain would intervene in the conflict.”¹²⁴

(10) Speaking in the House of Commons on 8 February 1922, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, after referring to Sir Edward Grey's commitments to France, said:

“Suppose that engagement had been made publicly in the light of

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 99.

¹²⁰ Coll. Dip. Docs., p. 543.

¹²¹ *Current History*, X, Pt. 1, p. 105. Quoted by Loreburn, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

¹²² *L'Allemagne avant la Guerre*, p. 306.

¹²³ Loreburn, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

¹²⁴ Poincaré: *Origins of the War*, pp. 232, 237-9.

day. Suppose it had been laid before this House and approved by this House, might not the events of those August days of 1914 have been different? Is it not, at any rate, clear that our intervention came as a great surprise and a great shock to the German Government, that they were totally unprepared for it, and that some few among them — I claim Admiral von Tirpitz as an example — saw at once that German ambitions would never be realized in the war in which they had already engaged and from which they could not escape? If we had had that; if our obligations had been known and definite, it is at least possible, and I think it is probable, that war would have been avoided in 1914.”

After reference to some of these opinions, *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy* has the following:

“On such conjectures it is not possible to express a final judgment; and, in any case, it would have been impossible to announce either of these decisions, since the Cabinet was divided.”¹²⁶

That the concealments and prevarications, and consequent hesitations, of Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey may have been the reason for precipitation of the greatest war in the world's history, is an unpleasant reflection. It must be noted, however, that in the opinion of Sir Edward all these men were wrong. In an address issued during the British elections of 1922, he said:

“It has been said that if I had used language of greater firmness before the war, it might have been avoided. No language could have avoided it. If I had used language committing this country any further than I used, you would have had a divided government, a divided House of Commons — even the Conservative party divided on the matter — and a divided country.”¹²⁶

Sir Edward had, during the eight years preceding the war, given pledges of assistance to France which plainly amounted to an “obligation of honor” (as above noted¹²⁷) to assist France in case of war with Germany. And when the time came — when avowal of intention to implement the pledge might have prevented not only the necessity for taking arms, but the war itself, he tells us, that he could do nothing — the government, &c., would have been divided. It is a deplorable confession.

British Neutrality. If the effect of a British declaration of determination to support France and Russia is uncertain, there is direct evidence as to what would have been the effect of an early declaration of British neutrality. In that case, would Russia and France have supported Serbia? In the course of a noteworthy statement, M. Sazonoff, the Russian Foreign Minister, said:

¹²⁶ III, p. 508.

¹²⁶ *The Citizen* (Ottawa), 6 Nov. 1922.

¹²⁷ Pp. 115-122.

"Herr Bethmann-Hollweg maintains that France and Russia would never have dared to accept the challenge of Germany if they had not been sure of the support of England. But the real political situation was the following, even if the Chancellor will not admit it: In reality, France and Russia, notwithstanding their profound love for peace and their sincere efforts to avoid bloodshed, had decided to break the pride of Germany at any price, and to make her stop, once for all, treading on the toes of her neighbors."¹²⁸

It is a curious statement, and has a tendency to make one critical of Russian peace-protestations. But it may be perfectly true. Poincaré, the chauvinistically inclined President of the French Republic, and M. Viviani, the French Foreign Minister, were in Petrograd on 20-23 July 1914,¹²⁹ and Poincaré had undertaken to deliver "a kind of lecture" to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador there.¹³⁰ If the decision to which Sazonoff refers was arrived at, St. Petersburg, and between the dates mentioned, were the place and time. Sir Edward Grey was of the same opinion as M. Sazonoff as to the effect of British neutrality. On 30 July 1914, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at London reported a conversation with him (Grey) as follows:

"On my remarking that I counted on him to influence St. Petersburg re-assuringly, he replied that two opposite points of view had been advised to him: to side on all accounts with Russia and France as thereby the war might be prevented (I interposed that that might, in the best of cases, cause the contrary effect), or to declare that England would, on no condition, take part in the war of France or Russia. The latter decision, he assured me, would not in any case prevent the war."¹³¹

One would like to know how Sir Edward had become aware of that fact.

ATTITUDE TOWARD GERMANY AND ENTENTE

As supplement to the subject just treated, it will be useful to present at this place a short sketch of the attitude of the United Kingdom toward Germany, on the one hand (the reasons which motived that attitude will be dealt with in subsequent chapters), and the Entente, on the other, during the years which preceded the war. Leaving, for special treatment,¹³² British, French, and Russian co-ordinated preparations for war, let us notice here a number of incidents which make clear the following:

¹²⁸ A communiqué to the *Russkoe Slovo*. Quoted and commented upon by Signor Tittoni in *Nuovo Atlologia*, Rome: *Current History*, V, p. 466.

¹²⁹ At that time, the intention of Austria-Hungary to send her demands to Serbia was well known: *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., I, No. 45.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 45.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, III, No. 42.

¹³² *Cap. XVII.*

1. Having determined to abandon its policy of aloofness from continental affairs, the first choice of the United Kingdom of a war-ally was Germany.

2. Negotiations along that line having failed, the United Kingdom turned to France and Russia and framed the Triple Entente.

3. Thenceforward, the chief aim of the British Foreign Minister was maintenance of the most cordial relations with France and Russia.

4. Prosecuting that purpose, he was willing to join France in war against Germany, in support of French imperialistic exploitations in Morocco; he upheld Russia in similar aggressions in Persia; and he modified the traditional policy of protecting Turkey against Russia.

1875-80. During Bismarck's chancellorship, negotiations for an alliance between the United Kingdom and Germany were prosecuted at various periods — by Lothair Bucher in London in 1875; between Bismarck and Lords Salisbury and Derby in 1876 and 1877; and afterwards in 1878, 1879, and 1880.¹³³

1887. In February and March 1887, by exchange of letters between the United Kingdom and Italy, it was declared that:

“Both Powers desire that the shores of the Euxine, the Aegean, the Adriatic, and the northern coast of Africa shall remain in the same hands as now. If, owing to some calamitous events, it becomes impossible to maintain the absolute *status quo*, both Powers desire that there shall be no extension of the domination of any other Great Power over any portion of those coasts. It will be the earnest desire of H. M.'s Government to give their best coöperation, as hereinbefore expressed, to the Government of Italy in maintaining these cardinal principles of policy.”¹³⁴

To this declaration, by letter of 24 March, Austria-Hungary adhered.¹³⁵

The “other Great Power” was France or Russia. Further letters, exchanged on 12 December of the same year, provided for the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean, the Adriatic, the Aegean, the Black Sea, and generally in the East; the maintenance of local autonomies, established by treaties;

“the independence of Turkey as guardian of important European interests (independence of the Caliphate, the freedom of the Straits, etc.), of all foreign preponderating influence”;

the maintenance of the Turkish position in Bulgaria; the inalienability of the Turkish guardianship of the Straits; the support of Turkey with relation to Bulgaria and the Straits; and action against Turkey in case of her connivance with any other Power.”¹³⁶

¹³³ Cf. *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, pp. 144-7. In 1880, a draft treaty was prepared: Eckardstein, *Ten Years at the Court of St. James*, p. 135.

¹³⁴ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 94-103.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-103.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

It will be observed that, by these arrangements, the United Kingdom associated herself with two countries of the Triple Alliance (Italy and Austria-Hungary) against both Russia in the east and France in the west. The transactions might aptly be referred to as a mortal extension of the Triple Alliance across the English Channel, for Germany was a party to the negotiations, though not a signatory of the documents. Indeed, it may be said that the agreement contained in the earlier letters (above referred to) was intended as complementary to treaties between Germany and Italy and Austria-Hungary and Italy which were signed on the same day as the renewal of the Triple Alliance (20 February 1887) and between the dates of the letters.¹³⁷

It should further be observed that, since September 1885, the relations between the United Kingdom and Russia had been under strain because of an acute situation in Bulgaria. The interests of Austria-Hungary coincided with the British, and that government was, for the moment, disposed to be passive. The British government:

“on the other hand were seriously preoccupied by the prospect of an eventual Russian advance on Constantinople, and Sir Augustus Paget was consequently instructed to sound the Austrian Government as to the steps to be taken to avert the danger of Bulgaria’s completely falling under Russian influence, and to urge the importance of the two Governments acting in concert.”¹³⁸

At the Guildhall banquet of 9 November (1887), Lord Salisbury declared (as reported in *The Times* of the next day) that if British interests were threatened, Great Britain would know how to defend them, and alluding to recent speeches:

“of two distinguished men — the Foreign Ministers of Austria and Italy — two States with which our sympathies are deeply bound up, and whose interests are in many respects closely coincident with ours,” he added: “We have read their speeches — speeches which have given encouragement to the world to hope for the maintenance of peace, and we believe that they both aim at the objects which I have defined as objects of English policy. They have expressed, not without justice, not without ground, a hope that they will have the sympathy of England on their side; and the sympathy of England I believe they will have, and all the influence she can command will be cast on the side of the nations whose efforts are directed to the maintenance of freedom, of legality, and of peace.”

The slap at Russia and France (against whom the treaties were aimed) indicated the extent to which the United Kingdom sympathized with the Triple Alliance.

¹³⁷ H. Oncken: *Das alte und das neue Mitteleuropa*, p. 47 (referred to by Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 83); *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, p. 246; *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, p. 162; Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 105–115. The subject is more fully referred to *post*, caps. VIII and XIV. ¹³⁸ Buchanan, *op. cit.*, I, p. 23.

1891-4. The association of the United Kingdom with the Central Powers was one of the two reasons for the formation of the Dual Entente (France and Russia) in 1891-4. It was M. de Giers, the Russian Foreign Minister, who said (21 August 1891) that the association had been motivated:

“by the manifest renewal of the Triple Alliance, and the more or less probable adhesion of Great Britain to the political objects which that alliance pursues.”¹³⁹

1891, July. The Kaiser's visit to London was marked by popular outbursts of cordial sentiments:

“So marked was the enthusiasm with which the Kaiser was received in this country on that occasion, that it was said that during his stay at Hatfield, a proposal was signed by Lord Salisbury and Baron Marschall von Bieberstein pledging Great Britain to support the Triple Alliance.”¹⁴⁰

1893. Danger of war between the United Kingdom and France in connection with Siam.

1895. In July, Lord Salisbury, in conversation with the Kaiser at Cowes, made proposals which included the partition of the Ottoman Empire between Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the United Kingdom. The interview ended in a “heated altercation” which permanently affected the personal relations of the men.¹⁴¹

1898, February-April. In February, negotiations were resumed — this time between Mr. Joseph Chamberlain and the Duke of Devonshire on the one hand, and Baron Eckardstein (of the German embassy in London) on the other.¹⁴² Little progress having been made, it was arranged (April) that Eckardstein should proceed to Berlin and press the matter there. After his first interview with the Kaiser, he (as he relates):

“felt almost certain that the London negotiations for an Anglo-German understanding in China and for an eventual alliance would lead to a favorable result. But scarcely a week had passed after my return when my Chief told me in a despairing voice that it was no good going on with the negotiations, as the Wilhelmstrasse and above all Wilhelm seemed to be definitely against an understanding with England. And I have never succeeded in learning what the new influence was that got the upper hand with the Kaiser. But I had learnt my lesson that Wilhelm's policy was the point of view of the last comer.”¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Fr. Yell. Bk; *Franco-Russian Alliance*, No. 17, Annexe. See *ante cap.* IV, p. 96.

¹⁴⁰ *Fortnightly Rev.*, vol. LXVI, p. 911.

¹⁴¹ Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-9. Cf. Sir Valentine Chirol in *The Times*, 11 and 13 Sept. 1920; and *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, 275.

¹⁴² Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-7. Cf. *The Kaiser's Letters to the Czar*, pp. 50-4. Cf. *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, 257; 276-9.

¹⁴³ Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, p. 95. This estimate of the Kaiser is sustained by

1899, September. Difficulties about Samoa having been settled, the terms of an alliance were discussed at Windsor Castle by the Kaiser and his Chancellor, von Bülow, on the one hand, and Mr. Chamberlain on the other, with such hopeful results that, speaking at Leicester on 30 November, Mr. Chamberlain said:

“Every far-sighted statesman has long been anxious that we should not permanently remain isolated on the Continent, and I think that the most natural alliance is that between ourselves and the German Empire.”¹⁴⁴

The speech was received in Germany with “a storm of indignation both in the press and in parliament.”¹⁴⁵ The Chancellor found it necessary to repudiate association with the proposal.

1900, 16 October. The agreement between the United Kingdom and Germany, directed against the expansion policy of Russia in China, was signed.¹⁴⁶

1900, 1 November. Lord Lansdowne succeeded Lord Salisbury as Foreign Secretary.

1901, January. At the country house of the Duke of Devonshire, a further attempt to arrive at terms of alliance was made, in conversations between the Duke, Mr. Chamberlain, and Baron Eckardstein.¹⁴⁷ A few days afterwards, when the Kaiser arrived in England, in order to manifest his respect for the dying Queen Victoria, he expressed approval of an alliance.¹⁴⁸ Upon his return to Berlin, he changed his view, Eckardstein declaring that:

“he at once fell under the influence again of the fanatical Anglophobes of his entourage, and of those financiers who made a profitable business of the exploitation of Anglophobia. Finally he came also under the sway of Field-Marshal Count Waldersee, who succeeded in setting the Kaiser strongly against the British Government.”¹⁴⁹

During the conversation at the Duke's house, Mr. Chamberlain said that (as Eckardstein reported):

“He himself did not belong to those who wished for an association with Russia; he was rather convinced that a combination with Germany and an association with the Triple Alliance was preferable. He himself would do everything to bring about a gradual advance in this direction. For the present he was in favor of arranging a secret agreement

reference to other occasions, two of which will be mentioned in a few moments: pp. 158, 160; and p. 160, note.

¹⁴⁴ Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, p. 130. Cf. *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, 277-9.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 143. And see pp. 144-5, 151.

¹⁴⁶ Hertslet, *op. cit.*, *Ann. Reg.*, 1900, p. [304; Thos. F. Millard, *Democracy and the Eastern Question*, p. 365; Gibbons, *The New Map of Asia*, p. 402; Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

¹⁴⁷ Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 198-9. And see p. 196.

between Great Britain and Germany with reference to Morocco on the basis that had already been put forward. His advice was that the matter should be taken up as soon as Lord Salisbury left for the South, and that the details should be negotiated with Lord Lansdowne and himself."¹⁵⁰

Nothing having been arranged, the French initiated negotiations¹⁵¹ which afterwards produced the Anglo-French settlement of difficulties by the treaty of 1904.

1901, 22 January. Although the death of Queen Victoria and the accession of Edward VII made no immediate change in the relations between the United Kingdom and Germany, they substituted for a sovereign inclined to be pro-German, one whose predilections were shortly to become French, and whose personal dislike of the German Emperor was in process of culmination. Paul Cambon, the able French Ambassador at London (1898-1920), has said that "without King Edward the Entente might never have been made."¹⁵² Eckardstein refers to King Edward as follows:

"King Edward, who, as I have already said, was never the fanatical foe of Germany that he has been represented, was in 1901 quite favorable to an alliance. But the perpetual pin-pricks from Berlin — an expression he employed more than once in talking to me that year — had made him think differently and drove him into the encirclement policy. And when, in 1905, he heard, not officially, but through other channels in Petersburg, of the treaty of Bjorko between Wilhelm and Nicholas, he embarked definitely on encirclement."¹⁵³

Edward spoke of the Kaiser as the "most brilliant failure in history."¹⁵⁴

1901, 17 April. Negotiations for the Anglo-Japanese alliance commenced between Lord Lansdowne and Count Hayashi.¹⁵⁵ The first of the treaties is dated 20 January 1902.

1901, March to May. The fifth attempt at an alliance — this time in the form of "a general defensive agreement" — appears to have been originated by Berlin. Chamberlain was now somewhat shy, saying to Eckardstein:

"We would gladly approach Germany with far-reaching proposals which would assure it as great advantages as, or even greater advantages

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 185-6. And see pp. 222-3.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 242.

¹⁵² *The Times* (London), 22 Dec. 1920: quoted in *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, p. 307.

¹⁵³ *Op. cit.*, p. 60. Eckardstein has several interesting references to King Edward (pp. 54-60, 117-19, 121, 217). "Whole volumes," he says, "might be written by those who were behind the scenes as to the tragedy of his relations with his nephew, the Kaiser" (p. 54). M. Poincaré, in his book *The Origins of the War*, refers to the King as "a sovereign who was unable to regard without impatience the pretensions of Germany to the domination of Europe" (p. 61).

¹⁵⁴ Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

¹⁵⁵ *The Secret Memoirs of Count Hayashi*, p. 121.

than ourselves. But as we know for a fact that everything that Berlin hears is at once passed on to Petersburg, no one can wonder if, in future, we maintain the greatest reserve towards Germany.”¹⁵⁶

Lord Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary, however, said (18 March): “that he had been contemplating the possibility of bringing about a defensive arrangement between Great Britain and Germany which should be concluded for a considerable period. He believed that several of his most influential colleagues would favor the idea. England was now at a turning point and must make up its mind as to what line it would take in the future. But should such an idea be put into concrete form by the Cabinet, no official proposal would be made to Germany until there was some certainty that Germany would be disposed in principle to accept it.”¹⁵⁷

Eckardstein relates that:

“As a matter of fact my negotiations with Lord Lansdowne had by then already gone so far that a successful issue seemed assured.”¹⁵⁸

On 23 May, Eckardstein reported:

“Lord Lansdowne again raised the question of an alliance yesterday. I explained the situation in the sense of your last telegram and he appeared to understand. He is really working hard to bring matters to a head, and I gather from him and from a long conversation with the Duke of Devonshire that Lord Salisbury, in spite of his old inclination to make trouble, is now willing to accede to the policy of Lansdowne and Chamberlain and to agree to a defensive alliance on a basis of absolute reciprocity.”¹⁵⁹

The reason for the failure of the negotiations is far from clear. Eckardstein reports King Edward as saying:

“As you know I have for years had the greatest sympathy for Germany, and I am still to-day of the opinion that Great Britain and Germany are natural allies. Together they could police the world and secure a lasting peace. . . . Only we can't keep pace with these perpetual vagaries of the Kaiser. Moreover, as you know, some of my Ministers have the greatest distrust for the Kaiser and Bülow, especially Lord Salisbury. I have always tried to dissipate this distrust, but after all one can't go on forever.”¹⁶⁰

On a later page, Eckardstein indicates that Bülow had asked the British Ambassador at Berlin:

“to say nothing to the Emperor about the pending negotiations, and he accordingly had not done so. So the Kaiser seems to have known nothing at all about the matter.”¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁶ Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 217. Cf. *Cam. Hist. Brit. For. Pol.*, III, pp. 282-3.

¹⁶¹ The Kaiser appears to have been kept in similar darkness with reference to

Eckardstein adds:

"Thus the negotiations that had begun so well ended in nothing. Or rather they ended in the beginning of encirclement, and the end of encirclement was the beginning of war."¹⁶²

1901-2. Renewal of attempts at alliance was made difficult by an angry interchange between Chamberlain and the German Chancellor. Sensitive to allegations of the foreign press as to the severity of the British military methods in South Africa, Chamberlain, in a speech at Edinburgh on 25 October 1901, said:

"I think that the time has come — is coming — when measures of greater severity may be necessary, and if that time comes, we can find precedents for anything we may do in the action of those nations who now criticise our 'barbarity' and 'cruelty,' but whose example in Poland, in the Caucasus, in Algeria, in Tongking, in Bosnia, in the Franco-German war — whose example we have never even approached."¹⁶³

To this the German Chancellor replied (8 January 1902):

"I think that we shall all agree, and I think that all sensible people in England will agree with us, that when a Minister finds himself constrained to justify his policy — a thing which may happen — he does well to let foreign countries alone. But if, nevertheless, he wishes to adduce foreign examples, it is expedient that he should do so with the greatest circumspection, else there is a danger not only of his being misunderstood, but also and without any such intention — as I will assume in the present instance and as I must assume in accordance with the assurances given me from the other side — there is a danger of hurting foreign feelings. This is the more to be regretted when it happens to a Minister in dealing with a country which, as Count Stolberg has just pointed out, has always maintained good and friendly relations with his own — relations the undisturbed continuance of which is equally in accordance with the interests of both parties. It was altogether intelligible that in a nation which is so closely bound up with its glorious army as is the German people the general feeling rose up

the extremely important negotiations for an Anglo-German-Japanese alliance (Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 221, 6). When apprised of them he complained to Bülow, but succumbed to the Chancellor's "exceptional tact" (*Ibid.*, pp. 231-2). During the 1901 negotiations, when the Kaiser was in England, Eckardstein received from Berlin "pressing recommendations not to let the Kaiser discuss with the British Ministers the Alliance or any other question of the moment, for fear his ideas might crystallize in some particular form" (*Ibid.*, p. 189. Cf. Haldane, *Before the War*, pp. 66-7, 70-1). Viscount Haldane's negotiations at Berlin led him to adopt the following language: "an eminent foreign diplomatist observed, 'In this highly organized nation, when you have ascended to the very top story you find not only confusion but chaos'" (p. 71).

¹⁶² *Op. cit.*, p. 221. And see p. 225.

¹⁶³ *Ann. Reg.*, 1901, p. [211].

against the attempt, and even against the appearance of an attempt, to misrepresent the heroic character and the moral basis of our struggles for national unity. The German army, however, stands far too high and its escutcheon is far too clean that it should be affected by distorted judgments. With regard to anything of that kind; the remark of Frederick the Great holds good when he said, on being told that some one had attacked him and the Prussian army, 'Let the man alone and don't excite yourselves, he is biting at granite.'"¹⁰⁴

Three days afterwards, at Birmingham, Chamberlain said:

"What I have said I have said. I withdraw nothing. I qualify nothing. I defend nothing. As I read history, no British Minister has ever served his country faithfully and at the same time enjoyed popularity abroad. . . . I make allowance for foreign criticism. I will not follow an example which has been set to me. I do not want to give lessons to a foreign Minister, and I will not accept any at his hands. I am responsible only to my own Sovereign and to my own countrymen. But I am ready to meet that form of criticism which is made at home, which is manufactured here for export by the friends of every country but their own; and in reference to these I would ask you, How can it be due to a few words in a speech that was delivered only a few weeks ago, that for months and for years, from the very beginning of this war, the Foreign Press has teemed with abuse of this country? How can the Foreign Secretary be made responsible for what Sir E. Grey has called the 'foul and filthy lies,' for what Lord Rosebery has described as the vile and infamous falsehoods which have been disseminated in foreign countries, without a syllable of protest, without the slightest interference by the responsible authorities? No, my opponents must find some other scapegoat. They must look further for the causes of that feeling of hostility which I do not think we have deserved, but which has existed, more or less, for a century at least, which always comes to the surface when we are in any difficulty, but which, I am glad to say, has never done us any serious harm."¹⁰⁵

Eckardstein relates that, in a subsequent conversation (8 February 1902), Chamberlain, complaining of the Chancellor's speech, said:

"It is not the first time that Count Bülow has thrown me over in the Reichstag. Now I have had enough of such treatment and there can be no more question of an association between Great Britain and Germany."¹⁰⁶

Eckardstein adds:

"From that moment I knew that Chamberlain was ready to adopt the alternative of an accession to the Dual Alliance, which he had an-

¹⁰⁴ *Ann. Reg.*, 1902, pp. [4-5.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. [5-6. Cf. Eckardstein, *op cit.*, p. 228.

¹⁰⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 228-9. And see p. 239.

nounced in our conversation of January 1901, at Chatsworth, as being the consequence of a failure of an Anglo-German negotiation.”¹⁶⁷

Are we then to say that the vagaries and instability of the Kaiser and a personal squabble between Mr. Chamberlain and the German Chancellor turned British European policy from an alliance with Germany to an entente with France? Hardly so. Already, for more fundamental reasons, the future, as we know it, was being moulded. Rapidity in the development of German industries, commerce, and power had pointed the course which British statesmen were to follow.

1902. The United Kingdom entered into war-treaty with Japan, aimed at Russia.

1904. The Anglo-French treaty of 1904 settled all outstanding disputes; gave to the United Kingdom a free hand in Egypt; assigned to France similar liberty in Morocco; and contained the implicating clause:

“The two governments agree to afford to one another their diplomatic support in order to obtain the execution of the clauses of the present Declaration regarding Egypt and Morocco.”

1905. **March–April.** The first of the Morocco incidents commenced (31 March) with the landing of the Kaiser at Tangier.¹⁶⁸ Lord Lansdowne thereupon submitted to the French Ambassador:

“a general formula for an entente; a formula, however, that was even a little more vague than that by which the Franco-Russian Alliance had been precluded in 1891.”¹⁶⁹

It was not agreed to.

1905, **August.** In connection with the arrangements between the Kaiser and the Czar, arrived at during the Bjorko meeting (July 1905), the Kaiser afterwards (22 August) wrote to the Czar a letter in which he referred as follows to Edward VII:

“The ‘Arch intriguer — and mischief-maker’ in Europe, as you rightly called the King of England, has been hard at work in the last months.”¹⁷⁰

In an earlier letter (17 November 1904), the Kaiser said:

“Last not least an excellent expedient to cool British insolence and overbearing would be to make some military demonstrations on the Persio-Afghan frontier — where the British think you powerless to appear with troops during this war.”¹⁷¹

1905–6. Throughout the Morocco crisis, the United Kingdom not only supported France diplomatically, but, had the occasion required it, would have rendered her war-assistance.¹⁷² The British military staff

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 229.

¹⁶⁸ Referred to in cap. XXII.

¹⁶⁹ Poincaré: *The Origins of the War*, p. 72.

¹⁷⁰ *The Kaiser's Letters to the Czar*, p. 198. And see p. 199.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

¹⁷² See cap. XXII; and Sir Edward Grey's speech of 3 Aug. 1914, *post.* pp. 183–6.

was engaged in close consultation with both the French and the Belgian staff officers in preparation for co-operation against Germany in case of war.

1906 — Autumn. Although possibility of alliance between the United Kingdom and Germany had terminated with the Anglo-French treaty of 1904 and the unconcealed pro-French attitude of the United Kingdom during the Morocco crisis, Germany made strong effort to arrange that in case of war she would not necessarily be compelled to encounter the British fleet — efforts as natural as persistent. They commenced with a proposal (1906) by the Kaiser¹⁷³ for conference at Berlin. The British government accepted the invitation, and sent the minister best qualified for the task — Mr. (now Viscount) Haldane. He had recently been engaged in overseeing arrangements between the British and French General Staffs, with a view to possible war with Germany,¹⁷⁴ and was undoubtedly anxious that the necessity for preparation should not recur. During his visit, Haldane had an interview with Chancellor von Bülow which he (Haldane) relates, in part, as follows:

“He then spoke of the navy. It was natural that, with the increase of German commerce, Germany should wish to increase her fleet — from a sea-police point of view — but that they had neither the wish, nor, having regard to the strain their great army put on their resources, the power to build against Great Britain. I said that the best opinion in England fully understood this attitude, and that we did not in the least misinterpret their recent progress, nor would he misinterpret our resolve to maintain, for purely defensive purposes, our navy at a Two-Power standard.”¹⁷⁵

Haldane declares that he found the men in Berlin friendly:

“I do not think that my impression was wrong that even the responsible heads of the Army were then looking almost entirely to ‘peaceful penetration,’ with only moral assistance from the prestige attaching to the possession of great armed forces in reserve.”¹⁷⁶

Mr. Haldane enjoyed his visit, but no arrangement could be made.

1907, June. By diplomatic notes, France and Spain agreed to maintain the *status quo* in the Mediterranean and adjoining Atlantic, and in case of disturbance, to consult together as to action. Simultaneous notes to the same effect passed between the United Kingdom and Spain. The visit of King Edward VII to the King of Spain at Cartagena in the preceding April was probably not unconnected with the negotiations.”¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Haldane: *Before the War*, p. 22.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-33.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-3.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁷⁷ The subject is referred to in *Ann. Reg.*, 1907, pp. [90, [160, [354; and in the despatches of the Belgian Ministers at Berlin and Paris of 12 & 18 April, and

1907, 31 August. By treaty of 31 August 1907, the United Kingdom and Russia settled all their troublesome questions relative to Persia, Tibet, and Afghanistan, thereby inaugurating the Triple Entente. Between that date and the outbreak of the war of 1914-18, Sir Edward Grey, on various occasions, felt constrained, by anti-German considerations, to tolerate, and even defend, Russian actions which he cordially disapproved.

1907, November. The Kaiser visited King Edward (11-18 November) at Windsor.¹⁷⁸ The Bagdad railway appears to have been the principal subject of conversation.

"Although," Haldane writes, "these negotiations had no definite result, they assisted in promoting increasing frankness between the two Foreign Offices, and other things went with more smoothness. Sir Edward kept France and Russia informed of all we did, and he was also very open with the Germans. Until well on in 1911, all went satisfactorily."¹⁷⁹

1908, 9 June. Between the date of Austria-Hungary's disturbing announcement of her intention to build the Novibazar railway (17 January 1908) and the date of her still more disturbing annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (7 October 1908), the British and Russian Sovereigns cemented, by their meeting at Reval (9 June), the friendship inaugurated by their recent treaty, and acknowledged (between themselves) its anti-German purpose. Isvolsky, the capable Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, was present,¹⁸⁰ and, in a despatch (18 June) to the Russian Ambassador at Berlin, communicated the drift of the conversations:

"During the meeting of the Emperor with King Edward at Reval, I was received by His Majesty, and had a number of lengthy conversations with Sir Charles Hardinge, Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs. I consider it my duty to acquaint you confidentially for your own personal information with certain details of this exchange of opinions. . . . The British Government sincerely desires to maintain the very best relations with her [Germany,] and does not believe that these relations will be strained for any reason in the immediate future. 'In spite of this,' Sir Charles Hardinge remarked to me, 'one cannot close one's eyes to the fact that if Germany should continue to increase her naval armaments at the same accelerated pace, a most alarming and strained situation might arise in Europe in seven or eight years. Then, without doubt,

17, 19 & 22 June 1907: Morel, *Diplomacy Revealed*, pp. 73-5, 85-8; and see p. 101, note 35.

¹⁷⁸ King Edward had met the Kaiser at Kronberg in Aug. 1906, and at Wilhelmshöhe in Aug. 1907: *Ann. Reg.*, 1907 pp. [247-8.

¹⁷⁹ Haldane, *op. cit.*, p. 52. Curiously enough, Haldane passes in silence the German "naval scare" in the United Kingdom in 1909.

¹⁸⁰ King Edward was unaccompanied by a minister: *Fortnightly Rev.*, Dec. 1921, p. 989.

Russia would be the arbiter of the situation. It is for this reason that we, in the interests of peace and the preservation of the balance of power, desire that Russia be as strong as possible on land and sea.' Sir Charles reiterated this idea more than once, whereby he apparently wished to have it understood that he is expressing not his own personal opinion, but the decided political conviction of the London Cabinet."¹⁸¹ The Russian Press gave warm expression to their gratification at the meeting. According to the *Annual Register*:

"The meeting of King Edward and the Tsar at Reval on June 9 was hailed with great satisfaction by all the organs of the Russian Press, as a further step in the *rapprochement* between England and Russia and as a guarantee of European peace."¹⁸²

1908, 12 August. After spending part of a day with the Kaiser at Cronberg, King Edward VII went on to Ischl to visit the Austro-Hungarian sovereign. As upon some other occasions, he was unaccompanied by a minister of the Crown, but he had with him Sir Charles Hardinge who talked with Achrenthal upon foreign affairs. It is believed that, during the visit, a more or less informal proposal was made for the withdrawal of Austria-Hungary from alliance with Germany — upon what terms is not known.¹⁸³ Baron Margutti, for many years closely associated with the Austrian Emperor, tells us that Hardinge, when departing, said:

"That old Emperor is a fine and uncommon man! But I think he has just let slip one of the most favorable opportunities ever offered him in the course of his long life!"¹⁸⁴

1908, 14 August. Mr. Churchill (President of the Board of Trade) made a notable speech at Swansea, in which, after deprecating the newspaper and club "snapping and snarling," and deploring recent language of the Earl of Cromer and Mr. Blatchford, he said:

"I say we honour that strong, patient, industrious German people, who have been for so many centuries divided, a prey to European intrigue and a drudge amongst the nations of the Continent. Now in the fulness of time, after many tribulations they have, by their virtues and valour, won themselves a foremost place in the front of civilization. I say we do not envy them their good fortune; we do not envy them their power and prosperity. We are not jealous of them; we wish them well from the bottom of our hearts, and we believe most firmly the victories they will win in science and learning against barbarism, against waste, the victories they will gain will be victories in which we will share, and which, while benefiting them, will also benefit us."¹⁸⁵

¹⁸¹ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 478-9.

¹⁸² 1908, p. [320.

¹⁸³ *Quarterly Review*, Jan. 1923, pp. 3-4.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁸⁵ Neilson: *How Diplomats Make War*, pp. 109-10. Cf. *Ann. Reg.*, 1908, pp. 191-2.

1908, 25 November. The Russian Ambassador at London, when referring to some Anglo-German negotiations relating to the Bagdad railway, said:

"I believe that it is only in London that one can judge how persistent are the efforts of Germany to come to an understanding with England, in particular the efforts of Emperor William, who has committed one error after another, principally because his personal efforts were fruitless and he found himself in London face to face with a stone wall."¹⁸⁶

The Ambassador added that:

"from time to time, many voices are heard asserting that at heart Emperor William appears to be sincere towards England. . . . Not a single one of these voices suggests, however, the possibility of an entente with Germany. Not only because the existing agreements — of which one is not so popular as the other — suffice for Englishmen, but also because the naval question forms an insurmountable barrier" to an Anglo-German alliance.¹⁸⁷

1908-9. During the period between the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (7 October 1908) and Serbia's submission (31 March 1909), war of European dimensions was imminent. Russia was supporting Serbia; France, Russia; and Germany, Austria-Hungary. Under these circumstances, the United Kingdom promised (28 January 1909) diplomatic support to Russia "in the question of the compensation of Serbia and Montenegro,"¹⁸⁸ although, in the opinion of the French government,¹⁸⁹ the Serbian demands were "difficult to justify" and did not touch Russian "vital interests";¹⁹⁰ although, in the opinion of the British government, Serbia ought not to demand compensation;¹⁹¹ and although adherence to such a demand "must inevitably lead to war," and was therefore regrettable.¹⁹² Frequent reference has been made to a speech of the Kaiser in which he said, in connection with these Balkan difficulties, that he stood by his ally "in shining armor." Little notice has been taken of the fact that the British Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, by his speech at the Guildhall Banquet on 9 November 1908, plainly announced to the world that the United Kingdom was standing by her ally France, and, through France, by Russia. He said:

"Nothing will induce us in this country to falter and fall short in any one of the special engagements which we have undertaken, to be

¹⁸⁶ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 481-2.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 482.

¹⁸⁸ Benckendorff to Isvolsky: *ibid.*, p. 231.

¹⁸⁹ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 233-251.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 233. The subject is dealt with in cap. XXII.

disloyal or unfaithful even for a moment to the spirit of any existing friendship." ¹⁹³

1909. The navy question became specially prominent in 1909 — the year of the German "navy scare" ¹⁹⁴ On 3 February, the Russian Ambassador reported a conversation with the British Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs:

"In the strictest confidence, Sir Charles added that a portion of the British public harbored hopes which he held to be exaggerated. I can but declare to you, he said, that according to our opinion in the Foreign Office, so long as the question of naval armaments exists, the establishment of normal relations between Germany and England, however desirable in themselves, will not be possible." ¹⁹⁵

1909. After the Serbian difficulty had been settled, King Edward VII, anxious to assist in the detachment of Italy from the Triple Alliance, paid a visit to her King at Baja. What took place was reported by the Russian Chargé (22 June 1909) as follows:

"As Sir Rennel Rodd himself told me, the agreement was that no political questions should be discussed during the course of this meeting. King Edward decided otherwise, and had two conversations, one with King Victor Emmanuel, the other with Tittoni, discussing with both of them the same subject, namely, the balance of power in the Adriatic and the attitude of Italy in the event of an Anglo-German war.

"The British Ambassador assured me that neither the King nor Tittoni had given any answer to the questions put to them, but that the conversation had evidently made a deep impression on them both. King Victor Emmanuel made no secret of this fact when he spoke to Sir Rennel in the Quirinal eight days after the departure of King Edward. Sir Rennel, for his part, was astonished that the King had not taken advantage of this opportunity in order to express such doubts as might have arisen in his mind during the meeting at Baja, and to enter into an exchange of views. As to the impression made upon Tittoni, the French Ambassador told me yesterday, the Minister seemed, above all, astonished that King Edward had spoken of the probability of an approaching conflict between England and Germany, a probability which Tittoni had hitherto regarded as a purely theoretical question, and which now suddenly loomed up before him as an immediate danger. Toward Barrère he had refrained from all comment, giving him, however, to understand how difficult it would be for Italy to participate in a conflict, as she would not be able to remain a mere on-looker." ¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ Asquith, *op. cit.*, cap. I.

¹⁹⁴ See *post*, cap. XIX.

¹⁹⁵ Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 486. See also *post*, cap. XIX.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 147. Rodd and Barrère were the British and French Ambassadors, respectively, at Rome. Further reference to the Baja meeting may be seen in cap. VII.

1909, 12 November. The Russian Ambassador at London reported: "In Germany, the effort to establish better and franker relations with England is becoming of late more and more evident. These efforts find expression both in the press and in the speeches of the German Colonial Minister in England after his return from Africa."¹⁹⁷

1910. Shortly after his accession to the throne (6 May), George V sent for the Russian Ambassador, who reported (10 May) that the King said he:

"desired that our relations in the future should be as friendly and as cordial as at present. Above all things he would like that this satisfactory state of affairs should be a lasting one. 'As far as I am concerned,' said the King, 'I will work all my life to achieve this result.'"

The Ambassador added:

"The personal sentiments of the King, as long as he was heir to the throne, have always been known to me; but now, since they have been confirmed in the most solemn fashion on the day following his accession, his words seem to me to possess a quite particular significance."¹⁹⁸

At a later date (22 November 1911), the Ambassador confirmed his earlier view by saying:

To "the Entente policy of Sir Edward Grey . . . the King is just as much attached as his late father."¹⁹⁹

1910, June. When Sir Charles Hardinge became Viceroy of India, his place as Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office was taken by Sir Arthur Nicolson, who had been Ambassador at St. Petersburg and a favorite with the Czar, in order, Sir Edward Grey said — "to strengthen the ties between Russia and England."²⁰⁰

1911, January. The Kaiser's startling interview with Dr. Dillon, the correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph* (London), evoked much condemnation in Germany; but, in the opinion of the Russian Ambassador at London:

"it is the appeal of a mighty sovereign to the British nation. The form of procedure may not have been a happy one — but the essence of the matter is clear."²⁰¹

1911, March. The German Government proposed that an effort should be made (as the Russian Ambassador reported):

"to find a general formula which would more clearly determine the relations between the two nations. . . . The London Cabinet in con-

¹⁹⁷ Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 498.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 524-5.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 614.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 525.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 542.

sequence indicated three points which might form the basis of an agreement: (1) The Bagdad Railway. (2) The railways in South Persia. (3) Armaments."²⁰²

Sir Edward Grey required, however, that the formula must include France and Russia, and, for the moment, the matter was allowed to drop. The three *entente* Foreign Offices had agreed that no separate arrangements would be made with Germany.

1911. The Anglo-Russian treaty of 1907 (above referred to), dividing Persia into three parts and allocating, as spheres of influence, the northern to Russia and the southeastern to the United Kingdom, was followed by usurpations (particularly in 1911) by Russia, in her sphere, which Sir Edward Grey profoundly regretted, but, in pursuance of his *entente* policy, formally supported. His timidity with reference to possible strain in *entente* relations was so obvious that Russia saw opportunity to exploit it to her own advantage.²⁰³

1911. In the same year and at other times, the divergence between British and Russian interests in connection with the Bagdad Railway was made subsidiary to the maintenance of cordial relations.²⁰⁴

1911, May to November. Throughout the second Morocco crisis, the United Kingdom not only supported France diplomatically but, had the occasion required, would have rendered her war-assistance.²⁰⁵ The "conversations" between the military staffs of the United Kingdom and France and the United Kingdom and Belgium were being continued. Military and naval conventions between the United Kingdom and France were signed by the chiefs of the General Staffs.²⁰⁶

1911, May-June. In the same year, at the Imperial Conference, Sir Edward Grey said to the Dominion prime ministers:

"We are most anxious to keep on the best of terms with Germany. I believe she is also genuinely anxious to be on good terms with us, and we smooth over the matters which arise between us without difficulty. . . . But we must make it a cardinal condition in all our negotiations with Germany that if we come to any understanding of a public kind which puts us on good relations with Germany, it must be an understanding which must not put us back into the old bad relations with France and Russia. That means to say that if we publicly make friendship with Germany, it must be a friendship in which we take our existing friends in Europe with us, and to which they may become parties. It must also be clear that, side by side with that, it will become equally apparent that there is no chance of a disturbance of the peace between Germany and France or Germany and

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 563.

²⁰³ *Post* cap. XXII.

²⁰⁴ *Post* cap. XXI.

²⁰⁵ See cap. XXII, and Sir Edward Grey's speech of 3 Aug. 1914, *ibid.*, pp. 184-6.

²⁰⁶ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 719-22. See cap. XVII.

Russia. That is what I mean by taking our friends with us into any new friendships into which we may go." ²⁰⁷

Such comprehensive friendship being impossible, "good terms" between the United Kingdom and Germany could not be expected.

1911, 22 November. Immediately after the close of the second of the Morocco incidents, the Russian Ambassador at London reported (22 November) that:

"attempts to effect reconciliation have already been made beyond doubt, and they come, moreover, from Germany. I do not wish to draw any exaggerated deductions from the above." ²⁰⁸

1912, February. In January 1912 (Haldane relates), the Kaiser: "sent his message . . . to the effect that feeling had become so much excited that it was not enough to rely on the ordinary diplomatic intercourse for softening it, and that he was anxious for an exchange of views between the Cabinets of Berlin and London, of a personal and direct kind." ²⁰⁹

Thereupon (February) Haldane returned to Berlin where he struggled with the unsolvable question of navy construction. He had not much hope. Reporting a conversation between him and Jules Cambon (the French Ambassador at Berlin) the Russian Ambassador at London said: "at the very beginning of the conversation with Emperor William and Bethmann, he [Haldane] had declared that it must be well understood that the understanding with France and Russia would remain the basis of English policy. Hereupon, Jules Cambon had remarked to Haldane: 'It is consequently a matter of a *détente* and not of an *Entente*.' ²¹⁰ Haldane replied: 'Precisely.'" ²¹¹

Reporting his conversations, Haldane relates that he said to Bethmann and afterwards to the Kaiser:

"Germany was quite free to do as she pleased, but so were we, and we should probably lay down two keels for every one that she added to her programme. The initiative in slackening competition was really not with us, but with Germany." ²¹²

Admiral von Tirpitz:

"thought the Two-Power standard a hard one for Germany, and, indeed, Germany could not make any admission about it. I said it was not matter for admission. They were free and so were we, and we must for the sake of our safety remain so." ²¹³

The Chancellor proposed an agreement, of which the two principal clauses were as follows:

²⁰⁷ Asquith, *op. cit.*, cap. XVI.

²⁰⁸ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 614.

²⁰⁹ Haldane, *op. cit.*, p. 56. Cf. Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 613-39.

²¹⁰ A relaxation of strain rather than the creation of an agreement.

²¹¹ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 627-8.

²¹² Haldane, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

"2. They will not, either of them, make any combination, or join in any combination, which is directed against the other. They expressly declare that they are not bound by any such combination.

"3. If either of the High Contracting Parties becomes entangled in a war with one or more other Powers, the other of the High Contracting Parties will at least observe toward the Power so entangled a benevolent neutrality, and use its utmost endeavor for the localization of the conflict."²¹⁴

Haldane disapproved. Bethmann relates of him that:

"he repeatedly asserted, and that too with great emphasis, that England's relations with France and Russia must under no conditions be prejudiced by closer connections with Germany."²¹⁵

Inasmuch as these relations involved British support of France in case of war with Germany, they made assent to the proposed formula impossible. In his turn, Haldane suggested the following:

"Neither Power will make or prepare to make any unprovoked attack upon the other or join in any combination or design against the other for purposes of aggression, or become party to any plan of naval or military enterprise, alone or in combination with any other Power, directed to such end."²¹⁶

Bethmann's objection to this was that:

"This formula, which only secured us against unprovoked war-making on the part of England itself but not against the participation of England in hostilities against Germany in the case of a Franco-Russian attack, could not effectively relieve the crisis in world conditions as then constituted."²¹⁷

Trying to reach agreement, the two men recast, for purposes of consideration only,²¹⁸ the draft as follows:

"1. The High Contracting Parties assure each other mutually of their desire of peace and friendship.

"2. They will not either of them make or prepare to make any (unprovoked) attack upon the other, or join in any combination or design against the other for purposes of aggression, or become party to any plan, or naval or military enterprise, alone or in combination with any other Power directed to such an end, and declare not to be bound by any such engagement.

"3. If either of the High Contracting Parties becomes entangled in a war with one or more Powers in which it cannot be said to be the aggressor, the other party will at least observe towards the Power so entangled a benevolent neutrality, and will use its utmost endeavor for

²¹⁴ Haldane, *Before the War.*, p. 64. Cf. Bethmann-Hollweg, *Reflections on the World War*, p. 50.

²¹⁵ Bethmann-Hollweg, *op. cit.*, p. 52. Cf. p. 53.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

²¹⁸ Haldane, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-6.

the localization of the conflict. If either of the High Contracting Parties is forced to go to war by obvious provocation from a third party, they bind themselves to enter into an exchange of views concerning their attitude in such a conflict.”²¹⁹

After Haldane's return to England, Sir Edward Grey proposed the following (14 March 1912):

“England will make no unprovoked attack upon Germany, and pursue no aggressive policy toward her. Aggression upon Germany is not the subject, and forms no part of any treaty, understanding, or combination to which England is now a party, nor will she become a party to anything which has such an object.”²²⁰

This formula being open to the same objection as Haldane's, Bethmann proposed to add one or other of the following clauses:

“England will therefore observe at least a benevolent neutrality should war be forced upon Germany; or

“England will therefore, as a matter of course, remain neutral if a war is forced upon Germany.”²²¹

In case one of these was agreed to, Germany would meet British wishes with reference to navy construction.²²² Apparently Sir Edward deemed this to be a reasonable proposal, but, before accepting it, he sent it to Paris. Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador there, afterwards (5 December 1912) reported to his Foreign Office as follows:

“From my conversations with Poincaré and Paléologue, I have been able to learn in a very confidential way that, with reference to the famous journey of Lord Haldane to Berlin (in February of this year), there had been made by Germany to England a proposal altogether concrete amounting to this that the Cabinet of London make written engagement to maintain neutrality in case Germany should find herself engaged in a war not provoked by Germany. The London Cabinet informed Poincaré of this, and apparently hesitated whether to accept or reject the proposal. M. Poincaré declared himself in most categorical fashion against such an engagement; he informed the English Government that while between France and England there existed no written accord of general political character, the signature of such an accord with Germany by England would deal a finishing blow to the present Franco-English relations. This objection had the expected effect, and the London Cabinet rejected the German proposal, in this way provoking at Berlin strong dissatisfaction.”²²³

²¹⁹ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 835; Asquith, *op. cit.*, cap. VIII.

²²⁰ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 836. Cf. Bethmann-Hollweg, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

²²¹ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 837. Mr. Asquith has, quite erroneously, declared that Bethmann's proposal for British neutrality would “have precluded us from coming to the help of France, should Germany on any pretext attack her, and aim at getting possession of her Channel ports”: *op. cit.*, cap. XII.

²²² British Foreign Office statement, as published in *N. Y. Times*, 1 Sep. 1915.

²²³ *Un Livre Noir*, I, pp. 365-6.

French dislike of the word "neutrality" is easily understood, for it indicated the possibility of France and Germany being at war under circumstances which made British neutrality obligatory. That Sir Edward Grey's rejection of the Chancellor's proposal was based upon French feeling, rather than his own opinion, may be gathered from his explanation to the German Ambassador, who, reporting 17 March 1912, said:

"The Minister said he would frankly tell me why the British government objected to incorporating the word 'neutral' or 'neutrality' in the treaty. With regard to the proposal for a treaty, Sir Edward Grey said he must consider not only relations with Germany, but also those with other countries. The British Government must reckon with the facts of Germany's growing naval power, which would be considerably increased by the projected Navy Bill. Therefore Great Britain could not jeopardize her existing friendships. A direct neutrality treaty would most certainly irritate French sensibility, which the British Government must avoid. Sir E. Grey could not go so far as to imperil the friendship with France."²²⁴

On the other hand, not being able to come to agreement, the British government:

"had," as Lord Haldane says, "only one course left open to us — to respond by quietly increasing our navy and concentrating its strength in northern seas. That was done with great energy by Mr. Churchill, the result being that, as the outcome of the successive administrations of the fleet by Mr. McKenna and himself, the estimates were raised by over twenty millions sterling to fifty-one millions."²²⁵

Both countries were anxious for peace. But the United Kingdom was pledged to France, and maintenance of cordial entente relations with France and Russia was the pivotal factor in Sir Edward Grey's conduct of his foreign policy. The rivalries — the antagonisms — were irremovable. Preparations for Armageddon continued.

1912, 6 June. Poincaré was well pleased with the failure of the Anglo-German negotiations. Following hard upon British support during the Morocco incident of the previous year, it satisfied him that, in case of war with Germany, he could count on the co-operation of

²²⁴ *The Times* (London), 9 Sept. 1915.

²²⁵ Haldane, *op. cit.*, p. 72. Haldane's negotiations in Berlin in Sept. 1905 and Feb. 1912 are referred to *ibid.*, pp. 22, 26, 36, 56-73; Haldane's *Diary*; Br. White Paper of 31 Aug. 1915, published in *The Manchester Guardian*, 1 Sept. 1917, and the *N. Y. Time*, 2 June 1918; von Bethmann-Hollweg, *Reflections on the World War*, pp. 49-55; von Tirpitz, *My Memoirs*, at the pages noted in the index; Neilson, *How Diplomats Make War*, pp. 164-9; Oliver, *The Ordeal by Battle*, pp. 287 ff., 343; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, pp. 589, 834; *Current History*, VII, Pt. 1, p. 328; *Ann. Reg.*, 1912, pp. [16, [332; *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, pp. 456-65. "The main obstacle," in Mr. Asquith's opinion, "was the steady and ever-accelerating pursuit by Germany of her policy of naval expansion": *The Genesis of the War*, cap. XII.

the United Kingdom. His views are recorded in a despatch from the Russian Ambassador at Paris, Isvolsky, of 6 June 1912:

“The question of the transformation of the entente between France and England into a formal alliance, discussed by the English press, has naturally awakened the greatest interest as well in governmental circles here as in the press. In a conversation with me, Poincaré has expressed his view on this question in very precise fashion. According to his conviction, neither France nor England has cause to desire modification of present relations. The events of these last days have proved that, in the existing situation in Europe, the community of interests between France and England, and the entente which results from it, is so great and so incontestable that for that reason the political accord between the two States, in no matter what case of serious complications, is guaranteed in a fashion altogether sufficient. Signature of this or that other formal document, even if one supposes that it might be compatible with the French or the English constitution, would not reinforce in any manner this guarantee.”²²⁶

1912, 7 June. In Berlin, the failure of the negotiations was both disappointing and discouraging. On 7 June 1912, the Russian Chargé there telegraphed to his Foreign Office:

“Not the fact of the conclusion of an alliance between England and France makes itself felt, but rather the circumstance that the Germans have been finally convinced that England is now turning away from the possibility of a rapprochement with Germany—a rapprochement which Germany in truth passionately desired.”²²⁷

1912, 10 July. On 10 July 1912, Sir Edward Grey took occasion when speaking in the House of Commons, to re-affirm his attachment to entente policy. He said:

“The starting point of any new development in European foreign policy is the maintenance of our friendship with France and Russia. Taking that as our starting point, let us have the best possible relations with other countries.”²²⁸

During the same debate, Mr. Bonar Law, leader of the Opposition, said:

“The right hon. Gentleman said to-night that the Triple Entente—the good understanding with France and Russia—should be the starting point of our foreign policy. I prefer to say that it is the keynote of our foreign policy. . . . The strength of this particular part of our foreign policy is this: It is not the policy of that Government; it was not the policy of their predecessors; or it was equally the policy of their predecessors. What is far more important, it is the policy which is necessitated by the facts of the situation. It is the national policy of

²²⁶ *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 269. See also *ibid.*, pp. 275, 313.

²²⁷ Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 644.

²²⁸ Hansard, XL, col. 1994.

this country. It was really for the purpose of saying this that I have taken part in the debate. It is the policy of this country, and if the party to which I belong is ever returned to power, it will equally be the policy of that party." ²²⁹

1912, August, September. Probability — almost certainty — of outbreak of war in the Balkans increased the activities of the Foreign Offices. The French Prime Minister, Poincaré, went to St. Petersburg in August; the Russian Foreign Minister, Sazonoff, went to London 23–28 September; Prince Liven, the Chief of the Russian Naval Staff, went to London also; and, in pursuance of Anglo-French and Russo-French agreements, the larger British ships were concentrated in the North Sea, while the French were removed from Brest to the Mediterranean. Reporting upon his interviews with King George and Sir Edward Grey at Balmoral (23–28 September), Sazonoff said that, in reply to his question as to the attitude of the United Kingdom in case of a Franco-Russian war with Germany:

"Without hesitation, Grey declared that if the anticipated circumstances occurred, England would put forth every effort to deal a most telling blow to the German naval power. . . . With reference to this, Grey spontaneously confirmed what I had already learned from Poincaré: the existence of an arrangement between France and England by virtue of which, in case of a war with Germany, England has agreed to come to the aid of France not only on the sea, but also on land by means of landing of troops on the continent.

"Touching the same question, the King, in one of his conversations with me, expressed himself in a manner still more decided than his Minister, and having, with manifest irritation, referred to the efforts made by Germany to place herself on a footing of equality with Great Britain as regards naval forces, His Majesty exclaimed that, in case of conflict, that policy would have fatal consequences not only for the German fleet, but also for the maritime commerce of Germany, for the English would sink every German merchant ship.

"These last words seemed to express not only the personal sentiments of his Majesty, but also the public opinion which predominates in England with reference to Germany." ²³⁰

1912, October–November. During the Morocco incident of 1911, Russia had deemed the moment opportune for improvement in her posi-

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, cols. 2035–6. See Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 648–9.

²³⁰ *Un Liere Noir*, II, pp. 347–8. Cf. *Remarques, &c.*, p. 106; Morel, *Pre-War Diplomacy*, p. 21. The Kaiser compiled a sort of chronological table of eleven parallel columns recording the leading events of the principal countries of the world from 1878 to 1914. In it there is an entry under the year 1912: "King George in Balmoral tells Sazonoff (Russian Ambassador) he intends to destroy the German Navy and merchant marine. Grey tells Sazonoff, England, at right moment, will do everything to give German power a most telling blow" (*Nineteenth Century*, Feb. 1922, p. 342).

tion at Constantinople, but had found that Sir Edward Grey was not quite ready to modify British policy in that regard.²³¹ During the next year, almost immediately after the outbreak of the Balkan war, the Russian Ambassador at London reported (21 October 1912):

“The entire conversation with Grey proves that he has completely veered round in his opinions, in the interests of the maintenance of the Entente, and that he is resolved, for the sake of the Entente, to grant far greater concessions at the cost of Turkey than he was prepared to grant hitherto. I look upon this discussion with Grey as very important.”²³²

Interrogated as to the attitude of the United Kingdom in case of war, Sir Edward Grey gave assurances of “diplomatic support” for Russia,²³³ but, when pressed as to participation in the war, his stereotyped reply was that it depended “on the attitude of the remaining Powers.”²³⁴ Sir Arthur Nicolson, the capable Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office, was more outspoken. Benckendorff (the Russian Ambassador at London), in one of his reports (14 November), said:

“Nicolson told Cambon, with every reservation, that if the Triple Alliance were fighting against the Entente, England would, he thought, take part in the war.”²³⁵

The subject is more fully dealt with in a preceding chapter.

1912, October–1913, August. During the Balkan wars, and amid the various crises of that period, the United Kingdom worked cordially and successfully with Germany in efforts to maintain peace. In his speech of 3 August 1914, Sir Edward Grey said:

“Throughout the Balkan crisis, by general admission, we worked for peace. The co-operation of the Great Powers was successful in working for peace in the Balkan crisis.”²³⁶

And Mr. Winston S. Churchill, in his recent book, has said:

“All through the tangle of the Balkan Conferences, British and German diplomacy laboured for harmony. . . . For months we had negotiated upon the most delicate questions on the brink of local rupture, and no rupture had come. There had been a score of opportunities had any Power wished to make war. Germany seemed, with us, to be set on peace.”²³⁷

Reporting a conversation with Sir Edward Grey, the Russian Ambassador said (20 November):

²³¹ Cf. Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 320, 326, 328–9, 417–8.

²³² *Ibid.*, p. 373. And see pp. 374, 420, 421.

²³³ Benckendorff to Sazonoff, 14 Nov. 1912 (*ibid.*, p. 399); Isvolsky to Sazonoff, 17 Nov. 1912 (*ibid.*, p. 403).

²³⁴ Benckendorff to Sazonoff, 14 Nov. (*ibid.*, p. 399), 20 Nov. (*ibid.*, p. 404), and 6 Dec. 1912 (*ibid.*, p. 429); 3 Jan. 1913 (*ibid.*, p. 668).

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 400.

²³⁶ *Post*, p. 182.

²³⁷ *The World Crisis*, I, p. 188.

"He had told me enough to prove to me that, under certain special conditions, England would enter the war. For this, in my opinion, two conditions are necessary: in the first place, the active intervention of France must make this war a general one; secondly, it is absolutely necessary that the responsibility for the aggression fall upon our opponents."²³⁸

1912, 22 November. Sir Edward Grey and the French Ambassador exchanged the letters which were afterwards recognized as embodying "an obligation of honor" on the part of the United Kingdom to support France in the event of a German attack.²³⁹ Poincaré's comment is as follows:

"The phrasing was simply hypothetical and implied no firm obligation of reciprocal assistance. The British Cabinet did not feel itself able to contract a positive engagement without parliamentary sanction. . . . Nevertheless, in default of an alliance, the friendship of Great Britain made our foreign policy easier and more authoritative, and in the numerous crises that followed each other in Europe from 1905 onwards we stood shoulder to shoulder with Britain; we remained united with her at least as closely as with Russia. In Balkan affairs notably it was with England first, and in all circumstances, that we took care to act in concert. For several years, the two Governments were in consultation day by day and hour by hour, and on no single occasion did either of them take an isolated initiative in any pending question; and together, down to the supreme moment, they made desperate efforts to preserve peace."²⁴⁰

1912, 5 December. A despatch from Isvolsky of 5 December well illustrates the two predominating factors in Sir Edward Grey's policy, namely, (1) determination to support France and Russia in case of war with Germany, and (2) unwillingness to subscribe written pledge to that effect.

"Since the commencement of the present crisis,²⁴¹ M. Poincaré has not ceased on every occasion to urge the London Cabinet to confidential conversations with a view to making clear the position which would be adopted by England in case of a general European conflict. . . . The London Cabinet invariably replies that that will depend on circumstances, and that the question of peace or of war will be decided by public opinion. On the other hand, between the French and English Staffs not only has the examination of all eventualities which can present themselves not been interrupted, but the existing military and naval accords have received within these last days a still greater development, in such way that at the present moment the Anglo-French mili-

²³⁸ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 405.

²³⁹ *Ante*, pp. 117-8.

²⁴⁰ *The Origins of the War*, pp. 73-4.

²⁴¹ The Balkan war.

tary convention has a character as perfect and complete as has the Franco-Russian convention; the only difference consists in the fact that the former carries the signatures of the Chiefs of the two Staffs, and for this reason is not, so to speak, obligatory on the Government. Lately, in the most rigorous secrecy, the Chief of the English general Staff, General Wilson, arrived in France, and on this occasion various complementary details have been elaborated; in addition, apparently for the first time, not only the military but other representatives of the French Government have participated in this work."²⁴²

1913, 12 February. Some Anglo-German negotiations with reference to navy construction, followed by a speech in which Admiral Tirpitz appeared to recognize British sea-supremacy, caused a flutter in the Foreign Offices of France and Russia. On 12 February 1913, Sazonoff (Russian Foreign Minister) telegraphed to London:

"We are of opinion that an alarming symptom is to be discerned in the last speech of Admiral Tirpitz, and in the effort of German diplomacy to bring about a *rapprochement* with England. We should be glad to know in what degree machinations of that sort might find a favorable soil in London, and how they would react upon the attitude of the English Government in the present crisis."²⁴³

Some comfort came the next day from the Russian Ambassador at London:

"The efforts made by German diplomacy are obvious, but the speech of Tirpitz, which had at first been received with satisfaction as a recognition of the supremacy of England at sea, has, after mature consideration, made only an ephemeral impression. One is still convinced here that the Berlin cabinet is seriously striving to preserve peace."²⁴⁴

1913, June. The solidarity of the *entente* relations was deepened by the visit of Poincaré and Pichon (the French President and Foreign Minister) to London in June 1913, in order to discuss what:

"attitude we" (the three Entente Powers) "should take in case of hostilities breaking out among the Balkan allies."²⁴⁵

"Grey is extremely satisfied" (the Russian Ambassador reported, 27 June) "with his discussions with Poincaré and Pichon since they, no less than the reception accorded to the French Ministers by the English public, had greatly strengthened the Entente."²⁴⁶

1913. The terms of a comprehensive settlement between the United Kingdom and Germany with reference to territorial interests in Africa, present and prospective, were agreed to. Disagreement as to the advis-

²⁴² *Un Livre Noir*, I, pp. 366-7.

²⁴³ Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 668.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 669.

²⁴⁵ Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 674.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 675.

ability of publishing or keeping secret a treaty embodying these terms was the only reason for failure in completion.

1914, 21 April. King George V and Sir Edward Grey visited Paris, and committed themselves deeply to both France and Russia. Sir Edward agreed to the formulation of a naval convention with Russia. Isvolsky's account of what happened is quoted in a subsequent chapter.²⁴⁷

1914, July. The terms of a settlement of differences relating to the Bagdad railway and associated questions were agreed to, reduced to writing, and tentatively initialed. Outbreak of the war prevented completion.

Generally. Speaking generally, the following extract from a report of the Russian Ambassador at London of 18 May 1914 is accurate:

"If we review the various phases of the Entente, it cannot be denied that England has never hesitated, in threatening moments, to place herself on the side of France; the same holds good for Russia on every occasion on which English and Russian interests were simultaneously affected, and this, despite the difficulty of reconciling the policies of both countries in questions that arise from day to day, and despite those reasons which it would lead too far to discuss here, but which explain clearly why the Entente between Russia and England has not taken root so deeply as that between France and England."²⁴⁸

A similar view expressed by Poincaré has already been referred to.²⁴⁹

Comment. The foregoing recital makes clear various things, but principally three:

1. Both the United Kingdom and Germany desired friendly relations.
2. But these were impossible: (1) because of German rivalries—especially in relation to construction of warships; and (2) because of British commitments to France and Russia—made necessary, in British opinion, by German rivalries. Confirmatory of what has already been said upon this point, may be quoted the report of the Russian Ambassador at London of 20 May 1914:

"The present decision of the English government²⁵⁰ proves that it has made up its mind to cultivate this amelioration²⁵¹ only within the limits permitted by the principles of the Triple Entente."²⁵²

In reporting upon his visit to King George V in September 1912, Sazonoff accounted for the failure of Germany's approaches to the United Kingdom by the difficulty:

"in finding a groundwork suitable for a rapprochement between the two rival states."²⁵³

²⁴⁷ Cap. XVII, p. 532-7.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 720; *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 316.

²⁴⁹ *Ante*, p. 178.

²⁵⁰ The reference is to the agreement with Russia for the arrangement of a naval convention.

²⁵¹ Better relations with Germany.

²⁵² *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 323-4.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 348.

3. From 1905 to 1914, the policy of the British government was one of determined support of France and Russia as against Germany. In the Morocco episodes of 1905-6 and 1911, the United Kingdom sided with France, and would have joined her in war against Germany. In 1908-9, and 1912-13, in quarrels between Austria-Hungary (backed by Germany), and Serbia (backed by Russia), the United Kingdom lent her diplomatic assistance to Russia, and had war ensued would almost certainly have contributed her fleet and army.

The recital helps us therefore to understand why, upon the outbreak of a similar quarrel in 1914, the United Kingdom espoused the cause of Serbia, although that State was blameworthy. Not sympathy for Serbia; not treaty obligation to Belgium; not vindication of "the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed"; not for the sake of eventual peace and a league of nations, did British troops fight in Flanders and elsewhere. Maintenance of British interests was the motive. Freedom from the menace of the establishment of a dominating Germany on the North Sea and English Channel coasts was regarded as essential to the security of the British Isles.

No suggestion is here intended as to the propriety or impropriety of British policy. The United Kingdom did not desire war in 1914. Prevailing competitions and ambitions had on several occasions brought the rival Powers to the verge of hostilities. Precipitation eventually occurred. All the governments would have avoided hostilities could their objects, their securities, their "legitimate aspirations," their "historic missions," have been otherwise furthered. Statesmen worked hard during the decade prior to the war. But they spent their energies in contradictory directions — on the one hand, piling armaments, making war-ententes and alliances; and, on the other, suggesting limitation of armaments, proposing futile arbitrations, and arranging temporary postponements. By which they achieved two results: (1) they deferred the outbreak of war for a few years, and (2) they lengthened and enlarged the war which arrived. No adequate attempt to remove the fundamental reasons for the preparations and the diplomatizings, the competitions and the aspirations, was made. Deep-seated as these were in human nature (as evidenced by the many manifestations of the inapplicability of golden rule principles to international conduct), all such endeavors would probably have been useless. The rivalries persisted. An incident arrived. War supervened.

SIR EDWARD GREY'S SPEECH OF 3 AUGUST 1914

Having now ascertained (as we think) the reason for the United Kingdom entering the war, let us read, for confirmation or correction, the speeches which Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith delivered in the House of Commons on 3 and 6 August 1914, respectively, remembering that Austria-Hungary had commenced her attack on Serbia on 28

July; that Russia had mobilized secretly against Germany on 29 August, and openly on the 31st; that Germany had delivered her ultimatum to Russia on the 31st July, and had followed it by a declaration of war on 1 August; that Germany, on the 31st July, had enquired as to French intentions and, having received no reply, had declared war on the 3d August; that Germany's ultimatum to Belgium was delivered on the 2d August; and that the invasion of Belgium commenced on the morning of the 4th. (The paragraph headings and the italics are not, of course, parts of the speeches. They have been added for the convenience of readers.)

Introduction. Last week I stated that we were working for peace not only for this country, but to preserve the peace of Europe. To-day events move so rapidly that it is exceedingly difficult to state with technical accuracy the actual state of affairs, but it is clear that the peace of Europe cannot be preserved. *Russia and Germany, at any rate, have declared war upon each other.*

Before I proceed to state the position of His Majesty's Government, I would like to clear the ground so that, before I come to state to the House what our attitude is with regard to the present crisis, the House may know exactly under what obligation the Government is, or the House can be said to be, in coming to a decision on the matter. First of all, let me say, very shortly, that we have consistently worked with a single mind, with all the earnestness in our power, to preserve peace. The House may be satisfied on that point. We have always done it. During these last years, as far as His Majesty's Government are concerned, we would have no difficulty in proving that we have done so. Throughout the Balkan crisis, by general admission, we worked for peace. The co-operation of the Great Powers of Europe was successful in working for peace in the Balkan crisis. It is true that some of the Powers had great difficulty in adjusting their points of view. It took some time and labour and discussion before they could settle their differences, but peace was secured because peace was their main object, and they were willing to give time and trouble rather than accentuate differences rapidly. In the present crisis, it has not been possible to secure the peace of Europe; because there has been little time, and there has been a disposition — at any rate in some quarters on which I will not dwell — to force things rapidly to an issue, at any rate, to the great risk of peace, and, as we now know, the result of that is that the policy of peace, as far as the Great Powers generally are concerned, is in danger. I do not want to dwell on that, and to comment on it, and to say where the blame seems to us to lie, which Powers were most in favor of peace, which were most disposed to risk or endanger peace, because I would like the House to approach this crisis in which we are now, from the point of view of British interests, British honor, and British obligations, free from all passion as to why peace has not been preserved.

We shall publish Papers as soon as we can regarding what took place last week when we were working for peace; and when those Papers are published, I have no doubt that to every human being they will make it clear how strenuous and genuine and whole-hearted our efforts for peace were, and that they will enable people to form their own judgment as to what forces were at work which operated against peace.

British Obligations. I come first, now, to the question of British obligations. I have assured the House — and the Prime Minister has assured the House more than once — that if any crisis such as this arose, we should come before the House of Commons and be able to say to the House that *it was free to decide what the British attitude should be, that we should have no secret engagement which we should spring upon the House*, and tell the House that, because we had entered into that engagement, there was an obligation of honor upon the country. I will deal with that point to clear the ground first.

There have been in Europe two diplomatic groups, the Triple Alliance and what came to be called the “Triple Entente,” for some years past. The Triple Entente was not an Alliance²⁵⁴ — it was a diplomatic group. The House will remember that in 1908 there was a crisis, also a Balkan crisis, originating in the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Russian Minister, M. Isvolsky, came to London, or happened to come to London, because his visit was planned before the crisis broke out. I told him definitely then, this being a Balkan crisis, a Balkan affair, I did not consider that public opinion in this country would justify us in promising to give anything more than diplomatic support. More was never asked from us, more was never given, and more was never promised.

Assurance to France. In this present crisis, up till yesterday, *we have also given no promise of anything more than diplomatic support* — up till yesterday no promise of more than diplomatic support. Now I must make this question of obligation clear to the House. I must go back to the first Moroccan crisis of 1906. That was the time of the Algeciras Conference, and it came at a time of very great difficulty to His Majesty's Government, when a General Election was in progress, and Ministers were scattered over the country, and I — spending three days a week in my constituency and three days at the Foreign Office — was asked the question whether if that crisis developed into war between France and Germany, we would give armed support. I said then that I could promise nothing to any foreign Power unless it was subsequently to receive the whole-hearted support of public opinion here if the question arose. I said, in my opinion, if war was

²⁵⁴ As between France and Russia, it was an alliance (*ante* p. 96). Sir Edward Grey, in a subsequent paragraph of his speech, so characterized it (*post*, p. 186). And as to the position of the United Kingdom, see *ante* pp. 163, 165.

forced upon France, then on the question of Morocco—a question which had just been the subject of agreement between this country and France, an agreement exceedingly popular on both sides—that if, out of that agreement, *war was forced on France at that time, in my view public opinion in this country would have rallied to the material support of France.*

Military and Naval Conversations. I gave no promise, but I expressed that opinion during the crisis, as far as I remember, almost in the same words, to the French Ambassador and the German Ambassador at the time. I made no promise, and I used no threats; but I expressed that opinion. That position was accepted by the French Government, but they said to me at the time—and I think very reasonably—“If you think it possible that the public opinion of Great Britain might, should a sudden crisis arise, justify you in giving to France the armed support which you cannot promise in advance, you will not be able to give that support, even if you wish to give it, when the time comes, unless some conversations have already taken place between naval and military experts.”

There was force in that. I agreed to it, and authorized those conversations to take place, but on the distinct understanding that nothing which passed between military or naval experts should bind either Government, or restrict in any way their freedom to make a decision as to whether or not they would give that support when the time arose.

The Cabinet. As I have told the House, upon that occasion a General Election was in prospect. I had to take the responsibility of doing that without the Cabinet. It could not be summoned.²⁶⁵ An answer had to be given. I consulted Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the Prime Minister; I consulted, I remember, Lord Haldane, who was then Secretary of State for War, and the present Prime Minister, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer. That was the most that I could do, and they authorized that on the distinct understanding that it left the hands of the Government free whenever the crisis arose. The fact that conversations between military and naval experts took place was later on—I think much later on, because that crisis had passed, and the thing ceased to be of importance—but later on it was brought to the knowledge of the Cabinet.

A Definite Understanding. The Agadir crisis came—another Morocco crisis—and, throughout that, I took precisely the same line that had been taken in 1906. But subsequently, in 1912, after discussion and consideration in the Cabinet it was decided that we ought to have a definite understanding in writing which was to be only in the form of an unofficial letter, that these conversations which took place were not binding upon the freedom of either Government; and

²⁶⁵ Lord Loreburn has denied this: *How the War Came*, pp. 80, 81.

on the 22nd of November, 1912, I wrote to the French Ambassador the letter which I will now read to the House, and I received from him a letter in similar terms in reply. The letter which I have to read to the House is this, and it will be known to the public now as the record that, whatever took place between military and naval experts, they were not binding engagements upon the Government:

“My dear Ambassador, — From time to time in recent years the French and British naval and military experts have consulted together. It has always been understood that such consultation does not restrict the freedom of either Government to decide at any future time whether or not to assist the other by armed force. We have agreed that consultation between experts is not, and ought not to be regarded as an engagement that commits either Government to action in a contingency that has not yet arisen and may never arise. The disposition, for instance, of the French and British Fleets respectively at the present moment is not based upon an engagement to co-operate in war.

“You have, however, pointed out that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, *it might become essential to know whether it could in that event depend upon the armed assistance of the other.*

“I agree that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, or something that threatened the general peace, *it should immediately discuss with the other* whether both Governments should act together to prevent aggression and to preserve peace, and, if so, what measures they would be prepared to take in common.”

(Not wishing to disclose the fact that military and naval conventions between the two countries had been signed, Sir Edward Grey omitted the last sentence of the letter.²⁵⁶)

No Obligation. That is the starting point for the Government with regard to the present crisis. I think it makes clear that what the Prime Minister and I said to the House of Commons was perfectly justified, and that as regards our freedom to decide in a crisis what our line should be, whether we should intervene or whether we should abstain, the Government remained perfectly free and, *a fortiori*, the House of Commons remains perfectly free. That I say to clear the ground from the point of view of obligation. I think it was due to prove our good faith to the House of Commons that I should give that full information to the House now, and say what I think is obvious from the letter I have just read, that we do not construe anything which has previously taken place in our diplomatic relations with other Powers in this matter as restricting the freedom of the Government to decide what attitude they should take now, or restrict the freedom of the House of Commons to decide what their attitude should be.

²⁵⁶ It appears *ante*, p. 117-18.

(That the letter created "an obligation of honor" to assist France in case of war with Germany, has been pointed out²⁵⁷).

Difference between the Crises. Well, Sir, I will go further, and I will say this: The situation in the present crisis is not precisely the same as it was in the Morocco crisis. In the Morocco question it was primarily a dispute which concerned France — a dispute which concerned France, and France primarily — a dispute, as it seemed to us, affecting France, and of an agreement subsisting between us and France and published to the whole world, in which we engaged to give France diplomatic support. No doubt we were pledged to give nothing but diplomatic support; we were, at any rate, pledged by a definite public agreement to stand with France diplomatically on that question. The present crisis has originated differently. It has not originated with regard to Morocco. It has not originated as regards anything with which we had a special agreement with France; it has not originated with anything which primarily concerned France. It has originated in a dispute between Austria and Servia. I can say this with the most absolute confidence — *no Government and no country has less desire to be involved in war over a dispute with Austria and Servia than the Government and the country of France. They are involved in it because of their obligation of honor under a definite alliance with Russia.* Well, it is only fair to say to the House that that obligation of honor cannot apply in the same way to us. We are not parties to the Franco-Russian Alliance. We do not even know the terms of that Alliance. So far I have, I think, faithfully and completely cleared the ground with regard to the question of obligation.

(Observe the unimportance of the merits of the quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia.)

Obligation of Friendship with France. I now come to what we think the situation requires of us. For many years we have had a long-standing friendship with France. [An hon. Member: "And with Germany!"] I remember well the feeling in the House — and my own feeling — for I spoke on the subject, I think, when the late Government made their agreement with France — the warm and cordial feeling resulting from the fact that these two nations, who had had perpetual differences in the past, had cleared these differences away. I remember saying, I think, that it seemed to me that some benign influence has been at work to produce the cordial atmosphere that had made that possible. *But how far that friendship entails obligation — it has been a friendship between the nations and ratified by the nations — how far that entails an obligation let every man look into his own heart, and his own feelings, and construe the extent of the obligation for himself. I construe it to myself as I feel it, but I do not wish to urge upon anyone else more than their feelings dictate as to what they*

²⁵⁷ *Ante*, pp. 119-122.

should feel about the obligation. The House, individually and collectively, may judge for itself. I speak my personal view, and I have given the House my own feeling in the matter.

(Evidently, in Sir Edward's view, the friendship involved a moral obligation to support France in a quarrel in which France had no interest, and in which the merits were a matter of indifference.)

Naval Situation. The French fleet is now in the Mediterranean, and the Northern and Western Coasts of France are absolutely undefended. The French fleet being concentrated in the Mediterranean, *the situation is very different from what it used to be, because the friendship which has grown up between the two countries has given them a sense of security that there was nothing to be feared from us.*

The French coasts are absolutely undefended. The French fleet is in the Mediterranean, and has for some years been concentrated there *because of the feeling of confidence and friendship which has existed between the two countries. My own feeling is that if a foreign fleet engaged in a war which France had not sought, and in which she had not been the aggressor, came down the English Channel and bombarded and battered the undefended coasts of France, we could not stand aside and see this going on practically within sight of our eyes, with our arms folded, looking on dispassionately, doing nothing! I believe this would be the feeling of this country. There are times when one feels that if these circumstances actually did arise, it would be a feeling which would spread with irresistible force throughout the land.*

(Sir Edward was not quite frank. The French fleet was concentrated in the Mediterranean not because "there was nothing to be feared from us" — for Germany was still to be thought of — but because the two countries had arranged, by means of the "conversations," that the British fleet should concentrate in the North Sea as against Germany, while the French took charge of the Mediterranean. Under these circumstances, an obligation to France undoubtedly existed. Sir Edward's second statement was better, — namely, that the French fleet had been concentrated for some years in the Mediterranean "because of the feeling of confidence and friendship which has existed between the two countries" — "confidence," he might well have explained, that the British government would not disappoint the expectations created by its conduct; "confidence" that the British government would implement its "obligation of honor.")

British Interests. But I also want to look at the matter without sentiment, and from *the point of view of British interests, and it is on that that I am going to base and justify what I am presently going to say to the House.* If we say nothing at this moment, what is France to do with her fleet in the Mediterranean? If she leaves it there, with no statement from us as to what we will do, she leaves her Northern and Western Coasts absolutely undefended, at the mercy of a German fleet

coming down the Channel, to do as it pleases in a war which is a war of life and death between them. If we say nothing, it may be that the French fleet is withdrawn from the Mediterranean. We are in the presence of a European conflagration; can anybody set limits to the consequences that may arise out of it? Let us assume that to-day we stand aside in an attitude of neutrality, saying, "No, we cannot undertake and engage to help either party in this conflict." Let us suppose the French fleet is withdrawn from the Mediterranean; and let us assume that the consequences — which are already tremendous in what has happened in Europe even to countries which are at peace — in fact, equally whether countries are at peace or at war — let us assume that out of that come consequences unforeseen, which make it necessary at a sudden moment that, in defence of vital British interests, we should go to war: and let us assume — which is quite possible — that Italy, who is now neutral — (Hon. Members: "Hear, hear!") — because, as I understand, she considers that this war is an aggressive war, and the Triple Alliance being a defensive alliance her obligation did not arise — let us assume that consequences which are not yet foreseen — and which perfectly legitimately consulting her own interests — make Italy depart from her attitude of neutrality at a time when we are forced in defence of vital British interests ourselves to fight, *what then will be the position in the Mediterranean? It might be that at some critical moment those consequences would be forced upon us because our trade routes in the Mediterranean might be vital to this country.*

(In other words, if we do not protect France in the north, France may treat us similarly in the Mediterranean.)

France entitled to know. Nobody can say that in the course of the next few weeks there is any particular trade route, the keeping open of which may not be vital to this country. What will be our position then? We have not kept a fleet in the Mediterranean which is equal to dealing alone with a combination of other fleets in the Mediterranean. It would be the very moment when we could not detach more ships to the Mediterranean, and we might have exposed this country from our negative attitude at the present moment to the most appalling risk. *I say that from the point of view of British interests. We feel strongly that France was entitled to know — and to know at once — whether or not in the event of attack upon her unprotected Northern and Western Coasts she could depend upon British support.* In that emergency, and in these compelling circumstances, yesterday afternoon I gave to the French Ambassador the following statement:

"I am authorized to give an assurance that if the German fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against the French coasts or shipping, the British Fleet will give all the protection in its power. This assurance is, of course, subject to the policy of His Majesty's Government receiving the support of

Parliament, and must not be taken as binding His Majesty's Government to take any action until the above contingency of action by the German fleet takes place."

("France was entitled to know — and to know at once." Yes, that was the meaning of the letter of 22 November 1912. But France was not permitted to know "at once" — nor until after vexatious delays. Why? Because Sir Edward Grey did not himself know. On the 2d August, the government was still "considering what statement we should make in parliament to-morrow"²⁵⁸ — considering whether they would honor or repudiate their obligation.)

The German Offer. I read that to the House, not as a declaration of war on our part, not as entailing immediate aggressive action on our part, but as binding us to take aggressive action should that contingency arise. Things move very hurriedly from hour to hour. Fresh news comes in, and I cannot give this in any very formal way; but I understand that the German Government would be prepared, if we would pledge ourselves to neutrality, to agree that its fleet would not attack the Northern Coast of France. I have only heard that shortly before I came to the House, but it is far too narrow an engagement for us. And, Sir, there is the more serious consideration — becoming more serious every hour — there is the question of the neutrality of Belgium.

(Sir Edward omitted to say that Germany had offered to respect the neutrality of Belgium if the United Kingdom remained neutral.²⁵⁹ In the indefiniteness of what follows we may note the effect of the offer.)

Belgian Treaty in 1870. I shall have to put before the House at some length what is our position in regard to Belgium. The governing factor is the Treaty of 1839, but this is a Treaty with a history — a history accumulated since. In 1870, when there was war between France and Germany, the question of the neutrality of Belgium arose, and various things were said. Amongst other things, Prince Bismarck gave an assurance to Belgium that, confirming his verbal assurance, he gave in writing a declaration which he said was superfluous in reference to the Treaty in existence — that the German Confederation and its allies would respect the neutrality of Belgium, it being always understood that that neutrality would be respected by the other belligerent Powers. That is valuable as a recognition in 1870 on the part of Germany of the sacredness of these Treaty rights.²⁶⁰

What was our own attitude? The people who laid down the attitude of the British Government were Lord Granville in the House of Lords, and Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons. Lord Granville, on the 8th August 1870, used these words. He said:

²⁵⁸ *Ante*, p. 133.

²⁵⁹ *Ante*, pp. 134-7.

²⁶⁰ That is not correct. See cap. XIV. , 17

"We might have explained to the country and to foreign nations that we did not think this country was bound either morally or internationally, or that its interests were concerned in the maintenance of the neutrality of Belgium; though this course might have had some conveniences, though it might have been easy to adhere to it, though it might have saved us from some immediate danger, it is a course which Her Majesty's Government thought it impossible to adopt in the name of the country with any due regard to the country's honor or to the country's interests."

Mr. Gladstone spoke as follows two days later:

"There is, I admit, the obligation of the Treaty. It is not necessary, nor would time permit me to enter into the complicated question of the nature of the obligations of that Treaty; but *I am not able to subscribe to the doctrine* of those who have held in this House what plainly amounts to an assertion, that *the simple fact of the existence of a guarantee is binding on every party to it, irrespectively altogether of the particular position in which it may find itself at the time when the occasion for acting on the guarantee arises.* The great authorities upon foreign policy to whom I have been accustomed to listen, such as Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston, *never to my knowledge took that rigid, and, if I may venture to say so, that impracticable view of the guarantee.* The circumstance that there is already an existing guarantee in force is of necessity an important fact, and a weighty element in the case to which we are bound to give full and ample consideration. There is also this further consideration, the force of which we must all feel most deeply, and that is, *the common interests against the unmeasured aggrandisement of any Power whatever.*"

The Treaty is an old Treaty — 1839 — and that was the view taken of it in 1870. It is one of those Treaties which are founded, not only on consideration for Belgium, which benefits under the Treaty, but in the interests of those who guarantee the neutrality of Belgium. The honor and interests are, at least, as strong to-day as in 1870, and we cannot take a more narrow view or a less serious view of our obligations and of the importance of those obligations than was taken by Mr. Gladstone's Government in 1870.

(Mr. Gladstone's view was apparently very much the same as that revealed by Sir Edward in one of his pre-war interchanges, namely, that "the preservation of the neutrality of Belgium might be, I would not say a decisive but an important factor in determining our attitude."²⁶¹ In other words, it was not a contractual obligation. Quite in line with this attitude was Sir Edward's phrase "a most important element in our policy" in the following paragraph.)

Application to the Belligerents. I will read to the House what took place last week on this subject. When mobilization was beginning,

²⁶¹ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 119.

I knew that this question must be *an important element in our policy — a most important subject for the House of Commons*. I telegraphed at the same time in similar terms to both Paris and Berlin to say that it was essential for us to know whether the French and German Governments respectively were prepared to undertake an engagement to respect the neutrality of Belgium. I got from the French Government this reply:

“The French Government are resolved to respect the neutrality of Belgium, and it would be only in the event of some other Power violating that neutrality that France might find herself under the necessity, in order to assure the defence of her security, to act otherwise. This assurance has been given several times. The President of the Republic spoke of it to the King of the Belgians, and the French Minister at Brussels has spontaneously renewed the assurance to the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs to-day.”

From the German Government the reply was:

“The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs could not possibly give an answer before consulting the Emperor and the Imperial Chancellor.” Sir Edward Goschen, to whom I said it was important to have an answer soon, said he hoped the answer would not be too long delayed. The German Minister for Foreign Affairs then gave Sir Edward Goschen to understand that he rather doubted whether they could answer at all, as any reply they might give could not fail, in the event of war, to have the undesirable effect of disclosing, to a certain extent, part of their plan of campaign.

(In 1870, Mr. Gladstone made similar enquiries of the French and German Governments, but he accompanied them with two declarations: (1) that if one party invaded Belgium, the other would receive the assistance of British forces in defence of Belgium; and (2) that unless Belgium were invaded, the British Government would be neutral. Sir Edward's commitments to France prevented him following Mr. Gladstone's example in either of these respects.)

I telegraphed at the same time to Brussels to the Belgian Government, and I got the following reply from Sir Francis Villiers:

“The Minister for Foreign Affairs thanks me for the communication, and replies that Belgium will, to the utmost of her power, maintain neutrality, and expects and desires other Powers to uphold it. He begged me to add that the relations between Belgium and the neighboring Powers were excellent, and there was no reason to suspect their intentions, but that the Belgian Government believe, in the case of violation, they were in a position to defend the neutrality of their country.”

Germany's Ultimatum to Belgium. It now appears from the news I have received to-day — which has come quite recently, and I am not yet sure how far it has reached me in an accurate form — that an

ultimatum has been given to Belgium by Germany, the object of which was to offer Belgium friendly relations with Germany on condition that she would facilitate the passage of German troops through Belgium. Well, Sir, until one has these things absolutely definitely, up to the last moment, I do not wish to say all that one would say if one were in a position to give the House, full, complete, and absolute information upon the point. We were sounded in the course of last week as to whether if a guarantee were given that, after the war, Belgian integrity would be preserved that would content us. We replied that we could not bargain away whatever interests or obligations we had in Belgian neutrality.

Shortly before I reached the House I was informed that the following telegram had been received from the King of the Belgians by our King — King George:

“Remembering the numerous proofs of your Majesty’s friendship and that of your predecessors, and the friendly attitude of England in 1870, and the proof of friendship she has just given us again, I make a supreme appeal to the diplomatic intervention of your Majesty’s Government to safeguard the integrity of Belgium.”

British Interest in Belgian Independence. Diplomatic intervention took place last week on our part. What can diplomatic intervention do now? *We have great vital interests in the independence — and integrity is the least part — of Belgium.* If Belgium is compelled to submit to allow her neutrality to be violated, of course the situation is clear. Even if by agreement she admitted the violation of her neutrality, it is clear she could only do so under duress. The smaller States in that region of Europe ask but one thing. Their one desire is that they should be left alone and independent. The one thing they fear is, I think, not so much that their integrity but that their independence should be interfered with. *If in this war which is before Europe the neutrality of one of these countries is violated, if the troops of one of the combatants violate its neutrality and no action be taken to resent it, at the end of the war, whatever the integrity may be, the independence will be gone.*

(In other words, British interests require maintenance of freedom from menace on the North Sea coasts.)

I have one further quotation from Mr. Gladstone as to what he thought about the independence of Belgium. It will be found in “Hansard,” vol. 203, page 1787. I have not had time to read the whole speech and verify the context, but the thing seems to me so clear that no context could make any difference to the meaning of it. Mr. Gladstone said:

“We have an interest in the independence of Belgium which is wider than that which we may have in the literal operation of the guarantee. It is found in the answer to the question whether, under

the circumstances of the case, this country, endowed as it is with influence and power, would quietly stand by and witness the perpetration of the direst crime that ever stained the pages of history, and thus become participators in the sin."

(Fear of participation in crime was, in 1914, mere rhetoric. Only a few days before Sir Edward spoke, he had watched, without a semblance of emotion, Germany's invasion of Luxemburg. He offered not even a diplomatic protest while the guaranteed neutrality of that little state was violated.)

No, Sir, if it be the case that there has been anything in the nature of an ultimatum to Belgium, asking her to compromise, or violate her neutrality, whatever may have been offered to her in return, her independence is gone if that holds. *If her independence goes, the independence of Holland will follow. I ask the House, from the point of view of British interests, to consider what may be at stake. If France is beaten in a struggle of life and death, beaten to her knees, loses her position as a Great Power, becomes subordinate to the will and power of one greater than herself* — consequences which I do not anticipate, because I am sure that France has the power to defend herself with all the energy and ability and patriotism which she has shown so often — still, if that were to happen, *and if Belgium fell under the same dominating influence, and then Holland, and then Denmark*, then would not Mr. Gladstone's words come true, that just opposite to us there would be a common interest against the unmeasured aggrandisement of any Power?

Effect of Neutrality. It may be said, I suppose, that we might stand aside, husband our strength, and that whatever happened in the course of this war, at the end of it to intervene with effect to put things right, and to adjust them to our own point of view. If, in a crisis like this, we run away from *those obligations of honor and interest as regards the Belgian Treaty*, I doubt whether, whatever material force we might have at the end, it would be of very much value in face of the respect that we should have lost. And do not believe, whether a Great Power stands outside this war or not, it is going to be in a position at the end of it to exert its superior strength. For us, with a powerful Fleet, which we believe able to protect our commerce, to protect our shores, and to protect our interests, *if we are engaged in war, we shall suffer but little more than we shall suffer even if we stand aside.*

We are going to suffer, I am afraid, terribly in this war whether we are in it or whether we stand aside. Foreign trade is going to stop, not because the trade routes are closed, but because there is no trade at the other end. Continental nations engaged in war — all their populations, all their energies, all their wealth, engaged in a desperate struggle — they cannot carry on the trade with us that they are carrying on in times of peace, whether we are parties to the war or whether we are not. I do not believe for a moment, that at the end of the war,

even if we stood aside and remained aside, we should be in a position, a material position, to use our force decisively to undo what had happened in the course of the war, *to prevent the whole of the West of Europe opposite to us — if that had been the result of the war — falling under the domination of a single Power*, and I am quite sure that our moral position would be such as to have lost us all respect.

I can only say that I have put the question of Belgium somewhat hypothetically, because I am not yet sure of all the facts, but if the facts turn out to be as they have reached us at present, *it is quite clear that there is an obligation on this country to do its utmost to prevent the consequences to which these facts will lead if they are undisputed.*

(In other words, following Sir Edward's line of reasoning, if Belgium is invaded there is an obligation, not under treaty to Belgium, but to British interests. Why could not Sir Edward have said as much to Russia and France when they were pressing for knowledge of his intentions? France was "entitled to know.")

Mobilization and Hesitation. I have read to the House the only engagements that we have yet taken definitely with regard to the use of force. I think it is due to the House to say that we have taken no engagement yet with regard to sending an Expeditionary armed force out of the country. Mobilization of the Fleet has taken place; mobilization of the Army is taking place; but we have as yet taken no engagement, because I do feel that in the case of a European conflagration such as this, unprecedented, with our enormous responsibilities in India and other parts of the Empire, or in countries in British occupation, with all the unknown factors, we must take very carefully into consideration the use which we make of sending an Expeditionary Force out of the country until we know how we stand.

(In other words, beyond Sir Edward's assurance of naval protection, the government had not as yet (the afternoon of the 3d of August) made up its mind to enter the war. It was waiting to see the drift of "public opinion."²⁶²)

Ireland. One thing I would say. The one bright spot in the whole of this terrible situation is Ireland. The general feeling throughout Ireland — and I would like this to be clearly understood abroad — does not make the Irish question a consideration which we feel we have now to take into account. I have told the House how far we have at present gone in commitments and the conditions which influence our policy, and I have put to the House and dwelt at length upon *how vital is the condition of the neutrality of Belgium.*

Neutrality and British Interests. What other policy is there before the House? There is but one way in which the Government could make certain at the present moment of keeping outside the war, and that would be that it should immediately issue a proclamation of uncon-

²⁶² *Ante*, pp. 129-31.

ditional neutrality. *We cannot do that. We have made the commitment to France that I have read to the House which prevents us from doing that. We have got the consideration of Belgium which prevents us also from any unconditional neutrality,* and without those conditions absolutely satisfied and satisfactory, we are bound not to shrink from proceeding to the use of all the forces in our power. If we did take that line by saying, "We will have nothing whatever to do with this matter," under no conditions — the Belgian Treaty obligations, the possible position in the Mediterranean with damage to British interests, and what may happen to France from any failure to support France — if we were to say that all those things mattered nothing, were as nothing, and to say we would stand aside, we should, I believe, sacrifice our respect and good name and reputation before the world, and should not escape the most serious and grave economic consequences.

(Three points are mentioned, and every one of them relates to British interests: First, "the Belgian Treaty obligations," in the Gladstonian sense — obligations "to prevent the consequences" to the United Kingdom of Belgium's loss of independence. Second, "the possible position in the Mediterranean, with damage to British interests." Third, "what may happen to France from our failure to support France"? This indeed: France "beaten to her knees"; Belgium under German "dominating influence"; "then Holland, then Denmark." Have we not with France "a common interest against the unmeasured aggrandisement of any Power"? These are the reasons — summed in the words "British interests" — for going to the assistance of France.)

No decision, but prepared. My object has been to explain the view of the Government, and to place before the House the issue and the choice. I do not for a moment conceal, after what I have said, and after the information, incomplete as it is, that I have given to the House with regard to Belgium, that we must be prepared, and we are prepared, for the consequences of having to use all the strength we have at any moment — we know not how soon — *to defend ourselves* and to take our part. We know, if the facts all be as I have stated them, though I have announced no intending aggressive action on our part, *no final decision* to resort to force at a moment's notice, until we know the whole of the case, that *the use of it may be forced upon us*. As far as the forces of the Crown are concerned, we are ready. I believe the Prime Minister and my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty have no doubt whatever that *the readiness and the efficiency of those forces were never at a higher mark than they are to-day, and never was there a time when confidence was more justified in the power of the Navy to protect our commerce and to protect our shores*. The thought is with us always of the suffering and misery entailed from which no country in Europe will escape abstention, and from which no neutrality will save us. The amount of harm that can be done by an enemy ship to

our trade is infinitesimal as compared with the amount of harm that must be done by the economic condition that is caused on the continent.

The most awful responsibility is resting upon the Government *in deciding what to advise the House of Commons to do*. We have disclosed our mind to the House of Commons. We have disclosed the issue, the information which we have, and made clear to the House I trust, that we are prepared to face that situation, and that *should it develop, as probably it may develop, we will face it*. We worked for peace up to the last moment and beyond the last moment. How hard, how persistently, and how earnestly we strove for peace last week, the House will see from the Papers that will be before it.

(Than these paragraphs, nothing can indicate more clearly the confusion in British counsels. On the day prior to the speech, the government had closed the door to neutrality by giving an undertaking which if acted upon meant war with Germany,²⁶³ and yet Sir Edward Grey in his speech declared that they had arrived at "no final decision." He declared that France must be assisted, whether Belgium were invaded or not; but the government, before reaching "final decision," was waiting to see if the invasion took place.)

Confidence. But that is over, as far as the peace of Europe is concerned. We are now face to face with a situation and all the consequences which it may yet have to unfold. We believe that *we shall have the support of the House at large in proceeding to whatever the consequences may be, and whatever measures may be forced upon us by the development of facts or action taken by others*. I believe the country, so quickly has the situation been forced upon it, has not yet had time to realize the issue. It perhaps is still thinking of the quarrel between Austria and Servia, and not the complications of this matter which have grown out of the quarrel between Austria and Servia. Russia and Germany we know are at war. We do not yet know officially that Austria, the ally whom Germany is to support, is yet at war with Russia. We know that a good deal has been happening on the French frontier. We do not know that the German Ambassador has left Paris.

The situation has developed so rapidly that technically as regards the condition of the war, it is most difficult to describe what has actually happened. I wanted to bring out *the underlying issues* which would affect our own conduct and our own policy, and to put them clearly. I have put the vital facts before the House, and *if, as seems not improbable, we are forced, and rapidly forced, to take our stand upon those issues, then I believe, when the country realizes what is at stake, what the real issues are, the magnitude of the impending dangers in the West of Europe*, which I have endeavored to describe to the House, we shall be supported throughout, not only by the House of Commons,

²⁶³ *Ante*, p. 126.

but by the determination, the resolution, the courage, and the endurance of the whole country.

(Among the "underlying issues," surely the chief was that between Austria-Hungary and Serbia — Was, or was not, Austria-Hungary justified in attempting to inflict military punishment upon Serbia? To that important subject, Sir Edward devoted not a single word. Indeed, he deprecated consideration of the merits of the quarrel.

In the evening of the day of Sir Edward's speech, he informed the House that a German ultimatum to Belgium had been delivered at 7 P.M. of the previous day. The invasion commenced on the morning of the 4th.²⁶⁴)

MR. ASQUITH'S SPEECH OF 6 AUGUST 1914

Mr. Asquith's speech of 6 August 1914 — after war had been declared — forms a striking contrast to that of Sir Edward Grey of the preceding Monday, indeed is a contradiction of it. For (1) Sir Edward made but little of the Belgian treaty, quoting Gladstone's opinion that guarantee treaties carry no categorical obligation; while Mr. Asquith insisted upon its obligatory character; and (2) Sir Edward stressed British interests as the compelling reason for participation in the war, while Mr. Asquith specifically denied the existence of any such motive. He said:

"If I am asked what we are fighting for, I reply in two sentences. In the first place to fulfill a solemn international obligation, an obligation which, if it had been entered into between private persons in the ordinary concerns of life, would have been regarded as an obligation not only of law but of honor, which no self-respecting man could possibly have repudiated. I say, secondly, we are fighting to vindicate the principle which, in these days when force, material force, sometimes seems to be the dominant influence and factor in the development of mankind, we are fighting to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed, in defiance of international good faith, by the arbitrary will of a strong and over-mastering Power. I do not believe any nation ever entered into a great controversy — and this is one of the greatest history will ever know — with a clearer conscience and stronger conviction that it is fighting, not for aggression, not for the maintenance even of its own selfish interest, but that it is fighting in defence of principles, the maintenance of which is vital to the civilization of the world."²⁶⁵

²⁶⁴ Belg. Grey Bk., 1914, No. 40: letter of M. G. deGrune (Secretary at the time to the Belgian Legation at London), 11 Jan. 1921, to *The Times*.

²⁶⁵ Notwithstanding repeated refutation of his two sentences, Mr. Asquith carries them into his *The Genesis of the War* (cap. XXVII), and adds, "That was the British *casus belli*."

There existed, as we shall see,²⁶⁶ no "solemn international obligation" to Belgium (That is what Mr. Asquith meant); and as for "small nationalities," Sir Edward Grey, in his despatches, had stated very clearly that not only Serbia, but Luxemburg, would be left to her fate.

That two such speeches could have been received with acclamations, not only by the House to which they were addressed, but by the public at large — indeed, that such men could offer them for acceptance, can be explained only by the attitude for several years past of the British mind toward Germany. Some observations on the subject may be seen in a subsequent chapter.²⁶⁷

CONCLUSIONS

From what has been said, the following conclusions may safely be deduced:

1. The merits of the quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia were not a factor in the British determination to enter the war.
2. There was no treaty obligation to defend Belgian neutrality.²⁶⁸ And Belgian neutrality could have been secured by the United Kingdom remaining neutral.
3. An "obligation of honor" to assist France existed. But it was evaded and, in effect, repudiated.
4. Protection of "small nationalities" was not a factor in the determination to enter the war.
5. Nor was the hope of territorial aggrandisement.
6. British self-interest was the reason for the form of the Belgian treaty in 1839; for *entente* relations with France and Russia; for support of these Powers in various crises; for military and naval conventions with France; for naval arrangements with Russia; for Sir Edward Grey's letters to the French Ambassador of 22 November 1912 and 2 August 1914; and for entering upon the war.
7. Embarrassed by previous denials of arrangements with France on the one hand, and by the German offer of Belgian neutrality on the other, Sir Edward Grey, in his speech of 3 August 1914, asserted that nothing had been done which circumscribed the perfect liberty of the Government and the House to do as they pleased; left uncertain what he thought about the Belgian treaty; and omitted reference to the German offer of Belgian neutrality in consideration of British neutrality. The only reason for participation in the conflict which Sir Edward Grey clearly indicated was conservation of British interests.
8. Mr. Asquith's speech of 6 August, though useful at the moment, may for historical purposes be disregarded.

Roots of the War. Speaking generally then, we say that the United

²⁶⁶ Cap. XIV.

²⁶⁷ Cap. XIX.

²⁶⁸ The subject is fully dealt with in chapter XIV.

Kingdom joined in *entente* relations with France and Russia, and entered the war, because her interests pointed a course in opposition to Germany. But if we desire to understand with greater precision the impelling motive of her action, we must explore no less than four of the roots of the war—the four which made the United Kingdom a belligerent. They may be denominated:

1. The German Rivalry Root.
2. The German Menace in the West Root.
3. The German Menace in the East Root.
4. The Morocco and Persia Root.

CHAPTER VI

WHY DID TURKEY ENTER THE WAR?

The Situation in 1914, 200. — German Attitude in 1914, 203. — Treaty with Germany, 204. — Why the Delay? 205. — The Embassies, 206. — The Turkish Ships, 208. — The German Ships, 210. — Comment, 212. — The Shatt-el-Arab Quarrel, 212. — Egypt, 212. — The Diplomacies, 214. — The Breslau in the Black Sea, 215. — The Rupture, 216. — Statement by British Government, 218. — Statements by Turkish Government, 220. — Why did Turkey enter the War? 222.

The Situation in 1914. Unfortunately for Turkey, possession of her capital and of the neighboring Straits had, for many years, prior to 1914, been a matter of international importance. Russia's only water-outlet to the Mediterranean passed that way, while British statesmen saw menace to British interests in the establishment of Russian control there — even of freedom of passage for Russian warships in time of peace. During the decade which preceded the war, Anglo-Russian antagonism had, to a very large extent, been superseded by Anglo-German rivalries, and Germany had become a dangerous aspirant for chief influence at Constantinople.¹ As between the pretensions of Russia and Germany, the United Kingdom was much more afraid of the Teuton than of the Slav; and, entering into *entente* relations with Russia, she joined her former adversary in determination to withstand the purposes and projects of the new world-rival.

But what, in 1914, were the thoughts of Turkey? Aware that her possessions were objects of vast value to each of the two most powerful military nations in Europe; aware of her inability to defend herself against either of them; aware that war between them might at any time break out, what ought she to do? In what way should she seek security? Djemal Pasha (one of the three most influential members of the Young Turk party, and Minister of Marine at the outbreak of the war) has described the position of Turkey with reference to the two groups of Powers as follows:

“ Among the Entente Powers, England had got Egypt completely in her power, and would undoubtedly strive to possess Mesopotamia, possibly Palestine also, and secure her exclusive influence over the whole of the Arabian Peninsula. Russia was so utterly anti-Turkish that it was quite unnecessary to look around for proofs. All this did not exactly suggest benevolent intentions towards Turkey!

¹ See cap. XXI.

“As regards the Triple Alliance group, Austria and Italy had nothing more to ask from Turkey. They had already done that country all the harm they possibly could. Thus they coveted no more. The most that could be said was that Italy might be indulging in visions which were in conflict with those of the Entente Governments. (With regard to the coasts of Adalia and Phœnicia, for example.) Germany, whatever else might be said, was the *only* power which desired to see Turkey strong. Germany’s interests could be secured by the strengthening of Turkey, and that alone. Germany could not lay hands on Turkey as if she were a colony, for neither the geographical position nor her resources made that possible. The result was that Germany regarded Turkey as a link in the commercial and trading chain, and thus became her stoutest champion against the Entente Governments which wanted to dismember her, particularly as the elimination of Turkey would mean the final ‘encirclement’ of Germany. Her southwestern front remained open, thanks to Turkey alone. The only way in which she could escape the pressure of the iron ring was to prevent the dismemberment of Turkey.

“Thus we had two groups of Powers before us, the ideal of one of which was to get us in its power, while the aim of the other was to make friendly approaches to us in view of certain prospective advantages, and to conclude an alliance with us based on equal rights and obligations.”²

Observing³ that:

“The *entente* Powers did not desire our participation in the war on their side”

—they wanted Turkish neutrality only — Djemal asked himself:

“What could be the reason for that?” and answered: “If we came into the war on the side of the Entente, Russia would see her last chance vanish of laying hands on Constantinople, the goal of her future hopes. That she could never admit, and therefore neither could France nor England. Their object was patently as follows: ‘For the moment let us prevent Turkey from doing anything to our disadvantage. During the war we will preserve our association with Russia and thereby bring it to a victorious conclusion. Then we can satisfy Russia’s ambition by giving her Constantinople, and on the pretext of reforms grant the Arabian provinces autonomy so that they will easily fall under our protection and control.’ . . . In short, we had only two safe courses open to us. We could either ally ourselves with the English and French, declare war on the Central Powers, and in that way secure ourselves against further attack by Russia, or we could join the

² Djemal Pasha: *Memories of a Turkish Statesman, 1913-1919*, p. 113.

³ As a result of his visit to Paris (to which he refers in his book — pp. 103-7) and his negotiations with the British Ambassador at Constantinople (*ibid.*, pp. 123-4).

Central Powers and assist in the destruction of Russia. After declining our alliance, France and England had required us to remain neutral and keep the Straits open for the benefit of our worst enemy. The Central Powers, on the other hand, allowed us to come in with them, though they felt themselves strong enough to destroy Russia, but they bound us to put every possible obstruction in her way. Thanks to that attitude, we could hope to see our foe overthrown. There was, of course, a possibility that the Central Powers might be beaten, and in that case a catastrophe for us was a certainty. But it is also an undeniable fact that if we had remained neutral and left the Straits open, the inevitable victory of our enemy would have sealed our fate with equal certainty.”⁴

Of Russian imperialistic designs, Turkey had good reason to be afraid.⁵ In his book, Djemal says:

“There is one fact that no one in the world can deny — that Russia is the hereditary enemy of the Ottoman Empire, and that her greatest desire is the possession of Constantinople. It is absolutely impossible to make her abandon that ideal. . . . Her allies, so far from opposing her design were now entirely in agreement with that design. The circumstances prevailing at the time of the Crimean War and the treaty of Berlin had now wholly changed. England, mistress of Egypt, looked with far more jealous eyes at Germany’s economic plans in the Gulf of Basra than at Russia’s ambitions with regard to Constantinople and the whole of Anatolia. Russia was to have Constantinople as compensation for Mesopotamia. As for France, she was not of those who would oppose the partition of Turkey so long as she was given a free hand in Syria. The fundamental plan to be pursued by Russia, which saw the realisation of her schemes at hand, was to isolate Turkey and always do everything which would keep her weak.”⁶

Reflecting somewhat the same ideas, Mr. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt represents the Turkish attitude prior to the war as follows:

“Grey, with Russia prompting him, had nothing better to propose than disarmament and economy in an emasculated State, sterilized of all religious ardour. This the Young Turks saw could only prove slow death to them, while alliance with Germany, a military Power which offered to reconstruct their army for them and restock their arsenals, gave them at least a chance of new national life. All the patriotic Turks whom I came in contact with gave me this account of it. The German Government, they said, does not seek our dis-

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 124-5.

⁵ The insuperable difficulty experienced by the Russian Ambassador, at the outbreak of the war, in his endeavor to secure Turkish friendship was, as he several times reported, that the Turks “fear us” (Russ. Orange Bk. 1915, Nos. 4, 6, 31, 58).

⁶ P. 111.

membership, it wishes us to be strong. What it wants of us is not political but commercial advantage, whereas Russia wants political possession of our provinces; while you at the English Embassy, so far as you wish us good, wish it for the Christian section of our people only.”⁷

As against Russian designs upon her capital, Turkey had formerly been upheld by British policy and power. But in the preservation of her outlying territories, the United Kingdom had taken less interest. In 1878, for a consideration, Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury had helped Austria-Hungary to possess herself of Bosnia and Herzegovina; and in taking Cyprus, they had not forgotten themselves. In 1882, commenced the process by which Turkish Egypt became a British protectorate. And in later years, British complacency, and even assistance, enabled France to annex Tunis, and Italy to annex Tripoli and Cyrenaica. Turkey had long regarded the United Kingdom as one of her depredators.⁸ We may take it that, in 1914, Turkey's choice lay between neutrality and co-operation with the Central Powers. During the negotiations the *entente* Powers offered to guarantee that after the war they would respect the integrity of Turkey, but in Russian promises of abstention, Turkish statesmen had little confidence.

German Attitude in 1914. It is somewhat difficult to understand the attitude toward Turkey of Germany shortly prior to the war. Instead of eagerness to secure assurance of Turkish support (as one might have expected), there appears to have been, even as late as 14 July (1914), disinclination to arrive at any agreement. Austria-Hungary had made some advances; had been advised that the tendency at Constantinople was rather toward *rapprochement* with Russia, and that Russia and France were “at work at Constantinople”; and had thereupon asked German opinion. But in his reply (14 July), von Jagow deprecated action, saying of Turkey that:

“She would not be in a position to play an aggressive part toward Russia. Moreover, if we proposed to her to enter our group, she would, without any doubt, put forward some conditions. But it would not be possible for us to provide for her absolute protection against Russian attacks, directed, for example, against Armenia. I believe that Turkey in her present situation cannot assume any other attitude than one of oscillation between the Powers, and association with the stronger and more fortunate group.”⁹

Proposals for alliance between Turkey and Greece, on the one hand,

⁷ *My Diaries*, II, p. 436.

⁸ “The Sultan Abdul Hamid never forgave us for our intervention in Egypt; and the Pan-Islam movement, so skillfully nursed, was largely the outcome of our presence in that land” (J. Holland Rose, *The Origins of the War*, p. 99. Cf. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, *op. cit.*, II, p. 436).

⁹ Kautsky Docs., No. 45. And see No. 71.

and Turkey and Bulgaria, on the other, appear to have been treated by Berlin as of little consequence, although an alliance with Greece might well have been regarded as a step toward the Entente and an alliance with Bulgaria as a step in the other direction. Indeed, Germany is said to have favored the Greek alliance at the time that the Entente Powers were working toward the same end.¹⁰

On 22 July, the German Ambassador reported that Enver Pasha (Turkish Minister for War) had said to him that at a meeting of a committee of the government, a majority, including the Grand Vizier (Said Halim), Talaat Bey (Minister of the Interior), Halil (Minister of Foreign Affairs and President of the Council), and he himself were in favor of an alliance with the Central Powers, while a minority desired an alliance with France and Russia; that:

"he was in a position to declare to me that the present Turkish government desired immediately to associate itself with the Triple Alliance, and that it was only if it were repulsed by us that, contrary to its desire, it would decide to conclude an agreement with the Triple Entente."

The Ambassador added (in his report):

"I replied to Enver that he had not convinced me of the necessity of alliances for Turkey. . . . The Powers of the Triple Alliance would probably hesitate to assume duties in exchange for which Turkey would not offer equivalent activity."¹¹

Treaty with Germany. More alive than von Jagow and the German Ambassador to the necessity for securing Turkish military support, the Kaiser directed (24 July) pursuit of negotiations at Constantinople.¹² On 28 July, the Grand Vizier, at the request of the Sultan, proposed to the German Ambassador certain terms of an alliance.¹³ On the same day, Berlin accepted the terms and submitted a draft.¹⁴ Of this the Grand Vizier objected (30 July) to one clause.¹⁵ Berlin having met the objection,¹⁶ a treaty was signed on 2 August.¹⁷ The principal clauses were as follows:

"1st. The two contracting Powers pledge themselves to observe strict neutrality in presence of the existing conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia.

"2d. If Russia should intervene with active military measures,¹⁸ and

¹⁰ Upon these points, see *ibid.*, Nos. 81, 99, 117, 243, 466.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, No. 117. And see Nos. 149, 285.

¹² His annotation on *ibid.*, No. 117; and Nos. 141, 144.

¹³ *Ibid.*, No. 285.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 320. And see No. 431.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 411.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Nos. 508, 547.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 726; Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, p. 107. Austria-Hungary adhered to the treaty on 5 Aug.; Pribram, *Austrian Foreign Policy, 1908-18*, p. 71.

¹⁸ Germany had, in fact, declared war on Russia the previous evening.

should thereby create for Germany the *casus fœderis* toward Austria-Hungary, the *casus fœderis* would take effect equally for Turkey.

"3d. In the event of war, Germany shall leave her Military Mission at the disposal of Turkey. The latter, for her part, assures to the said Military Mission an effective influence upon the general conduct of the Army, in accordance with what has been directly agreed between his Excellency the Minister of War and his Excellency the Chief of the Military Mission.

"4th. Germany pledges herself, if necessary by force of arms . . .¹⁹ Ottoman territory if it should be menaced.

"7th. The present instrument shall be ratified by his Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia, and by his Majesty the Emperor of the Ottomans, and the ratifications shall be exchanged within a period of one month from the date of the signature."²⁰

On the Turkish side, the treaty had been arranged by the four ministers above mentioned. It was revealed to some only of their colleagues.²¹

On 5 August, Germany requested ratification of the treaty.²² Turkey complied; but twelve weeks of negotiating and intriguing intervened before she commenced hostilities. Why the delay? And why, at last, did she commence operations?

Why the Delay? Turkey had been at war with Italy in 1911-12, and with the Balkan States in 1912-13. From a military and financial point of view, she was, in large measure, exhausted. She needed time for preparation, and at the Council of Ministers, Djemal so urged. He relates as follows:

"I said that not only would it be of no benefit to Germany for us to take an active part in the war before our mobilization was complete, but it would simply mean suicide on our part. If the English, French, and Russians, who knew perfectly well that we had not a single man at the Dardanelles, in Constantinople, or on the Russian frontier, made a sudden attack on the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, simultaneously advanced on Erzerum, and after occupying Constantinople and Erzerum, approached the interior of Anatolia through Sivas, our army would be unable to complete its mobilisation during the war, and the downfall of the Ottoman Empire would be decreed at the very outset. My colleagues admitted the justice of my reasoning, and brought the German Ambassador round to the same point of view.²³ So after discussion in the Council of Ministers, we decided to proclaim the neutrality of Turkey, though the country would commence a general mobilisation of the army in order to enforce that

¹⁹ A group of figures is missing: Kautsky Docs., No. 733, note.

²⁰ Kautsky Docs., No. 733. Cf. *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 115.

²¹ Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-10, 116, 122, 127.

²² *Kautsky Docs.*, No. 865.

²³ Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

neutrality against either side. We immediately translated words into deeds."²⁴

There were further reasons for delay: first, uncertainty as to Bulgaria, and second, fear of British seizure of warships under construction in England for Turkey.²⁵ The diplomatizings which filled the next three months constituted a struggle between the representatives of the *entente* Powers to secure continuation of the neutrality, and the representatives of the Central Powers to procure eventual fulfillment of the treaty.

The Embassies. For this work the German and British diplomatic staffs were unequally matched. The German Ambassador, prior to May 1912, was the very capable and dexterous Marschall von Bieberstein (at Constantinople since 1897) of whom, in one of his books, Sir Edwin Pears (for forty years a resident of Constantinople) said:

"There was an unscrupulous, masterful, and energetic German Ambassador, a man of conspicuous energy and pushfulness, of great ability and power of driving men to carry out his designs. He had a superbly equipped staff of Turkish scholars," including "extremely competent interpreters," to help him.²⁶

At the same period and until May 1913, the United Kingdom was represented by Sir Gerard Lowther, who was handicapped by the character of his staff. Sir Edward Pears tells us that:

"The German Ambassador, the able Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, had seen the reputation of Germany fall on the success of the July Revolution in 1908. He recognized that the Committee²⁷ was in power and was the only party in Turkey with vitality, and commenced at once to cultivate it. Within a year many of the leading Young Turks had become his friends. During that time it was a matter of public remark that nearly everyone at the British Embassy, except Sir Gerard himself, spoke disparagingly of Young Turkey. The only British newspaper published in the capital, and on that account supposed, quite incorrectly, to represent the opinions of the Embassy, was one of the most constant to join in denunciations of the Committee."²⁸

Marschall von Bieberstein was succeeded (1912) by "the fiery Wangenheim." In June 1913, Sir Louis Mallet was appointed successor to Sir Gerard Lowther. Of the contrast between the two legations, Professor Joseph H. Longford has said:

"What was the personnel of our own Embassy, when it had to strive

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

²⁵ German Ambassador at Constantinople to German Foreign Office, 3 August 1914: Kautsky Docs., No. 795. And see Nos. 816, 836, 854.

²⁶ *Forty Years in Constantinople*: quoted in *Nineteenth Century*, May 1919, p. 1004.

²⁷ The Committee of Union and Progress.

²⁸ *Abdul Hamid*, pp. 328-9. According to Mr. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, Sir Gerard had "intrigued for the past three years against the Young Turks": *My Diaries*, II, p. 429.

against such an Ambassador and such a staff? Our Ambassador, whose previous career had been passed as a clerk in the Foreign Office in London, had been less than a year in Turkey, never had any experience in it, and did not know a word of Turkish. He was assisted by a counsellor and two secretaries of the diplomatic service, all three of whom resembled their immediate chief in that not one of the three knew a word of the Turkish language, or had a particle of experience or knowledge of Turkey.”²⁹

Sir Edwin Pears said:

“The situation of our Embassy under the circumstances was lamentable — the contrast between ours and the German Embassy was all too marked.”³⁰

At the outbreak of the war, Sir Louis Mallet was absent from his post, and did not reach it until about three weeks afterwards (16 August). Meanwhile much had happened. After his arrival at Constantinople, Sir Louis played his exceedingly difficult part with firmness and discretion. He earned the acknowledgment of Sir Edward Grey. His estimate of the situation — written after his withdrawal from the capital — is interesting:

“It is a matter of common consent that Enver Pasha, dominated by a quasi-Napoleonic ideal, by political Pan-Islamism, and by a conviction of the superiority of the German arms, was from the first a strong partisan of the German alliance. How far his several colleagues and other directing spirits outside the Ministry entered into his views is to some extent a matter of speculation; but it may be taken as certain that the Sultan, the Heir Apparent, the Grand Vizier,³¹ Djavid Bey,³² a majority of the Ministry, and a considerable section of the Committee of Union and Progress were opposed to so desperate an adventure as war with the Allies. At what moment Talaat Bey,³³ the most powerful civilian in the Cabinet and the most conspicuous of the Committee leaders, finally threw in his lot with the war party cannot be ascertained precisely. His sympathies were undoubtedly with them from the beginning, but the part which he actually played in the earlier stages is shrouded in mystery. I have reason to think that for some time he may have thought it possible, by steering a middle course, to postpone a decision until it was clearer what would be the result of the European war; and he may well have been anxious to gain time, and to secure, in exchange for Turkey’s adhesion to the German cause, something more

²⁹ *Nineteenth Century*, May 1919, p. 1004. Mallet had been more than “a clerk in the Foreign Office.” He had been Assistant Secretary of State from 1907 to 1913.

³⁰ *Forty Years in Constantinople*, p. 345. Quoted in *Nineteenth Century*, May 1919, p. 1005.

³¹ Said Halim.

³² Minister of Finance.

³³ Minister of the Interior.

solid than promises. These were tendered, indeed, on a lavish scale, but I am not aware that they were given in a form which could be considered binding. It is certain in any case that Talaat Bey's hesitations were overcome, and that he had definitely joined the conspiracy to bring about war this autumn some three weeks before the crisis was precipitated."

Referring specially to the Sultan, Sir Louis said:

"It is quite possible that he was sincere in this conviction, but he was fully alive to the precarious nature of his own position and to the fact that any real attempt on his part to run counter to the policy of Enver Pasha and the military authorities would have meant his elimination."³⁴

Whether Sir Louis was right in saying that "a majority of the Ministry . . . were opposed" to war, is doubtful. When decision was taken, only four dissented. Talaat Bey (as has already been said) was one of the four ministers who had arranged the treaty with Germany. The Grand Vizier had signed it, but appears to have hesitated to act in accordance with it.³⁵ Sir Louis, however, cannot be blamed for miscalculation. The Turkish object being to gain time, it was necessary that he should be indulged with the appearance of willingness to engage in negotiations for neutrality³⁶ — indeed, that he should be misled with "naïve replies" and "crazy proposals."

"It is certainly astounding," records Djemal, "that this very perspicacious English diplomat actually believed my words, so much so that he communicated this crazy proposal to the Foreign Secretary, as I read in a Blue Book."³⁸

The Turkish Ships. Sir Louis Mallet was heavily handicapped by the actions, in three respects, of his Foreign Office. The first, and more important, of these was the seizure of two warships, the *Sultan Osman* and the *Rashadie*, which were being built in England for the Turkish government, and which were, at the outbreak of the war, upon the point of completion.³⁷ On 3 August, Sir Edward Grey telegraphed to Beaumont, the British *Chargé d'Affaires* at Constantinople:

"Arrangements are being made with the firm of Armstrong, Whit-

³⁴ Letter to the British Foreign Minister, 29 Nov. 1914: Br. White Paper, Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7716; *The Times* (London), 11 Dec. 1914. See, however, the opinion of Mr. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt in *My Diaries*, II, p. 436.

³⁵ Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-2.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

³⁹ The final payment in respect of the work on the *Sultan Osman* had been made (*ibid.*, p. 116). That ship was to have been delivered by the end of July 1914, and the other at the beginning of 1915 (*ibid.*, p. 95). Both were seized on 21 July (*ibid.*, p. 97), and the British flag was hoisted on 1 or 2 Aug. (*ibid.*, p. 116). Cf. Winston S. Churchill: *The World Crisis*, I, pp. 221-2.

worth and Co. for His Majesty's Government to take over the Turkish battleship *Osman I* now building with that firm. Please inform Turkish Government that His Majesty's Government are anxious to take over the contract." ⁴⁰

On the same day, Beaumont replied:

"Grand Vizier and Minister of the Interior spoke to me with some vexation of the detention of Turkish ship, which they seemed to consider an unfriendly act as Turkey is not at war. Minister of the Interior referred to the very heavy financial sacrifices by which the ship has been paid for with money borrowed at a rate amounting to interest of 20 per cent." ⁴¹

Six days afterwards (9 August), Beaumont again telegraphed:

"Public opinion is daily growing more excited, and I think that if His Majesty's Government were able to give an assurance that Turkey would have the ships, if possible, on the conclusion of hostilities, such an assurance would have a soothing effect." ⁴²

On the 18th August, Sir Louis Mallet (who had returned to Constantinople on the 16th) telegraphed that the Grand Vizier, in reply to a protest about the German ships (to be referred to shortly), had said: "that seizure of Turkish ships building in England by His Majesty's Government had caused the whole crisis, and as almost every Turkish subject had subscribed towards their purchase, ⁴³ a terrible impression had been made throughout Turkey, where British attitude had been attributed to intention to assist Greece in aggressive designs against Turkey. Turkish population would have understood if Great Britain had paid for the ships, or if she had promised to return them when the war was over; but, as it was, it looked like robbery. Germans had not been slow to exploit the situation, of which they had taken every advantage." ⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Br. Blue Bk.: Turkey, 1914, Cd. 7628, No. 1.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, No. 2.

⁴² *Ibid.*, No. 6. Cf. Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, No. 10.

⁴³ "These two vessels, the *Sultan Osman* and *Reshadieh*, were of the very latest and most formidable type, and far exceeded in dimensions and armament anything yet possessed by Turkey in the course of her history. Great publicity was given to their acquisition by the Turkish Government, and to any visitor to Constantinople the enthusiasm roused among the populace by the proud thought of possessing them was unmistakable. Not a steamer plied between Therapia and the Capital without collections being made on board for payment of the new ships of war; not a street but contained exhortations to come to the assistance of an overstrained exchequer with voluntary subscriptions. Copious was the response to these appeals. Peasants sent in their savings, Greek, Armenian, and Ottoman subjects vied with one another in paying their tribute of loyalty to the Porte. The money was found; and Turkish crews had arrived in England to take back to Constantinople two of the finest Dreadnoughts in the world": Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

⁴⁴ Br. Blue Bk.: Turkey, 1914, Cd. 7628, No. 20. Cf. Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, Nos. 10, 79.

On 20 August, Mallet telegraphed that the Minister of Marine had: "demanded the immediate return of the two Turkish battleships acquired by His Majesty's Government at the commencement of the war. I told him that this was impossible, but that I would endeavor to obtain as good terms as possible for them, and that I hoped they would not be needed during the war, and would soon be returned to Turkey; in the meantime they should be regarded as a loan from Turkey to a friend."⁴⁵

On 25 August, Sir Edward Grey telegraphed to Mallet:

"His Majesty the King desires that your Excellency should convey to His Imperial Highness the Sultan of Turkey a personal message from His Majesty, expressing his deep regret at the sorrow caused to the Turkish people by the detention of the two warships which His Imperial Majesty's subjects had made such sacrifices to acquire. His Majesty the King wishes the Sultan to understand that the exigencies of the defence of his dominions are the only cause of the detention of these ships, which His Majesty hopes will not be for long, it being the intention of His Majesty's Government to restore them to the Ottoman Government at the end of the war, in the event of the maintenance of a strict neutrality by Turkey without favor to the King's enemies, as at present shown by the Ottoman Government."⁴⁶

That Mallet recognized the justice of the Turkish complaint may be seen in the part of his final report which referred to the activities of the Press:

"Through these agencies, unlimited use was made of Turkey's one concrete and substantial grievance against Great Britain as distinguished from other European Powers, that is, the detention of the '*Sultan Osman*' and the '*Reshadic*' at the beginning of the war."⁴⁷

The grievance was not so substantial as Mallet imagined, for on the second day of the same month Turkey (as we have seen) had allied herself with Germany. Seizure of the ships thirteen days previously (21 July) was premature, but for detention of them after the 2d of August, Turkey could not fairly complain.

The German Ships. Meanwhile two German warships, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, having been chased through the Mediterranean, arrived at the Dardanelles — 11 August. What was the Turkish Government to do? Djemal tells of the embarrassment in this way:

⁴⁵ Br. Blue Bk.: Turkey, 1914, Cd. 7628, No. 24.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 34. During the war, we were told that, in the contract for the construction of the ships, was a clause reserving to the British government a right to appropriate them in the event of war. Sir Edward Grey nowhere offered that plea. Nor does Mr. Winston S. Churchill (who at the time was First Lord of the Admiralty) in his book *The World Crisis*. His plea is that: "The Turkish battleships were vital to us. With a margin of only seven Dreadnoughts we could not afford to do without these two fine ships. Still less could we afford to see them fall into bad hands and possibly be used against us" (I, pp. 221-2).

⁴⁷ Br. White Paper: Turkey, 1914, Cd. 7716.

"It was certainly a very ticklish question. Two ships of one of the combatants had fled into Turkish waters. According to the rules of neutrality, we were bound either to make them leave our waters within twenty-four hours, or to disarm them and intern them in one of our harbors."⁴⁸

Neither alternative being possible:

"one of us," at a Council meeting, "proposed the following formula: Could not the Germans have previously sold us these units? Could not their arrival be regarded as delivery under the contract?"⁴⁹

It was necessary, however, to procure assent from Berlin.

"It came about four o'clock in the morning. It empowered us, on condition that we accepted Admiral Souchon in the Ottoman service, to say that the ships had been sold to Turkey. It was not a real, but merely fictitious sale. We were informed that as the Emperor could not sell a single ship in the navy without a decree of the Reichstag, the real sale could not be carried out until the end of the war and the Reichstag had conveyed its assent."⁵⁰

The British Admiral, Limpus (till then in the employ of the Turkish government), now proposed to take charge of the vessels, to discharge the German personnel, &c. Djemal picked a quarrel with him, and he resigned.⁵¹ Every English officer left the fleet.

⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, pp. 118-19. On 11 August, Sir Edward Grey telegraphed to Beaumont: "I learn that at 8:30 P.M., last night 'Goeben' and 'Breslau' reached the Dardanelles. These ships should not be allowed to pass through the Straits, and they should either leave within twenty-four hours, or be disarmed and laid up" (Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914, Cd. 7628, No. 8. Cf. Russ. Orange Bk. 1915, No. 22. An article, "Who let the 'Goeben' Escape?", in *The Nineteenth Century*, October 1920, may be referred to. Cf. Kautsky Docs., No. 852). Beaumont replied on the same day, "The Ottoman Government have bought 'Goeben' and 'Breslau.' Officers and men will be allowed to return to Germany. Grand Vizier told me that purchase was due to our detention of 'Sultan Osman.' They must have ship to bargain with regard to question of the islands on equal terms with Greece, and it was in no way directed against Russia, the idea of which he scouted" (Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914, Cd. 7628, No. 9). Earlier in the year, the United States had sold two warships—the *Idaho* and the *Mississippi*—to Greece at cost price, "and the sale was partly intended to enable Greece to be a match for Turkey, and so to avoid a Greco-Turkish war": *Ann. Reg.*, 1914, pp. [459-60.

⁴⁹ Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 120-1. Reporting the fact, Beaumont telegraphed (15 August): "Admiral Limpus and all officers of British Naval Mission have suddenly been replaced in their executive command by Turkish officers, and have been ordered to continue work at Ministry of Marine, if they remain. Although I have been given to understand by a member of the Government that they are still anxious to get officers and crew of the 'Goeben' and 'Breslau' out of Turkey, this will probably mean retention of mechanics and technical experts, at least, which will create most dangerous situation here: Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914, Cd. 7628, No. 16. On the 13th Sept., all British officers were recalled: Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, No. 52.

Comment. Commenting upon the action of the British Government in seizing the two Turkish ships, Mr. A. L. Kennedy has said that: "but for one crowning blunder, for which the British Government must accept responsibility, it might still have been possible to win Turkey to our side."⁵²

And after referring to the arrival at Constantinople of the two German ships, Mr. Kennedy added:

"Their arrival determined the destiny of Turkey. Wangenheim was in a position assiduously to contrast the perfidy of Britain in withholding delivery of promised warships with Germany's swift provision for their deficiency. Germany was Turkey's friend in act as well as in word, and had made the Turkish navy stronger than the Russian Black Sea fleet."⁵³

The Shatt-el-Arab Quarrel. The action of the British government in connection with what may be called the Shatt-el-Arab quarrel constituted Sir Louis Mallet's second handicap. On 12 October, he telegraphed his Foreign Office that the Porte was complaining that two British men-of-war had passed up the Shatt-el-Arab⁵⁴ to anchor at Mohammerah in Persia, "whilst Shatt-el-Arab is under Turkish domination."⁵⁵

Grey replied the following day:

"As regards the passage through the Shatt-el-Arab to and from the post of Mohammerah, His Majesty's Government maintain in principle the legitimacy of such passage, but express themselves quite ready to examine in a friendly spirit any representation that the Ottoman Government may make on the subject, if the Sublime Porte themselves strictly observe their neutrality, which they have gravely violated by continuing to retain the German officers and crews of the 'Goeben' and 'Breslau,' in spite of all assurances and promises to the contrary."⁵⁶

Four days afterwards (17 October), Grey telegraphed:

"You should inform Turkish Government that there is no present intention of her⁵⁷ passing down the Shatt-el-Arab, but His Majesty's Government consider they have a right to claim that passage so long as 'Goeben' and 'Breslau,' with German crews and officers have free use of Turkish territorial waters and the Straits."⁵⁸

The "legitimacy" of the operation, it will be observed, is here abandoned. It was, of course, untenable — unless upon the ground of reprisal.

Egypt. Synchronously with the emergence of the Turkish com-

⁵² *Op. cit.*, p. 164.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁵⁴ The joint stream of the Tigris and Euphrates.

⁵⁵ Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7628, No. 117. And see Nos. 110, 111.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 123.

⁵⁷ H. M. S. *Espiègle*.

⁵⁸ Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7628, No. 137.

plaint just referred to, there arose the inevitable difficulty with regard to the position of Egypt—Sir Louis Mallet's third handicap. Although the territory was, admittedly, a part of the Turkish Empire, the United Kingdom, from the time of her bombardment of Alexandria (1882), had remained in military occupation, and, step by step, had advanced toward the exercise of sovereign authority. A fitting time for the fulfillment of repeated promises to withdraw had not been found. What, in 1914, was to be the situation? Did Turkish sovereignty justify the entry of Turkish troops? Had the United Kingdom a right to treat the country as if it were British territory? On 12 October, Mallet telegraphed that the Porte had represented: "that, although I have on several occasions assured Grand Vizier that His Majesty's Government have no intention of altering *status* of Egypt, yet declaration that Egypt is in a state of war; dismissal of German and Austrian agents who receive their exchequers from the Porte; and, above all, arrival in Egypt of important contingents from India as well as other acts, have attracted serious attention of Imperial Government and have created real anxiety."⁵⁹

On 23 October, Mallet, telegraphing with reference to a conversation which, in company with the French Ambassador, he had had with the Minister of Marine, said:

"My French colleague then enquired what was meaning of preparations in Syria and of all the violent talk about Egypt. Minister of Marine replied that England was treating Egypt as if it belonged to her, whereas it formed part of Ottoman dominions. Turks were indifferent about India, Tripoli, and Tunis, &c., but Egypt was on their frontier, and they felt about it as French did about Alsace-Lorraine. They would do nothing officially, but would shut their eyes to any agitation which was directed against English occupation of Egypt. Continuing, he referred to a proposal which he made me a fortnight ago, to the effect that England and Turkey would now sign convention on lines of Drummond-Wolff Convention, providing for evacuation of Egypt by British troops at end of war. It is quite true he made this suggestion. I did not report it at the time because it was so entirely unpractical. This shows that Germans are turning all their attention to Egypt, and are inciting the Turks against us, so that we must expect to have a considerable amount of trouble on frontier.

"Turkish newspapers are full of Egypt just now and of our high-handed proceedings. It is, *e.g.*, announced to-day that we have closed El Azhar mosque. There is no doubt that Germans are at the bottom of this, and are inciting religious fanaticism of Turks against us."⁶⁰ Sir Edward Grey replied the next day:

"Your telegram of 23rd October gives the impression that Turkey

⁵⁹ Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7628, No. 118.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 164.

considers sending an armed force over the frontier of Egypt as being in some way different from acts of war against Russia. You should disabuse the Turkish Government of any such idea, and inform them that a military violation of frontier of Egypt will place them in a state of war with three allied Powers.

"I think you should enumerate to Grand Vizier the hostile acts of which we complain, and warn him that if German influences succeed in pushing Turkey to cross the frontiers of Egypt and threaten the international Suez Canal, which we are bound to preserve, it will not be we, but Turkey, that will have aggressively disturbed the *status quo*."⁶¹

The Diplomacies. While Germany, in her negotiations for Turkish support, had wide scope for formulation of promises, the *entente* Allies had little to offer. Turkey had recently sustained heavy territorial losses in the Balkans at the hands of Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria. Germany and Austria-Hungary could hold out prospects of recovery. There can be little doubt that Mallet was right in saying that German "promises . . . were tendered, indeed, on a lavish scale."⁶² On the other hand, the *entente* Allies were at the moment supporting Serbia and bargaining with Greece and Bulgaria. On 24 September, the Grand Vizier said to Mallet — as the Ambassador reported:

"that Turkish Government would be unable to refrain from an attempt to get back what they had lost in Balkan wars, if Balkan complications ensued. No arguments of mine could induce him to change his attitude in this respect. He said he would be powerless to prevent it."⁶³

To Turkish suggestions of British concessions, Mallet could offer little encouragement. Restoration of Egypt, he said, was "entirely unpractical,"⁶⁴ and abolition of the capitulations⁶⁵ could be only hypothetically

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, No. 166.

⁶² In his final report, Mallet said: "In pursuance of a long-prepared policy, the greatest pressure was at once exercised by Germany to force Turkey into hostilities. German success in the European war was said to be assured. The perpetual menace to Turkey from Russia might, it was suggested, be averted by a timely alliance with Germany. Egypt might be recovered for the Empire. India and other Moslem countries represented to be groaning under Christian rule might be kindled into a flame of infinite possibilities for the Caliphate of Constantinople. Turkey would emerge from the war the one great Power of the East. Such was the substance of German representations." (Br. White Paper, 1914: Cd. 7716. Cf. Pribram: *Austrian Foreign Policy, 1908-18*, pp. 71, 98-9). Arrival of gold from Germany (16-20 Oct.) is said to have removed the last obstacle to Turkish commencement of hostilities: Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, Nos. 86-9.

⁶³ Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7628, No. 91.

⁶⁴ *Ante*, p. 213.

⁶⁵ Previous treaty surrenders of portions of Turkish sovereign authority within Turkish territory. Negotiations upon this point are referred to in Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, Nos. 43, 44, 48, 51, 54, 55, 56, 61, 63, 64, 65, 74.

conceded. The one proffered bait was the following very guarded guarantee, as authorized by a telegram from Grey to Mallet of 22 August:

“The demands made by the Turkish Government are excessive; we do not, however, wish to refuse all discussion, and you may therefore as soon as the French and Russian Ambassadors have received similar instructions, address the following communication to the Porte:

“If the Turkish Government will repatriate immediately the German officers and crews of the “Goeben” and “Breslau”; will give a written assurance that all facilities shall be furnished for the peaceful and uninterrupted passage of merchant vessels; and that all the obligations of neutrality shall be observed by Turkey during the present war, the three allied Powers will in turn agree, with regard to the Capitulations, to withdraw their extra-territorial jurisdiction as soon as a scheme of judicial administration, which will satisfy modern conditions, is set up. They will further give a joint guarantee in writing that they will respect the independence and integrity of Turkey, and will engage that no conditions in the terms of peace at the end of the war shall prejudice their independence and integrity.”⁶⁶

Mallet's remarks, when communicating this proposal to the Turks, did not render it any more acceptable. Reporting lack of success (6 September), he said:

“I went carefully over several infringements of neutrality of which Turks had been guilty, and I said that so long as a single German officer, naval or military, remained here, I should consider Turkey as a German protectorate; that I had been informed that Turkish Government attached no importance to written declarations which I and my French and Russian colleagues had made them respecting their integrity. I was greatly surprised at this attitude, but personally somewhat relieved, as to guarantee integrity and independence of Turkey was like guaranteeing life of man who was determined to commit suicide.”⁶⁷

The Breslau in the Black Sea. Mallet accurately foresaw the effect which would be produced by the presence of the German ships in the Black Sea, and endeavored to prevent their entry there. On 19 September, he reported that Halil Bey, Minister of Foreign Affairs, had said:

“that even if Turkish fleet went into Black Sea, it would not be with any hostile intention towards Russia, with whom they were not going to war. I pointed out to him that Germany was pressing Turkey to send their fleet into the Black Sea with one object only, namely, that war might be provoked by some incident. I therefore urged him most strongly against any such action. He said that he was against it, and

⁶⁶ Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7628, No. 28. Cf. Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, No. 34.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 64.

that he saw the force of my argument, to which I replied that as the Minister of War was supreme, it was unfortunately no guarantee that it would not be done. President told me that the Cabinet had their own policy, which was to remain neutral, and that they were all alive to the aims of Germany. I pressed him hard as to what was the policy of the Minister of War.”⁶⁸

On the next day, Mallet, reporting a similar assurance by Djemal Pasha, said:

“As an illustration of the entire lack of control possessed by the Cabinet over the Minister of War and the Germans, if any further illustration is needed, I have to report that, despite this assurance from the Minister of Marine, the ‘Breslau’ and three other smaller ships passed us this morning and entered the Black Sea.”⁶⁹

On 22 September, the Russian Ambassador reported as follows:

“In the face of the decision of the Council of Ministers not to despatch the fleet to the Black Sea, the German Ambassador nevertheless sent the ‘Breslau’ there, and thereupon informed the Grand Vizier that the German vessels were only to a certain extent under Turkish control, and that they were destined to serve, not only Turkish, but principally German interests. The Ambassador, at the same time, promised that the German officers would not challenge the Russian fleet.”⁷⁰

The Rupture. Failing to achieve anticipated successes on the Marne and in Galicia, the Central Powers, early in October, urged Turkey to take immediate action,⁷¹ and, to consider the question, the German Ambassador invited to his embassy quarters (11 October), the Grand Vizier, Enver Pasha, Talaat Bey, Halil Bey, and Djemal Pasha.⁷² The next day, a meeting of the inner Cabinet was held of which Djemal relates as follows:

“At the outset there were two alternatives before us:

1. Immediate intervention in the World War.
2. To send Halil Bey, accompanied by Hakki Bey⁷³ and the Deputy Chief of the General Staff, to convince the Germans of the necessity of maintaining neutrality for another six months.

“The second alternative was advocated by Djavid Bey, but the other Ministers stood by the first. For the first time the Grand Vizier showed himself undecided. At that moment Enver Pasha told us that in consequence of the numerous and very justified protests of the Admiral, on military grounds he could no longer oppose the cruise of the *Goeben*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 82.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 83.

⁷⁰ Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, No. 58.

⁷¹ Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, p. 127. Cf. Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, No. 87.

⁷² Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

⁷³ A former Grand Vizier.

and *Breslau* into the Black Sea. Yet the excursion of these two war-ships, accompanied by other Ottoman vessels, would inevitably involve our participation in the war. In the first place, the Entente Governments did not regard the *Goeben* and *Breslau* as Turkish ships, and had made a formal declaration that if they passed through the Straits, even without showing a flag and with Turkish crews, they would be treated as hostile vessels. Thus it was certain that the Russian Fleet would immediately attack the *Goeben* and *Breslau* if they could be taken at a disadvantage. And even if the Russian Fleet, for any reason, refrained from attacking these two ships, Admiral Sauchon, who was extremely anxious that we should participate in hostilities, could bring us into the war by attacking the Russian Fleet or Russian ports on his own initiative. After a short discussion, we decided to send Halil Bey and Hafiz Hakki Bey to Berlin to give full authority to the Deputy commander-in-Chief to deal with the Fleet question, while avoiding everything which might involve us in the war.”⁷⁴

On the 27th, the *Goeben* and the rest of the Turkish fleet left for the Black Sea,⁷⁵ where happened that which was expected. On the 29th, the fleet bombarded Odessa, Theodosia, and Novorossiysk — Russian ports.⁷⁶ For this, Mallet reported, the Grand Vizier expressed profound regret:

“His Highness convinced me of his sincerity in disclaiming all knowledge of, or participation in, the events which had led to the rupture, and entreated me to believe that the situation was even now not irretrievable. I replied that the time had passed for assurances. The crisis which I had predicted to His Highness, at almost every interview which I had had with him since my return, had actually occurred, and unless some adequate satisfaction were immediately given by the dismissal of the German mission, which could alone prevent the recurrence of attempts upon Egyptian territory and attacks on Russia, war with the allies was inevitable. My Russian colleague had already demanded his passports, and I must, in pursuance of the instructions I had received, follow the same course. The Grand Vizier again protested that, even now, he could undo what the war party had done without his knowledge or consent. In reply to the doubt which I expressed as to the means at his disposal, he said that he had on his side moral forces which could not but triumph, and that he meant to fight on to the end. He did not, indeed, hint at a possibility of immediately dismissing the German

⁷⁴ Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-130.

⁷⁵ Mallet, reporting on the 27th, said that Enver Pasha, “the only firebrand,” had felt himself sufficiently sure of his position to say “that he was determined to have war, whatever his colleagues might desire. Turkish fleet would be sent into Black Sea, and he could easily arrange with Admiral Suchon to provoke hostilities. Fleet has, in point of fact, gone into Black Sea, so it is impossible to foretell what is in store”: Br. Blue Bk.: Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7628, No. 170.

⁷⁶ Cf. Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, Nos. 90, 91.

mission, but he informed me that there was to be a meeting of the Council at his house that evening, when he would call upon his colleagues to support him in his determination to avert war with the allied Powers.

"The Council was duly held, and, as he had predicted, the majority of the Ministers supported the Grand Vizier, who made a strong appeal in favour of peace, and was seconded by Djavid Bey. But the powerlessness of the Sultan's Ministers to do more than vote in the Council Chamber was evident. The question of dismissing the German naval officers was discussed, but no decision to do so was taken, and no Minister ventured even to propose the expulsion of the military mission. In the interval the war party had sealed their resolution to go forward, by publishing a *communiqué* in which it was stated that the first acts of hostility in the Black Sea had come from the Russian side. Untrue and grotesque as it was, this invention succeeded in deceiving many of the public.

"It is not possible to establish by proof which of the Ministers had pre-knowledge of the German Admiral's *coup*, but it may be regarded as certain that Enver Pasha was aware of it, and highly probable that Talaat Bey was also an accomplice.

"The story of the Russian provocation was plainly an afterthought, and if the official report of the Russian Government were not sufficient to disprove it, I could produce independent evidence to show that the orders to begin hostilities were given at the mouth of the Bosphorus on the evening of the 27th October, as the result of a conspiracy hatched between the German representatives at Constantinople and a small and unscrupulous Turkish faction."⁷⁷

The situation being unsatisfactory, the Ambassadors of the *entente* Powers left Constantinople, and the British and French squadrons bombarded the Dardanelles and Akaba on the Red Sea.

Statement by British Government. On 1 November, the British Government issued a statement of the situation; on 5 November, declared war;⁷⁸ and, by Order-in-Council, annexed the island of Cyprus to the British Crown. The statement was as follows:

"At the beginning of the war the British Government gave definite assurances that, if Turkey remained neutral, her independence and integrity would be respected during the war and in the terms of peace. In this France and Russia concurred.

"The British Government have ever since endeavored with the greatest patience and forbearance to preserve friendly relations in spite of increasing breaches of neutrality on the part of the Turkish Government at Constantinople, in the case of the German vessels in the Straits.

⁷⁷ Br. White Paper: Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7716; *The Times* (London), 11 Dec. 1914. Cf. Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, Nos. 94, 97, 98.

⁷⁸ "Owing to hostilities committed by Turkish forces under German officers, a state of war exists between Great Britain and Turkey as from to-day."

“On Friday, October 29, 1914, the British Government learnt with the utmost regret that Turkish ships of war had, without any declaration of war, without warrant, and without provocation of any sort, made wanton attacks upon open undefended towns in the Black Sea of a friendly country, thus committing an unprecedented violation of the most ordinary rules of international law, comity, and usage.

“Ever since the German men-of-war the *Goeben* and *Breslau* took refuge in Constantinople, the attitude of the Turkish Government towards Great Britain has caused surprise and some uneasiness. Promises made by the Turkish Government to send away the German officers and crews of the *Goeben* and *Breslau* have never been fulfilled. It was well known that the Turkish Minister of War was decidedly pro-German in his sympathies, but it was confidently hoped that the saner counsels of his colleagues who had had experience of the friendship which Great Britain has always shown towards the Turkish Government would have prevailed and prevented that Government from entering upon the very risky policy of taking a part in the conflict on the side of Germany.

“Since the war, German officers in large numbers have invaded Constantinople, have usurped the authority of the Government, and have been able to coerce the Sultan’s Ministers into taking up a policy of aggression.

“Great Britain, as well as France and Russia, has watched these proceedings patiently, protesting against the many acts which have been constantly committed contrary to neutrality, and warning the Government of the Sultan against the danger in which they were placing the future of the Ottoman Empire. Vigorously assisted by the Ambassadors of Germany and Austria, the German military elements in Constantinople have been persistently doing their utmost to force Turkey into war, both by their activities in the service of the Turks and by the bribes of which they have been so lavish.

“The Minister of War, with his German advisers, has lately prepared an armed force for an attack upon Egypt. The Mosul and Damascus Army Corps have, since their mobilization, been constantly sending troops south preparatory to an invasion of Egypt and the Suez Canal from Akaba and Gaza. A large body of Beduin Arabs has been called out and armed to assist in this venture, and some of these have crossed the Sinai frontier. Transport has been collected and roads have been prepared up to the frontier of Egypt. Mines have been despatched to be laid in the Gulf of Akaba. The notorious sheikh Azis Shawish has published and disseminated through Syria, and probably India, an inflammatory document urging Mahomedans to fight against Great Britain. Dr. Prueffer, who was so long engaged in intrigues in Cairo against the British occupation, and is now attached to the German Embassy in Constantinople, has been busily occupied in Syria trying to

incite the people to take part in this conflict. Aggressive action was certain to be the result of the activity of the numerous German officers employed in the Turkish army and acting under the orders of the German Government, who thus have succeeded in forcing the hands of the advisers of the Sultan.

"German intrigue cannot influence the loyalty to Great Britain of the 70 millions of Mahomedans in India and the feeling of the Mahomedan inhabitants of Egypt. They must look with detestation on misguided action under foreign influence at Constantinople, which will inevitably lead to the disintegration of the Turkish Empire, and which shows such forgetfulness of the many occasions on which Great Britain has shown friendship to Turkey. They must feel bitterly the degeneration of their co-religionists who can thus be dominated against their will by German influence, and many of them realize that, when Turkey is pushed into war by Germany, they must dissociate themselves from a course of action that is so prejudicial to the position of Turkey itself.

"The Turkish Government summarily and without notice on Friday shut off telegraphic communication with the British Embassy at Constantinople. This is, no doubt, the prelude to further acts of aggression on their part, and the British Government must take whatever action is required to protect British interests, British territory, and also Egypt from attacks that have been made and are threatening."⁷⁹

Statements by Turkish Government. On 12 November, the following Turkish *iradé* was issued:

"On October 29th, at a time when the Ottoman fleet was undertaking some manœuvres in the Black Sea, a portion of the Russian fleet, which we learnt later had been set in motion in order to lay mines at the entrance of the Bosphorus, interrupted our manœuvres and advanced towards the Strait in prosecution of an act of hostility. The Imperial Russian Fleet began the action. Nevertheless the Ottoman Government, in view of this untoward event, approached the Russian Government and proposed to open an enquiry to elucidate the causes of the event, and, in this wise, to maintain its neutrality. In spite of this, the Russian Government, without answering this invitation, withdrew its Ambassador and began hostilities, ordering its armed forces to cross the frontier at several points in the neighborhood of Erzerum. Meanwhile the English and French Governments recalled their Ambassadors and began effective hostilities, including an attack of the English and French fleets on the Dardanelles and the bombardment of Akaba by an English cruiser. Since these Powers have thus shown that they consider themselves in a state of war with the Ottoman Government, I, trusting in the support of the Almighty, now declare war on the aforesaid States."⁸⁰

⁷⁹ *The Times* (London), 2 Nov. 1914. The despatch referred to is No. 145 in Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7628.

⁸⁰ *The Times History of the War, Naval*, under date of 12 Nov. 1914.

To the representations of the British Foreign Office, the Turkish Government replied (14 November 1914) as follows:

“England complains that Turkey, without any preliminary notice, bought two warships from Germany. It should be borne in mind, however, that before war was declared, the English Government ordered the seizure of two dreadnoughts that were being built for Turkey in British yards, and that one of these dreadnoughts, the ‘Sultan Osman,’ was seized half an hour before the appointed time when the Turkish flag was to have been raised over the ship; and that finally no indemnity was paid for these confiscations.

“It is natural, therefore, that Turkey, finding herself deprived of the two warships that were considered indispensable for the defense of the Empire, hastened to remedy the loss by acquiring the two ships offered in a friendly spirit by the German government.

“England complains of the closing of the Dardanelles. But the responsibility for this act falls on the British Government, as will appear from the following reasons, which determined the Turkish Government to take the final decision: In spite of the neutrality of Turkey, England, under the pretext that German officers were serving on Turkish ships, declared officially that Turkish war vessels would be considered as hostile craft, and would be attacked by the British fleet anchored at the entrance of the Straits.

“In view of this hostile declaration Turkey found herself compelled to close the Dardanelles in order to ensure the safety of the capital. And as to the claims of England, it is evident that the presence of German officers on the Turkish warships was a question of internal politics and should not, therefore, have given rise to any protest on the part of a foreign power.”

Continuing, the Turkish Government declared that England, though asked to intervene on behalf of Turkey during the Balkan wars of 1912–13, did everything that was in its power to bring about the downfall of the Turkish Empire; and that when Adrianople was recaptured by the Turkish army, the British Prime Minister did not hesitate to threaten Turkey with collective punishment on the part of the great Powers if the city was not evacuated by the Turkish forces.⁸¹ The note continued as follows:

“The designs of the British are not limited to the countries of Europe; they extend to the Gulf of Persia. England has carried out its plan of impairing the sovereign rights of Turkey and of opening up a way of access into Arabia, for a long time coveted by the English.

“Faithful to its policy of hostility, England has ever opposed the attempts at reforms in Turkey. It exerted all its influence to prevent the Powers from furnishing expert technical help to the Turkish Government. The Kaiser alone, disregarding the intrigues of Great Britain,

⁸¹ As to these allegations see cap. II, pp. 51–4.

authorized S. E. Liman von Sanders, Pasha, to re-organize the Turkish army which is to-day challenging the British forces."⁸²

After reference to the Franco-British convention of 1904, which "passed a sentence of death on Morocco and on Egypt," and the agreement with Russia in reference to Persia (1907), the note concluded with the following:

"England for more than a century has been striving to destroy the freedom of the Moslems so as to open up their countries to the greedy exploitation of the British merchants. The English Government, pursuing its program of hatred against the Moslem states, has succeeded in giving to its policy a religious color which ensures to it the support and the adhesion of the English people, puritanic and fanatical.

"Let us be grateful to God who has given us the opportunity of victoriously defending the welfare of Islam against its three ruthless enemies, England, Russia, and France."

Why did Turkey enter the War? If there be any difficulty in replying to the question, Why did Turkey enter the War? it is one shared by the Sultan. Did he slide into it? Was he tricked into it? Was he frightened into it by "Enver Pasha and the military authorities"? Was he kicked into it by Germans and public opinion? Possibly, if compelled to be frank, he might say kicked. But truthfulness not being indispensable, he puts the blame on Russia. We may, however, say for him that his position was precarious and difficult. If he remained neutral and the *entente* Powers won, Russia, fulfilling her "historic mission," would take possession of Constantinople.⁸³ If he remained neutral and the Central Powers won his capacity for resistance to German economic exploitation would be seriously diminished. His co-operation with the *entente* Powers was not desired by Russia, for that would interfere with her imperialistic plan.⁸⁴ And while successful co-operation with the Central Powers might bring restoration of some of his estates and preserve to him very much more, failure would mean disintegration and disruption for his country, and political extinction, or worse, for himself. It is little wonder that his ministers were divided in opinion. And it is not surprising that, under such circumstances, the strong men of action had their way. The Sultan favored neutrality. He slid, or was tricked, or was frightened, or was kicked into desolating war and personal oblivion. A curious fate.

⁸² Upon this point see cap. II, pp. 60-8.

⁸³ In Russian opinion, that was to follow upon success in a great European war. See *ante*, cap. II, pp. 36, 55-7.

⁸⁴ *Ante*, pp. 39-58; 200-1.

CHAPTER VII

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WHILE his country was still neutral, Signor Salandra, the Italian Premier, summed the attitude of his government as follows:

"what is needed is . . . a freedom from all preconceptions and prejudices, from every sentiment except that of sacred egoism" (*sacro egoismo*) "for Italy."¹

The noun "*egoismo*" was well chosen. Its adjective ought to have been *predatory*, or *imperialistic*, or *treacherous*. To appreciate the situation, some reference to previous diplomatic history is necessary.

¹ *Address to the Personnel of the Consulta*, Oct. 1914: Thomas Nelson Page, *Italy and the World War*, p. 182.

THE TREATIES

Italian consolidation, perfected by the occupation of Rome in 1870, was deemed to be an incomplete realization of Italian "legitimate aspirations." Territories occupied by Italians still remained within the limits of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. *Italia irredenta* became the watchword of a powerful party, and the objective of patriotic ambition. As a result of the war in 1866, Venice had been secured. But the Trentino and Trieste districts were yet in foreign hands. Consolidation, moreover, had produced (as usual) desire for territorial expansion over still other lands, and thoughts of restoration of Rome's imperial greatness had commenced to stir the minds of the bolder of the Italian statesmen. Gradually the foreign policy of Italy became centred upon four objects: (1) security against France; (2) redemption of unredeemed Italy; (3) acquisition of territory in North Africa, the Balkans, and the Mediterranean; and (4) frustration of attempts by other Powers to extend their jurisdictions in these last named places.

Security against France. The withdrawal of French troops from Rome during the Franco-Prussian war (1870-1) and the occupation of the city by Italian forces was followed by a period of strain between France and Italy. In Crispi's view "the policy of France towards Italy became but a series of acts of reprisal and malice."² Fearful of invasion³ Italy sought alliance with Germany. Upon that country she had some claim because of war-assistance against Austria-Hungary rendered in 1866, and passing events made not improbable that similar assistance as against France might be welcome. When therefore Signor Crispi proposed, in conversation with Bismarck, a war-alliance, he met with ready assent, subject only to the approval of the Emperor.⁴

"I have seen Bismarck," Crispi reported on 18 September 1877. "He accepts treaty of alliance, defensive and offensive should France attack. He will take His Majesty the Emperor's orders with regard to official action in the matter."⁵

Various circumstances, including the death of the Italian King, the extrusion of Crispi from office, and the change of ministry (Depretis to Cairoli), interrupted the negotiations, and made more difficult their subsequent success; for, meanwhile, Germany and Austria-Hungary formed the Dual Alliance.

The Triple Alliance. Increasing enmity with France⁶ drove Italy to a renewal of her appeal to Germany. Tunis lay on the south shore of the Mediterranean — just opposite Italy. It was protected only by

² *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, 204. And see pp. 272-3.

³ *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, pp. 11-26, 204.

⁴ *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, vol. II, pp. 28, 29, 37, 58, 59.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-9.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 379.

its Turkish ownership; the Turk was becoming less and less formidable, and Italy intended, some day, to take possession. In 1881, she found herself forestalled by France,⁷ and, postponing development of quarrel with Austria-Hungary, she entered into war-agreement with that monarchy and Germany, thus joining (1882) the Dual Alliance which had been formed in 1879. The principal clauses of the Triple Alliance treaty (20 May 1882) were as follows:

“*Article I.*: The High Contracting Parties mutually promise peace and friendship, and will enter into no alliance or engagement directed against any one of their States.

“They engage to proceed to an exchange of ideas on political and economic questions of a general nature which may arise, and they further promise one another mutual support within the limits of their own interests.

“*Article II.*: In case Italy, without direct provocation on her part, should be attacked by France for any reason whatsoever, the two other Contracting Parties shall be bound to lend help and assistance with all their forces to the Party attacked.

“The same obligation shall devolve upon Italy in case of any aggression without direct provocation by France against Germany.

“*Article III.*: If one or two of the High Contracting Parties, without direct provocation on their part, should chance to be attacked and to be engaged in war with two⁸ or more Great Powers non-signatory to the present Treaty, the *casus fœderis* will arise simultaneously for all the High Contracting Parties.

“*Article IV.*: In case a Great Power non-signatory to the present Treaty should threaten the security of the states of one of the High Contracting Parties, and the threatened Party should find itself forced on that account to make war against it, the two others bind themselves to observe towards their Ally a benevolent neutrality. Each of them reserves to itself, in this case, the right to take part in the war, if it should see fit, to make common cause with the Ally.”

“*Article V.*: If the peace of any of the High Contracting Parties should chance to be threatened under the circumstances foreseen by the preceding Articles, the High Contracting Parties shall take counsel together in ample time as to the military measures to be taken with a view to eventual coöperation”⁹

These provisions (by various renewals of the treaty) were in force at the outbreak of the war, and to them had been added, in 1887, vari-

⁷ Upon this subject see *ibid.*, pp. 98, 99, 106-112, 440-59, 463, 464. On 23 July 1880, de Freycinet (French Foreign Minister) said to the Italian Ambassador: “Why will you persist in thinking of Tunis, where your rivalry may one day cause a breach in our friendly relations? Why not turn your attention to Tripoli, where you would have neither ourselves nor any one else to contend with?” (*ibid.*, p. 107).

⁸ Meaning France and Russia.

⁹ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 65-7.

ous others, one of which — known in subsequent discussions as Article VII — bound Austria-Hungary and Italy as follows (the more important words now italicized):

“*Article VII.*: The High Contracting Parties, having in mind only the maintenance, so far as possible, of the territorial *status quo* in the Orient, engage to use their influence to forestall any territorial modification which might be injurious to one or the other of the Powers signatory to the present Treaty. They shall communicate to one another all information of a nature to enlighten each other mutually concerning their own dispositions, as well as those of other Powers.

“However, if, in the course of events, the maintenance of the *status quo* in the regions of the Balkans or of the Ottoman coasts and islands in the Adriatic and in the Aegean Sea should become impossible, and if, whether in consequence of the action of a third Power or otherwise, Austria-Hungary or Italy should find themselves under the necessity of modifying it by a temporary or permanent occupation on their part, this occupation shall take place only after a previous agreement between the two Powers aforesaid, based upon the principle of a reciprocal compensation for every advantage, territorial or other, which each of them might obtain beyond the present *status quo*, and giving satisfaction to the interests and well-founded claims of the two Parties.”¹⁰

By the renewal of 1887, the following other clauses (carried into the subsequent renewals) were agreed to as between Italy and Germany.

“*Article III.*: If it were to happen that France should make a move to extend her occupation, or even her protectorate or her sovereignty, under any form whatsoever, in the North African territories, whether of the Vilayet of Tripoli or of the Moroccan Empire, and that in consequence thereof Italy, in order to safeguard her position in the Mediterranean, should feel that she must herself undertake action in the said North African territories, or even have recourse to extreme measures in French territory in Europe, the state of war which would thereby ensue between Italy and France would constitute *ipso facto*, on the demand of Italy and at the common charge of the two Allies, the *casus faderis* with all its effects foreseen by Articles II and V of the aforesaid Treaty of May 20, 1882, as if such an eventuality were expressly contemplated therein.

“*Article IV.*: If the fortunes of any war undertaken in common against France should lead Italy to seek for territorial guarantees with

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 109. In 1909, after the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary, and her renunciation of the right accorded to her by the treaty of Berlin (1878) of maintaining troops and military and commercial routes throughout the Sanjak of Novibazar (Art. XXV), she and Italy, by special treaty, agreed (15 December 1909) that Article VII should “apply to the Sanjak as well as to the other parts of the Ottoman Empire.” *Ibid.*, pp. 241, 257; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), App. No. 1.

respect to France for the security of the frontiers of the Kingdom and of her maritime position, as well as with a view to the stability of peace, Germany will present no obstacle thereto, and in a measure compatible with circumstances, will apply herself to facilitating the means of attaining such a purpose.”¹¹

By the renewal of 1902, another clause (carried into the further renewal of 1912) was agreed to as between Italy and Germany:

“*Article IX.*: Germany and Italy engage to exert themselves for the maintenance of the territorial *status quo* in the North African regions on the Mediterranean, to wit, Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and Tunisia.¹² The Representatives of the two Powers in these regions shall be instructed to put themselves into the closest intimacy of mutual communication and assistance.

“If unfortunately, as a result of a mature examination of the situation, Germany and Italy should both recognize that the maintenance of the *status quo* has become impossible, Germany engages, after a formal and previous agreement, to support Italy in any action in the form of occupation, or other taking of guaranty, which the latter should undertake in these same regions with a view to an interest of equilibrium and of legitimate compensation.”

“It is understood that in such an eventuality the two Powers would seek to place themselves likewise in agreement with England.”¹³

Spanish Treaty. On 4 May 1887, Italy further strengthened herself, as against France, by obtaining from Spain a promise that she: “would not lend herself as regards France, in so far as the North African territories among others are concerned, to any treaty or political arrangement whatsoever which would be aimed directly or indirectly against Italy, Germany, and Austria, or against any one of these Powers.”¹⁴

Triple Alliance Naval Convention. As early as 5 December 1900 (probably earlier), Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy, entered into a convention providing for co-operation of their navies in time of war.¹⁵ Another, in supercession of it, was signed in draft 23 June 1913, and came into force the following November (only nine months prior to the war of 1914–18); and its comprehensiveness and elaborate minuteness indicate how deeply Italy was committed to Germany and Austria-Hungary while, at the same time (as we shall see), under war-treaty

¹¹ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 113.

¹² Prior to the last renewal of the treaty of 5 December 1912, the sovereignty of France in Tunis had been recognized, and Cyrenaica had, as a result of the Italo-Turkish war, become Italian; but, notwithstanding these facts, the form of the treaty remained unchanged. By a protocol, Germany and Austria-Hungary recognized Italian sovereignty in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania (*ibid.*, p. 257).

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 227, 251.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, II, p. 115, and pp. 87–8, note.

obligation to France. The following are a few extracts from the nine pages of the agreement.¹⁶

“The Naval forces of the Triple Alliance which may be in the Mediterranean shall unite for the purpose of gaining naval control of the Mediterranean by defeating the enemy fleets.”

“Naval units which may be lying in the same foreign port, or within reach of one another, shall attempt to join forces, provided they have not received other orders, with a view to co-operating in the interests of the Triple Alliance.”

“As often as shall seem advantageous for the preparation of the operations of the United Fleet, the above mentioned authorities shall get in touch with one another, either directly or through specially assigned officers.”

“For the transmission of orders and the exchange of intelligence between the vessels (signal stations) of the Allied Navies, the joint Signal Book (Triple Code) shall be employed. This also contains provisions concerning secret signals and recognition and communication by cipher.”

“The Austro-Hungarian and the Italian fleets shall assemble as soon as possible in the neighborhood of Messina and complete their supplies. The Italian fleet shall then proceed to its anchoring place between Milazzo and Messina, the Austro-Hungarian fleet to the harbor of Augusta. If need be, Italy shall retain a division for special duty in the north of the Tyrrhenian Sea and despatch a part of her torpedo flotillas mentioned in Annex I, heading A, together with mine layers, to Cagliari and Trapani. The Commander-in-Chief shall be notified in due season.

“The German vessels shall endeavor to unite at Gaeta (or in the event of unfavorable conditions at sea, at Naples) in order to complete their supplies. Should special circumstances render it impossible to reach Gaeta (Naples), the German naval forces also shall join the Commander-in-Chief in the neighborhood of Messina.”

“The main action is to be carried out so swiftly that the decision shall be reached before the Russian forces in the Black Sea can interfere.”

“Since the first French troop transports from North Africa may be expected to proceed northward from the main embarkation centres of Bona-Philippeville, Algiers, Oran-Mostagenem, and Casablanca-Mogador within the first three days of the mobilization, Italy shall immediately establish a patrol off the North African coast with fast auxiliary cruisers.”

“Apart from the measures which will probably be first taken in the second phase of the war for the obstruction of enemy commerce, it would appear advantageous to establish a patrol of the Suez Canal and the Dardanelles immediately on the outbreak of hostilities.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, I, pp. 282-301.

“The necessary preparations for commerce destroying shall be made in time of peace by the Commander-in-Chief.”

Treaty with Austria-Hungary and the United Kingdom, March 1887. In 1887, Italy added the United Kingdom to her list of friends. Besides profuse expressions of friendship, of identity of political objects, and of desire for political co-operation, the letters (12 February and 24 March 1887) exchanged between Lord Salisbury and Count Corti (Italy), and Count Károlyi (Austria-Hungary) contained, in not very explicit terms, the assent of the last two to the British declaration that:

“Both Powers desire that the shores of the Euxine, the Aegean, the Adriatic, and the northern coast of Africa shall remain in the same hands as now. If, owing to some calamitous events, it becomes impossible to maintain the absolute *status quo*, both Powers desire that there shall be no extension of the domination of any other Great Power over any portion of those coasts. It will be the earnest desire of H. M.’s Government to give their best co-operation, as hereinbefore expressed, to the Government of Italy in maintaining these cardinal principles of policy.”¹⁷

The “other Great Power” was Russia or France. In Károlyi’s letter was the following:

“Although the questions of the Mediterranean in general do not primarily affect the interests of Austria-Hungary, my Government has the conviction that England and Austria-Hungary have the same interests so far as concerns the Eastern Question as a whole, and therefore the same need of maintaining the *status quo* in the Orient, so far as possible, of preventing the aggrandizement of one Power to the detriment of others, and consequently of acting in concert in order to insure these cardinal principles of their policy.”¹⁸

Treaty with Austria-Hungary and the United Kingdom, December 1887. In December of the same year, the same Powers came to protective agreement as against Russia. By exchange of letters (12 December 1887), they concurred in the principle of:

“The independence of Turkey, as guardian of important European interests (independence of the Caliphate, the freedom of the Straits, etc.), of all foreign preponderating influence.”

The three Powers also agreed upon measures for resistance to intervention of “any other Power” (Russia) in Bulgaria “in order to establish a foreign administration there.”¹⁹ The alignment of the

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 94-103. Bismarck exerted his influence in London in support of this agreement: *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, p. 162; *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, 246.

¹⁸ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 101. *Cf. ibid.*, II, pp. 82-3.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, I, p. 125. The text of the agreement may be seen *post*, cap. VIII, pp. 280-1.

Powers created by these letters of February, March, and December — the United Kingdom with Italy and Austria-Hungary, members of the Triple Alliance — should be observed.

Treaty with Austria-Hungary, 1900-1. During her negotiations for a war-treaty with France, Italy entered into one more agreement with Austria-Hungary. By exchange of letters (20 December 1900 and 9 February 1901), the two Powers agreed with reference to "their interests in the Ottoman coasts of the Adriatic" (meaning Albania), as follows:

"1. To maintain the *status quo* as long as circumstances permitted;

"2. In case the present state of affairs could not be preserved, or in case changes should be imperative, to use our efforts to the end that the modifications relative thereto should be made in the direction of autonomy;

"3. In general, and as a mutual disposition on both sides, to seek in common, and as often as there is reason for it, the most appropriate ways and means to reconcile and to safeguard our reciprocal interests."²⁰

Gravitation towards France. Italy's alignment with Austria-Hungary was unnatural. The territories of *Italia irredenta* — unredeemed Italy — lay within Austria's geographical boundaries; the interests of the two Powers in the Balkans conflicted; and each desired maritime supremacy in the Adriatic. Italian antipathy to France, as expressed in the Florence, Massowah and Tunis incidents and a tariff war which lasted for ten years (1888-98) was the *raison-d'être* of the alliance; and as ill-will subsided, Italy resumed her gravitation towards France. In 1896, in consideration of certain economic concessions, Italy recognized the French position in Tunis.²¹ In 1898, the "tariff war" terminated. Afterwards conflicting interests in the Red Sea were adjusted:

"since which epoch," as the French Ambassador at Rome said, "the press of this country has made no reference to rival interests and incidents of which it was formerly full."²²

On 14-16 December 1900, an agreement for partition of interests in North Africa was arrived at, France declaring her disinterestedness in Tripoli and Cyrenaica, and Italy withdrawing any claim to Morocco.

"It has been agreed, also, that, if there should result from this a modification of the political or territorial status of Morocco, Italy reserves to herself, by way of reciprocity, the right to develop eventually her influence in Tripoli and Cyrenaica."²³

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 197, 199.

²¹ In 1897, in connection with the Cretan affair, "Italy ranged herself with the adversaries of her allies," thereby indicating that she "was going her own way" (Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 115-16).

²² M. Barrère to M. Delcassé, 10 Jan. 1901: Fr. Yell. Bk.: Franco-Italian Accords, No. 1.

²³ *Ibid.*, Annexes 1 and 2.

Italy was not satisfied with this clause, because, as she afterwards stated:

“It results from this text that Italy would be able to avail herself of the advantage that it stipulates, only if France were led to impose her direct sovereignty or her protectorate over Morocco.”²⁴

France acknowledged the justness of the objection, and agreed (1 November 1902) that the clause should be interpreted:

“in this sense, that each of the two Powers can freely develop its sphere of influence in the above-mentioned regions at the moment it deems opportune, and without the action of one of them being necessarily subordinated to that of the other.”²⁵

French War Treaty. Simultaneously with this last agreement, a war-treaty with France was arranged. The French view of the previous relations was subsequently (10 March 1912) stated by M. Barrère (the French Ambassador at Rome) as follows:

“The present was satisfactory. The existence, however, of the Triple Alliance made its character precarious. In order to assure to the re-established good relations a stability which should confer upon them their full value, it was necessary to clear up the point of knowing whether the Triple Alliance was, under the form which it then possessed, compatible with Franco-Italian friendship. . . . The Alliance remained defensive. But it permitted a very broad interpretation of the duties of the Allies: if France, openly provoked, should declare war, could Italy regard this declaration as a defensive step on our part? It was doubtful. What is more, nothing prevented her from going beyond the actual text of the Treaty if she should judge that her political interests demanded it of her. It is the knowledge of this state of affairs which led the Department and the Embassy to conclude that, under defensive appearances, the Triple Alliance implied an eventually offensive character, which ought to be got rid of in the interest of our security and of the relations of friendship between the two countries.”²⁶ One way of getting rid of the “eventually offensive character” of the Triple Alliance treaty was by alteration in its phraseology, and this Italy attempted when it was being renewed in 1902. As anticipated, she failed; whereupon the wily diplomats hit upon the idea that Italy (quite unknown to her allies) should:

“find the means of fixing the interpretation with regard to us which Italy intended to give her obligations as an ally.”²⁷

²⁴ Barrère to Delcassé, 10 January 1901: *Ibid.*, No. 1.

²⁵ Barrère to Prinetti (Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs), 1 Nov. 1902: *Ibid.*, No. 7; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 249.

²⁶ Barrère to Poincaré; Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 11; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 233.

²⁷ Barrère to Poincaré, 10 March 1912: Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 11; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 237.

"The means" having been easily found, and the Triple Alliance having in that way been rendered quite "compatible with Franco-Italian friendship," the two countries agreed (1 November 1902) as follows:

"In case Italy should be the object of a direct or indirect aggression on the part of one or more Powers, France will maintain a strict neutrality. The same shall hold good in case Italy, as the result of a direct provocation, should find herself compelled, in defence of her honor or of her security, to take the initiative of a declaration of war. In that eventuality, the Royal Government shall previously communicate its intention to the Government of the Republic, which will thus be enabled to determine whether there is really a case of direct provocation."²⁸

Mutatis mutandis, Italy assumed precisely similar obligations to France.²⁹ Simultaneously, M. Prinetti, the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, gave to France the following assurance:

"In order to remain faithful to the spirit of friendship which has inspired the present declarations, I am authorized further to confirm to you that on the part of Italy no protocol or military provision in the nature of an international contract which would be in disagreement with the present declarations exists or will be concluded by her."³⁰

Upon this arrangement, M. Barrère commented as follows:

"The agreement is in no way contradictory to the obligations of Italy. It confines itself to defining their character. In doing this, the Italian Government did not contravene its engagements towards its Allies; it defined them as regards us by interpreting them in a spirit suitable to its relations of friendship with us; it eliminated all ambiguity as to the *defensive* character of the Alliance by its definition of an act of provocation. At the same time, it precluded itself from modifying at will, from enlarging in the future, this interpretation in a sense

²⁸ Barrère to Prinetti, 1 Nov. 1902. Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 7; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 253-57.

²⁹ Prinetti to Barrère, 1 Nov. 1902. Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 8; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 240-51. The treaty contained no time-limit and needed no renewal: Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

³⁰ Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 8. A previous assurance had been given (4 June 1902) in the following form: "I have been authorized by His Excellency, M. Prinetti, to communicate to Your Excellency a telegram in which the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy assures me that, in the renewal of the Triple Alliance, there is nothing directly or indirectly aggressive toward France, no engagement binding us in any eventuality to take part in an aggression against her, finally no stipulation which menaces the security and tranquillity of France. M. Prinetti likewise desires that I should know that the protocols or additional conventions to the Triple Alliance, of which there has been much talk of late, and which would alter its completely defensive character, and which would even have an aggressive character against France, do not exist": Telegram, Prinetti to Count Tornielli, Italian Ambassador at Paris. Fr. Yell. Bk. *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 4; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 247.

unfavorable to us, without our being advised thereof under the conditions which the letters exchanged between M. Prinetti and myself determine.”³¹

That Italy, having a war-alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary, should undertake, for a consideration, to give it an interpretation favorable to their potential enemy was, in the view of French diplomacy, rather creditable than censurable.

After Russia had been informed of the letters containing the agreement between France and Italy, Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador at Paris, asked Poincaré, the French Foreign Minister:

“What interpretation and what value did the French Government attach to the expressions, somewhat ambiguous in my view, of the accord of 1902?”

Poincaré replied (as the Ambassador reported, 5 December 1912) that:

“Taking the same view as his predecessors, he had always thought that the value of this accord for France was not to be found in such or such employed expressions, but in the fact that, since its conclusion, Italy had in fact ceased all preparations, defensive and offensive, on the French frontier, and had concentrated her preparations on the Austrian frontier. There is no doubt, Poincaré said to me, that at the decisive moment Italy will always discover the possibility of giving to the accord the interpretation desirable for herself, it is that which we see at the present moment; but, I repeat, the practical result for France has been the possibility of reducing the military situation on the Italian frontier, where Italy has ceased the erection of fortifications and the construction of strategic railways, and has turned all her efforts and her measures against Germany.”³²

The other side of the story (the incidents connected with the loosening of Italy's attachment to Germany and Austria-Hungary) is related in a former chapter.³³

Effect of the Treaties. Italy had, by these alliances and *contre-partie* arrangements, manœuvred herself into some very comfortable positions. With the addition, here and there, of such words as “without provocation” (which can always be interpreted as desired), the following was the situation:

³¹ Barrère to Poincaré, 10 March 1912: Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 11; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 239.

³² *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 361. And see *ibid.*, p. 351. At the important conference of Algeciras (1906) with reference to Morocco, Italy supported France as against Germany — conduct which led the Kaiser to say to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador (as the latter reported): “that it was really monstrous for any one to give thought to the possibility of war against an ally; he must assure me, however, that in case Italy should show hostility to Austria-Hungary, he would seize with real enthusiasm the opportunity to join us, and to turn loose upon her his whole military strength” (Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 138).

³³ Cap. III.

1. In case of French attack upon Italy, Germany and Austria-Hungary would lend assistance. And in case of German or Austro-Hungarian attack upon Italy, France would be neutral.

2. If Germany were attacked by France, or either Germany or Austria-Hungary were attacked by two Great Powers, Italy promised her earlier allies to assist. And if France were attacked by Germany and Austria-Hungary, Italy promised her later ally to be neutral.

In other words, Italy had succeeded in establishing war-relations of equal validity with both of the outstanding opponents — Germany and Austria-Hungary on the one hand, and France on the other. And not only so, but she was reasonably certain that if she were in trouble, the Powers which she would call to her assistance would interpret in her favor such words as “without provocation”; whereas in case of quarrel between her two sets of allies, she would decide as she pleased. That is what she did.³⁴

3. Italy had still further cause for self-gratulation, for, as part of her war-arrangements against France, she had secured the support of Germany in connection with Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, while afterwards, as part of her *rapprochement* with France, she obtained French declaration of disinterestedness in these objects of her imperialistic ambition, in return for similar Italian declarations as to Morocco.³⁵

Italy and the United Kingdom — Baja — 1909. Anxious to assist in the detachment of Italy from the Triple Alliance, King Edward paid a visit to the King of Italy at Baja³⁶ in June 1909. For what took place we have to depend very largely upon a report sent to St. Petersburg by the Russian Chargé (22 June 1900) from which may be

³⁴ She had acted in like manner in 1912, when, the Balkan allies having defeated Turkey, acute differences arose between Austria-Hungary and Serbia (backed by Russia) with reference to the disposition to be made of Albania. Italy's interests inclining her to side with Austria-Hungary, Poincaré and Tittoni (Italian Ambassador at Paris) discussed the question of Italy's obligation as follows (according to the report of the Russian Ambassador, 20 Nov. 1912): Tittoni having expressed anxiety because Italy's interest in the integrity of Albania would lead her to assist Austria with military force, “Poincaré remarked that it was difficult to reconcile that position with what he knew of the Racconigi Russo-Italian entente, and that it was in flagrant contradiction of the Franco-Italian accord of 1902, according to which France had a right to count on the neutrality of Italy in case of war with Germany and Austria. Tittoni replied that the Italian treaty with Austria on the subject of Albania was anterior to the treaties with France and Russia, and that it bound the Italian government in an absolute fashion. Without doubt, that put Italy in a very difficult situation, and she would apply herself with the greatest effort to find a peaceful solution of the question. During the course of the conversation, Poincaré said to Tittoni that if the Austro-Serbian conflict resulted in general war, Russia could count entirely and completely on the armed support of France”: *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 347.

³⁵ Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 1, Annexes 1 and 2; Nos. 7, 8. Cf. Tardieu: *La Conférence d'Algéras*, p. 61; and Dillon: *From the Triple to the Quadruple Alliance*, p. 44.

³⁶ A town on the coast of Campania, Italy.

gathered that King Edward spoke "of the probability of an approaching conflict between England and Germany," and desired to ascertain "the attitude of Italy in the event of an Anglo-German war."³⁷ If no definite assurance was obtained, we may feel certain that King Edward's engaging manners left a favorable impression upon the Italian King and Tittoni, his Foreign Minister. Perhaps we shall not be far wrong if we assume that the Italian reply was similar to that given by San Giuliano, the Italian Foreign Minister, to the British Ambassador at Rome in the following April:

"San Giuliano declared emphatically that Italy was bound by the Triple Alliance only in absolutely and definitely fixed questions, possessing in every other respect unconditional freedom of action, whereby she would exclusively take into consideration her own national interests."³⁸

Italy and Russia — Racconigi Treaty — 1909. Six months afterwards (23-5 October 1909), the meeting at Racconigi³⁹ of the Czar (Isvolsky attending) and the King of Italy (Tittoni attending) marked a further important stage in the change in orientation of Italy's foreign policy. From the date of Austria-Hungary's announcement (27 January 1908) of her intention to construct a railway through the Sanjak of Novibazar; throughout the period of the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; and down to Serbia's humiliating submission on 31 March of the following year, war of European dimensions had been more than a possibility, and the attitude of Italy doubtful. Under these circumstances (and what further we do not know), the sovereigns met at Racconigi and subscribed a treaty (24 October) of which the terms, as given by Sazonoff in a letter to Isvolsky of 28 November 1912 were as follows:

"1. Russia and Italy will apply themselves in the first place to the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkan Peninsula.

"2. To every eventuality which may occur in the Balkans they will make application of the principle of nationality, by the development of the Balkan States, to the exclusion of all foreign domination.

"3. They will oppose, by joint action, all activity contrary to the above purposes; by 'joint action' is understood diplomatic action, action of a different kind naturally to remain reserved for future agreement.

"4. If Russia and Italy wish to make new arrangements with a third

³⁷ A longer extract may be seen *ante*, cap. V, p. 168. The whole report is in Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-7.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

³⁹ The summer residence of the King of Italy. In the previous year, at the same place, Isvolsky, the Russian Foreign Minister, had long conversations with King Victor Emmanuel, "the effect of which was to bring about very friendly relations between Russia and Italy": Poincaré, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

Power with reference to the European Orient,⁴⁰ in addition to those which exist at present, neither of them will do it without the participation of the other.

"5. Italy and Russia agree to consider favorably, the one, Russian interests in the question of the Straits, the other, Italian interests in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica."⁴¹

The arrangements were undoubtedly aimed at Germany and Austria-Hungary, and that fact was well recognized by the Great Powers. The United Kingdom regarded the meeting with "intense satisfaction"; but, at the same time, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs declared (as reported by the Russian Chargé, 27 October 1909):

"that he shares the opinion of a part of the European press regarding the strange position which Italy has assumed in respect to the grouping of the Powers. Chiefly in the event of complications in the Near East, Italy would either have to be untrue to her ally or act counter to her own national interests. These words confirm the deep impression made on government circles here by the meeting at Racconigi; they seem to incline to the belief that Italy in the future will stand closer to the Entente than to the Triple Alliance."⁴²

From Constantinople, the Russian Ambassador reported (6 November 1909) that:

"In a conversation with the Grand Vizier, he told me, with evident satisfaction, that the meeting at Racconigi was a significant victory won by Russian diplomacy over Austria-Hungary."⁴³

From Rome, the Russian Ambassador reported (7 November 1909):

"The very favorable impression made by the visit of our Czar to Italy continues to exert its influence. This impression has far exceeded the expectations, and, I might say, the hope, of Tittoni. In the political world, delight over the *rapprochement* with Russia is emphasized again and again. Direct contact between Russia and Italy is now desired here, without the mediation of France, which was regarded formerly as an important factor."⁴⁴

⁴⁰ This would include arrangements as to Albania. Cf. Isvolsky to Neratoff, 22 July 1911; Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁴¹ *Un Livre Noir*, I, pp. 357-8. The following documents may be read in connection with this treaty: Isvolsky to Russian Ambassador at Berlin, 4 Nov. 1909 (Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 150); Isvolsky to Neratoff, 22 July 1911 (*Ibid.*, p. 157); Isvolsky to Neratoff, 26 Sept. 1911 (*Un Livre Noir*, I, pp. 134-6, 136-8); Isvolsky to Neratoff, 27 Sept. 1911 (Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 161; *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 138); Neratoff to Benckendorff, 7 Nov. 1911 (Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-8); Isvolsky to Sazonoff, 9 Nov. 1912 (*ibid.*, p. 199; *Remarques &c.*, p. 102; Giolitti: *Mémoires de ma Vie*, pp. 157-9.

⁴² Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

From Vienna, on the other hand, the Russian Ambassador reported (27 October 1909):

“The meeting between our Czar and the King of Italy and the fact that His Majesty took a roundabout way in order to avoid Austro-Hungarian territory, has aroused much ill-feeling here.”⁴⁵

From Berlin, the Russian Ambassador reported (29 October 1909):

“The judgment of the Russian and Italian press, interpreting the meeting at Racconigi to be a manifestation directed against the Triple Alliance, especially against Austria, has not passed unnoticed here. Notwithstanding, both Government and official press have up to now maintained a quiet and moderate tone. . . . But in spite of all these assurances a certain amount of uneasiness seems to prevail in government circles in Germany, as it is not known how these new Russo-Italian relations will react on Italy’s position in the Triple Alliance and on the general course of European policies.”⁴⁶

The war-treaty with France and the meetings at Baja and Racconigi sufficiently indicate that Italy had determined that in case of European war:

“she would exclusively take into consideration her own national interests”⁴⁷ — that she would be actuated by no “sentiment except that of *sacro egoismo*.”⁴⁸

Tripoli — War with Turkey. Owing to the delay in her political consolidation (1870), Italy had been forestalled by the United Kingdom, France, and Spain in imperialistic aggressions upon territory in North Africa. The United Kingdom and France had established themselves in Egypt; all three nations had made commencements in Morocco; and France had taken possession of Algiers and Tunis. Tripoli and Cyrenaica alone remained unpreëmpted, and, casting covetous eyes upon them, Italy, through various bargainings, arranged for non-interference of the other imperialistic Powers.

At the Berlin conference of 1878, the United Kingdom secured the assent of Italy to British designs by pointing her to Tripoli and Cyrenaica as fields for exploitation, even as the complaisance of France had been purchased by pointing her to Tunis.⁴⁹ On 23 July 1890, Signor Crispi (Italian Premier) wrote to Lord Salisbury (British Foreign Minister (protesting against French action in Tunis, and seeking support for Italian occupation of Tripoli. In the ensuing conversation with the Italian Ambassador, Salisbury gave the requisite assurance.⁵⁰ In his written reply to Crispi, Salisbury was somewhat guarded, but ended his letter with the words:

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

⁴⁷ *Ante*, p. 235.

⁴⁸ *Ante*, p. 223.

⁴⁹ *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, pp. 114-18; Dawson, *The German Empire*, II, p. 109.

⁵⁰ *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, pp. 451-2.

"I beg Your Excellency to trust ever in the friendship which the English people and this government cherish for Italy, and to accept the assurance of my esteem and respect."⁵¹

In 1900 and 1902, Italy agreed to give a free hand to France in Morocco, in exchange for a free hand in Tripoli and Cyrenaica.⁵²

In 1902, as part of the renewal in that year of the Triple Alliance, Germany agreed, under certain conditions, to support Italy in operations which she might undertake in the same provinces.⁵³

Finally, in 1909, Russia agreed to give benevolent consideration to Italian interests in the provinces, in return for similar consideration by Italy for Russian interests in the question of the Straits between the Aegean and the Black Sea.⁵⁴

These arrangements having been effected, Italy took advantage of the European crisis in connection with the second of the Morocco incidents⁵⁵ to deliver an ultimatum to Turkey (28 September 1911), and, simultaneously, to institute military operations with a view to occupation of the coveted places. The reason for the action, as explained to Russia (12 September 1911) was that Italy:

"wants the African question settled, before a change in the present situation in the Balkans takes place, in order later on to be able to protect the Italian interests beyond the Adriatic Sea. . . . In considering the Tripolitan and Balkan questions, Italy would never lose sight of her arrangements and agreements with Russia."⁵⁶

To Isvolsky, at Paris, on the other hand, the Italian Ambassador there explained (27 September) that:

"Italy's step is the direct and inevitable outcome of Kiderlen's policy. If Germany, in renouncing the Algeciras Act, has hastened the declaration of the French protectorate over Morocco, and in doing so demanded compensation for herself, there was nothing left to Italy but to put the claims to Tripoli which she had reserved for herself into effect at this juncture, because she could not but fear that Italy's claims might at some future time, and on the occasion of an eventual change in the French Government, be forgotten or, possibly, declared void."⁵⁷

In other words, once France was secure in Morocco, she might disregard her obligations to Italy.⁵⁸ In his *Mémoires de ma Vie*, Giolitti (the Italian Prime Minister) sought to justify his action by the assertion that:

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 455.

⁵² *Ante*, pp. 230-1.

⁵³ The text of the agreement appears *ante*, p. 227.

⁵⁴ The text of the agreement appears *ante*, p. 235-6.

⁵⁵ *Post*, cap. XXII.

⁵⁶ Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 159. The reference is to the Racconigi treaty: *ante*, pp. 235-6.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

⁵⁸ *Aus. Red Bk. (Second)*, App. Nos. 3, 34.

“The existing state of things could not last, and, considering the conduct of the Young Turks, if we were not to go into Libya, some other Power, interested politically, or having known how to create in it economic interests, would certainly go there.”⁵⁹

British opinion with reference to Italy's action was, as might (had one understood the diplomatic situation) have been expected. Reporting on 6 November 1911, Benckendorff (the Russian Ambassador at London) said:

“Some time ago, I drew your attention to the public feeling in England aroused by Italy's sudden decision to occupy Tripoli. The most important newspapers, with the ‘Times’ at their head, saw in the Italian action a misuse of brute force, and pointed out—and that not without an ironical touch—that the Italian complaints of the Turkish administration had matured at the right moment in the midst of the Moroccan crisis. Public opinion went further still than the newspapers, and this tendency has been apparent all through. The political tendencies of the government, however, and of the most influential circles, have moved rather in an opposite direction. Turkey and the Young Turk Party have lost their former popularity in England, and the Government is anxious not to put any obstacles in the way of good relations with Italy in the future.”⁶⁰

As in Morocco and Persia,⁶¹ so also in Tripoli, British support of, or indifference to, aggression by Great Powers upon Little Powers was thought to be necessary for the maintenance of the Entente as a consolidated fighting force against Germany. A strong indication of Italy's real attitude toward her two groups of friends appeared in the fact:

“that the regiments sent from Northern Italy to Tripoli have been taken from the French, not from the Swiss or Austrian frontier.”⁶²

Italy and Russia. When, in 1912, an “increasing coolness” in Franco-Italian relations supervened⁶³ Russia became alarmed lest, at that critical moment, her *rapprochement* with Italy might lose its effectiveness. Fortunately, however, for Russia, Italy had, at the same time, a quarrel with Austria-Hungary because of her interference (based upon asserted treaty obligations) with Italian naval operations against Turkey. Under these circumstances, Italy gave Russia warm reassurance. Reporting from Rome (25 March 1912), the Russian Ambassador said:

“The Minister for Foreign Affairs has informed me that the Italian representatives in Peking and Teheran have been authorized to uphold

⁵⁹ Pp. 207-8.

⁶⁰ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

⁶¹ *Post*, cap. XXII.

⁶² Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 608.

⁶³ *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 2, 33.

our Legations, not only in official actions, but in every possible way. He emphasized in this connection that he had selected these two cities because our attention for the moment was being engrossed by Chinese and Persian questions. In a whole series of conversations, he has tried to convince me that the Italian Government is prepared to comply as far as possible with your wishes, and that it is attempting to harmonize the general direction of the foreign policy of the two states wherever they are not already bound by existing treaties. . . . Owing to the Reinsurance Treaties, which are known to you, in the event of a conflict between the two hostile camps of Europe, Germany can no longer absolutely count on Italy.”⁶⁴

The incident passed peacefully.

Fluctuation. The war with Turkey having been brought to satisfactory termination; a war between Turkey and the Balkan states having supervened; the coolness between Italy and France⁶⁵ having continued; and Italy having renewed her treaty with her other friends (Germany and Austria-Hungary), Russia and France took counsel together, Poincaré saying (9 November 1912):

“that the time had come when both Allies should inform each other with absolute candour in regard to their relations with Italy; Italy was destined to play an important part in the events of the moment and this part must be clearly defined in advance.”⁶⁶

Reporting from Paris on 20 November, Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador said:

“I know that in the French Foreign Office one has seriously considered whether the moment had not come to demand a categorical answer from Italy as to whether the problems of the Triple Alliance in its newest form are compatible with the special agreements between France and Italy. I have reason to believe that Barrère,⁶⁷ although not denying Italy’s deflection toward the Triple Alliance, wishes to exercise a quieting influence on the French government; he believes that in a short while the present cabinet will resign and be replaced by a new government, which need not be so under the influence of Berlin and Vienna. In reply to my question as to how he explained the contradiction that Italy, on the one hand, wished to conduct negotiations with France in regard to a new agreement, and, on the other hand, had changed her policy so completely, Pichon said that this contradiction was absolutely incomprehensible to him, and could only be explained by the traditional duplicity in Italian diplomacy. . . . Be that as it

⁶⁴ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 192-3. And see pp. 194-6.

⁶⁵ In connection with the occupation by Italy (as a result of her war with Turkey) of islands in the Ægean: *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 2, 33, 123-4. See also pp. 176, 177, 179, 180-2, 238, 497-9.

⁶⁶ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-200.

⁶⁷ French Ambassador at Rome.

may, I must direct your serious attention to the unsatisfactory relations existing between France and Italy.”⁶⁸

In reply to inquiries, Italy assured France and Russia: “that the treaty in question” (the Triple Alliance) “has been renewed without amendments of any kind — punctuation marks included — and that all rumors to the contrary are without foundation.”⁶⁹

But the statement was not believed, Pichon, the French Foreign Minister, saying (4 December 1913):

“Nevertheless, we have positive information, not from Italian but from German sources, that at the renewal of the Triple Alliance, a special protocol or a special naval convention pertaining to the Mediterranean was signed.”⁷⁰

Pichon was substantially right. A very important naval convention had been signed in draft on 23 June 1913, and had come into force on the following 1 November.⁷¹ French suspicions having been mentioned by the Russian Ambassador to the Italian Foreign Minister, the answer was (21 April 1914):

“that the Triple Alliance had been renewed without so much as a comma being altered. No supplementary provisions had been agreed on by Italy and her Allies, and the agreements between France and Italy were still valid. The Minister added that French suspicion was based on certain proofs which France believed to have in her possession. These so-called proofs, however, could not be anything but mere common forgeries.”⁷²

The statement was true, but misleading, and by the Entente Powers “not considered categorical enough.”⁷³ The treaty had been renewed without amendment, and there were no “supplementary provisions,” but there undoubtedly existed the naval convention just mentioned.

Lack of cordiality between Italy and her *entente* friends continued to the outbreak of the war in July 1914.⁷⁴ In conversation on the previous 24 February with the Russian Ambassador, the Secretary General of the Italian Foreign Office explained that the situation was due to the fact that Italy found it necessary to keep in touch with Austria-Hungary in connection with the disposition to be made of Albania:

“Our entire policy was directed towards exercising a restraining

⁶⁸ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-2. And see pp. 178-83, 186, 206-7. The trouble was that, owing to vicissitudes, Italy was beginning to find herself more in harmony with Austria-Hungary than with Russia: *ibid.*, pp. 207-8.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 203. Cf. *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 194.

⁷⁰ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 203. Cf. *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 220.

⁷¹ *Ante*, pp. 227-9.

⁷² Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Cf. *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 33, 46, 166, 179-82, 194, 220, 298-9, 340, 361, 371.

influence on Austria and thus avoiding a war . . . after the solution of the Albanian question, a closer co-operation between Russia and Italy in all political questions would result as a matter of course.”⁷⁵

In Paris, Tittoni, the Italian Ambassador, seems to have placed the blame for tension upon Giuliano. He agreed that Italy had acted rightly in co-operating with Austria-Hungary with reference to Albania, but declared that:

“the Minister’s policy had become all too Austro-German in its orientation.”⁷⁶

That was as late as 2 July 1914 — the month in which the great war commenced. The situation ought to be remembered when noting Italy’s neutrality until the death of Giuliano (15 October 1914) and the installation of his successor, Baron Sonnino.

Summation. The foregoing recital has made fairly clear what would be the attitude of Italy at the outbreak of war between Germany and France. By treaty with Germany (renewed as late as 5 December 1912), she was:

“bound to lend help and assistance with all” her “forces” to Germany “in case of any aggression, without direct provocation, by France against Germany.”

And as late as 1 November 1913, came into force the tripartite naval agreement of which the first clause was:

“The Naval forces of the Triple Alliance which may be in the Mediterranean shall unite for the purpose of gaining naval control of the Mediterranean by defeating the enemy fleets.”⁷⁷

On the other hand, by agreement in 1902, Italy had promised France “a strict neutrality” in case France “should be the object of a direct or indirect aggression.” Treaties, however, count for little. Italy’s friendships, like those of other nations, were based upon her interests, and changed from time to time, quite independently of treaty obligations — as *sacro egoismo* dictated. From 1871 until 1898, she was anti-French. In 1896, she commenced her gravitation toward France; in 1898 she terminated the “tariff war”; in 1900, she made agreement with France as to Morocco and Tripoli; and in 1902, entered into war-treaty with her; in 1909, she made treaty with Russia with reference to the Balkans, the Straits, and Tripoli. Turning again in 1912, she cultivated friendship with Austria-Hungary and Germany — “l’Italie est en plein dans la Triple-Alliance,”⁷⁸ “l’Italie est plus triplicienne que jamais”;⁷⁹ renewed the Triple Alliance; supplemented

⁷⁵ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁷⁷ *Ante*, p. 228.

⁷⁸ Telg. of Isvolsky, 9 Jan. 1912: *Un Livre Noir*, II p. 2; and see pp. 179-80.

⁷⁹ The view of the French Foreign Minister, 13 March 1913: *Ibid.*, p. 46.

the renewal with a most important naval convention; and prevaricated to France.

This being her record, the course which Italy would take in 1914 was not doubtful. It had been confidently predicted upon several occasions⁸⁰: Italy would wait, and, closely watching the course of hostilities, would prepare to fly to the relief of the victor.⁸¹ She acted as foretold.⁸²

ITALY AND THE WAR—THREE PERIODS

Appreciation of the story of Italy's entrance upon the war will be assisted by the preliminary observation that it may be divided into three distinct periods:

I. The few days immediately preceding the declaration of Italy's neutrality, that is up to 3 August 1914.

II. The first part of the neutrality period, namely, while San Giuliano remained Foreign Minister, and afterwards, until 9 December 1914.

III. The second part of the neutrality period, namely, during the administration of the Foreign Office by Sonnino, down to the Italian declaration of war—23 May 1915.

I. PRIOR TO ITALIAN DECLARATION OF NEUTRALITY

Austria-Hungary was unaware of Italy's war-alliance with France, but she well knew that the earlier enmity between the two countries had given place to friendship, although latterly somewhat clouded; that, on the other hand, the natural antipathy of Italy to her northern neighbor had been augmented by the Trieste decrees⁸³ and the happenings during the Italo-Turkish war of 1911-12; that any Austro-Hungarian operations in the Balkans would arouse the jealousy, if not the opposition of Italy;⁸⁴ that acute differences of view with reference to Article VII of the treaty of the Triple Alliance⁸⁵ could not be avoided; and that success or failure in a European war depended, to a large extent, upon Italian attitude. Under these circumstances, one would have expected that Berchtold (the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister), before committing himself to war in the Balkans, would have engaged in frank conversation with Italy; would have evinced a friendly and accommodating disposition; and would have exhausted every effort to arrive at an understanding. His action was precisely the contrary. It was evasive, tricky, and stubborn. Assuming that

⁸⁰ *Ante*, cap. III, pp. 88, 91.

⁸¹ *Post*, p. 275.

⁸² Further observations upon this subject may be seen in cap. III, pp. 87-92.

⁸³ *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., I, No. 35.

⁸⁴ *Kautsky Docs.*, No. 46; *Kautsky, The Guilt &c.*, pp. 148-50.

⁸⁵ *Ante*, p. 226.

Italy would be unfriendly, he treated her as a potential enemy rather than as a promised ally. Germany saw and deplored his mistake; urged him to adopt conciliatory methods; and made such amends for his foolishness as were possible. On 3 August 1914, the German Ambassador at Rome reported that the King of Italy had said to him that: "The incredible stupidities of Austria, wounding the susceptibilities of the Italian people during these last days, so irritated public opinion against her that now active co-operation with her would unchain a tempest."⁸⁶

ARTICLE VII OF TRIPLE ALLIANCE TREATY

Three questions arose as to the interpretation of Article VII of the Triple Alliance Treaty — quoted on a previous page.⁸⁷

(1) What was the meaning of the phrase "in the regions of the Balkans"?

(2) Was Austria-Hungary under obligation to come to agreement with Italy as to "compensation" prior to occupying, even for military purposes, any part of Serbian territory?

(3) If "compensation" had to be made by Austria-Hungary prior to occupancy of Serbian territory, upon what principle would it be calculated, and from what source would it be derived?

Short reference to each of these questions will be advisable before detailing the course of the negotiations.

(1) "In the regions of the Balkans." Italy contended that these words applied to the whole geographical area of the Balkans, while Austria-Hungary, on the other hand, contended that their application was limited to those parts of the Balkans owned by Turkey. At the date of the treaty (1887 — renewed in 1912), Turkey had extensive possessions in the peninsula. By the treaty of Bucarest (1913), all but the southeast corner of it and Albania had been partitioned among the Balkan nations. Austria-Hungary claimed that the words "in the regions of the Balkans" applied only to these vestiges of Turkish sovereignty. It was an impossible interpretation.⁸⁸ Germany at once concurred in the Italian view,⁸⁹ and afterwards urged admission of the point.⁹⁰ On the 25th July, the German Chancellor telegraphed to Vienna:

⁸⁶ Kautsky Docs., No. 771. In an earlier report, the Ambassador at Vienna had said: "But Austrians will always remain Austrians. A mixture of vanity and lightness is neither easily nor quickly overcome! I know them well": *Ibid.*, No. 326.

⁸⁷ P. 226.

⁸⁸ Austria-Hungary argued from the course of the negotiations which had preceded the treaty. It is interestingly detailed in Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 56, 61, and notes.

⁸⁹ *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., II, Nos. 50, 63; Kautsky Docs., Nos. 150, 326.

⁹⁰ *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., II, No. 87; III, Nos. 32, 81, 126; Kautsky, *The Guilt* *etc.*, pp. 154, 156.

“Vienna must not evade an agreement by disputable interpretations of the treaty, but must make her decisions in keeping with the gravity of the situation.”⁹¹

Austria-Hungary was tenacious. Not until the 31st — the day upon which the German ultimatum went to Russia — would Berchtold concede the point, and then he attached the condition that Italy should fulfill:

“her duties as an ally, in the event of the present conflict” (with Serbia) “expanding into a general conflagration.”⁹²

To this condition, Italy objected (2 August), upon three grounds: (1) imposition of conditions are in order when framing a treaty, but not when interpreting it; (2) the treaty had still twelve years to run, and interpretation of it ought to be the same, no matter what the circumstances; (3) interpretation of the treaty was but one of the factors which Italy would have to take into consideration in determining her course of action.⁹³ Under pressure from Germany, Berchtold eventually withdrew the condition.⁹⁴

(2) **Necessity for previous Agreement.** Whether, according to Article VII of the treaty, Austria-Hungary was under obligation to come to agreement as to “compensation” with Italy, prior to occupying, even for military purposes, any part of Serbian territory, was a more debatable question. Berchtold had, from one point of view, the better side of the controversy, but appears not fully to have realized that fact. For the question was not (as Italy put it) whether Austro-Hungarian occupation of Serbian territory, of itself, gave Italy a right to compensation and made “a previous agreement necessary,” but whether Austria-Hungary was about to modify the *status quo* in the Balkans “by a temporary or permanent occupation” of Serbian territory. Not occupation itself gave a right to compensation, but occupation with a certain purpose.⁹⁵ Had Berchtold, however, so stated his case, Italy might well have replied that, as he had abstained from

⁹¹ Kautsky, *The Guilt &c.*, p. 156.

⁹² Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, No. 87. Cf. Nos. 81, 86, 106; Kautsky Docs., Nos. 577, 594. When, on 4 Aug., Berlin complained that Austria-Hungary had not “met Italy’s wishes regarding the interpretation of Article VII and of the claims of compensation derived therefrom in time” (Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, No. 126), Berchtold’s excuse was “that the Italian Government up to this date has not addressed itself to us with any proposals or wishes on the subject of compensation” (*ibid.*). Berchtold was not more candid with Berlin than with Rome and St. Petersburg.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, Nos. 107, 108, 109.

⁹⁴ Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 43, 44.

⁹⁵ When Berchtold objected to the somewhat similar action of Italy in the course of her war with Turkey, San Giuliano replied that Article VII “applied to the permanent modifications of the *status quo*, and not to the temporary occupations counselled and imposed by military reasons”: Giolitti, *op. cit.*, p. 248. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 253.

declaring his purpose, she was justified in assuming that the *status quo* was being attacked. Indeed, it was inevitable that an Austro-Hungarian success would, in one way or another, affect the *status quo*.

Italy, moreover, could point to the action of Austria-Hungary during the Italo-Turkish war of 1911-12. Italy, then, had in view an attack upon Turkish territory in the Balkans, and had met with warning from Austria-Hungary to the effect (in Berchtold's language) that:

"even a temporary occupation of the coast of the Ægean Sea by Italy would not be conformable with the provisions of Article VII."⁹⁶

The position of the parties being now reversed, Berchtold was prepared to contend that the Austro-Hungarian attitude, at that time, had not been unfriendly; that:

"all we did was to warn Italy with regard to the threatening consequences."⁹⁷

But in the secrecy of a meeting of the Austro-Hungarian Council, he acknowledged — indeed argued — that:

"during the Libyan campaign, we had most rigorously interpreted Article VII."⁹⁸

(3) **Compensation.** If the Italian interpretation of the treaty were accepted, two further questions would arise: (1) How was the compensation to be calculated?, and (2) From what source was the compensation to be derived? According to the treaty, Italy would be entitled to:

"compensation for every advantage, territorial or other," which Austria-Hungary "might obtain beyond the present *status quo*, and giving satisfaction to the interests and well-founded claims of " Italy. But prior to successful termination of the war, Austria-Hungary would obtain no advantage, and, very clearly, no computation of the extent of Italy's compensation could be made until the measure by which it would be calculated had come into existence. As Burian (Berchtold's successor) put it (22 February 1915):

"The compensation, as provided for by Article VII, must be proportionate and equivalent in the plain sense of the words. Hence it will be impossible to perfect an arrangement for compensation at a time when the advantage subject to compensation is non-existent and depends entirely upon the future. It would be unthinkable to specify and define a compensation so long as the point of comparison is still completely lacking. . . . Each of the contracting parties is obliged to give timely notice to the other party and to open negotiations without

⁹⁶ Aus. Red Bk., O. F., II, No. 52.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* And see No. 63. Italy acknowledged that during the latter part of the war, Austria-Hungary had displayed an amicable attitude: *Ibid.*, No. 52.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, III, No. 79. Cf. Dillon: *From the Triple to the Quadruple Alliance*, pp. 44-5. Upon this point, see Aus. Red Bk. (Second), App., Nos. 5-7, and Nos. 78, 109-13. Giolitti's account of the attitude of Austria-Hungary may be seen in his *Mémoires de ma Vie*, pp. 245-53.

delay on the subject of compensation. It will always be possible to fix the general basis of the accord in a short time; the details and concrete stipulations on the appraising of values, however, are inevitably subordinated to the possibility of comparing the advantages to be compensated for. This implies that the activities referred to must take their course without awaiting an adjustment of counter-proposals — a delay which at the present juncture could be nothing less than fantastic.”⁹⁹

Upon the other point — with reference to the source from which compensation might be derived — Italy had legally the stronger case.¹⁰⁰ She demanded the cession of parts of Austria-Hungary; Austria-Hungary replied that compensation must be found in Turkish territory in the Balkans; pointed to Albania; and at first refused to entertain the proposal that “the Monarchy” should “cut from its own flesh.” But the treaty prescribed no limitation of peace. When Germany agreed to the establishment of a French protectorate in Morocco, she received “compensation” by the transfer of French territory in the Congo.¹⁰¹

Interpretation Immaterial. Argument as to the true interpretation of the language of the treaty upon all these points became, at an early period (20 December) useless by the Italian change of basis of claim from “compensation” under the treaty to “the fulfillment of certain national aspirations” in derogation of the treaty. Treaty or no treaty, Italy saw her opportunity in Austro-Hungarian embarrassment, and took advantage of it. How much territory, and at what moment, would Austria-Hungary cede as the purchase price of Italian neutrality? became the only questions.

German Pressure on Austria-Hungary. Germany regarded with fretful impatience the exasperating methods of Vienna. In Jagow’s view (15 July):

“Italian public opinion has, up to the present, shown itself as Serbophile as it is usually Austrophobe. I have no doubt that in an Austro-Serbian conflict, she” (Italy) “will place herself squarely on the side of Serbia. The territorial expansion of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and even an extension of its influence in the Balkans, is regarded in Italy with horror, and is considered a prejudice to the position of Italy in that region.”¹⁰²

Under these circumstances, Jagow, at the express instance of the Kaiser, telegraphed to the German Ambassador at Vienna (27 July):

⁹⁹ Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 109. At another time, Burian argued that “it is the *agreement* which must be ‘previous,’ *but not its fulfilment*”: *Ibid.*, Nos. 117–8.

¹⁰⁰ During the negotiations which preceded the treaty, Austria-Hungary was assured that Italy had no idea of demanding compensation in the Tyrol: Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 70. Cf. statement by Herr von Holstein: *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ See cap. XXII.

¹⁰² Kautsky Docs., No. 46. Cf. Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I, No. 35.

"His Majesty the Emperor considers as indispensable that Austria come to agreement in good time with Italy as to Article VII and the question of compensations. His Majesty has expressly commanded so to advise your Excellency, at the same time asking that it should be communicated to Count Berchtold."¹⁰³

Jagow went so far as to recommend the voluntary cession of the Trentino.¹⁰⁴ We shall see more of this German pressure as we proceed.

Austro-Hungarian Evasions. Berchtold had assumed that Austria-Hungary's contemplated action against Serbia would bring from Italy a claim for compensations,¹⁰⁵ but he appears also to have assumed that the claim would not be very strongly pressed, and for a time his policy of evasion met with some success. Telegraphing to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Rome on 21 July, he said that if the Italian Minister:

"maintains his point of view [with reference to Article VII], it will be desirable that you do not continue the discussion on this subject, and justify yourself to the Minister by saying that neither of you would succeed in making the other accept any interpretation but his own."¹⁰⁶

After the Italian Ambassador at Vienna had represented to Berchtold that:

"the treaty compels us [Austria-Hungary] to come to an understanding previous to occupying any portion of Serbian territory,"

he (Berchtold) telegraphed to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Rome (26 July):

"As it is uncertain up to the present, whether we will decide for a temporary occupation, and to what extent, I consider it unnecessary to open a discussion on the subject just now, and will do my best to postpone it."¹⁰⁷

Having acted upon this instruction,¹⁰⁸ the Ambassador received from the Italian Foreign Minister (29 July), the reply that "It is evident that an agreement upon this point is urgent."¹⁰⁹ Thus pressed, Berchtold presented the matter at a meeting of Council (31 July), at which he said that:

"he had until now instructed the I. & R. Ambassador in Rome to reply to the demands concerning the compensation by vague phrases,"¹¹⁰

¹⁰³ Kautsky Docs., No. 267; Kautsky, *The Guilt, &c.*, p. 156.

¹⁰⁴ Kautsky Docs., No. 46. Cf. Nos. 94, 326, 328.

¹⁰⁵ Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I, No. 32.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 42.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, II, No. 51. And see No. 63.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 85. And see No. 86; and III, No. 139.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, III, No. 11.

¹¹⁰ The Ambassador did not like the rôle, and the German Ambassador at Rome reported (29 July) that "it would be impossible much longer to avoid clear explanations between Austria and Italy": Kautsky Docs., No. 363.

and continue insisting on the fact that all idea of territorial aggrandisement was quite beyond our intentions. If, however, we should be forced against our will to undertake a non-temporary occupation, there would then still be time to approach the question of compensation.”¹¹¹

Austro-Hungarian Purposes. A very important element in the consideration of the treaty-rights of Italy was the nature of the intentions of Austria-Hungary with reference to Serbian integrity. Italy wanted to know what changes in the Balkan map would follow upon an Austro-Hungarian victory, and what were to be the political relations between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. But Berchtold refused to make clear reply. He was not altogether to blame, for (like Sir Edward Grey), he was embarrassed by disagreement within his own Council. The minutes of the meetings of the Council reveal that while Berchtold (the Foreign Minister) contemplated annexation of Serbian territory at the end of the war, and Tisza (the Hungarian Prime Minister) insisted upon contrary policy,¹¹² they agreed upon the non-committal formula:

“that no war for conquest is intended, nor is the annexation of the Kingdom contemplated.”

None of the Powers was misled. Each of them wanted more definite assurance, and Germany pressed, even to the point of insistence, that satisfaction in this respect should be given to Italy and Russia.¹¹³ The day after the Council meeting of the 19th, Berchtold telegraphed to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Rome that he:

“might express the opinion, as your own, that, should peaceable means fail, the Vienna Cabinet was far from thinking of a war with a view to conquest, or the annexation of any part of Servia.”¹¹⁴

The Ambassador understood, but, being personally opposed to concessions to Italy, completely spoiled Berchtold's dissembling plans by declining (in conversation, on 21 July, with the Italian Foreign Minister) to sanction publication of the assurance, and by adding, as he reported (*italics as in original*):

“that there was *no intention* of territorial acquisition, but not an *engagement*.”¹¹⁵

Italy was not to be put off with such trifling,¹¹⁶ and her Ambassador at Vienna declared to Berchtold (28 July):

“that it would be of advantage to us” (Austria-Hungary) “if we made a binding declaration to the Powers on this point.”¹¹⁷

¹¹¹ Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, No. 79. And see II, Nos. 81, 85, 86.

¹¹² The proceedings of the Council will be referred to in cap. XXVI.

¹¹³ See *post*, cap. XXVII.

¹¹⁴ Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I, No. 34.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 43. The Ambassador made the same distinction in a later interview (31 July): *Ibid.*, III, No. 60.

¹¹⁶ Kautsky Docs., No. 119. See Kautsky, *The Guilt &c.*, p. 153.

¹¹⁷ Aus. Red Bk., O. F., II, No. 87.

But Berchtold declined to be drawn. Replying to the Ambassador, he said (as he himself noted):

“that this was not possible, because no one could foresee at this moment, whether in the course of the war, we might not be obliged to occupy Servian territory much against our will. If the war takes a normal course, this need not be apprehended, since we really had no cause whatever to wish to augment the number of our Servian subjects. . . . As we have already declared to the Italian Ambassador here, we intend to make no territorial acquisitions. Should we, against our previsions be forced to occupy Servian territory more than temporarily, we are prepared to enter into negotiations on the compensation question with Italy. On the other hand, we expect from Italy that the kingdom will in no wise hinder its ally in the action necessary to attain its ends and will maintain the friendly attitude of an ally, which it has promised.”¹¹⁸

In Italian view, this was merely a new form of evasion. Von Kleist, the German Military Attaché at Rome, reported (5 August) to Berlin as follows:

“Italy is irritated at Austria, and thinks the latter is aiming at aggrandisement on the Balkan, which Austria-Hungary has not as yet emphatically repudiated. If this distrust of Italy is strengthened by evasion on the part of Austria, or if it is confirmed, Italy will consider such a violation of its interests, and is preparing not to stand it.”¹¹⁹ To a complaint from Berlin based upon this report, Berchtold replied, the same day, that:

“The object of our war against Serbia is well enough known there. We want to put an end to Servian propaganda, aiming at the dissolution of the Monarchy, and make sure — without any territorial aggrandisement at the cost of Servia — that Servia in future will have to give up its attacks on us. . . . The above clear and precise assurance should suffice to re-assure Italy, if it really is *de bonne foi*, as to our intentions. I certainly could not undertake to give any further explanations, as this would mean going in for systematic blackmailing, which finally might lead to a conflict.”¹²⁰

There can be little surprise that Italy was irritated.¹²¹ London, Paris, and St. Petersburg had the same experience as Rome. Even Berlin felt constrained (as we shall see¹²²) to make sharp complaint of Berchtold's divagations.

No Consultation as to Demands on Serbia. The exact form of the Austria-Hungarian demands upon Serbia was in Berlin on the

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.* Cf. Kautsky Docs., No. 428; and see No. 328.

¹¹⁹ Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, No. 148.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Kautsky Docs., No. 771.

¹²² Cap. XXVII.

afternoon of the 23d.¹²⁵ Of this incivility, Italy made strong comment to Serbia.¹²³ Berchtold had proposed to treat Italy in the same way,¹²⁴ but changed his mind and delayed communication until the afternoon of the 23d.¹²⁵ Of this incivility, Italy made strong complaint to Berlin as well as to Vienna.¹²⁶ The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Rome reported (26 July) that the Secretary to the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs had:

“harped on the tone of our note, which would have been unacceptable to every State; on the fact that the note was not sooner communicated to the Powers.”¹²⁷

Disclosure, by the publication of the German *White Book*, of the fact that Germany had been taken into Austro-Hungarian confidence created “a sensation in Rome.”¹²⁸

No Intimation of War-Intentions. Italy had another and more substantial grievance. Berchtold took care to consult with Berlin as to his proposed hostilities against Serbia. The Emperor-King and the Kaiser exchanged personal letters.¹²⁹ The Foreign Offices came to agreement. German support was assured.¹³⁰ Italy, on the other hand, was kept in the dark,¹³¹ Berchtold saying (3 July) that:

“if we consulted the cabinet of Rome in this question, it would no doubt ask for Valona in compensation, and this we could not concede.”¹³²

His idea was that Italy being unreliable,¹³³ her government, as he said (12 July):

“should not be informed, but placed in a position that cannot be averted by our grave attitude in Belgrade.”¹³⁴

He proposed, he said (18 July), “to place the Italian Government before a *fait accompli*.”¹³⁵ Very naturally, Italy resented the treatment. Reporting a conversation with San Giuliano (Italian Foreign Minister) on 3 August, the German Ambassador said:

¹²³ Count Max Montg elas: *Foreign Affairs*, Feb. 1920, p. 13. Berlin had asked for information on the 19th, 20th, and 21st: Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I, No. 39; Kautsky Docs., Nos. 77, 83.

¹²⁴ Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I, Nos. 16, 20, 22, 35, 49, 50.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, Nos. 50, 56.

¹²⁶ Kautsky, *The Guilt &c.*, p. 152. And see Aus. Red. Bk., O. F., III, Nos. 38, 88.

¹²⁷ Aus. Red Bk., O. F., II, No. 50. Cf. Kautsky Docs., No. 78.

¹²⁸ Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, No. 164. See also No. 167; II, Nos. 53, 87; and Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 37.

¹²⁹ See cap. XXVII.

¹³⁰ Ger. White Bk., 1914; Coll. Dip. Docs., p. 406.

¹³¹ Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 35, 36, 88.

¹³² Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I, No. 3.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, Nos. 35, 41; II, No. 86.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, I, No. 16.

¹³⁵ Kautsky Docs., No. 87.

“He charged us with having concerted with Austria the plan to place Italy before a *fait accompli*. It is not possible to thrust a great Power into such a conflict without previously consulting her. We ought then to shoulder the consequences of the fact that Italy will not permit herself to be imposed upon. She has not been allowed time to make the necessary military preparations. One could not, under these circumstances, expose the country to Anglo-French attacks. To that must be added the great danger of the internal situation. We shall see what will become of Austria in this struggle. She was a corpse which could not be revived. She will be completely annihilated.”¹³⁶ It is not surprising that, under such circumstances, Italy felt disposed to give to her treaty with the Central Powers an interpretation which enabled her to declare her neutrality.

Berchtold's partial Success. Notwithstanding all these points of difference and complaint, Berchtold appears to have scored something of a success by persuading (31 July) the Italian Ambassador at Vienna to accept the following declaration as to the Austro-Hungarian attitude:

“If, however, through force of circumstances, Austria-Hungary should be obliged to make territorial acquisition in the Balkan peninsula, notably in Serbia and Montenegro, the Imperial and Royal Government would be ready to come to agreement with Italy on the subject of the compensations to be accorded to her, whether Italy lends her assistance to Austria in case the *casus fœderis* provided for by the treaty presents itself, or lends her assistance without the *casus fœderis* presenting itself. This declaration contains the elements which constitute the substance of the interpretation which Italy gives to Article 7, and which I agree to accord to Italy even though I do not concur in this interpretation.”¹³⁷

On 4 August, the Ambassador went to Rome in order, if possible, to turn Italy from the policy which she appeared to have adopted.¹³⁸ The negotiations had, however, ended on the previous day by the Italian declaration of neutrality. Offering advice for Berchtold's future guidance, Jagow declared that:

“As regards the question of compensation . . . it was not right that if this question should be still further pursued by Italy, it be answered evasively.”¹³⁹

What might have happened had not the administration of Italian foreign affairs passed, by the death of San Giuliano, to Sonnino cannot be confidently asserted.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 745. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 88.

¹³⁷ Kautsky Docs., No. 573. And see No. 577.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 844; Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, No. 141.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 137.

II. FIRST PART OF THE NEUTRALITY PERIOD

The real reason for Italy's declaration of neutrality was the same as that which afterwards produced a declaration of war, namely, that her interests dictated her course. Her treaty with Austria-Hungary and Germany was interpreted as might have been, and was, anticipated. It bound her to assist Germany and Austria-Hungary in case they, "without direct provocation on their part, should chance to be attacked and to be engaged in war with two or more Great Powers";¹⁴⁰ and Italy's interest being as it was, she decided that the *casus fœderis* had not arisen. San Giuliano assumed to dispose of it by saying (31 July):

"The war undertaken by Austria, and the consequences which might result, had, in the words of the German Ambassador himself, an aggressive object. Both were, therefore, in conflict with the purely defensive character of the Triple Alliance, and in such circumstances Italy would remain neutral."¹⁴¹

The point was arguable. The view of the Central Powers was that Russia, having no right to intervene in a quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, was attacking them without provocation; secondly, that as Austria-Hungary had good cause for complaint against Serbia (Sazonoff, the Russian Foreign Minister, himself so admitted¹⁴²), the attack by Russia was necessarily "without direct provocation"; and, thirdly, that if Austro-Hungarian attack upon Serbia was a provocation to Russia, it was not "direct" but circuitous provocation. To the first of these points, Italy could answer that for Russian intervention under the circumstances, the precedents were conclusive. To the second, she could reply that while Serbia had been wrong she had (in the opinion even of Germany) made sufficient submission. The third point presented more difficulty — argumentatively.

Italy did as do all other nations: She consulted her own interests and acted accordingly. In her defence, however, may fairly be urged that Austro-Hungarian methods had made war-co-operation impracticable; that she had not been treated as an ally; that she had not been informed (as was Germany) of Austria-Hungary's belligerent intentions; that she had not been approached (as was Germany) with reference to co-operation; that, purposely, she had been kept in the dark and presented with a *fait accompli*; that she was, from a military point of view,¹⁴³ unprepared; that her troops in Libya would be left without

¹⁴⁰ *Ante*, p. 225.

¹⁴¹ Brit. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 152. And see Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 124; Aus. Red Bk., O. F., II, No. 63; III, Nos. 53, 79; Kautsky Docs., Nos. 419, 534.

¹⁴² *Post*, cap. XXVII.

¹⁴³ On 1 August, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Rome reported that, among the members of the government, "the balance is for the present strongly in favor of neutrality. For this tendency, which has only manifested itself within

support,¹⁴⁴ and her newly acquired territories taken from her; that popular opinion being Austrophobe, no government dared propose an anti-Serbian war;¹⁴⁵ and that, whatever the treaty might require, for the King and government *ultra posse nemo obligatur*.¹⁴⁶ When the Italian King telegraphed to the Emperor-King (2 August) that Italy "will maintain an attitude of amicable neutrality,"¹⁴⁷ Austria-Hungary had to be content:

"*de faire bonne mine au mauvais jeu*, and to avoid anything by which Italy might be induced to veer round into the adversary's camp. Starting from this point of view, we must strive to let Italy believe that in consideration of the other important reasons which are decisive for its neutrality, we are satisfied. Should Italy further insist on the compensation question, we would point out that we have not as yet occupied any territory in a Balkan State, and evade the conversation in a friendly manner."¹⁴⁸

On 3 August, Italy formally declared her neutrality.¹⁴⁹ Between that day and the 9th of the following December (after Sonnino's assumption of office), negotiations with Austria-Hungary with reference to compensation were, very largely, superseded by efforts to obtain international assent to the Italian occupation of Saseno, an Albanian island.¹⁵⁰

III. SECOND PART OF THE NEUTRALITY PERIOD

The Auction. When the war broke out, Salandra was Premier of Italy and San Giuliano was Foreign Minister; and their policy of neutrality and silence remained unmodified until after the death of the latter on 15 October 1914. On reconstruction of the ministry (after a temporary defeat), Baron Sonnino became Minister of Foreign Affairs (2 November 1914), and, with his advent, the Italian policy underwent complete change.¹⁵¹ First, he asked of Austria-Hungary what

the last few days, the circumstance has been decisive — this is my firm conviction — that England, contrary to opinion here (and in Berlin) will not remain neutral, but will intervene. To expose its extensive and insufficiently protected coasts to the bombardment of English ships, and to let the Italian fleet, which together with ours is inferior to the English and French Mediterranean fleets, take up the struggle, appears here as a terrible outlook": Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, No. 90.

¹⁴⁴ Kautsky Docs., No. 614.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Nos. 46, 261, 745, 771, 840, 850.

¹⁴⁶ There is no obligation beyond the possible.

¹⁴⁷ Kautsky Docs., No. 700; Aus. Red Bk., O. F. III, No. 100.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 117; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 37.

¹⁴⁹ Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, Nos. 113, 134.

¹⁵⁰ Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 35-73.

¹⁵¹ Sonnino "became an ever-increasingly dominant force in the Italian government" (Thomas Nelson Page, *Italy and the World War*, p. 167). He had accepted office on the understanding that he would open negotiations with Austria-Hungary: Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 90.

territory she would transfer upon condition of Italy's continued neutrality. And, experiencing difficulty in obtaining fulfilment of Italy's "national aspirations" in that way, he turned to the Entente Allies, asking, What territory, of various ownerships, would they assure to Italy in exchange for war-assistance? Published documents enable us to follow closely the bargaining with Austria-Hungary. Particulars of the negotiations with the *entente* Powers have not been so completely disclosed.

Sonnino's Commencement. For some unrevealed reason, Sonnino allowed five weeks to elapse before making his first demand upon Austria-Hungary. On 9 December, he instructed the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Vienna to commence "an exchange of views" by asserting as follows:

1. Austria-Hungary, before invading Serbian territory, ought to have come to agreement with Italy as to the compensation to be conceded to Italy.

2. The mere invasion of Serbia, even if only temporary, was sufficient to disturb the Balkan equilibrium and give a right to compensation. These claims were based upon Article VII (above quoted ¹⁵²) of the treaty between the nations.

3. Italy was deeply interested in the territorial integrity and the political and economic independence of Serbia. And although Austria-Hungary had, on various occasions, declared that she "did not intend" territorial conquest at the expense of Serbia, a declaration in that form was not satisfactory.

4. Public opinion was insisting upon the realization of Italy's "national aspirations."¹⁵³

The War Situation. The Balkan situation at this time and shortly afterwards must be understood. Austro-Hungarian forces had crossed the Drina into Serbia on 13 August 1914. After some fighting, the army retired in disorder toward the frontier. On the 25th the invasion terminated. In a second attempt, the Austro-Hungarian forces again crossed the Drina on 7 September. On the 15th the troops were back again in Austro-Hungarian territory. The third invasion commenced on 8 November — six days after Sonnino's accession to office. On the 2d December the Austro-Hungarians occupied Belgrade. On the 5th they were badly beaten in the Ridges and took to flight. On the 8th (the day before Sonnino launched his instructions), they were again defeated. On the 15th they evacuated Belgrade and took refuge in their own territory. They had been in possession of the Serbian capital thirteen days. Not until 7th October of the following year, long after Italy had entered the war (23 May), were Austro-Hungarian troops again in Serbia. The Italian demands for compensation, there-

¹⁵² *Ante*, p. 226.

¹⁵³ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 1. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 74.

fore, were pressed after Austria-Hungary had been twice extruded from Serbian territory, and while (with the exception of the first six days) Austria-Hungary was not in occupation of a foot of Serbian soil. In estimating the correctness of Italy's action, that fact must be kept prominently in mind.

The Negotiations. Replying to the Italian demands, Berchtold said (12 December 1914) that he could not understand how compensations for military occupations, which might be abandoned from day to day (They were abandoned three days afterwards), could be arranged. He would be ready to discuss the subject as soon as any Serbian territory had been occupied, even temporarily.¹⁵⁴ Up to the present there had been only "momentary" occupation.¹⁵⁵ Pressed¹⁵⁶ by the German Chancellor (who was quite willing to purchase Italian neutrality by the cession of Austro-Hungarian territory), Berchtold receded from this uncompromising attitude, and proceeded to an exchange of views with Italy. Italy thereupon (20 December) intimated that maintenance of neutrality would be difficult without "the fulfillment of certain national aspirations,"¹⁵⁷ and thereafter the negotiations proceeded upon the basis, not of what were the compensations to which Italy was entitled because of Austro-Hungarian invasion of Serbia, but of what was the price of Italy's neutrality. The word "compensations" still persisted, but what Austria-Hungary was required to give ceased to have relation to any "advantage" which she had obtained, or might obtain, at the expense of Serbia.¹⁵⁸

With the withdrawal, on the 15th December, of the Austro-Hungarian troops from Serbia, the "momentary occupation" ceased; but Sonnino, although embarrassed by the fact, persisted with his demands. Relating, in a letter to the Italian Ambassador at Vienna, a conversation with the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Rome, he said (7 January 1915):

"The withdrawal of the Imperial troops from Serbia seems perhaps to render such a discussion less timely, depriving its character of urgency if not of actuality, nor could I wish by over-insistence to convey the impression that I was seeking a quarrel with Austria-Hungary."¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, Sonnino added, the reasons for the demand of "compensations" remained as before, for they were based logically upon the fact that the intentions of Austria-Hungary were:

"absolutely opposed to the clearest and most obvious political interests of Italy in the Balkan Peninsula";

¹⁵⁴ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 3. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 75, 76, 78.

¹⁵⁵ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, Nos. 3, 4. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 78.

¹⁵⁶ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, Nos. 5, 8. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 77.

¹⁵⁷ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, Nos. 8, 9.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 14.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 10. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 79, 90, 95.

and the political reason was to be found, he said, in the necessity for the elimination of "the continual friction and misunderstandings," and the creation of "relations of sympathy and cordiality," between the two countries. For these reasons, it was necessary:

"to have at once the courage and the tranquillity to face serenely the delicate question of the possible cession of territories at present forming part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire."

Was the Imperial and Royal Government disposed, Sonnino asked the Ambassador,

"to discuss the question, even if carried on to these grounds? Being neutral it was not possible for us at present to discuss the matter on a basis of eventual compensation involving territory possessed at present by other belligerents, because that would be equivalent to our taking part as from to-day in the contest."

The Ambassador suggested Albania as a source of "compensations," but Sonnino declined, saying that Italy's interest in that regard was merely that no other Power should establish itself there.¹⁶⁰ To the contention that the extent of the "compensations" should depend upon the result of the war, Sonnino replied:

"that if we were to control Italian public opinion, inclining it favorably towards our agreement, we must be able from the outset to show a minimum of advantages that were tangible and assured, and not merely dependent upon uncertain and remote eventualities."¹⁶¹

Von Bülow. For the purpose of endeavoring to arrange terms with Sonnino, Germany employed at Rome one of her ablest men — Prince Bülow, a former Chancellor of the Empire. Commencing on 20 December 1914¹⁶² he did his best. That he failed was due to the change in the basis of negotiation from measurable compensations to indefinite "national aspirations," and to the demand for the cession of Austro-Hungarian territory immediately, instead of at the close of the war. In interviews with Sonnino on 11 and 14 January, assuming that Austria-Hungary could be persuaded to cede the Trentino, he urged (1) the difficulty of transferring, during hostilities, territory in which were the homes of some of the soldiers on active service; and (2) the necessity, for reasons of national *moral*, that, until the end of the war, the transfer should be kept secret. Sonnino conceded the difficulty, but not only insisted upon immediate and open transfer, but added that he:

"did not believe that popular Italian sentiment would content itself

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 90. Italy had already taken possession of Valona (*ibid.*, Nos. 80-87, 89), a fact which Berchtold thought might explain Italy's "deprecatory utterance with respect to Albania" (*ibid.*, No. 91. Cf. No. 96).

¹⁶¹ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 10. Cf. *ibid.*, No. 12; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 90. Through the Italian Ambassador at Vienna, Sonnino conveyed to Berchtold similar intimations and inquiries. The reply may be seen in *ibid.*, Nos. 95, 98.

¹⁶² Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 8.

with the Trentino alone; that a permanent condition of harmony between Austria and Italy would not be attained until it were possible entirely to eliminate the irredentist formula of 'Trent and Trieste.'"¹⁶⁵ Bülow replied that Austria-Hungary would rather fight than give up Trieste.

Austria-Hungary's Counter-claim. A few days afterwards (18 January 1915), Baron Burian (now the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister), in an interview with the Duke d'Avarna (Italian Ambassador at Vienna), remarked that Italy had during her recent war with Turkey occupied the Turkish islands of the Dodecanese; that she still occupied them; that, during the war now in progress, she had taken possession of Valona in Albania; and he urged that in these respects he also, had a claim to "compensations." The Ambassador replied that the situation of the islands was well known,¹⁶⁶ and that Valona was occupied merely for the purpose of maintaining order, and would be dealt with by Europe at the end of the war¹⁶⁷ — not a very pertinent reply by a nation which was claiming "compensations" because Austria-Hungary, after occupying other parts of the Balkans, had already evacuated them. The Ambassador added that the majority in Italy:

"desired neutrality and was determined to support the government, but this upon the presumption that the national aspirations would obtain some satisfaction."¹⁶⁸

A New Stage. An interview between Sonnino and Bülow on 26 January marked a new stage in the negotiations, Bülow requiring that the extent of Italy's demands should be defined, and Sonnino replying: "that as long as the Government of Vienna declines to agree, explicitly and clearly, that the discussion be carried into the region of the cession of territories at present belonging to the Empire, it is not to be exacted that we should detail the quantity and quality of our demands."¹⁶⁷ The point being put by the Italian Ambassador at Vienna to Burian, the latter replied (28 January):

"that he admitted the principle of compensation due to us by virtue of Article VII of the Treaty of the Triple Alliance. He also accepted in principle our demand for compensation, and he was disposed to examine and discuss it, but he had not yet reached the point of being able to declare that he admitted our point of view to the effect that the question of compensation should be carried into the region of the cession of territories at present belonging to the Monarchy."¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 11.

¹⁶⁴ In a later interview (9 February), the Ambassador explained that if Italy was in possession of the islands, the reason was that Turkey had not performed her engagements under her treaty: *ibid.*, No. 20. And see Nos. 22, 23.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 12. And see Nos. 20, 21, 22; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 80-7, 89, 94, 95, 100, 101, 104, 106, 109, 113, 126.

¹⁶⁶ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 12.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 15. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 103, 104.

¹⁶⁸ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 16. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 98, 99.

Burian added that he required time for consultation with the governments of Austria and Hungary, and for careful consideration.

Another Stage. Another interview between Sonnino and Bülow (2 February) marked a still further stage in the negotiations — another advance in the Italian demands. Referring to the extent of his requirements, Sonnino said that, until Austria-Hungary had accepted his basis for discussion:

“I shall define nothing and exclude nothing, whether concerning the Trentino, Trieste, Istria, or any other territory.”¹⁶⁹

Italy's Veto on Military Action. Alleging that more than two months had elapsed since he first opened the question of compensations under Article VII, and that he had met with evasions Sonnino, on 12 February, withdrew all propositions and announced that Italy:

“considers directly opposed to the article itself, any military action entered into from to-day by Austria-Hungary in the Balkans, whether against Serbia, Montenegro, or another, unless there should be a previous agreement as that article demands.”

Sonnino, in so instructing the Italian Ambassador at Vienna, added:

“It is not necessary for me to observe that should the Austro-Hungarian Government display in the event a disregard of this declaration and of the provisions of Article VII, such a course might lead to grave consequences, the responsibility for which is forthwith disclaimed by the Royal Italian Government.”¹⁷⁰

Sonnino afterwards explained to the Ambassador (17 February) that this announcement:

“amounts precisely to a veto, opposed by us to any military action of Austria-Hungary in the Balkans until the agreement demanded by Article VII concerning compensation should have been reached.”¹⁷¹

When Bülow attempted to renew the discussion, Sonnino said, as he himself related (18 February) that:

“I did not now wish to enter into discussions regarding the extent of the concessions that might suffice to ensure our neutrality by satisfying in some measure our national aspirations; that on this score there might be greater or less doubt or difference of opinion; but that, outside of this basis of concessions, no negotiations were possible. It was not a question of the lust of conquest, or of megalomaniac ambitions: but of the appreciation of the popular mind and the national sentiment.”¹⁷²

Conversations, nevertheless, continued at Vienna. Burian declared to the Italian Ambassador there (as he reported, 22 February) that he could not agree that the treaty gave Italy a right to interpose a veto

¹⁶⁹ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 17.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 22. And see Nos. 23, 26, 27. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 106.

¹⁷¹ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 24.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, No. 25. And see No. 26.

upon military actions against Serbia, nor could he agree to the Italian view as to:

“the basis of the compensation to which we are entitled. On this last point, it is idle to entertain illusions. The Imperial and Royal Government will never, under present conditions, consent to the cession of territories belonging to the Monarchy.”¹⁷³

Intervention of Berlin. In Berlin, the Italian Ambassador was assured (21, 26 February) not only of German concurrence in the view that compensations must be agreed upon prior to the commencement of further military operations, but that Burian was really of the same opinion.¹⁷⁴ Burian, nevertheless, continued to argue (26 February) that while negotiations as to compensations might very well commence at any useful time, the details could be arrived at only as advantages resulted from the military operations. He urged that Austria-Hungary and Serbia being at war, advisable military operations could not be delayed until agreement was reached with Italy, and added:

“that he could not at present bind himself regarding the basis of the compensation, such a question possessing at that moment no character of actuality.”¹⁷⁵

In reply, Sonnino said (27 February) that the existence of a state of war was immaterial, for that was due to the action of Austria-Hungary in the face of contrary counsels by Italy. And that:

“the inception of fresh military operations in the Balkans would constitute in our eyes a sufficient reason for claiming a minimum of territorial compensation, independently of the results to be obtained.”¹⁷⁶

Until, he added, Austria-Hungary agreed to the cession of Austro-Hungarian territory, further discussion was useless. Burian was of the same opinion, and skilfully insisted that the question of compensations was of no present importance for while Italy claimed the right to a settlement prior to renewal of attack on Serbia, Austria-Hungary, on the other hand:

“was not yet in a position to undertake a military action against Serbia . . . as soon as the time should have come to initiate the said action . . . he would not fail to keep our declaration before him; and seeing that the diplomatic measures would keep pace with the military action, no operation would be undertaken before the agreement should be initiated.”¹⁷⁷

Italy's Demands. Sonnino now (4 March) formulated his demands in six propositions¹⁷⁸:

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, No. 27. The reply is in No. 28. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No.

109.

¹⁷⁴ Ital. Green Bk., 1915., Nos. 29, 31.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 32. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 111, 113.

¹⁷⁶ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 33.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 34. And see Nos. 27, 32.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 35.

1. No military operations in the Balkans must be commenced until after an agreement with Italy had been concluded.

2. Infraction of this requirement:

“would be considered by us as an open violation of the treaty, in view of which Italy resumes her full liberty of action so as to protect her proper rights and interests.”

3. Compensations must be found in the territory of Austria-Hungary.

4. Italy is entitled to compensations on the mere ground of the commencement of Austria-Hungary's military operations, quite independently of their result, without excluding other compensations proportionate to the advantages which Austria-Hungary might acquire.

5. Agreement as to compensations for the initiation of the operations must not only be announced publicly, but be carried into effect immediately.

6. Discussion as to compensations for Italian occupation of the islands and Valona will not be admitted.

Italy and the Entente. Although attempts by the United Kingdom and France to gain the adherence of Italy met with little success during the first part of the Italian neutrality period, it may be assumed that Sonnino's demands upon Austria-Hungary (commenced 9 December 1914) had their counterpart in conversations with London and Paris, of progressive seriousness. As early as 6 January (1915) Sonnino, in an interview with the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, referred to the — “vigorous efforts which the Entente was making to bring Italy over to her side by all sorts of promises”¹⁷⁹ — efforts which included a resolution by the British War Council (13 January):

“That the Admiralty should consider promptly the possibility of effective action in the Adriatic at Cattaro or elsewhere — with a view (*inter alia*) of bringing pressure on Italy.”¹⁸⁰

During the earlier part of March the London conversations developed into something of a conference, the only published record of which is a memorandum found in the archives of the Russian Foreign Office. *The Manchester Guardian*, on 7 February 1918, printed the following translation of the document:

“The question of wresting Italy from the Triple Alliance of that time, and of prevailing upon her to join the Allies arose at the very beginning of the war. The attempt was unsuccessful.

“Prince Bülow's mission to Rome only led to the change in Italian policy being delayed for half a year. The German representative strove to buy Italy's neutrality with the price of concessions at Austria's expense. The monarchy of the Danube was unwilling to follow this course.

¹⁷⁹ Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 90. And see Nos. 119, 133, 137, 160, 162.

¹⁸⁰ Churchill: *The World Crisis*, II, p. 104.

“In view of the fruitlessness of this bargaining, in the latter half of February 1915, the possibility of Italy joining the Allies arose once more.

“At that time, the Russian Government did not see any imperative necessity for Italy’s intervention in the affairs of the Allies. The Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed the apprehension that the appearance of a fourth European British (*sic.*) member in the coalition might complicate the relations between the Allies. While he did not oppose the plan for drawing Italy into the Alliance, S. D. Sazonoff considered that in any case the initiative in this matter should proceed from her herself.

“Negotiations were formally begun in London at the end of February (O. S.) on the initiative of the Italian Ambassador, Marchese Imperiali. They were conducted by Sir E. Grey and the Ambassadors M. Cambon of France, Count Benckendorff of Russia, and the above-mentioned Italian.

“They became involved, however, on the one hand, by Prince Bülow’s continued efforts to incline the Cabinet of Vienna to make the concessions to Italy, and, on the other hand, by the contradictoriness of the interests being defended by the representatives of the Great Powers in London.

“France and Russia considered Italy’s demands to be exorbitant, the former with regard especially to the question of the south-eastern shores of the Adriatic, and the latter with regard to the north-east of this sea. Six weeks were spent deciding the details of the future territorial disposition of Albania and Dalmatia. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs persistently defended the interests of the Southern Slavs, and maintained that an outlet to the sea should be permanently assured to Serbia, step by step repelling Italy’s desires for the extensions of her sea-shores and for the neutralisation of the regions intended for Serbia. In the meanwhile the events at the different theatres of war caused the military leaders to consider the urgency for Italy’s immediate intervention on the side of the Allies. In the beginning of April (O. S.) the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while not particularly intent on conforming with the desire of the Allies to sign a convention with Italy, began to set forth new demands, namely, the urgency for persuading that kingdom to the earliest possible active intervention.¹⁸¹ Besides that, the Russians demanded (1) the settling of the time for the publication of the convention, and (2) of the avowal of the inviolability of the

¹⁸¹ M. Paléologue, French Ambassador at Petrograd, states that on 16 March 1915, he had an interview with the Grand Duke, the General in Chief of the Army, who said “that the co-operation of Italy and Roumania is an imperious necessity. . . . I remain convinced that, God helping us, we shall have the victory. But without the *immediate* co-operation of Italy and Roumania, the war will perhaps be prolonged during long months more with terrible risks”: *La Russie des Tsars pendant la Grande Guerre*, p. 323.

agreements previously concluded between the three Great Powers of the coalition.

"On April 13 (26), the convention was signed in London by Grey, Cambon, Count Benckendorff, and Marchese Imperiali. In the days immediately preceding this event, we succeeded in obtaining a few more concessions from Italy on behalf of Serbia and Montenegro."¹⁸²

Italian Basis accepted by Austria-Hungary. It was probably the opening of the London negotiations and consequent pressure from Berlin¹⁸³ that induced Burian to assume a more accommodating attitude and to authorize (9 March) von Bülow to communicate to Sonnino the following:

"Baron Burian has begged us [Germany] to declare to the Italian Government that Austria-Hungary is ready to enter into negotiations with Italy, in accordance with the proposal of Baron Sonnino and on the basis of the cession of Austrian territory. The declaration to be made to the Italian Parliament would be edited in concert with Vienna. Baron Burian will do all possible to the end that the formula may be edited by mutual concurrence as quickly as possible."¹⁸⁴

Sonnino's Conditions. In agreeing to enter into negotiations upon this basis, Sonnino stipulated (10 March) for "absolute secrecy" meanwhile, and occupation of the ceded territories immediately after agreement arrived at.¹⁸⁵ To the latter stipulation, Burian (16 March) raised his former objection,¹⁸⁶ saying that in that respect he had the concurrence of Germany.¹⁸⁷ Von Bülow intervened (17 March), and to the contention that Italy could not rely upon a mere promise to make transferee at the end of the war, offered the guarantee of Germany and the Kaiser for faithful fulfilment.¹⁸⁸ Sonnino replied that if, as Burian alleged,¹⁸⁹ cession must be sanctioned by the parliament of Austria-Hungary, no one could expect or enforce action of that kind at the termination of the war.¹⁹⁰ At the close of the conversation, von Bülow, in the presence of Sonnino, noted the result as follows:

"Baron Sonnino points out to me that the advantages at once accruing to Austria-Hungary from the agreement consist in the guarantee that she would thus obtain of Italy's neutrality throughout the war. Baron Burian, on the other hand, appears to subordinate all actual cession of territory to the condition that Austria should in effect realise territorial acquisitions and other advantages at the end of the war.

¹⁸² May be seen in Cocks: *The Secret Treaties*, pp. 79-80.

¹⁸³ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 39.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 39. And see Nos. 40, 41. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 115.

¹⁸⁵ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, Nos. 42, 44. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 117.

¹⁸⁶ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 43.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 45.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Nos. 46, 48, 49.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 46.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Nos. 46, 50. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 121, 127, 128.

“Baron Burian’s point of view renders impossible an agreement acceptable to Baron Sonnino, that is to say, an agreement having the nature of a *forfait*: the cession of territory at present Austrian, on the one side, against a guarantee of neutrality for the duration of the war on the other, whatever may be the issue of that war.”¹⁹¹

Not being able to agree upon the period for putting into operation any arrangement which might be arrived at, von Bülow proposed that that point be left for discussion after agreement upon others had been reached,¹⁹² and to this Sonnino assented.

Burian’s Offer. Another stage in the negotiations commenced with submission by Burian (27 March) of proposed terms of agreement, of which the more important were: (1) the benevolent neutrality of Italy; (2) liberty of action for Austria-Hungary with reference to the Balkans; (3) freedom from future demands for compensation; and (4) cession by Austria-Hungary of territories in the southern Tyrol, including the city of Trent.¹⁹³ Sonnino replied (31 March) that (1) the proposals were too vague; (2) they were “absolutely inadequate”; and (3) Italy could not give Austria-Hungary a free hand in the Balkans, unless she would disinterest herself in Albania.¹⁹⁴ Burian rejoined (2 April) by saying that Austria-Hungary could not disinterest herself in Albania, and by delimiting the area of his proposed Trentino cession.¹⁹⁵ Four days afterwards, he asked that Italy formulate her wishes.¹⁹⁶

Italy’s Demands. Sonnino complied; and, the negotiations with the *entente* Powers having nearly reached successful termination, his demands (8 April) were far from moderate:

(1) The Trentino.

(2) Extension of boundaries to the east, including the cities of Gradisca and Gorizza.

(3) The city of Trieste, with territory both north and south of it, to be:

“constituted an autonomous and independent state in all that regards its internal, military, legislative, financial, and administrative policies; and Austria-Hungary shall renounce all sovereignty over it. It is to remain a free port.”

(4) A number of islands in the Adriatic.

(5) Italy to occupy at once the territories conceded to her.

(6) Sovereignty of:

¹⁹¹ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 48. And see No. 49. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 117, 118, 122.

¹⁹² Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 46; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 121. Burian did not approve the proposal: *Ibid.*, No. 125.

¹⁹³ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 56. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 131.

¹⁹⁴ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 58. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 132.

¹⁹⁵ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 60. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 134.

¹⁹⁶ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 62. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 138.

“Valona and its bay, comprising Saseno, with as much territory in the hinterland as may be required for their defence.”

(7) Renouncement by Austria-Hungary of every right in Albania.¹⁹⁷

(8) Amnesty for political prisoners in ceded territory.

(9) Financial adjustment.

(10) Italy to preserve perfect neutrality during the war.

(11) Italy to renounce any right to further advantage under Clause VII.¹⁹⁸

Sonnino accompanied these demands with a letter expressive of his “trust that the Imperial Government will grant us, with the least possible delay, an answer which I hope may be acceptable.”

Further Negotiations. On the 16th April, Burian handed to the Italian Ambassador a long reply in which, after saying that:

“To its sincere regret, the Austro-Hungarian Government has found a great part of these proposals, and especially those embodied in Articles 2, 3, and 4, unacceptable for political, ethnographical, strategic, and economic reasons, which it would be of no avail to enlarge upon,”

he proceeded to the discussion of the other articles.¹⁹⁹ On the 21st, in his “Observations,” Sonnino regretted that the Austro-Hungarian reply did not:

“form an adequate basis for an agreement which is to create between the two States that enduring and normal situation which is mutually desired”;

discussed some of the points; and added:

“Where disagreement appears to be insurmountable is on the subject of Article V, regarding the date of the eventual fulfillment of the agreement that might be reached.”²⁰⁰

Five days afterwards (26 April), “the Pact of London” — Italy’s agreement with the Allies — was secretly²⁰¹ signed. The negotiations with Austria-Hungary, nevertheless, continued. On the 27th, Burian offered to send Count Goluchowski, as special envoy, to Rome.²⁰² On the 29th, he made reply to the “Observations”; discussed various points; but held out no hope upon the difficult point as to the time for transfer

¹⁹⁷ At the castle of Monza in 1897, the representatives of Italy and Austria-Hungary had agreed that the *status quo* in Albania should be maintained, and that any future modification should be “in the direction of autonomy.” The agreement was confirmed by the notes of 20 Dec. 1900 and 9 Feb. 1901: Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 197–201.

¹⁹⁸ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 64; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 141. Discussion of the proposal between von Bülow and Sonnino may be seen in *ibid.*, No. 143.

¹⁹⁹ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 71; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 144. Cf. *ibid.*, Nos. 146, 147, 149, 150.

²⁰⁰ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 72. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 153.

²⁰¹ Cf. *ibid.*, No. 168.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, No. 157. Sonnino rather deprecated the idea (*ibid.*, Nos. 159, 161, 163), and Goluchowski did not go (*ibid.*, No. 165).

of the territory to be ceded.²⁰³ Five days afterwards (4 May), the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, in a conversation of an hour and a half, discussed the various points with Sonnino. He made no progress, but closed his report with the following:

“Baron Sonnino announced his willingness to consider any new proposals you may proffer, if they are specific, and to submit them to the Cabinet, provided they would not be such as to give rise to protracted interpretation; he, on his part, had no further proposals to make.”²⁰⁴

Treaty denounced. On the same day, Italy declared: “as cancelled, and as henceforth without effect, her treaty of alliance with Austria-Hungary,” giving as her reason, not that she had made a splendid bargain with the enemies of her ally, but as follows:

“The alliance between Italy and Austria-Hungary proclaimed itself, from the first, to be an element and a guarantee of peace, aiming first of all as the principal object at common defence. In view of subsequent events and of the new situation arising out of them, the two countries found it necessary to propose a new object no less essential, and in course of the successive renewals of the treaty, they devoted themselves to safeguarding the continuity of their alliance, stipulating the principle of preliminary agreements regarding the Balkans, with a view to reconciling the divergent interests and propensities of the two Powers.

“It is very evident that these stipulations, loyally observed, would have sufficed as a solid basis for a common and fruitful action. But Austria-Hungary, in the summer of 1914, without coming to any agreement with Italy, without even giving her the least intimation, and without taking any notice of the counsels of moderation addressed to her by the Royal Italian Government, notified to Serbia the ultimatum of the 23rd July, which was the cause and the point of departure of the present European conflagration. Austria-Hungary, by disregarding the obligations imposed by the treaty, profoundly disturbed the Balkan *status quo*, and created a situation from which she alone should profit to the detriment of interests of the greatest importance which her ally had so often affirmed and proclaimed.

“So flagrant a violation of the letter and the spirit of the Treaty not only justified Italy’s refusal to place herself on the side of her allies in a war provoked without previous notice to her, but at the same time deprived the alliance of its essential character and of its *raison d’être*. Even the compact of friendly neutrality for which the Treaty provides was compromised by this violation. Reason and sentiment alike agree in preventing friendly neutrality from being maintained when one of the allies has recourse to arms for the purpose of realising a programme

²⁰³ Ital. Green Bk., 1913, No. 75; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 158.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 171.

diametrically opposed to the vital interests of the other ally interests the safeguarding of which constituted the principal reason of the alliance itself. Notwithstanding this, Italy exerted herself for several months to create a situation that should be favorable to the re-establishment between the two States of these friendly relations which constitute the essential foundation of all co-operation in the domain of general policy. With this aim and in this hope the Royal Italian Government announced its willingness to come to an arrangement having for its basis the satisfaction in an equitable degree of the legitimate national aspirations of Italy and serving at the same time to reduce the disparity existing in the reciprocal position of the two States in the Adriatic.

"These negotiations did not lead, however, to any appreciable result. All the efforts of the Royal Italian Government met with the resistance of the Imperial and Royal Government, which even now, after several months, has consented, only to admit the special interests of Italy in Valona, and to promise an insufficient concession of territory in the Trentino, a concession which in no way admits of the normal settlement of the situation, whether from the ethnological, the political, or the military point of view. This concession, moreover, was to be carried into effect only in an indeterminate epoch, namely, not until the end of the war. In this state of things the Italian Government must renounce the hope of coming to an agreement, and sees itself compelled to withdraw all its proposals for a settlement. It is equally useless to maintain for the alliance the formal appearance which could only serve to dissemble the reality of continual mistrust and daily opposition. For these reasons Italy, confident of her just rights, affirms and proclaims that she resumes from this moment her complete liberty of action, and declares as cancelled and as henceforth without effect her treaty of alliance with Austria-Hungary."²⁰⁵

Further Negotiations. The next day (5 May), Burian authorized the Ambassador to make further concessions. When submitted (6th), Sonnino's reply was that they would be referred to the council of ministers.²⁰⁶ Increasing apprehension of the completion of an agreement between Italy and the *entente* Powers induced Burian to authorize his ambassador (10 May) to indicate to Sonnino:

"the acceptance in principle of Italy's former propositions as a basis for negotiations, with the suggestion that still further concessions might be made on one point or another."²⁰⁷

Upon the question of the time for the transfer of the territory to be ceded, Burian was willing (18 May) to agree that:

"The transfer of the ceded territories will take place as soon as the

²⁰⁵ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 76; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 170. The Austro-Hungarian reply to the Italian declaration is in *ibid.*, No. 200.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 174.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 177. And see Nos. 178, 179, 185, 188, 190, 192, 194, 195.

decisions taken by aforesaid commissions shall have been satisfied; it will be completed within one month." ²⁰⁸

Parliament. On the 20th, the Chamber of Deputies, amid manifestations of patriotic fervor, by a vote of 377 to 54, endowed the government with extraordinary powers in case of war. Cries of:

"'Long live Italian Trieste!', 'Long live the avengers of Lissa!', etc., were applauded, even from the Government benches." ²⁰⁹

In the Senate (21st), there was no minority; the debate:

"exceeded, in patriotic superlatives, yesterday's proceedings in the Chamber of Deputies." ²¹⁰

Burian's final Effort. Burian made a final effort (23d), by offering still further concession as to the time for carrying into effect the transfer of territory, only to be "met with the ever-recurring phrase: 'It is too late.'" ²¹¹

TREATY WITH THE ENTENTE ALLIES

By the Pact of London (26 April 1915), ²¹² Italy engaged to commence war against Austria-Hungary, and, in return, obtained the promise of dazzling additions to her territory — additions far in excess of the limits of *Italia irredenta*:

1. "By the future treaty of peace, Italy is to receive the district of Trentino; the entire southern Tyrol up to its present geographical frontier, which is the Brenner Pass; the city and district of Trieste; the counties of Gorizia and Gradisca; the entire Istria up to Quarner, including Valesco and the Istrian Islands of Cherso and Lussina. . . ." It will be remembered that all that Italy had demanded from Austria-Hungary with reference to Trieste was that it should be made an independent sovereignty. By the treaty, sovereignty was to be transferred to Italy. The northern section of the southern Tyrol is inhabited almost exclusively by Germans. ²¹³ The population of Gorizia and Gradisca, according to the last Austrian census (1910) was 249,893, of whom 90,119, or about thirty-six per cent. only, were Italians. Istria includes the great naval station of Pola, and although the western seaboard is largely Italian, the interior is almost entirely non-Italian. The total population of Istria is about 386,463, of whom 147,417 or about thirty-eight per cent. only, are Italians.

2. Italy was also to receive so much of Dalmatia as lay north of Cape Planka, although the Italian population formed but a very small percentage of the inhabitants.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 192.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 198.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 201. Giolitti's account of the development of the feeling in his *Mémoires de ma Vie* (pp. 332-341) is interesting.

²¹¹ Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 202, 203.

²¹² Cocks, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-41.

²¹³ Cf. C. L. Kennedy: *Old Diplomacy and New*, p. 234.

3. Italy was also to receive:

“all the islands situated to the north and west of the coasts of Dalmatia . . . down to Melada in the south”;

also:

“Valona, the island of Saseno, and as much territory as would be required to secure their military safety.”

4. Article 7 of the treaty provided that Italy:

“in the event of a small autonomous and neutralized State being formed in Albania,” was “not to oppose the possible desire of France, Great Britain, and Russia” to distribute among Montenegro, Serbia, and Greece “the northern and southern districts of Albania.”

5. Article 9 provided that the Allies:

“admit . . . Italy’s interest in the maintenance of political balance of power in the Mediterranean, and her rights, in case of a partition of Turkey, to a share, equal to theirs, in the basin of the Mediterranean — viz., in that part of it which adjoins the province of Adalia. . . . The zone which is to be made Italy’s property is to be more precisely defined in due course in conformity with the vital interests of France and Great Britain. Italy’s interests will likewise be taken into consideration in case the Powers should also maintain the territorial integrity of Asiatic Turkey for some future period of time, and if they should only proceed to establish among themselves spheres of influence.”

6. Article 13 provided that:

“should France and Great Britain extend their colonial possessions in Africa at the expense of Germany, they will admit in principle Italy’s right to demand certain compensation by way of an extension of her possessions in Eritrea, Somaliland, and Libya and the Colonial areas adjoining French and British colonies.”²¹⁴

7. Italy was to receive the Dodocanese Islands in the Ægean, inhabited almost exclusively by Greeks.

Of this treaty, Mr. Winston Churchill has said:

“Locked in the deadly struggle, with the danger of the Russian collapse staring them in the face, and with their own very existence at stake, neither Britain nor France was inclined to be particular about the price they would pay or promise to pay for the accession to the alliance of a new first-class power. The Italian negotiators, deeply conscious of our anxiety, were determined to make the most advantageous bargain they could for their country. The territorial gains which Italy was to receive on her frontiers, in the Adriatic, and from the Turkish Empire were tremendous.”²¹⁵

The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy has the following:

²¹⁴ Expansion in Eritrea and Somaliland could be acquired at the expense of the Soudan, British or French Somaliland, British East Africa, or Abyssinia (a neutral state). Expansion in Libya could be acquired at the expense of Egypt, Tunis, or the French Sahara.

²¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, II, p. 343. And see pp. 344, 352, 362, 372.

“The only excuse for a treaty which handed over the German population of southern Tyrol and the Slavonic population of northern Dalmatia was the familiar plea of necessity. ‘The French and ourselves were fighting for our lives on the western front,’ bluntly testifies Mr. Asquith, ‘and the treaty represented the terms on which Italy was prepared to join forces.’ Though it increased the material strength of the Grand Alliance, it diminished its moral authority; and Servia learned within a week of the Pact which had disposed of Jugo-Slav territory behind her back.”²¹⁶

DECLARATION OF WAR

On the 23d May, Italy declared war:

“In compliance with the orders of his noble Sovereign the King, the undersigned, Royal Italian Ambassador, has the honor to communicate the following to his Excellency, the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs:

“On the 4th of this month the Austro-Hungarian Government was informed of the grave reasons for which Italy, confident of being in the right, declared that her alliance with Austria-Hungary was null and void, and without effect in the future, since this alliance had been violated by the Austro-Hungarian Government, and that Italy resumed her full freedom of action. Fully determined to protect Italian rights and interests with all the means at its disposal, the Italian Government cannot evade its duty to take such measures as events may impose upon it against all present and future menaces as to the fulfilment of Italy’s national aspirations. His Majesty the King declares that from to-morrow he will consider himself in a state of war with Austria-Hungary.

“The undersigned has the honor at the same time to inform his Excellency, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, that to-day the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Rome will receive his passports, and he would be grateful if his Excellency would hand him likewise his own passports.”²¹⁷ Observe the “national aspirations.” Sonnino’s explanatory circular to the Powers (23 May) contains no better reason for war than is to be found in the declaration.²¹⁸

Austria-Hungary protests. In an address to his troops, the Austro-Hungarian sovereign said:

“The King of Italy has declared war on me. Perfidy, whose like history does not know, was committed by the Kingdom of Italy against both allies. After an alliance of more than thirty years duration, during

²¹⁶ III, p. 511.

²¹⁷ Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 204. The incidents leading up to the declaration of war — the government’s fear of defeat in parliament; its unaccepted resignation; the King’s hesitation; d’Annunzio’s patriotic histrionics; the street manifestations; the urgings of the press; and the proceedings in parliament — are referred to in *ibid.*, Nos. 140, 167, 180, 182, 184, 186, 187, 189, 191, 196, 197, 198, 201, and in Sir Sidney Low, *Italy in the War*, pp. 296–305.

²¹⁸ Ital. Green Bk., 1915, App.

which it was able to increase its territorial possessions and develop itself to an unthought of flourishing condition, Italy abandoned us in our hour of danger and went over with flying colors into the camp of our enemies.

"We did not menace Italy; did not curtail her authority; did not attack her honor or interests. We always responded loyally to the duties of our alliance and afforded her our protection when she took the field. We have done more. When Italy directed covetous glances across our frontier we, in order to maintain peace and our alliance relation, resolved on great and painful sacrifices which particularly grieved our paternal heart. But the covetousness of Italy, which believed the moment should be used, was not to be appeased, so fate must be accommodated."

Somewhat in the same line as the language of the Emperor-King was that of the German Chancellor, von Bethmann-Hollweg, who, speaking in the Reichstag, said:

"Italy has now inscribed in the book of the world's history in letters of blood which will never fade, her violation of good faith. Nobody threatened Italy — neither Austria-Hungary nor Germany. Whether the Triple Entente was content with blandishments alone, history will show later.

"Without a drop of blood flowing, or the life of a single Italian being endangered, Italy could have obtained the long list of concessions which I recently read to the House — territory in Tyrol and on the Isonso, as far as Italian speech is heard; satisfaction of her national aspirations in Trieste, a free hand in Albania, and the valuable port of Avlona."²¹⁹

Italy's Choice. Italy's choice had been between two sets of promises, and the value of each of them was contingent upon successful termination of the war. Selection of one or the other, therefore, was dependent upon forecast of the future. And Italy's final action was undoubtedly greatly influenced by the notable Russian successes in Galicia and the Carpathians between 1 January and 17 April 1915, including (22 March) the important capture of Przemyśl.²²⁰ The treaty with the Entente was arranged during this period. It was signed on 26 April. Two days afterwards, the great Austro-German counter-offensive commenced.²²¹ Przemyśl was recaptured on 3d June and Lemberg on 22d June. Had this movement developed earlier, Italy's treaty might have been made with Austria-Hungary.

"A few weeks' more delay," Mr. Churchill said, "in the entry of Italy into the war, and the continuance of the great Russian defeats in Galicia would have rendered that entry improbable in the extreme."²²² Such is the operation of *sacro egoismo!*

²¹⁹ *N. Y. Times*, 29 May 1915. Cf. *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, pp. [218-9.

²²⁰ *Aus. Red Bk.* (Second), Nos. 135, 137, 142, 143.

²²¹ Cf. Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

²²² *Op. cit.*, II, p. 167.

COMMENT ON THE FOREGOING

It is impossible to uphold the contentions of Italy with reference to her claims for compensations, and, even if her arguments were valid, they could afford no justification for her declaration of war. For if it be conceded (a very large concession) that the short military occupations of parts of Serbia by Austria-Hungary, above referred to, were occupations within the meaning of Article VII of the treaty, and that they ought to have been preceded by "a previous arrangement between the two Powers," there still remain the following points:

1. After Austria-Hungary had commenced her attack upon Serbia, and after Italy, therefore, was perfectly well aware that invasion was intended, she declared that she "would remain neutral." She did not then claim that the inception of the war without "previous agreement" entitled her to compensation out of Austro-Hungarian territory. For twelve days in August, for eight days in September, and for thirty-seven days in November and December, Austrian troops were upon Serbian soil; and it was not until 9 December (six days prior to the third evacuation) that, under a new Foreign Minister the first demand appeared, that the bargaining commenced, and that reasons for extravagant pretensions were sought.

2. The third occupation of thirty-seven days terminated on 15 December. There was none between that day and 23 May 1915 — the date of Italy's declaration of war. Austria-Hungary had obtained no advantage from any alleged "occupation," and there existed, therefore, no datum from which "compensation" could have been calculated.

3. The Italian demands (as above scheduled) were preposterously in excess of any compensations to which Italy, could, by the wildest stretch of imagination, have deemed herself to be entitled. Indeed, the concessions offered by Austria-Hungary far exceeded all legitimate claims.

4. In any case, nothing which Austria-Hungary had done, or had refused to do, formed a reason for war.

5. The declaration of war contained no suggestion of such a reason. "Duty to take, against every existing and future menace, measures which events impose for the fulfillment of national aspirations," was the excuse offered. In other words, Italy said: "We intend to take advantage of our 33-year-old ally being heavily engaged in war, in order to take from her territory which we regard as within our 'national aspirations.'"

To this may be added that even those Italians who deprecated engagement in war with Austria-Hungary, and desired continuation of neutrality, agreed that advantage ought to be taken of Austro-Hungarian war-embarrassments in order to obtain the desired fulfillment. Giovanni Giolitti, who had been prime minister from 12 July 1907 to 30 June

1913, who, even when out of office, was probably the most influential of the statesmen, and who continued to urge neutrality even when the war-crowds mobbed him, has, in his recent book, indicated his attitude in such sentences as the following:

“I had full confidence that the government, in declining to involve the country in the risks of war, would recognize the opportunity to obtain from Austria the best concessions. . . . I said to him [Salandra] that my desire was simply that Parliament would give him the means of exercising upon Austria pressure of such sort that he might be able to obtain the greatest concessions possible. This conversation persuaded me still more of the necessity of permitting the government a free hand, and I acquired also the conviction that it was not at all necessary to alarm oneself on the subject of the military measures that the government was preparing to take, which, first of all, were justified by the general situation, and then should, above all, serve to demonstrate to Austria the necessity for her to hasten to make important concessions.”²²³ Giolitti refers to the Italian demands as having been advanced “in a spirit of equity and moderation.”²²⁴ One wonders what would have been claimed had Sonnino chosen to be unreasonable.

ITALIAN AND OTHER COMMENTS

After publication — an unwelcome publication — of Italy's treaty with the *entente* Powers, Sonnino said (16 February 1918):

“Italian diplomacy comes out the least hurt from the revelations of the Bolsheviki. Our government is the one which has shown itself the least imperialistic, the least annexationist, and the most repelled by the unscrupulous methods of old diplomacy — ”²²⁵

a damning, but quite unwarranted reflection upon the allies of Italy. A few days before this speech, the Premier, Signor Orlando, said in the Chamber (12 February):

“Our aim is a holy one, if any ever was.” “We have been carrying on a war not only for the defence of our rights and our existence, but also a war against a common enemy.”

The premier added, by way of dissipating:

“the inexplicable and deplorable ambiguity which has arisen regarding our war aims, we have once more, for ourselves and all the world, affirmed them clearly and loyally here, declaring that our aims are exclusively to ensure our national integrity against the menace which has existed for us so long.”²²⁶

On an earlier occasion, Sonnino spoke as follows:

“The allied nations took up arms for a high ideal, for the restoration

²²³ *Mémoires de ma Vie*, pp. 334-5.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 335.

²²⁵ *N. Y. Times*, 4 March 1918.

²²⁶ *The Times* (London), 14 Feb. 1918.

of international justice which had been violated; for the right of the nations which had been barbarously trodden upon. At the same time, they are fighting for revendication not based upon imperialistic ideas (as our enemies are trying to make people believe,) but in order to bring about readjustment of the international status based on international justice."

"Italy fights for the freedom of the world and for the completion of her national independence within the boundaries assigned to her by nature, and to assure for herself in the Adriatic such conditions as are necessary for her existence and for her legitimate safety."²²⁷

If the war had been undertaken by the *entente* Allies "for the restoration of international justice, which had been violated," one would have expected that all high-minded nations would at once have joined in the struggle. Italy did not. She waited until she had bargained for "revendications" at the expense of a long-time ally, and for acquisition of the territory of other nations.

In view of the indisputable facts and the language of Italian statesmen, it is difficult to understand the mentality which permitted Mr. Thomas Nelson Page to assert that:

"Italy boasts, and has a right to boast, that she was the first Christian nation to elect to surrender voluntarily a position of security, and enter the war on the side of freedom."²²⁸

On another page of his book, Mr. Page says that:

"The stopping of the Germans before Paris, and the victory of the French in the first battle of the Marne, tended to offset the apparently insuperable power of Germany, and as the interim passed, Italy grew clearer and clearer in her view of the questions at issue."²²⁹

Italy's view as to "the side of freedom" had, evidently, some relation to the military mutations in the progress of the war. Mr. Page did not intend to be either humorous or satirical. Mr. President Wilson, too, can hardly be forgiven for having said in the Italian Chamber of Deputies (3 January 1919), on the occasion of his visit to Rome, following the armistice:

"Then back of it all, and through it all, running like the golden thread that wove it together, was our knowledge that the people of Italy had gone into this war for the same exalted principle of right and justice that moved our own people."²³⁰

The French Senator who, exasperated at Italy's delay in entering the

²²⁷ *N. Y. Times*, 27 Oct. 1917. Another Italian, Enrico Corradini, declared that "the motive that, more than any other, inspired our generous people was that of honor, when the truth was told them that an agreement now bound us to France and England": *Nineteenth Century*, June 1917, p. 1199.

²²⁸ *Italy and the World War*, p. 215.

²²⁹ P. 166.

²³⁰ *Current History*, IX, Pt. 2, p. 210.

war "on the side of freedom," said that "l'Italie viendra au secours du vainqueur,"²³¹ was more correct than calumnious.

Mr. Sidney Low, by complimenting Italy in various pages of his book,²³² and descending to facts in others, has produced some curious contradictions. On one page we read that:

"Like the rest, she is fighting to vindicate individual and national liberties against militarist autocracy."²³³

On another page, the author, sharply following fiction with fact, says that when Italy declared war against Germany she:

"had now thrown herself, without reserve, against militarist barbarism, and all her energies were bent upon the triumph of the common cause and the task of self-realization and self-completion for which she had drawn the sword."²³⁴

On other pages, the fact alone appears:

"If they have gone to war for an idea," the idea "was that of a greater Italy."²³⁵

After affirming that Italy might "have remained neutral if she had so chosen," the author proceeds:

"It must be admitted, then, that she was at war because she wished to be at war, because peace, at this crisis of the world's history, would have meant the abandonment of her aspirations, and the neglect of her interests."²³⁶

"Everywhere in Italy just now you see the inscription: *Par la piu grande Italia* — for the Greater Italy. The soldiers write it on the walls of their barracks, and fall with the words on their lips. It is the thought that nerves them in toil and danger."²³⁷

Lofty ideals suffer no little abasement when, at other places, the author says:

"But if the Italian war — *la nostra guerra* — is one of ideals, do not let us forget that the ideal is to be attained by the highly practical method of seizing territory, ports, islands, railways, strips of coast-line, naval bases. . . . It is then a war of ideals, but also, in a sense, a war of aggression, a war of conquest, like that which was waged against Turkey for the acquisition of Libya and the Dodecanese —"²³⁸

a purely wanton bit of imperialistic plundering. But, after all, upon accepted and universally practiced principles of international action, was Italy blameworthy? As between rival nations, has not *egoismo* always been the actuating motive? Was von Bülow wrong when he said:

"The alpha and omega of English policy has always been the at-

²³¹ "Italy will fly to the relief of the victor": Page, *op. cit.*, p. 213; *Contemporary Review*, Oct. 1921, p. 499.

²³² *Italy in the War*.

²³³ P. 236.

²³⁴ P. 304.

²³⁵ P. 15.

²³⁶ P. 237.

²³⁷ P. 238.

²³⁸ Pp. 238-9.

tainment and maintenance of English naval supremacy. To this aim all other considerations, friendships as well as enmities, have always been subordinated. It would be foolish to dismiss English policy with the hackneyed phrase '*per fide Albion.*' In reality this supposed treachery is nothing but a sound and justifiable egoism, which, together with other great qualities of the English people, other nations would do well to imitate." ²³⁹

WHY DID ITALY ENTER THE WAR?

In view of the foregoing, there can be no hesitation in saying:

1. That consideration of the merits of the quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia was not a factor in the determination of Italy's action.
2. That Italy, after the first six days of the Sonnino negotiations, had no ground for even a pretence of complaint against Austria-Hungary, other than that which had existed for thirty-three years of treaty-alliance with that country.
3. That it was solely for the purpose of acquiring territory — not only territory owned by her ally (Austria-Hungary), but other extensive tracts — that Italy, after many weeks of posturing on the auction-block, declared war upon her third-of-a-century friend.

²³⁹ *Imperial Germany*, p. 23.

CHAPTER VIII

WHY DID BULGARIA ENTER THE WAR?

HISTORY, 277. — Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia, 278. — New International Alignments — Ferdinand, 279. — Alliance, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and the United Kingdom, 1887, 280. — Rapprochement of the Czar and Ferdinand, 282. — Austro-Russian Agreement, 1897, 282. — Bulgaria and Russia — Military Convention, 1902, 283. — Independence, 1908, 283. — Bulgaria and Serbia, 284. — Bulgaria and Russia — Military Convention, 1909, 284. — The Balkan League, 1912, 286. — Reasons for the League, 288. — Bulgaria and Serbia, 291. — Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary, 292. — New Balkan League, 292. — ATTRACTIONS AND REPULSIONS, 293. — Negotiations and Neutrality, 294. — War, 297. — Serbian Contention as to Concessions, 298.

WHY DID BULGARIA ENTER THE WAR? 301.

THE war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia commenced on 28 July 1914. Turkey associated herself with the Central Powers on 29 October of the same year. Italy joined the Entente allies on 23 May 1915. Bulgaria opened hostilities against Serbia on 11 October 1915. Roumania hesitated until 27 August 1916. Greece waited still longer. The following observations will assist in the formation of opinion as to Bulgaria's motive for participating in the conflict.

History. Bright spots appear in Bulgaria's history, but, on the whole, she has been unfortunate. Her course has been dictated by a combination of nationalism and imperialism. She has fought frequently and well, for the same object that has actuated other virile nations — freedom and expansion; but to-day she suffers restriction, while her competitors Greece and Serbia — not better entitled than she, have made enormous gains.

Prior to the Turkish invasion of Europe, each of these Powers had occupied wide territories and enjoyed extended authority. Bulgaria's "national power reached its zenith under Simeon (893-927), a monarch distinguished in the arts of war and peace. In his reign, says Gibbon, 'Bulgaria assumed a rank among the civilized powers of the earth.' His dominions extended from the Black Sea to the Adriatic, and from the borders of Thessaly to the Save and the Carpathians. Having become the most powerful monarch in eastern Europe, Simeon assumed the style of 'Emperor and Autocrat of all the Bulgars and Greeks' (*tsar i samodrzhetz vsêm Blgarom i Grkom*), a title which was recognized by Pope Formosus. During the latter years of his reign, which were spent in peace, his people made great progress in civilization,

literature flourished, and Prêslav, according to contemporary chroniclers, rivalled Constantinople in magnificence."¹

After three centuries of existence, the first Bulgarian Empire came to an end. Between 1018 and 1186, the Bulgars were dominated by the Byzantine Emperors. Then, under Ivan Asên II, the "Tsar of the Bulgars and Greeks," independence was regained, and erection of the second Bulgarian Empire commenced.

"The greatest of all Bulgarian rulers was Ivan Asên II (1218-1241), a man of humane and enlightened character. After a series of victorious campaigns he established his sway over Albania, Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace, and governed his wide dominions with justice, wisdom and moderation. In his time the nation attained a prosperity hitherto unknown: commerce, the arts and literature flourished; Trnovo, the capital, was enlarged and embellished, and great numbers of churches and monasteries were founded or endowed. The dynasty of the Asêns became extinct in 1257, and a period of decadence began."²

After a short period (1331-1355) of subjection to Serbia, the Turks arrived and placed the Balkan Powers under equal subjugation. Four and a half centuries later — in the early years of the nineteenth century — as the strength of the invaders waned, national ambitions revived and imperialistic competitions for possession of the Turkish assets ensued. Let us follow, shortly, Bulgaria's more recent political history, observing (1) the incidents connected with the inauguration of her political independence; (2) her inability, amid imperialistic strivings, to stand alone; (3) the competition between Russia and Austria-Hungary for the place of chief influence at her capital; (4) the alternating successes; (5) the formation of the Balkan League in 1912 under Russian patronage, and its success against the Turks; (6) the war of Bulgaria against Greece and Serbia in 1913 — noting these as necessary to the understanding of Bulgaria's action in the war 1914-18.

Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia. The Berlin Conference (1878), while practically relieving Bulgaria from political subordination to Turkey,³ confined her geographical limits to the area between the Danube and the mountains, and left the territory to the south — calling it Eastern Rumelia — under Turkish control. The separation was the work of Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury. It was their principal achievement at the Conference. To secure it, they threatened war with Russia, then the champion of Bulgaria.⁴ That was in 1878. Defeated for the moment, Russia persisted in her policy; maintained, to the extent possible, her dominating influence at Sofia; and succeeded in 1881

¹ *Ency. Brit.*, 11th ed., IV, p. 780.

² *Ibid.*

³ Bulgaria became a principality under the suzerainty of Turkey.

⁴ The championship was limited by consideration of self-interest. To persuade the Powers to assent to Russian annexation of Roumanian territory, Russia did not scruple to compensate Roumania with a strip of Bulgaria.

in obtaining the insertion of the following provision in the League of the Three Emperors:

“The three Powers will not oppose the eventual reunion of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia within the territorial limits assigned to them by the Treaty of Berlin, if this question should come up by the force of circumstances.”⁵

Not long afterwards, the respective attitudes of the United Kingdom and Russia underwent complete change — the former desiring and the latter opposing the reunion of the divided Bulgaria. The reason was obvious. Russia, while originally wanting a strong Bulgaria, had desired one submissive to direction from St. Petersburg. But the Bulgarian Prince (Alexander of Battenburg), although at first sufficiently complaisant, soon acquired the national objection to foreign control; and his country, instead of being an ally upon whom Russia could count when the day should arise for an advance upon Constantinople, promised to become an independent state through which Russia might find difficulty in forcing her way to her traditional objective. For the same reason, the United Kingdom reversed her policy. A strong buffer state, protecting Turkey from Russia, was exactly what she wanted.⁶

Under these curiously interchanged conditions, a revolution as against Turkey broke out in Eastern Rumelia (18 September 1885), the avowed object being union with Bulgaria. Shortly afterwards (14 November), Serbia, insisting upon “compensations” by way of offset as against Bulgaria’s enlargement and at Bulgaria’s expense, declared war. She was soon defeated, and in this way Bulgaria appeared to justify her claim to consummate the union. Action to that end was, no doubt, a breach of the treaty of Berlin, but, nevertheless, the Bulgarian government proceeded to the accomplishment of her purpose by conducting elections in Eastern Rumelia of deputies to the Bulgarian sobranje. Russia at once protested, saying (14 October):

“we cannot recognize the validity of the decisions of an Assembly which we consider to be illegal.”⁷

The Prince having approved the proceedings, Russia determined that he should be removed, and, probably well aware of the design, some Russian officers seized him and hurried him off to Lemberg in Austria. Assisted by the governments, he soon returned, but only to recognize that he could not remain, and to abdicate (3 September 1886).

New International Alignments — Ferdinand. An anxious period followed. Russia endeavored to influence the direction of affairs,⁸ and

⁵ Pribram: *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary, 1879-1914*, I, pp. 43, 45.

⁶ As Lord Randolph Churchill (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) said: “We can, I think, perfectly defend Constantinople by going in for the independence of Bulgaria”: W. S. Churchill, *Lord Randolph Churchill*, II, pp. 162-3. Quoted by Fuller, *Bismarck’s Diplomacy at its Zenith*, p. 94; and see p. 92.

⁷ Br. Blue Book., *Turkey, 1887* (1), p. 240. Quoted by Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

⁸ Fuller, *op. cit.*, pp. 91, 103, 116, 117, 192.

succeeded in having inserted in Bismarck's "reinsurance treaty" (18 June 1887) the following clause:

"Germany recognizes the right historically acquired by Russia in the Balkan Peninsula, and particularly the legitimacy of her preponderant and decisive influence in Bulgaria and Eastern Rümelia. . . . Germany, as in the past, will lend her assistance to Russia in order to re-establish a regular and legal government in Bulgaria. She promises in no case to give her consent to the restoration of the Prince of Battenberg."⁹

Within a month afterwards, flouting Russia, the Bulgarian *sobranje* assumed (7 July 1887) to elect as sovereign Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, a lieutenant in the Hungarian Hussars, and the owner of large properties in Hungary.¹⁰ Russia made strong protest, denouncing the proceedings as illegal and palpably obnoxious to the terms of the treaty of Berlin. The representatives of Austria, Italy, and the United Kingdom, on the other hand (under agreement, as we shall see), held unofficial but friendly interviews¹¹ with the man whom Russia denounced as a usurper.

Alliance: Austria-Hungary, Italy, and the United Kingdom, 1887.

In February-March 1887, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and the United Kingdom exchanged notes in which were expressed agreement upon the principle of the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean, the Adriatic, the Ægean, and the Black Sea and the:

"desire that there shall be no extension of the domination of any other Great Power over any portion of these coasts."

The three Powers agreed to co-operation in the maintenance of these principles, but:

"the character of the co-operation must be decided by them when occasion for it arises, according to the circumstances."

The events of the next few months (above referred to) induced the three Powers to interchange further notes (12 December) by which they defined:

"the common attitude of the three Powers, in prospect of the eventualities which might occur in the Orient."

The nine points agreed to were as follows:

"1. The maintenance of peace and the exclusion of all policy of aggression.

"2. The maintenance of the *status quo* in the Orient, based on the treaties, to the exclusion of all policy of compensation.

"3. The maintenance of the local autonomies established by these same treaties.

⁹ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 277, 279. "As in the past" were usefully qualifying words.

¹⁰ Victor Kuhne, *Bulgaria Self-revealed*, p. 221, note; *Fortnightly Rev.*, Sept. 1917, p. 420. For sketch of Ferdinand's character, see Nekludoff, *Diplomatic Reminiscences*, pp. 7-15.

¹¹ Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 233; Buchanan, *op. cit.*, I, p. 51.

"4. The independence of Turkey, as guardian of important European interests (independence of the Caliphate, the freedom of the Straits, etc.), of all foreign preponderating influence.

"5. Consequently Turkey can neither cede nor delegate her suzerain rights over Bulgaria to any other Power, nor intervene in order to establish a foreign administration there, nor tolerate acts of coercion undertaken with the latter object, under the form either of a military occupation or of the despatch of volunteers. Likewise Turkey, constituted by the treaties guardian of the Straits, can neither cede any portion of her sovereign rights, nor delegate her authority to any other Power in Asia Minor.

"6. The desire of the three Powers to be associated with Turkey for the common defence of these principles.

"7. In case of Turkey resisting any illegal enterprises such as are indicated in Article 5, the three Powers will immediately come to an agreement as to the measures to be taken for causing to be respected the independence of the Ottoman Empire and the integrity of its territory, as secured by previous treaties.

"8. Should the conduct of the Porte, however, in the opinion of the three Powers, assume the character of complicity with or connivance at any such illegal enterprise, the three Powers will consider themselves justified by existing treaties in proceeding, either jointly or separately, to the provisional occupation by their forces, military or naval, of such points of Ottoman territory as they may agree to consider it necessary to occupy in order to secure the objects determined by previous treaties.

"9. The existence and the contents of the present Agreement between the three Powers shall not be revealed, either to Turkey or to any other Powers who have not yet been informed of it, without the previous consent of all and each of the three Powers aforesaid."¹²

No limitation of operative time was mentioned. The British note contained the following comment:

"The illegal enterprises anticipated by the fifth article would affect especially the preservation of the Straits from the domination of any other Power but Turkey and the independent liberties of the Christian communities on the northern border of the Turkish Empire established by the Treaty of Berlin.¹³ H. M.'s Government recognize that the protection of the Straits and the liberties of these communities are objects of supreme importance and are to Europe among the most valuable results of the treaty; and they cordially concur with the Austro-Hungarian and Italian Governments in taking special precautions to secure them."¹⁴

¹² Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 124-33.

¹³ The description includes Bulgaria.

¹⁴ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 128. Further reference to the treaty may be seen in cap. IV.

These articles were, obviously, aimed at Russia, and if the three Powers were aware, as seems probable, of the treaty between Germany and Russia above referred to, their action may be regarded as a direct reply to it. Russia was asserting:

“the legitimacy of her preponderant and decisive influence in Bulgaria and in Eastern Rumelia”;

Germany was recognizing this legitimacy; while the other three Powers declared that Turkish “suzerainty” over Bulgaria must remain undisturbed; that no “foreign administration” should be established there; and that no military occupation by any foreign Power should be tolerated. Russia and Austria-Hungary were thus at issue over Bulgaria, and each enjoyed strong support. Note the alignment of Germany with Russia, and of the United Kingdom with Italy and Austria-Hungary. But there must also be noted that, *sub rosa*, the agreement between these last-named Powers was, to some extent, the work of Bismarck, and that he complied with Lord Salisbury’s requirement of giving to it Germany’s moral support.¹⁵

Rapprochement of the Czar and Ferdinand. During the period under review, Russia had forfeited the position of influence at Sofia which she had gained (1878) by procuring Bulgaria’s release from Turkish domination; and Austria-Hungary had, to some extent, secured Bulgaria’s friendship. The estrangement between Russia and Bulgaria came to an end when a new Czar, Nicholas II (November 1894), recognized Ferdinand’s kingship. Two years afterwards, cordial relations, upon a footing of national equality, were established by Ferdinand’s determination to affiliate his son and heir, Boris, with the Orthodox church. Nicholas became the godfather of Boris. Ferdinand, nevertheless, continued his dislike of pan-Slavism, and retained to the end his attachment to his native country. On one occasion (June 1909), when the Serbian representative was about to present his credentials, the King objected to the following words in the Serbian’s address:

“Slav solidarity, the voice of the blood, common sorrows and hopes, and more than all this — the unshakable belief in our common future, induced us to hail the Bulgarian success as an important event of our common future.”¹⁶

Austro-Russian Agreement, 1897. Ten years after the election difficulty in Bulgaria, a trip of the Austrian Emperor to St. Petersburg resulted in an exchange of notes (8 and 9 May 1897) by which opposing views with reference to Balkan affairs were, to a large extent, submerged under such phrases as agreement:

“to pursue in future in this field a policy of perfect harmony and to

¹⁵ Fuller, *op. cit.*, pp. 88, 149-53, 154, 250, 267, 272, 329-33; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 82-3; *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, p. 246.

¹⁶ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

avoid in consequence everything which might engender between us elements of conflict or of mistrust.”¹⁷

The meeting created a more friendly feeling; a sort of *modus vivendi* endured for eleven years.¹⁸

Bulgaria and Russia — Military Convention, 1902. Russian influence at Sofia was well re-established in 1902. In that year, as a reply to the Austro-Hungarian-Roumanian military convention of 1900, Bulgaria and Russia, on 13 June, entered into a treaty of alliance. M. Gueshoff (Bulgarian Prime Minister), in his book *The Balkan League*, referred to the treaty as follows:

“By article 3 of this Russo-Bulgarian military convention — about which I sent so many telegrams to M. Bobtcheff, our Minister in Petrograd during the winter of 1912–13, when the Roumanians were threatening us with invasion — Russia had undertaken to defend with all her forces the integrity and inviolability of the Bulgarian territory.”¹⁹ The treaty was denounced by Russia in 1912.²⁰

Independence, 1908. The year 1908 witnessed another change in Bulgaria's external relations, for, quite disregarding the Russian claim of preponderating influence in her affairs, she entered into an agreement with Austria-Hungary for announcement of two disconcerting changes in political arrangements, namely (1) Bulgarian independence — that is, cancellation of Turkish suzerainty (5 October), and (2) Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (7 October). To the first of these announcements, Russia, prudently, made little objection. Indeed, she facilitated settlement of the financial question which necessarily arose, by herself arranging part of Bulgaria's liability to Turkey.²¹ The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary, in conjunction with the Bulgarian movement, was another matter, and Russia, naturally, resented the association of her protégé with the rival Power. To the Serbian representative in London, Isvolsky (the Russian Prime Minister) said (13 October 1908) that Bulgaria by her action:

“had lost the sympathy of Europe, and particularly the sympathy and aid of Russia, which she would feel in the future to be greatly to her damage. I know, said he, that you Serbians believe that we are well disposed towards the Bulgarians and favor them particularly. I admit that such was really the case at one time, and the explanation of it is that Bulgaria was our creation, and we considered ourselves

¹⁷ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 195. Cf. Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

¹⁸ It terminated with the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary in 1908.

¹⁹ P. 36.

²⁰ Buchanan, *op. cit.*, I, p. 143.

²¹ *Ann. Reg.*, 1909, p. [327; Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 21. The Turco-Bulgarian protocol and the Russo-Bulgarian agreement were signed on 19 April 1909.

obligated on that account to assist her in her development. Her present conduct, however, has released us from that obligation, and she will have occasion to feel this altered attitude of ours.”²²

Isvolsky made no secret of his displeasure. Writing to the Russian Ambassador at Sofia (16 August 1909), he said:

“You may make use of the material herewith placed at your disposal, without, however, letting it be known from which sources it originates, and explain to the Minister in a friendly way how unfavorable is the impression made upon us, on the one hand, by the secret relations to Vienna, and on the other by the unfriendly attitude towards the neighboring Slav State. We naturally do not admit the possibility that, during the existence of certain mutual obligations between Russia and Bulgaria, the latter should really have the intention of assuming obligations to Austria, yet we find that the Russian Government, without wishing to interfere in the domestic affairs of the kingdom, has the right to demand that Bulgaria, upon whom Russia has just conferred so important a service, should show greater frankness.”²³

Austro-Hungarian influence was now the stronger.

Bulgaria and Serbia. While the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina ruptured, for a time, diplomatic relations between Russia and Austria-Hungary, it provided for Serbia a strong incentive to closer relations with Bulgaria with a view to future possibilities. Efforts to this end with the assistance of Russia, were made. The Serbian Foreign Minister visited Sofia (March 1909); was graciously received; found that “the personal views of King Ferdinand” were the obstacle; and was retired with some evasive replies. Explaining the eventual failure, the Russian Minister at Sofia (25 November 1910) said:

“Serbia can give nothing to Bulgaria, and alone she can do nothing to help Bulgaria to realize her national aspirations. One must also bear in mind that the decisive factor in Bulgarian Foreign Policy is King Ferdinand, who lets himself be guided above all by personal considerations.”²⁴

For the time, the negotiations halted. The correspondence in connection with the attempt may be seen in Siebert and Schreiner.²⁵

Bulgaria and Russia — Military Convention, 1909. M. Bogitshevich (at one time Serbian Chargé at Berlin) is authority for the statement that, in December 1909, Bulgaria and Russia entered into a second military convention. Bulgaria promised to assist Russia should she be in conflict with Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Roumania; or with Austria-Hungary and Germany; or with Turkey. Russia, on the other hand, agreed to assist Bulgaria in case of her being attacked, without provocation, by Austria-Hungary, and to mobilize certain troops in case

²² Bogitshevich: *Causes of the War*, p. 117.

²³ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 277-8.

²⁴ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 273-81.

of an unprovoked attack by Turkey. In certain eventualities Russia was to assist in Bulgarian territorial expansion:

“approximately within the territorial bounds which were established by the preliminary treaty concluded at San Stefano.”²⁶

Article V is important:

“In view of the fact that the realization of the high ideals of the Slavic peoples upon the Balkan peninsula, so near to Russia’s heart, is possible only after a favorable outcome of Russia’s struggle with Germany and Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria accepts the holy obligation, both in the event mentioned, and also in the event of accession of Roumania or of Turkey to the coalition of the above-named Powers, to make the utmost exertions to avert every provocation to the further expansion of the conflict. As regards those Powers whose relations with Russia are those of Allies or friends, Bulgaria will adopt a suitable friendly attitude towards them.”²⁷

Then follow some military arrangements. The agreement was to last for five years (that is until after the outbreak of the 1914-18 war), and subsequently until one year after notice. Although Bogitshevich purports to supply a complete copy of the treaty, no trace of it appears in the Russia diplomatic correspondence published by Siebert and Schreiner. Indeed, there are some evidences of its non-existence. At the date assigned by Bogitshevich to it, Isvolsky was Russian Foreign Minister. Afterwards, he became Ambassador at Paris, and, while there, he wrote to Sazonoff (23 October 1912):

“. . . I remember that at the time of my being in charge of the Foreign Ministry, the Military Convention with Bulgaria was discussed without its being concluded (whether it has since been concluded I do not know).”²⁸

Had it been concluded, he would almost certainly have been advised. Three months afterwards (19 January 1913), Sazonoff telegraphed to Isvolsky as follows:

“The existence of a military convention between Austria and Roumania²⁹ having been at the time ascertained, a treaty was concluded between Russia and Bulgaria in 1902, in virtue of which Bulgaria pledged herself to assist us in the case of a war with one of the Powers of the Triple Alliance, whereas we, on our part, pledged ourselves to guarantee Bulgaria’s territorial integrity. The treaty has so far benefited us exclusively, as Bulgaria was bound by its stipulations. We were asked to do nothing more but what for political and economic

²⁶ See Map in cap. XXIV.

²⁷ Bogitshevich, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

²⁸ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 362; *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 333. Cf. Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 277, 343-5.

²⁹ The convention had been agreed to in Sept. 1900: Gueshoff, *The Balkan League*, p. 35.

reasons we should have been unable to refuse Bulgaria even if no such treaty had existed.”³⁰

Sazonoff made no reference to the alleged convention of 1909. Professor Pribram (no mean authority) nevertheless refers to it, noting that it contained:

“among other things, the declaration that the realization of the ideals of the Slav peoples in the Balkan Peninsula would only be possible after a Russian victory over Germany and Austria-Hungary³¹ — the first open confession that the Russian Government anticipated a war with the Central Powers as inevitable.”³²

Had the convention existed, Sir George Buchanan (British Ambassador at St. Petersburg) would, in all probability, have been aware of it. In his book — *My Mission to Russia* — he makes no reference to it.

The Balkan League, 1912. Prior to March 1911, arrangements between Serbia and Bulgaria seemed to be impracticable. Russia, from time to time, endeavored to effectuate agreement,³³ but, as the Russian Ambassador at Vienna said (15 February 1911):

“The union of all Slav nationalities must naturally be the goal of Russian policy, but one asks oneself how is this to be achieved, now that the King and Government of Bulgaria manifest such distrust of Serbia?”³⁴

Two incidents contributed to a change in the outlook. In March, King Ferdinand visited Vienna and returned (as the Russian Minister at Sofia reported, 11 March):

“but very indifferently satisfied with the meeting he had had with the Austrian Emperor, since it had led to no definite results. According to the Bulgarian Minister’s opinion, this will contribute towards a cooling of the relations between the two countries and towards strengthening Russophile tendencies.”³⁵

Shortly afterwards, by a change of government and the accession to office of the coalition ministry, the “great National Ministry,” of Gueshoff (the leader of the Popular party) and Daneff (the leader

³⁰ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 315. Eighteen months previously (8 July 1911), Nekludoff, Russian Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, authorized the Russian Minister at Sofia to deny “all rumors of the existence of a military convention of 1902 as being unfounded”: *Ibid.*

³¹ That conviction found expression elsewhere. See cap. II, pp. 55, 56, 57.

³² *Austrian Foreign Policy*, p. 33. The Professor makes no reference to the military convention of 1902, and, probably had not noticed Sazonoff’s letter of 19 Jan. 1913 above quoted.

³³ *Cf.* Fr. Yell. Bk., *Balkan Affaires*, I, No. 24; Sazonoff to Isvolsky, 30 March 1912; *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 373; Buchanan, *op. cit.*, I, p. 121.

³⁴ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 309. *Cf.* Fr. Yell. Bk., *Balkan Affaires*, III, Nos. 111, 126, 134, 138, 142, 154, 156. There are several other indications in the correspondence of the King’s change of attitude: Sazonoff to Russian Minister at Sofia, 30 May 1912 (Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 345); Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff, 6 June 1912 (*ibid.*, p. 347).

of the Progressives) the prospect of a Serbo-Bulgarian League improved. The King disliked both men,³⁶ for they were distinctly russophile, and eventually they pushed him into the combination which he disapproved; or rather Daneff first pushed Gueshoff,³⁷ and together they pushed the King. On 29 September 1911, commenced the Italo-Turkish war:

“and it is to this event that is due the Russo-Serb *rapprochement*. Under the auspices of Russia, conversations were commenced and proceeded rapidly to an agreement.”³⁸

When Nekludoff, the Russian Ambassador at Sofia, informed Sazonoff (end of September 1911) of the prospect of a Serbo-Bulgarian alliance, the reply was:

“Well, but this is perfect! If only it would come off! Bulgaria closely allied to Serbia in the political and economic sphere; five hundred thousand bayonets to guard the Balkans — but this would bar the road forever to German penetration, Austrian invasion.”³⁹

By November, preliminary arrangements between Serbia and Bulgaria had been reached, and on 13 March 1912 a treaty was signed.⁴⁰ Its terms had been settled in consultation with Russia.⁴¹ Russia was once more established in Sofia. But King Ferdinand was resentful. A Serbo-Bulgarian agreement, arranged in consultation with Russia and without the knowledge of Austria-Hungary, was not only distasteful to himself, but a disloyalty to his friend Francis Joseph. And, to add to the King's misery,⁴² the Russian Ambassador was tactless enough to say to him:

³⁶ Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

³⁷ Gueshoff was at first unfavorable to alliance with Serbia: Russian Chargé at Sofia to Isvolsky, 8 April 1911: Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 314; and see p. 317.

³⁸ French Minister at Sofia to French Foreign Minister, 3 April 1912. Not only was Turkey in difficulties, but Germany and Austria-Hungary (being allies of Italy) could not help her: Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, I, No. 24.

³⁹ Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 45. And see p. 55.

⁴⁰ It and the accompanying military arrangements may be seen in Gueshoff, *The Balkan League*, pp. 112-27; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, VIII Supp., pp. 1-11; and *Nationalism and War in the Near East* (By a Diplomatist), pp. 387-396. The pendency of the Turco-Italian war (commenced October 1911) facilitated the negotiations (Nekudoff, *op. cit.*, p. 55).

⁴¹ The negotiations for the treaty may be seen in Gueshoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-36. M. Nekludoff, in his book *Diplomatic Reminiscences*, has said: “In point of fact, Hartwig and I were the constant arbiters, continually consulted and referred to in each difficulty, however small, by both parties” (p. 52. And see p. 38). Nekludoff was Russian Ambassador at Sofia, and Hartwig Russian Ambassador at Belgrade. Cf. Poincaré, *The Origins of the War*, pp. 108-9; Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, I, Nos. 37, 184; Bogitshevich, *op. cit.*, p. 27. M. Gueshoff, who was Bulgarian Prime Minister during the negotiations, does not in his book, *The Balkan League*, refer to Russian activity. On the contrary, he creates the impression that Russia was a stranger to the proceedings (p. 43). But in his first sketch of the proposed treaty was the following: “The participation of Russia to be a *conditio sine qua non* for the conclusion of a treaty on the above lines” (p. 14).

⁴² He spoke of himself as “a poor invalid surrounded by a few of his treasures” (Nekudoff, *op. cit.*, p. 62).

“By signing this agreement Bulgarian policy has entered on a new course, accurately outlined, and cannot now turn back; having formed ties that cannot be broken with Serbia, Bulgaria has bound herself by that very fact to us, and the two Governments will have henceforth to listen very attentively to our advice if they really wish to attain their national aims.”⁴³

The Ambassador himself, when referring afterwards to the remark, said:

“I have since been told — and had, moreover, found it out for myself — that the beginning of my personal rupture with Ferdinand dated from this significant conversation. . . . Ferdinand felt that certain alleys were henceforth closed to him. The feeling was unbearable and roused his anger against the Russian Minister who contemplated hampering the freedom of his political enterprises.”⁴⁴

The King feared that his treaty might be disclosed to the Austro-Hungarian Monarch. He foresaw, he said, that:

“the Serbian irredentists that King Peter cannot keep in hand — as I can keep the Macedonians — will not miss the opportunity to annoy Austria-Hungary in Bosnia and Herzegovina”; and that “we two, that is Bulgaria and Serbia, instead of profiting by our agreement to guard the rights of our kin in Macedonia shall be forced to arms in all haste to uphold our own integrity and our own independence.”⁴⁵

Shortly afterwards, the King mortgaged to Russia his personal liberty by borrowing two million francs from the Czar.⁴⁶

Negotiations for alliance between Bulgaria and Greece had proceeded simultaneously with those between Bulgaria and Serbia.⁴⁷ On 29 May 1912, a treaty was signed.⁴⁸ By verbal agreements with Montenegro,⁴⁹ the four states were brought into association as the Balkan League.

Reasons for the League. The reasons for the formation of the League are not doubtful, and may be gathered from the terms of the secret articles attached to the Serbo-Bulgarian treaty. The treaty itself is in terms purely defensive, but the first of the annexed secret articles is as follows:

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 65-6.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁴⁷ Proposals for an alliance had been commenced in conversations between Venizelos, the Greek Prime Minister, and Mr. J. D. Bourchier, a correspondent of *The Times* (London) who afterwards acted as intermediary between Greece and Bulgaria. The negotiations for the treaty are referred to by Gueshoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-40.

⁴⁸ It may be seen, with the accompanying military arrangements, *ibid.*, pp. 127-33; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, VIII Supp., pp. 81-5; *Nationalism and War in the Near East* (By a Diplomatist), pp. 396-400.

⁴⁹ Gueshoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-2.

“In the event of internal troubles arising in Turkey which might endanger the State or the national interests of the contracting parties, or either of them; or in the event of internal or external difficulties of Turkey raising the question of the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkan Peninsula, that contracting party which first arrives at the conclusion that, in consequence of all this, military action has become indispensable must make a reasoned proposal to the other party, which is bound immediately to enter into an exchange of views, and, in the event of disagreement, must give to the proposing party a reasoned reply. Should an agreement favorable to action be reached, it will be communicated to Russia, and if the latter Power is not opposed to it, military operations will begin as previously arranged, the parties being guided in everything by the sentiment of solidarity and community of their interests. In the opposite case, when no agreement has been reached, the parties will appeal to the opinion of Russia, which opinion, if and in so far as Russia pronounces herself, will be binding on both parties. If, Russia declining to state an opinion and the parties still failing to agree, the party in favor of action should on its own responsibility open war on Turkey, the other contracting party is bound to observe towards its ally a friendly neutrality, ordering at once a mobilisation in the limits fixed by the military convention, and coming to its assistance in the event of any third party taking the side of Turkey.”⁵⁰ Article 2 provided the manner in which territory to be taken from Turkey was to be partitioned between the parties. And the Russian Ambassador at Sofia was not astray when, shortly after the signature of the treaty and while the Turco-Italian war was proceeding, he said (3 April 1912) that:

“the moment is particularly favorable for the Balkan States to settle the Macedonian question, and in that way to realize their national aspirations.”⁵¹

When, during a conversation at St. Petersburg (August 1912), the text of the treaty was read to Poincaré, he immediately (as he relates): “pointed out to M. Sazonoff that this Convention in no way corresponded to the description of it that had been given to me, and that it was, as a matter of fact, a war agreement, and that it not only revealed *arrières pensées* on the part of both the Serbs and the Bulgarians, but that it was to be feared their hopes appeared to have been encouraged by Russia, and that the eventual partition had been used as a bait for their covetousness.”

Sazonoff replied that Russia:

“will be able to exercise a right of veto which will assure the maintenance of peace, which she will not fail to do.”⁵²

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 114-15.

⁵¹ Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, I, No. 24. Cf. Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁵² Poincaré: *The Origins of the War*, p. 115.

As soon as harvesting had been completed, the war commenced. As usual, ethical motive for initiating it was alleged, namely, relief of Macedonian Christians from the rigors of Turkish oppression.⁵³ To that pretence, the Great Powers — all anxious for peace⁵⁴ — replied by declaring (10 October 1912) that:

“they take in their hands the execution of the reforms in the government of European Turkey.”⁵⁵

Bulgaria refused (13 October) to agree to that best of methods for securing reforms,⁵⁶ and preceded her reply by making upon Turkey a series of demands (12 October) which would certainly be rejected.⁵⁷ Her declaration of war soon followed (18 October):

In assisting in the formation of the League, Russia had her own objects in view. First, through control of the League, she hoped to make secure her hegemony in the Balkans.⁵⁸ And secondly, by the substitution of the Balkan states for Turkey, she hoped to interpose a more effective and permanent bar to the approach of Austria-Hungary and Germany to the Ægean and Constantinople.⁵⁹ This latter hope was realized. The former was not. Sazonoff imagined that Russia would always be able to “make both countries,” Bulgaria and Serbia, “listen to reason” — to Russian reasoning.⁶⁰ He was wrong. When not only counsel from Russia, but pressure from the Great Powers failed to prevent precipitation of war, Poincaré’s comment was:

“She” (Russia) “perceives to-day that it is much too late to restrain the movement which she has provoked, and, as I said to MM. Sazonoff and Isvolsky, she attempts to check, but it is she who has lighted the motor.”⁶¹

Nevertheless, France would support Russia.⁶² The friendly relationships of the Triple Entente must be maintained.⁶³

⁵³ Cf. Bulgaria’s circular to the Powers on the commencement of hostilities: Gueshoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 58–60.

⁵⁴ Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, I, Nos. 101, 115, 116, 127, 135, 168.

⁵⁵ Gueshoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 52–3.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 54–5.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 55–6.

⁵⁸ Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, I, No. 184.

⁵⁹ Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 55; Bogitshevich, *op. cit.*, p. 27; Buchanan, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 121–2.

⁶⁰ When informing France of the existence of the Serbo-Bulgarian treaty (30 March 1912), Sazonoff said that “as a secret clause obliges both parties to primarily obtain Russia’s views before taking any active steps, we believe we have a means at our command to influence both governments, while we have at the same time taken a protective measure in order to oppose any expansion of the influence of any great Power in the Balkans”: Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 339; *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 373. Cf. Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 46, 47; Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, I, Nos. 57, 184.

⁶¹ Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, I, No. 184. Cf. *ibid.*, III, Nos. 72, 75.

⁶² *Ibid.*, I, No. 263.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

Bulgaria and Serbia. Russia's chief embarrassment in connection with the Balkan wars was caused by the development of hostile relations between Bulgaria and Serbia. Under her ægis and for her own advantage, Russia had succeeded in bringing the two states into co-operation. Together (and with the help of Greece and Montenegro) they had defeated and despoiled Turkey, but, quarrelling over the booty, they had fallen apart and fought each other. Bulgaria was beaten, and terms of peace had to be arranged. Between the claims of Turkey and Bulgaria to Adrianople and the claims of Greece and Bulgaria to Cavalla, Russia did what she could for Bulgaria,⁶⁴ and, in these respects, felt little embarrassment. But when she was confronted with the conflicting claims of Bulgaria and Serbia to her support in respect of succession to much more extensive territory in Thrace and Macedonia, her position became one of extreme difficulty. Bulgaria's claim rested upon her ante-war treaty with Serbia, by which definite allocations of portions of the territory had been agreed to, and the rest left to the arbitrament of Russia. Serbia, on the other hand, pointed to the fact that, by the action of the Powers (in requiring her withdrawal from Albania), she had been deprived of the larger part of the territory allocated to her, and claimed that Bulgaria should suffer as well as herself. Bulgaria insisted upon the treaty.⁶⁵ Serbia insisted upon revision.⁶⁶ Russia insisted (9 June) upon her right to act as arbitrator,⁶⁷ and determined (13 July) that, in a general way:

"the frontier between Serbia and Bulgaria should be constituted by the watershed between the Vardar and the Struma, and, on the other hand, Greece should obtain the territory situated to the north of a line commencing at Guevgueli, passing by Lake Doiran, cutting the *embouchure* of the Struma between Demir-Hissar and Seres, leaving this last town to Greece, and terminating at the sea to the east of the gulf of Orfano."⁶⁸

That was a wide departure from the terms of the treaty,⁶⁹ and was keenly resented by Bulgaria.⁷⁰ Radoslavoff, the new prime minister, spoke for more than himself when he said (23 November 1913): "Bulgarian policy will no longer be Russophile."⁷¹ Upon assuming the premiership (5 July), he wrote to the King declaring that:

⁶⁴ Russia supported Bulgaria also diplomatically as against Roumania (*ibid.*, II, Nos. 91, 94, 128), but declined to render military assistance (*ibid.*, Nos. 371, 383).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Nos. 274, 327, 332, 342, 347, 351, 356.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, Nos. 328, 331, 333, 338, 347, 355, 381.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Nos. 321, 322.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 389. France urged Bulgaria to submit: *ibid.*, No. 449.

⁶⁹ It was, however, an arrangement much more favorable to Bulgaria than that which was imposed upon her subsequently by the peace treaty of the following month. See map in cap. XXIV.

⁷⁰ Cf. Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, II, No. 389.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, III, No. 138.

"the salvation of our State can only be found in a policy of intimate friendship with Austria-Hungary. That policy should be adopted at once and without hesitation, because every hour is fateful. We invite you to act immediately in order to save Bulgaria from further misfortunes and the dynasty from further responsibility." ⁷²

Sazonoff soon became aware of the change in the Bulgarian attitude. ⁷³

Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary. While Russia, by her support of Serbia ⁷⁴ was forfeiting the friendship of Bulgaria, Austria-Hungary, by her objection to the Bucarest peace-treaty, ⁷⁵ even to the extent of willingness to reverse its arrangements by force, ⁷⁶ became the recognized champion of the Bulgarian interests. ⁷⁷ Radoslavoff was:

"the only Bulgarian leader of any prominence who had always displayed hostility to Russia." ⁷⁸

New Balkan League. By the disruption of the League, Russia's design that it should interpose united Balkan defence against Austria-Hungary and Germany was frustrated. For remedy, she endeavored (after the Bucarest treaty) to arrange a new Balkan League, to be formed of Roumania, Serbia, Greece, and Montenegro; ⁷⁹ having as its immediate object the isolation and reduction to helplessness of Bulgaria, ⁸⁰ and, as its ultimate aim, the inclusion of Bulgaria herself in the League. For the purpose of making arrangements with Roumania, Venizelos and Paschitch (Greek and Serbian Prime Ministers respectively) visited the Roumanian capital in February 1914. The effect of the meeting is referred to elsewhere. ⁸¹

Well aware of Russia's efforts in this regard, Austria-Hungary saw that the motive which would actuate Roumania would be the prospect of acquiring Austro-Hungarian territory in Transylvania and Bukovina; ⁸² that the motive of Serbia would be expansion, through Austro-Hungarian territory, to the Adriatic; that Bulgaria might be attracted by offers of extension in Macedonia; ⁸³ and that Greece, both with a view to further acquisitions and to defence of recent gains, might be induced to co-operate. To meet that danger, Austria-Hungary proposed the

⁷² *Ency. Brit.*, XXX, p. 518. Prior to that date, Russia had reason to believe that Bulgaria's friendship was precarious: *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 8, 96.

⁷³ *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 178-9. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 167-71.

⁷⁴ Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 217; A. L. Kennedy: *Old Diplomacy and New*, p. 248.

⁷⁵ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, VIII, Supp., p. 13.

⁷⁶ Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 209; *Ann. Reg.*, 1913, p. [333]. Austria-Hungary was restrained by Germany: *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., I, No. 3.

⁷⁷ Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

⁷⁸ Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

⁷⁹ Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-3. Cf. *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., I, No. 1; *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 93.

⁸⁰ Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

⁸¹ *Cap*, IX, pp. 308-9.

⁸² *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., I, No. 1, pp. 7-8.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

formation of an anti-Serbian League, under her own ægis, composed of Roumania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey.⁸⁴ Her action was dilatory, and her success impossible. The significance of the rival attempts (for present purposes) is that Russia regarded Bulgaria as antagonistic, and that Austria-Hungary regarded Serbia as a potential enemy.

Attractions and Repulsions. The diplomatic struggle for political hegemony in the Balkans was unfinished when the recent war commenced. But, apart from the operation of future overmastering influences, the attitude which, in case of general war, would be assumed by Bulgaria was well determined. Her attractions and repulsions may be summed as follows:

(1) Ferdinand had never frankly accepted Russian friendship. He had remained Hungarian, while his people, upon the whole, were Rus-sophile.

(2) Russia's friendship when most needed (1913) had been value-less.

(3) Serbia, Greece, and Roumania had all in 1913 deprived Bulgaria of territory which she deemed to be rightfully hers. Nothing could be gained by joining them in the war, unless by concessions previously agreed to.

(4) Turkey had also despoiled Bulgaria in 1913, but only to the extent of resuming a small part of the territory which she had lost in the previous years.

(5) Russia's traditional ambition to reach Constantinople across Bulgaria was always objectionable to Bulgaria.

"It is fear of Russia," says one writer, "which has reconciled Bulgaria to Turkey. At Sofia, since the failure of the Tchataldja *coup* in 1912, they have wanted the Turks to remain at Constantinople. The moment they found they could not get there themselves, they wanted no one else to do so. In the liberator of 1878⁸⁵ they do not recognize a friend; they see only a protector who aims at becoming master. Now, they are not willing to serve as a tool. They desire to become masters on their own account."⁸⁶

Radoslavoff, the Bulgarian Prime Minister in 1914, said, in substance, to the American Colonel Emerson:

"If Russia should succeed in reaching Constantinople across the Dobrudja, we should have to resign ourselves to becoming either an entirely Russian region, or else a buffer state. An independent Bulgaria will never consent to the seizure of Constantinople by the Russians."⁸⁷

(6) Germany and Austria-Hungary were interested jointly with Bul-

⁸⁴ *Post*, cap. XXVI.

⁸⁵ Russia.

⁸⁶ Auguste Gauvain in his preface to Kuhne: *Bulgaria Self-Revealed*, p. x. And see *post* cap. XI.

⁸⁷ Kuhne, *op. cit.*, p. xi. See also quotations in caps. II and XI.

garia in upsetting the Bucarest settlement — in recasting the Balkan map. Victory of these Powers would mean rehabilitation of Bulgaria, provided that, by military activity, she had earned a right to participate in the spoils of war. As between the opposing war-combinations, Bulgaria's interests lay with the Central Powers.

Negotiations and Neutrality. Bulgaria shared with Italy, Roumania, and Greece disturbing ignorance as to what would be the result of the gigantic conflict. Could they have foreseen the future, all four of them would have lost no time in choosing their side. Uncertain, each waited, and negotiated for contingent benefits. Even prior to the outbreak of hostilities, Germany commenced *pourparlers* with Bulgaria. On 25 July (1914), Radoslavoff, the Prime Minister, expressed his readiness to consider adhesion to the Triple Alliance,⁸⁸ and on 2 August submitted a draft of the bases of an agreement.⁸⁹ Berlin immediately agreed.⁹⁰ Austria-Hungary (4 August) expressed concurrence,⁹¹ but appears to have neglected on both that and the next day to send the necessary instructions to Sofia.⁹² And the opportunity passed. With contrary intent, Mr. Winston Churchill (presumably with the assent of Sir Edward Grey⁹³) sent to Sofia, Mr. Noel Buxton (a Balkan expert), who, after investigations and negotiations there, reported (January 1915) that:

“The attempt to persuade the Balkan States to make voluntary agreements with one another should be abandoned. The suggested declaration should be made by the Governments of the Entente in conformity with the following conditions:

“(1) The arrangement contemplated must be dictated from without. It is quite unreasonable to expect the Balkan States to settle the problem by mutual concession. None of the peoples concerned would allow their Governments to cede territory voluntarily; but to accept the terms of the Entente is a different matter.

“(2) England must take an equally prominent part with France and Russia in dictating the terms. In Bulgaria little confidence is felt in Russia or France, owing to the events of 1913.

“(3) The arrangements proposed must be precise, and not vague.

“(4) The declaration must be communicated in substance to the leaders of the chief Parties in each State.”⁹⁴

⁸⁸ Kautsky Docs., No. 162.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 673. And see No. 857.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 697. And see Nos. 866, 873.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, No. 798.

⁹² *Ibid.*, Nos. 857, 872.

⁹³ Probably Sir Edward Grey's repudiation in the House of Commons of Buxton's mission was more diplomatic than rigidly correct: Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

⁹⁴ Above is taken from Buxton's reference to the subject in his book, *The War and the Balkans*, pp. 95-6.

Greece and Serbia had been pressed to make territorial concessions to Bulgaria, in order to induce her to assist the *entente* Powers, but without success. Buxton now proposed that the Allies should themselves recast the Bucarest map at the expense of these two States — one of them fighting on the *entente* side and the other a neutral. If arrangement could be made with Bulgaria, coercion, it was thought, might be applied to Serbia and Greece.⁹⁵ Russia proposed another force-plan: that Russian troops should be landed at two places in Bulgaria, and an appeal for co-operation made to the people as against the King and his government.⁹⁶ The popularity of the pro-Russian statesmen, Gueshoff and Stambolisky, offered assurance of success. But Sir Edward Grey disapproved. Nothing was done.

Bribery (supposed to be less objectionable than force) was tried. Sir Edward Grey's emissary (the First Secretary of the British Legation of Sofia) was entrusted with the expenditure of any amount up to two million pounds. His selection of a chief agent to superintend disposition of the money was unfortunate, for at the critical moment the rascal declared himself a Germanophile. He is "now reputed to be the second richest man in Bulgaria."⁹⁷

Sir Edward Grey was handicapped by the fact that the British Ambassador at Sofia — Sir Henry Bax-Ironside — was not well suited for his position. He sympathized strongly with Serbia.⁹⁸ He entered into rivalry, rather than into cultivation of friendship, with his Russian colleague.⁹⁹ And he regarded Buxton as an intruder.¹⁰⁰ For these or other reasons, Sir Arthur Paget was sent (February 1915) as special envoy to Sofia. He was pleasantly received and, after an audience with the King, telegraphed (17 March):

"that all possibility of Bulgaria attacking any Balkan states that might side with the Entente is now over, and there is some reason to think that, shortly, the Bulgarian army will move against Turkey to co-operate in the Dardanelles operations."¹⁰¹

Bax-Ironside, on the same day, dissociated himself from these views, saying that he did not believe in any of the promises made to Paget either by the King or the Prime Minister.¹⁰² Bax-Ironside was right, but his counsel was unacceptable. Having been recalled, he left Sofia on 17 July. The appointment of Mr. O'Beirne to the post "proved to be a blunder."¹⁰³ Meanwhile, Germany had not been inactive.

⁹⁵ See as to Greece, *post*, cap. X, and as to Serbia, Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-1; Buchanan, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 229, 231-4, and *post*, pp. 300-1.

⁹⁶ Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 259-60.

⁹⁷ Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

⁹⁸ Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 244.

¹⁰¹ Winston Churchill: *The World Crisis*, II, p. 200.

¹⁰² Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 246. ¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

“At the end of December 1914, the veteran Marshal von der Goltz, who personified German military pre-eminence to South-Eastern Europe, paid a demonstrative visit to King Ferdinand, bringing with him an autograph letter from Kaiser Wilhelm. The Bulgarian monarch was urged to join the Central Powers at once. Greece he was told, would be made to cede ‘her recent acquisitions’: Bulgarian forces would be used to fight Serbs and the French, but not Russians. The Marshal was very favorably received by King Ferdinand; and his visit was followed by an advance by German banks, in January 1915, of £3,000,000. This was a belated fulfilment of an agreement for a loan of £20,000,000 concluded in July 1914. The payment of the instalment at this particular moment probably indicates that von der Goltz obtained what he considered satisfactory assurances from Ferdinand.”¹⁰⁴

Between February and June, further sums in respect of the loan above referred to were advanced by Germany to Bulgaria, and in the last of these months the King was induced to consolidate his personal debts by means of an extensive advance from Germany.¹⁰⁵ In May, Radoslavoff gave the British government an outline of the conditions on which, as he said, Bulgaria would consent to join forces with the Entente:

“These conditions included the restitution by Serbia of the Bulgarian portion of Macedonia (both the part which was admitted to be Bulgarian in the Serbo-Bulgarian treaty of 1912, and also the ‘contested zone’); the cession of Kavalla, Drama, and Serres; the restoration by Roumania of the New Dobrudja, other than Silistria; and, as against Turkey, the restoration of the Enos-Midea frontier according to the Treaty of London of 1913.”¹⁰⁶

Compliance with these conditions would have involved reversal of the fundamental provisions of the treaty of Bucarest, which had followed upon Bulgaria’s defeat in 1913. Serbia, Greece, Roumania, and Turkey were all to restore to Bulgaria the territories of which they had deprived her. With the demands, the *entente* Powers were willing enough to agree, but their difficulty was that, being at the moment engaged in endeavoring to secure the war-co-operation of Roumania and Greece (until then neutral), they desired to hold out to them prospects of accretions of territory, rather than to propose deprivations. They did what they could. On 29 May 1915, they submitted a written proposal by which:

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 245. Cf. *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [248]. The assertion that agreement for the loan had preceded the war is probably not accurate. Russian Foreign Office documents indicate that Russia and France were alive to the danger of the German proposal; did what they could to prevent its consummation; and, for the time, were successful: See Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 450-6. In 1912, Bulgarian negotiations for a loan in Paris had been interrupted by disclosure of the Serbo-Bulgarian war-treaty: Cf. Poincaré, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-9; *Un Livre Noir*, I, pp. 233, 267, 283, 325.

¹⁰⁵ Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 248-9.

¹⁰⁶ *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [248].

"the demands of the Sofia Government were only partially met; the difficulty being that Roumania, Serbia, and Greece were not inclined to cede any territory. A serious hitch thus arose in the negotiations, and, as will be seen, the obduracy of Serbia ultimately proved fatal to success."¹⁰⁷

Later request by Bulgaria for more specific guarantees was answered on 3 August (1915) with an offer of immediate transfer of certain Serbian, Greek, and Turkish territory.¹⁰⁸ Serbia and Greece declined to agree. The offer added materially to the difficulties which Venizelos was experiencing at Athens in his pro-Entente endeavors.¹⁰⁹ As late as 15 September, efforts to purchase Bulgarian support were being made by the *entente* Powers.¹¹⁰

Meanwhile the German army was realizing the confident expectations of the Bulgarian King. The rapid advance of von Mackensen in Galicia; the Entente failure at the Dardanelles; the stalemates in France and Flanders gave weight to the pro-German influences at Sofia; and early in June (1915) a preliminary agreement with Austria was initialed.¹¹¹

"On 17th July, three days after the Russians had fallen back to the Nareff, and the great Austro-German offensive from the Baltic to the frontier of Roumania had begun, Bulgaria signed a definitive treaty with Germany, Austria, and Turkey, after which diplomatic negotiations with the Western Allies was continued merely as a feint till Germany's plans should be matured. By the terms of the treaty Bulgaria was to gain all Serbian Macedonia and Salonika; Epirus, which belonged to Greece and had no Bulgarian population; the Enos-Midia boundary on her south-east; and, in certain eventualities, a large portion of the Dobrudja."¹¹²

In the same month, a pact was arranged between Bulgaria and Turkey by which Bulgaria's aspirations to the south were satisfied.¹¹³ The preliminary agreement was signed on 22 July. The completed document was dated 6 September.¹¹⁴

War. On 19 September 1915, the Bulgarian Government suddenly issued an order for general mobilization, announcing that the intention

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. [248-9. Cf. Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 252-3.

¹⁰⁸ *Ency. Brit.*, tit. *Bulgaria*, XXX, p. 519.

¹⁰⁹ See cap. X.

¹¹⁰ *Ency. Brit.*, XXX, p. 519.

¹¹¹ Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 260, 270.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 260-1. Prof. Pribram assigns 6 Sept. as the date of the treaty: *Aus. For. Pol. 1908-18*, p. 90.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

¹¹⁴ Supplied by the Serbian delegation at the Peace Conference. Cf. *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XIV, p. 105. Mr. Churchill says that the document was signed on 22 Sept.: *The World Crisis*, II, p. 496.

was merely to maintain an armed neutrality¹¹⁵ — an announcement which deceived nobody. On 3 October, Russia delivered an ultimatum to Bulgaria as follows:

“The events which are taking place in Bulgaria at this moment give evidence of a definite decision of King Ferdinand’s Government to place the fate of its country in the hands of Germany.

“The presence of German and Austrian officers in the Ministry of War and on the staff of the army, the concentration of troops in the zone bordering Serbia, and the extensive financial support accepted from our enemies by the Sofia Cabinet, no longer leave any doubt as to the object of the military preparations of Bulgaria.

“The Powers of the Entente, who have at heart the realization of the aspirations of the Bulgarian people, have, on many occasions, warned M. Radoslavoff that any hostile act against Serbia would be considered as directed against themselves. The assurances given by the head of the Bulgarian cabinet in reply to these warnings are contradicted by the facts.

“The representative of Russia, which is bound to Bulgaria by the imperishable memory of her liberation from the Turkish yoke, cannot sanction by his presence preparations for fratricidal aggression against a Slav and allied people.

“The Russian minister, therefore, has received orders to leave Bulgaria with all the staffs of the Legation and Consulates, if the Bulgarian Government does not within twenty-four hours break with the enemies of the Slav cause and of Russia, and does not at once proceed to send away officers belonging to the armies of States which are at war with the Powers of the Entente.”¹¹⁶

Shortly afterwards, the new Austro-German attack upon Serbia commenced, and on 11 October, with a view to participation in it, Bulgarian troops crossed the Serbian frontier. Within a few days, the *entente* Powers declared war upon Bulgaria.

Serbian Contention as to Concession. Dispute has arisen as to the responsibility of Serbia for failure of the efforts to induce Bulgaria to join the *entente* Powers. The Serbian Prime Minister, M. Paschitch, has categorically denied that Serbia refused to make concessions. He has said:

“At the beginning of the war, Serbia proposed to Roumania and Greece to make a joint declaration to Bulgaria that they were ready to

¹¹⁵ *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. 1250. Mr. Churchill’s suggestion that among the effects of the defeat of the Allies (10 August 1915) at Suvla Bay (Gallipoli) was the determination of Bulgaria to enter the war (*The World Crisis*, II, pp. 484-5) is probably inaccurate. It may have been, and very likely was, one of the moving considerations, but, inasmuch as the Allied troops remained upon the peninsula until the following 8 January, and the activity of Allied submarines in the Marmora continued meanwhile, the reverse at Suvla could hardly have been the sole, or even the determining factor.

¹¹⁶ G. A. Schreiner: *The Craft Sinister*, p. 174.

proceed to a revision of the treaty of Bucarest in her favor. In her own name, Serbia declared to Russia that, without waiting for the answer of the other signatories to the treaty of Bucarest, she was prepared to make territorial concessions to Bulgaria to the east of the Vardar. When Turkey entered the war, Serbia invited Bulgaria to discharge her debt to Russia, her deliverer, and promised territorial concessions, if she would do so. Bulgaria refused to enter into negotiations, invoking as a pretext the neutrality she would violate in taking the side of Russia. At length, some time before the Bulgarian mobilization, when the Entente approached the Serbian Government with the view of obtaining territorial concessions in favor of Bulgaria, Serbia consented to make territorial concessions in the interests of Balkan concord and the prompt cessation of the war. The sacrifices which she promised were enormous. She was ready to cede territory also west of the Vardar, and almost all the famous line of the treaty of 1912 [the treaty between Serbia and Bulgaria] including Monastir, excepting only Prilep, and under the reserve of a common frontier with Greece.¹¹⁷ We know how Bulgaria responded. She treacherously attacked Serbia, and declared war against the Entente. It was after entering the war that Bulgaria explained her repeated refusals. The Government exposed the game through an article in the *Narodni Prava*. It stated clearly that the pretext Bulgaria had put forward was not true, that if she had wished she might have accepted the Serbian concessions as fully satisfying all her pretensions in Macedonia. If, notwithstanding, she had engaged in war against the Entente, it was because she would not permit the installation of Russia at Constantinople, and the expansion of Serbia."¹¹⁸

On the other hand, Mr. Radoslavoff, the Bulgarian Prime Minister,¹¹⁹ gave to the United States Press, in August 1915, the following:

"Bulgaria is fully prepared and waiting to enter into the present war, the moment absolute guarantees are given her that by so doing she will attain that for which the other nations already engaged are striving — namely, the realization of her national ideals. The bulk of these aspirations are comprised in Serbian Macedonia, which, with its 1,500,000 Bulgarian population, was pledged and assigned to us after the first Balkan war and is still ours by the right principles of nationality. When the Triple Entente can assure us that this territory will be returned to Bulgaria, and our minor claims in Grecian Macedonia and elsewhere realized, they will find us ready and waiting to fight with them; but

¹¹⁷ Greece objected to large cessions from Serbia to Bulgaria as disruptive of the balance of power in the Balkans.

¹¹⁸ Interview with correspondent of *Petit Parisien*: Serbian Press Bureau, Corfu, 17 Feb. 1917: Quoted by Kuhne, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-9, note.

¹¹⁹ Radoslavoff has been described as "brought up in Germany, Russophobe, Serbophobe, faithful servant of King Ferdinand" (Kuhne, *op. cit.*, p. 193). He remained in office until June 1918.

these guarantees must be real and absolute. No mere paper ones can be accepted. Only certainty on this point can induce the Bulgarians again to pour out their blood.

“On the part of the Entente we are asked for a direct participation in the war with the full assistance of our entire army, whose valor the whole world knows. On the part of Germany, Austria, and Turkey, we are only asked for a continuation of our neutrality till the end of the war. Candidly this latter we are loath to grant. We cannot foretell what the future holds for us. To discount it entirely would be impolitic. We might, indeed, concede the continuation of our neutrality for a lesser period, but whether we remain neutral or whether we fight, the end to be gained by us and the motive governing our decision remain always the same. In these negotiations we have no disposition to gain time. We seek only to gain absolute guarantees for the realization of our national ideals.”¹²⁰

Two years afterwards, in September 1917, the Bulgarian Minister at Washington, M. Stephen Panaretoff, gave to the Press a somewhat similar statement:

“Bulgaria entered the war with the single object of regaining the Dobrudja and the Macedonian parts of Serbia which were unjustly taken from her in the Balkan war. She had no particular love for the Central Powers, in fact, had previously been at war with Turkey. As a price for her entry into the war she asked for the restoration of her former territory, which, according to the President’s statement on national boundaries, rightfully belongs to her. Bulgaria would have preferred to have joined the Allies, but they offered the restoration of her territory provided Serbia consented to take other land in exchange. Our Prime Minister even stated to the Allies that within a day of the acceptance of Bulgaria’s terms the Bulgarian Army would be marching towards Constantinople. But Germany’s offer was unqualified. We joined the Central Powers not because we had to, but we deliberately chose to do so.”¹²¹ If terms could have been made with Serbia, the British Government was not aware of it. In Mr. Winston Churchill’s recent book is the following:

“The imminent peril in which Serbia stood, and the restricted conditions under which the Allies could afford her protection, made it indispensable that she should cede, and if necessary be made to surrender, the uncontested zone in Macedonia to the Bulgarians, to whom it belonged by race, by history, by treaty, and — until it was taken from them in the second Balkan War — by conquest. . . . Right and reason, the claims of justice, and the most imperious calls of necessity, alike counselled the Serbians to surrender at least the uncontested zone. To the

¹²⁰ *The Times* (London), 13 Aug. 1915.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 28 Sept. 1917.

ordinary exhortations of diplomacy were added special appeals by the Sovereigns and the Rulers of the allied countries. The Prince Regent of Serbia was besought by the Tsar, by the President of the French Republic, and by King George V, to make a concession right in itself, necessary in the common cause, vital to the safety of Serbia. But to all these appeals the Serbian Government and Parliament proved obdurate. The allied diplomacy, moving ponderously forward — every telegram and measure having to be agreed to by all the parties to the alliance — had just reached the point of refusing any further supplies of stores or money to Serbia unless she complied with their insistent demand, when the final invasion began. . . . It would be unjust not to recognize at the same time the extraordinary difficulties with which Sir Edward Grey was confronted owing to the need of combining the diplomatic action of four separate great Powers in so delicate and painful a business as virtually coercing a then friendly Greece and an allied and suffering Serbia, specially shielded by Russia, to make territorial concessions deeply repugnant to them. . . . Serbia, however, though fully conscious of her danger, remained recalcitrant to all appeals to make effective concessions. Till the last moment she kept her heel on the conquered Bulgarian districts of Macedonia, and maintained a stubborn front to the overwhelming forces that were gathering against her.”¹²²

WHY DID BULGARIA ENTER THE WAR ?

Quotation upon a previous page contains candid confession of Bulgaria's reason for entering the war. Equally frank is the statement of Radoslav Andrea Tsanoff, a native of Bulgaria, a Ph.D. of Cornell University, and Assistant Professor at the Rice Institute, Houston, Texas:

“From Bulgaria's point of view, any talk of moral ideals in this war is futile claptrap. It is part of the campaign of both sides to call themselves champions of liberty and saviors of civilization. Actually, this war is a gigantic clash of the most sordid interests imaginable. In such a conflict of interests, then, Bulgaria also had to seek her own national interests, and not sacrifice them on the altar of passion and impulse.”¹²³ In view of all this, there can be no hesitation in saying that:

1. Bulgaria did not enter the war because, in her judgment, Austria-Hungary was justified in attacking Serbia. The merits of that quarrel were immaterial.

2. Her motive was self-interest.¹²⁴

3. She desired expansion of her territorial boundaries. She was not an exception to Nietzsche's generalization that the national actuating impulse is the “will to power.”

¹²² *The World Crisis*, II, pp. 485-7. Cf. Buchanan, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 228-34. And see Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-3.

¹²³ *Current History*, V, Pt. 1, pp. 74-5.

¹²⁴ Kuhne, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

CHAPTER IX

WHY DID ROUMANIA ENTER THE WAR?

Terra Irredenta, 302. — Berlin Congress, 1878, 302. — The Quadruple Alliance, 303. — Attitude in 1913, 304. — Attitude in 1914, 305. — New Balkan League, 308. — War Attitude, 309. — Neutrality and Negotiations, 310. — War Treaty with Entente Powers, 313. — Declaration of War, 314. — German Chancellor's Comment, 315. — Polivanov's Report, 315. — Why did Roumania enter the War? 316.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY declared war on Serbia on the 28th July 1914. Turkey associated herself with the Central Powers on 29 October of the same year. Italy joined the Entente Allies on 26 April 1915. Bulgaria joined the Central Powers on 11 October 1915. Roumania remained neutral for two years — until 27 August 1916. Then she united with the Entente Powers. Why did she wait? And why did she, at length, act?

Terra Irredenta. Roumania is a Latin island in a Slav ocean. Unfortunately for her, she lies athwart Russia's European road to Constantinople. And, unfortunately again, prior to the recent war large numbers of her race-brothers lived in territory beyond her political limits — in Russian Bessarabia; in Austrian Bukovina; in Hungarian Transylvania. The territories so inhabited were her unredeemed territory — were within the sphere of her (so-called) "legitimate aspirations."

Berlin Congress, 1878. In the course of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-8, Roumania first acceded to Russia's demand for military passage, and afterwards, when success was doubtful, rendered valuable assistance. Her recompense was a Russian demand for retrocession of that part of Bessarabia (up to the Kilia mouth of the Danube) which had been transferred to her by the treaty of 1856. The Berlin Congress of 1878 compelled her assent to this iniquity, making some compensation by giving her part of the Dobrudja at the expense of Bulgaria. The Roumanian delegates were permitted to make protest before the Congress,¹ but not until after the matter had been well discussed and opinions declared.² The delegates asserted that:

"at the commencement of her campaign, Russia signed with Roumania a convention by which she expressly guaranteed the present integrity of the Roumanian territory. This guarantee had been demanded and ac-

¹ Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Berlin Congress*, pp. 156, 162-6.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 156-60.

corded when the only question was as to the passage of the Imperial armies through Roumania.”³

After short discussion,⁴ the Congress determined that the independence of Roumania would be recognized, but only upon condition that she would submit to the spoliation above referred to,⁵ Bismarck saying that:

“On the other hand, the work of the Congress would not, in his opinion, be durable, as he had already remarked,⁶ if a sentiment of wounded dignity was carried into the future politics of a great Empire; and whatever might be his sympathy for the Roumanian State, whose Sovereign belonged to the German Imperial family, His Serene Highness⁷ ought to think only of the general interest, which counselled the creation of a new guarantee of the peace of Europe.”⁸

Before the Congress assembled, the United Kingdom and Russia had come to secret agreement upon the principal points involved. One of the clauses of the bargain was, in part, as follows:

“11. The Government of Her Britannic Majesty would have to express its profound regret in the event of Russia insisting definitively upon the retrocession of Bessarabia. As, however, it is sufficiently established that the other signatories to the Treaty of Paris are not ready to sustain by arms the delimitation of Roumania stipulated in that treaty, England does not find herself sufficiently interested in this question to be authorized to incur alone the responsibility of opposing herself to the change proposed, and thus she binds herself not to dispute the decision in this sense.”⁹

Hard is the lot of “the smaller nationalities.”

The Quadruple Alliance. The Triple Alliance — Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy — had been formed on 20 May 1882. On 30 October of the following year, urged thereto by resentment against Russia, Roumania joined these Powers in the formation of a Quadruple Alliance, by a treaty consisting of several documents, the chief of which was an agreement between herself and Austria-Hungary:¹⁰

“*Article I.*: The High Contracting Parties promise one another peace and friendship, and will enter into no alliance or engagement directed against any one of their states. They engage to follow a friendly policy, and to lend one another mutual support within the limits of their interests.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 161-70.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 170: arts. 4-7 of the treaty.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁷ Meaning Bismarck.

⁸ Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Berlin Congress*, p. 169.

⁹ *Ann. Reg.*, 1878, p. 246. The profundity of the regret may be gauged by the fact that “Lord Beaconsfield suggested this restitution in a letter written to Lord Derby in the preceding September”: *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, p. 129, note.

¹⁰ Pribriam: *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary, 1879-1914*, I, p. 79.

“*Article II.*: If Roumania, without any provocation on her part, should be attacked, Austria-Hungary is bound to bring her, in ample time, help and assistance against the aggressor. If Austria-Hungary be attacked under the same circumstances in a portion of her states bordering on Roumania, the *casus foederis* will immediately arise for the latter.

“*Article III.*: If one of the High Contracting Parties should find itself threatened by an aggression under the above mentioned conditions, the respective Governments shall put themselves in agreement as to the measures to be taken with a view to co-operation of their armies. These military questions, especially that of the unity of operations and of passage through the respective territories, shall be regulated by a military convention.

“*Article IV.*: If, contrary to their desire and hope, the High Contracting Parties are forced into a common war under the circumstances foreseen by the preceding Articles, they engage neither to negotiate nor to conclude peace separately.”

By a separate paper of the same date, Germany acceded to the treaty, and agreed to the assumption of its obligations. On 15 May 1888, Italy, with some qualifications, also acceded. The treaty was renewed on three occasions — the last, in February and March of 1913.¹¹ In view of subsequent events, its most notable points are: (1) the promise of Roumania that she would “enter into no alliance or engagement directed against” Austria-Hungary; and (2) the agreement of Roumania to support Austria-Hungary as against unprovoked attack upon Transylvania and Bukovina — territories “bordering on Roumania,” and regarded by Roumania as part of her *terra irredenta*.

Attitude in 1913. In January 1913, the French Foreign Office regarded Roumania as a faithful ally of the Central Powers.

“It is very improbable,” said the Foreign Minister, “that Roumania can be separated from the Triple Alliance: her *rapprochement* with Austria-Hungary has gone too far.”¹²

Before the end of the year, the situation had changed — public feeling in Roumania had become pro-Russian. Meanwhile, the Balkan League, consisting of Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Montenegro, had defeated Turkey, and, quarreling over the spoils, Bulgaria had fallen foul of Serbia and Greece. In that situation, Roumania saw an opportunity for gratifying her desire for the part of the Dobrudja which she had not taken from Bulgaria in 1878. So when Greece, in 1913 (13 June), asked for co-operation in war against Bulgaria, saying that:

“this is a rare opportunity for Roumania to acquire a far more radical rectification of frontier from Bulgaria, for in taking part in such a

¹¹ A military convention between Austria-Hungary and Roumania was agreed to in September 1900: Gueshoff, *The Balkan League*, p. 35.

¹² *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 8.

war it would not, as things are, come into collision with (word omitted, presumably 'Russia'),"

M. Také Jonsescu, the Roumanian Foreign Minister, replied (15 June) that he:

"is in entire agreement with M. Venizelos, and the object of a Roumanian mobilization will be to impose peace on Bulgaria, and maintain the balance of power in the peninsula."¹³

These were mere words. Bulgaria being hard pressed by her enemies, Roumania attacked from the north (Turkey doing likewise from the south), and, as part of the treaty of peace (treaty of Bucarest 10 August 1913), imposed upon the victim, Roumania insisted upon transfer of the territory which she desiderated.

Russia, by her attitude in connection with the treaty, secured the goodwill of Roumania and increased the enmity of Bulgaria.¹⁴ Austria-Hungary, on the other hand, made herself unpopular with the Roumanians, and, had Germany and Italy been willing, the Dual Monarchy would have intervened and prohibited the settlement (so disastrous to Bulgaria) arrived at by the treaty. But Italy refused to co-operate, and Count Berchtold, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, afterwards said:

"When Roumania, without consulting us, joined Servia in attacking defenceless Bulgaria very much against our interests, as I well knew, Germany concurred and gave us to understand that we must keep quiet."¹⁵

When congratulating the Czar on his work at Bucarest, Isvolsky said (14 August 1913):

"I considered and I continue to consider that your diplomatic *chef-d'œuvre* has been the detachment of Roumania from Austria, which I had always dreamed of, but which I had not been able or know how to attain."¹⁶

In the opinion of Count Czernin, Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Bucarest, and afterwards Foreign Minister:

"the real obstacle in the way of closer relations between Bucarest and Vienna was the question of Great Roumania; in other words, the Roumanian desire for national union with her 'brothers in Transylvania.'" ¹⁷

Transylvania was then in Hungary. As a result of the war, it and much more are now part of Roumania.

Attitude in 1914. Of the Austro-Hungarian view of Roumania's

¹³ Roumanian Green Bk.: Quoted in *Nationalism and War in the Near East*, by a Diplomatist, p. 270, note.

¹⁴ *Ante*, cap. VIII., p. 291.

¹⁵ Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I, No. 3.

¹⁶ *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 133. Cf. p. 371.

¹⁷ *In the World War*, p. 80.

attitude immediately prior to the war, there is satisfactory evidence. The Russian Ambassador at Bucarest, reporting on 24 January 1914, said:

“To my mind, all this corroborates the fact already pointed out by my predecessor, and also emphasized by my French and English colleagues, that an important or perhaps even a decisive change in public opinion has been brought about here in favor of Russia. Besides one must bear in mind that the events of last year which have inspired the Roumanians, and above all their military leaders, with confidence in their own strength, have at the same time also encouraged the efforts of the Irredentists. These are not so much directed against Russia as against Transylvania with its three million Roumanians. This latter circumstance naturally also tends to enhance Roumania’s sympathy for Russia. When one considers that Roumania has long been looked upon as a member of the Triple Alliance, the statements made by the Ministers here, that Roumania enjoys perfect freedom of action in her foreign policy and that she will in the future pursue only Roumanian interests, have a decidedly favorable significance for us.”¹⁸ In a remarkable letter to the Kaiser, of 2 July 1914, the Austro-Hungarian Sovereign said:

“The danger is increased by the fact that Roumania, though it is allied to us, entertains intimate bonds of friendship with Serbia, and tolerates the same hateful agitation within its realm as Serbia does.”¹⁹ In other words — as Serbia agitates for acquisition of the Austro-Hungarian provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, so Roumania agitates for acquisition of Transylvania and Bukovina. In a *Mémoire* which accompanied the letter was the following:

“As to Roumania, the action of Russia and France became intense before the crisis in the Balkans, and, with the help of extraordinary distortions and by cleverly encouraging the old idea of a Greater Roumania, which in this country always smoulders under the fire, had inspired public opinion with hostile feelings against the monarchy and had persuaded Roumania to a military co-operation with Serbia, which was scarcely fair, when its duties as an ally of Austria-Hungary are taken into consideration.”²⁰

After further reference to the attitude of Roumania, the *Mémoire* proceeded:

“Under these circumstances it is practically impossible that the alliance with Roumania should ever again become so reliable and so trustworthy, that it might be regarded as the pivot for Austria-Hungary’s Balkan politics.

¹⁸ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 436-7.

¹⁹ Aus. Red. Bk., O. F., I, No. 2.

²⁰ Aus. Red. Bk., O. F., I, pp. 7-8.

“The political and military importance of Roumania make it imperative for Austria-Hungary not to continue remaining passive and possibly imperil its own defences, but to commence military preparations and political actions that will dispel or at least attenuate the effects of Roumania’s neutrality and eventual hostility.”²¹

Count Tisza, the Hungarian Premier, advised the Emperor-King (8 July) as follows:

“Notwithstanding Berlin’s optimism, I should consider the neutrality of Roumania very questionable. Public opinion in Roumania would passionately cry out for war with us, and the present government would not be able to resist; King Carol very little. In this war, therefore, we should have to expect to see the Russian and the Roumanian armies among our foes, and this would make our chances of war very unfavorable.”²²

And Count Berchtold declared that:

“It is his belief that Roumania cannot be won back as long as Servian agitation continues, because agitation for greater Roumania follows the Servian and will not meet with opposition until Roumania feels isolated by the annihilation of Serbia and sees its only chance of being supported is to join the Triple Alliance.”²³

Count Czernin has supplied further testimony as to the aloofness of Roumania.²⁴ Referring to her friendly relations with Russia, he said:

“When the Czar was at Constanza a month before the tragedy at Serajevo, his Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sassonoff, paid a visit to Bucarest. When there, he and Bratinau²⁵ went on a walking tour together to Transylvania. I did not hear of this tactless excursion until it was over, but I shared Berchtold’s surprise at such a proceeding on the part of both Ministers.”²⁶

In his report to the Czar of June 1914, Sazonoff referred in the most optimistic manner to his conversations with King Ferdinand during this visit. Bratiano had not been so reassuring.

“The general conclusions,” Sazonoff reported, “which I have been able to draw from this conversation are that Roumania is not bound by any obligation which would compel her to act with Austria and against us under all circumstances; but that, in reality, in case of a war between us and Austria-Hungary, she would endeavor to place

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

²² *Ibid.*, No. 12.

²³ *Ibid.*, No. 8.

²⁴ *In the World War*, pp. 77-82, 90, 106, 109, 112.

²⁵ Roumania’s Prime Minister.

²⁶ *In the World War*, p. 112. Referring afterwards (23 July) to the visit of the Czar, Také Jonescu said that although it had been regarded in Bucarest as inopportune, the proposal for it would not be rejected: Kautsky Docs., No. 129. Sazonoff made no reference to a walking tour in Transylvania in his report to the Czar: *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 377.

herself on the side of the one which would be the stronger and which would be in condition to promise her the greatest profits.”²⁷

Sazonoff was right.

New Balkan League. At an important meeting of Venizelos and Paschitch (Greek and Serbian Prime Ministers respectively) with Roumanian statesmen at the Roumanian capital in February 1914, something of an *entente* was established between the three countries.²⁸ On the 24th of that month the Russian Ambassador at Belgrade reported as follows:

“During the stay of Venizelos and Pashitch at Bucarest, news was spread in the Balkan press, and in European newspapers, of Roumania having joined the Serbian-Greek-Montenegrin Alliance. As Pashitch quite frankly informed me, this news is wholly incorrect. Neither a formal alliance, nor any kind of written agreement, has been signed at Bucarest. On the other hand, the statements made by the Roumanian statesmen, as well as by the representatives of Greece and Serbia, have clearly demonstrated the serious inclination to conclude an agreement.” After quoting a remark of the Roumanian King, the Ambassador added:

“Without doubt, such an utterance, made by the King, is a proof of the fact that an important change has taken place in the political views of the Monarch, as up to now he has always followed the instructions from Berlin and Vienna.”²⁹

The Russian Ambassador at Vienna held similar view. Reporting on 3 April 1914, he said:

“Now, however, under existing political conditions, Austria is entirely isolated in the Balkans and every attempt on her part to alter the *status quo* would meet with decided resistance on the part of the League — Roumania, Serbia, and Greece. . . . This situation, and the knowledge that the Vienna Cabinet has committed an error in supporting Bulgaria during the last crisis, are calling forth in Austria and Hungary that vague general apprehension which has become apparent of late. In conclusion, I should like to express my regret that our newspapers, and especially the French ones, are so noisily expressing their satisfaction as to the new course of Roumanian policy. To do this is quite futile, because the only significant fact for us is that we

²⁷ *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 380. Cf. pp. 298, 299, 301, 373. Sazonoff had expressed the same view in a report to the Czar on 23 November 1913. He said that Roumania and Italy “are subject to megalomania, and, not having sufficient strength to realize their projects openly, they are obliged to content themselves with a policy of opportunism, by always observing on which side the strength lies in order to range themselves on that side”: *Ibid.*, p. 371.

²⁸ Montenegro was at the same time negotiating for political association with Serbia: *post*, cap. XXVI.

²⁹ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 440-1.

have disengaged Roumania from the coalition opposed to us, and not the diplomatic success obtained.”³⁰

Serbia and Greece had previously (21 June 1913) entered into war-alliance — Russia’s efforts to form a Balkan anti-Bulgarian and anti-Austro-Hungarian league were maturing.³¹ On 11 July 1914, nevertheless, the Roumanian King could deny knowledge — official probably — of such efforts.³²

War Attitude. King Carol was a member of the Sigmaringen branch of the Hohenzollern family. He ascended the throne in 1866, and was always strongly biased in favor of Austria-Hungary and Germany. It was he who signed the Quadruple Alliance and its renewals. And when the war of 1914–18 commenced, he wished to co-operate with the Central Powers. But he was powerless. On two previous occasions he had warned his allies that popular feeling would make fulfillment of his treaty obligations impossible;³³ and in that position he found himself when appealed to (2 August) by Germany at the opening of the war.³⁴ The decision of a Council meeting (3 August) was conveyed to the German and Austro-Hungarian Ambassadors by M. Bratiano in the following memorandum:

“After a warm appeal from the King³⁵ in favor of bringing the treaty into operation, the Crown Council unanimously, with the exception of one, declared that no party could assume responsibility for such an action. The Crown Council decided that inasmuch as Roumania had neither been informed nor consulted in connection with the Austro-Hungarian *démarche* at Belgrade, the *casus fœderis* did not exist.³⁶ In addition, the Crown Council resolved to commence military preparations with a view to measures for the security of the frontiers constituting an advantage for the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, as by that some hundreds of leagues of frontier are protected. After the meeting of the Crown Council, the Ministry continued in session, and, for the purpose of giving to its White Book³⁷ the effect of greater expedition, resolved not to insist upon the maintenance of the Bucarest treaty, and to admit a Bulgarian intervention in Serbia — a measure which would allow Austria-Hungary to withdraw from the Serbian theatre

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 443.

³¹ See *ante*, p. 292; *post*, cap. XXVI.

³² Kautsky Docs., No. 41. Cf. No. 129.

³³ *Ibid.*, Nos. 15, 39, 41.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 646.

³⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, No. 826. The Austro-Hungarian Monarch had no confidence in Carol (*ibid.*, No. 11), and his view of the quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia (*ibid.*, No. 39) supplies some justification for suspicion.

³⁶ A better, but by no means undebatable, reason would have been that Austria-Hungary was not being attacked “without any provocation on her part.” See *ante*, cap. VII, p. 253.

³⁷ The word *action* should, probably, replace the words “White Book”: see Kautsky Docs., No. 811, note 4.

of war army corps in number equal to those which Roumania would be able to send to the Pruth. This, moreover, would be the only way to be absolutely sure as to the action of Bulgaria where otherwise Russian influence would not permit security. It is to be understood that this action will take place only if the attitude of Roumania is considered by the two Empires as harmonizing with amicable relations. It is impossible to require more from the chivalrous sentiments of the King without passing possible limits."³⁸

Germany at once declared that the attitude of Roumania was considered as "responding to friendly relations."³⁹ In the view of the German Ambassador (4 August):

"Italy's declaration of neutrality, which had become known before the cession of the Crown Council, produced a great impression, without which it might have been possible for Roumania to march with the Triple Alliance."⁴⁰

King Carol died on the 10th of the following October (1914), and was succeeded by his nephew, Ferdinand, who proved himself to be more amenable to the inducements offered by the *entente* Allies.

Neutrality and Negotiations. Under the circumstances above related—treaty obligations to the Central Powers; later *rapprochement* toward Russia, Serbia, and Greece; a pro-German King; an anti-Austro-Hungarian people; irredentist aspirations in the east; greater irredentist aspirations in the west; *entente* understanding with Serbia and Greece; fear of Bulgarian revenge—Roumania's only immediate course was neutrality. She could not afford to be on the losing side. Prudently, she determined to wait and see; and circumspectly, she entered into negotiations with both sides, leaned one way or the other as went the varying field-successes, and finally cast in her lot with the *entente* Powers. Observe the following:

1. From secret documents, afterwards published in Russia in 1917, we learn that negotiations between Russia and Roumania commenced immediately after the outbreak of the war, and resulted (3 October) in the purchase of Roumanian neutrality by the following agreement on the part of Russia:

"Russia agrees diplomatically to oppose all attempts against Roumanian integrity.

"Russia recognizes the Roumanian claim to territory with a Roumanian population.

"The question of the partition of Bukovina is to be handed to a joint commission.

"Roumania can occupy the territories agreed upon whenever convenient.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 811. See also Nos. 699, 786, 841, 868; Czernin, *In the World War*, pp. 12, 13, 90.

³⁹ Kautsky Docs., No. 847.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 868.

“Russia agrees to secure the support of England and France.

“Roumanian neutrality is to include the stoppage of supplies from Germany to Turkey.”⁴¹

2. Germany and Austria-Hungary also wanted an assurance of Roumanian neutrality, and probably (we have not as yet all the documents) offered in return the cession of the Russian territory lying between the Pruth and the Dniester, and even territory lying east of the Dniester; adding also the northeastern part of Serbia known as the Temok valley,⁴² by which Roumania would interpose herself between Bulgaria and Serbia.

3. The Russian successes in the latter part of 1914 and the early part of 1915, including the capture of Lemberg and Przemysl, and the appearance of an advance guard on the south side of the Carpathians, convinced Roumania that the Entente was the stronger organization, and that, with the assistance of her own troops, success was assured.⁴³ Accordingly she intimated her readiness to commence operations against the losing side, stipulating, however, that she should receive as reward at the end of successful war about one half of Hungary, including Transylvania and the Banat of Temesvar;⁴⁴ and should receive also

⁴¹ Cocks: *The Secret Treaties*, p. 50.

⁴² Cf. Také Jonescu's pamphlet, *The Origins of the War*, p. 26.

⁴³ During this period, Roumania had been watching Italy and Italy watching Roumania. Both were pursuing the same policy — neutrality until assured that their participation in the hostilities would not be on the losing side. Well aware of the importance of making the same choice, they entered (23 Sept. 1914) into a temporary bargain for common action. On 6 Feb. 1915, the agreement was renewed for a further four months: Pribram, *Austrian Foreign Policy*, pp. 74, 81, 85.

⁴⁴ “The Banat of Temesvar is a country of mixed nationality, stretching from the borders of Roumania and Transylvania on the east to the River Theiss on the west, and bounded on the south by the Danube, and on the north by the River Maros. Its population includes Serbs, Roumanians, Magyars, Szekels, Germans, Slovaks, and other races. The western parts are mainly Serb, the northern parts mainly German and Magyar, and the eastern parts mainly Roumanian, with large Serb, German, and Magyar ‘islands.’ By the census of 1910 the population of the Banat was 1,582,133, of which 592,049 were Roumanians, or about 37½ per cent. Thus a large majority of the population is non-Roumanian.

“Transylvania is divided from Roumania by the Carpathians, and except for a few years at the end of the sixteenth century, has always been linked to Hungary. The latter country is divided into two parts by the River Theiss, which runs from north to south. . . . Undoubtedly, in Transylvania proper a large part of the population is of Roumanian stock — although it contains important Szekel and Saxon ‘islands’ — but, by making the River Theiss the boundary, many districts which are overwhelmingly Magyar would be included in the ceded territory. The rich lands around Debreczen and bordering on the Theiss are, for example, the purest Magyar districts in Hungary, and Debreczen itself is the stronghold of Magyar Calvinism. The important Magyar towns of Grosswardein and Arad are also by this treaty to be handed over to Roumania. Indeed, taking this territory as a whole, the majority of the population is non-Roumanian” (Cocks, *op. cit.*, p. 54, notes).

Bukovina from Austria. Inasmuch as the Banat was situated immediately across the Danube from Serbia, and contained a large Serbian population, agreement to the proposed terms by the *entente* Powers — fighting in defence of Serbia — was difficult.⁴⁵

4. Then occurred the Russian retreat in Poland and Galicia (April–July 1915,⁴⁶ with the result that the *entente* Powers became more willing to make concessions. They agreed that the Banat should be transferred to Roumania upon condition only that she would undertake not to Roumanize the Serbians who lived there. Roumania was, however, little disposed to modify her terms, and negotiations with Russia ceased.

5. In the hope of furnishing aid to Serbia, for whose overthrow elaborate preparations, by the Central Powers and Bulgaria, were in progress during the latter part of September 1915, further efforts to secure Roumanian co-operation were made. As encouragement, Allied troops, for service in the Balkans, were landed at Salonica, and written assurance was given that the number would be increased to 200,000 by the end of the year.⁴⁷ Roumania declined to move.

6. The following is quoted from a report by General Polivanov (Russian Minister for War) of 7 20 November 1916:

“At the end of 1915 and early in 1916, after the destruction of Serbia and Bulgaria’s intervention, Roumanian policy leaned very noticeably towards the side of our enemies. At that time the Roumanian Government concluded a whole series of very advantageous commercial agreements with Austria-Hungary and Germany. This circumstance forced our military, financial, and commercial authorities to show great caution in the question of the export from Russia to Roumania of war materials and various other supplies, such as might fall into the hands of our enemies.”⁴⁸

Referring to this period, Count Czernin (Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs) has said:

“The downfall of Serbia and the conquest of the whole of Poland

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 51–2. Cf. Buchanan, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 228–9, 235; II, p. 2.

⁴⁶ In March, the Russians were contemplating retreat in the Carpathian district. They had been driven from East Prussia, and on the 26th of the month, the Grand Duke, General in Chief of the Army, said to M. Paléologue, the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg, “that the co-operation of Italy and Roumania is an imperious necessity. . . . I remain convinced that, God helping us, we shall have the victory. But without the immediate co-operation of Italy and Roumania, the war will perhaps be prolonged during long months with terrible risks.” Paléologue replied that Delcassé (the French Foreign Minister) was doing his best, but that Russian claims to Constantinople “will perhaps render impossible the accession of the two governments to our alliance.” Article by M. Paléologue in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1 April 1921, p. 579.

⁴⁷ The document may be seen *post*, cap. X, pp. 335–6.

⁴⁸ Cocks, *The Secret Treaties*, p. 52.

occurred during this period, and, I repeat, in those months we could have secured the active co-operation of Roumania.”

“It is obvious, however, that it would have been impossible, during the world war, to have stirred up an armed conflict between Vienna and Budapest. My then German colleague, von dem Busche, entirely agreed with me that Hungary ought to make some territorial sacrifices in order to encourage Roumania’s intervention. I firmly believe that then, and similarly before the Italian declaration of war, a certain pressure was brought to bear direct on Vienna by Berlin to this end — a pressure which merely contributed to strengthen and intensify Tisza’s opposition. For Germany, the question was far simpler; she had drawn payment for her great gains from a foreign source. The cession of the Bukovina might possibly have been effected, as Stürgkh did not object, but that alone would not have satisfied Roumania. . . . I sent at that time a confidential messenger to Tisza enjoining him to explain the situation and begging him in my name to make the concession. Tisza treated the messenger with great reserve, and wrote me a letter stating once for all that the voluntary cession of Hungarian territory was out of the question; ‘whoever attempts to seize even one square metre of Hungarian soil will be shot.’”

“The Roumanians attempted several times to make the maintenance of their *neutrality* contingent on territorial concessions. I was always opposed to this, and at the Ballplatz they were of the same opinion. The Roumanians would have appropriated these concessions and simply attacked us later to obtain more. On the other hand, it seemed to me that to gain *military co-operation* a cession of territory would be quite in order, since, once in the field, the Roumanians could not draw back and their fate would be permanently bound up with ours.”⁴⁹

7. The brilliant campaign of General Brusilov in the spring and summer of 1916 again altered the situation, and inclined Roumania, once more, toward the Entente. Negotiations with Russia were resumed, and the question of non-Roumanization of the Serbians in the Banat came under discussion.⁵⁰

8. Shortly afterwards, French nervousness, arising from the ineffectiveness of the offensive on the Somme, made the co-operation of Roumania more than ever desirable. Russia offered to abandon the demand for a guarantee with reference to the Serbians of the Banat; and England and France offered (7 August) to make a military advance on the Salonica front in order to protect Roumania from Bulgarian pressure.

War Treaty with Entente Powers. Continued Russian successes, some important Italian advances, and generous promises of territorial expansion at last induced Roumania (17 August 1916) to come to

⁴⁹ *In the World War*, pp. 106-7, 109.

⁵⁰ Cocks, *op. cit.*, pp. 52, 53.

terms with the *entente* Powers. She agreed to declare war against Austria-Hungary upon the following, among other, conditions:

“ 1. Roumania’s territorial integrity was guaranteed. That protected the Dobrudja against Bulgaria.

“ 2. Roumania was to receive the Austrian and Hungarian territory above described. As palliation for the establishment of Roumania on Serbia’s northern boundary — in territory predominantly occupied by Serbians — Roumania undertook:

“ not to build fortifications opposite Belgrade within a zone to be decided upon later, and to maintain in this zone only forces necessary for police purposes. The Royal Roumanian Government binds itself to indemnify the Serbians of the Banat region who, abandoning their property, should desire to emigrate within the space of two years after the conclusion of peace.

“ 3. The Allies engage to undertake an offensive with their armies at Saloniki at least eight days before Roumania’s entry into the war in order to facilitate the mobilization and concentration of all the Roumanian military forces. This offensive shall start on August 20, 1916.

“ 4. The principal objective of Roumanian action, in so far as the military situation south of the Danube shall permit, shall be by way of Transylvania toward Budapest,”⁵¹

that is to say, through the Hungarian territory that she had bargained to acquire. She attempted that work; was quickly thrown back; followed; and discomfited.

The only possible justification for the surrender by the *entente* Powers to the demand for territory occupied by Serbians (in defence of whose interests Mr. Asquith said that the United Kingdom took up arms⁵²), is to be found in the necessity for inducing Roumania to join in the hostilities against the Central Powers.⁵³ Is that sufficient? Justification of the Italian war-treaty also depends upon an affirmative reply.

Declaration of War. On the 27th of August 1916,⁵⁴ Roumania declared war against Austria-Hungary, assigning the purely sophistical reason that she could not look on passively while nearly one half of the Roumanian race was being oppressed and gradually destroyed.⁵⁵ In an interview with Mr. Stanley Washburn, the correspondent of *The Times* (London), the King of Roumania made some approach to the truth when he said that:

“ Roumania has not been moved by a mere policy of expediency, nor has her determination to enter this war been the outcome of any cynical

⁵¹ *Current History*, X, Pt. I, pp. 346-7.

⁵² *Ante*, pp. 142-3.

⁵³ Cf. A. L. Kennedy: *Old Diplomacy and New*, pp. 238-9.

⁵⁴ Synchronously with Italy’s declaration of war against Germany.

⁵⁵ *Fortnightly Rev.*, Oct. 1916, p. 559.

material policy, or of bad faith to the Central Powers, but it has been based on the biggest principles of nationality and of national ideals. In every nation there are elemental public opinions which are instinctive rather than political. In Roumania, as in Russia, the tie of race and blood underlies all other considerations, and the appeal of our purest Roumanian blood that lies beyond the Transylvanian Alps has ever been the strongest influence in the public opinion of all Roumania from the throne to the lowest peasant. . . . Roumania has waited for the time when she could act with reasonable assurance of protecting herself and of having the support of her great Allies.”⁵⁶

The “appeal of our purest Roumanian blood” was not the “influence” which had dictated the formation of the war-alliance in 1883 with the country in which those people lived, and the continuation of that alliance down to the very day upon which Roumania issued her declaration of war against her thirty-three-year ally.

German Chancellor's Comment. *The Annual Register* for 1916 (p. [240]) gives the following account of the speech of the German Chancellor at the session of the Reichstag which opened 28 September 1916:

“Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg then went on to relate the story of the relations of Rumania with the two Central Empires. The late King Carol had, he said, desired to join the Central Powers immediately after war broke out, as he considered that this was incumbent upon Rumania owing to her treaty relations with the Triple Alliance, but the Government opposed the sovereign's wishes, and secretly sympathized with the Entente. The territorial ambitions of Russia and Rumania had clashed, declared the speaker, and thus no agreement had been reached between Rumania and the Entente in 1915, but nevertheless Rumanian neutrality became more and more beneficent towards Germany's enemies. The Rumanian Government, said the Chancellor, had always had their eye on the military situation, and had been waiting to see the course of the war in order that they might choose the moment to intervene at which the risk to themselves would be at a minimum. The Chancellor said that he had been repeatedly assured by the Rumanian Government that Rumania would remain neutral in all circumstances. Both the King and the Premier, even up to the very day before the declaration of war, had declared to the representatives of the Central Powers in Bukarest that the Rumanian Government did not desire war.”

Polivanov's Report. After Roumania's defeat by the Central Powers, and prior to the final victory of the *entente* Allies, the Russian General Polivanov, in one of his reports, cynically remarked that the defeat of Roumania, a Russian ally, was not without some compensating advantage:

⁵⁶ *The Times*, 13 Oct. 1916.

“If things had developed in such a way that the military and political agreement of 1915 with Roumania had been fully realized, then a very strong state would have arisen in the Balkans, consisting of Moldavia, Wallachia, the Dobrudja, and of Transylvania, the Banat, and Bukovina (acquisitions under the treaty of 1916), with a population of about 13,000,000. In the future, this state could hardly have been friendly disposed towards Russia, and would scarcely have abandoned the design of realizing its national dreams in Bessarabia and the Balkans. Consequently the collapse of Roumania’s plans as a Great Power is not particularly opposed to Russia’s interests. This circumstance must be exploited by us in order to strengthen, for as long as possible, those compulsory ties which link Russia with Roumania.”⁵⁷

Why did Roumania enter the War? Our original question has now been answered. The merits of the quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia were not a factor in Roumania’s consideration of what she ought to do. She wanted to obtain Bessarabia from Russia; and the Bukovina, Transylvania, and the Banat from Austria-Hungary. To get either the one lot or the other, she must act, or at least sympathize, with the winning side, and action would bring greater gain than would sympathy. Not knowing which of the groups was to succeed, she remained neutral for two years, spending her time in bargaining with both, and in preparing to fight against the one which might prove the weaker. When satisfied that the *entente* Allies were to be victorious, she joined her forces to theirs, and eventually obtained her promised reward.

She was under treaty-obligation to “enter into no alliance or engagement directed against” Austria-Hungary. But she did. She had promised to support Austria against unprovoked attack upon Transylvania and Bukovina. Yet she took advantage of Austria-Hungary’s war-engrossment to invade Transylvania with a view to annexation of both it and Bukovina. For purely self-regarding motives, she declared war upon her long-time ally. Nevertheless, in customary language, Také Jonsescu (Roumanian Foreign Minister) said, at a dinner in his honor in London (15 October 1920):

“The late war was not like other wars; it was, let them hope, the last struggle between might and right, between despotism and freedom, between civilization and barbarism. In that war Roumania has done on a small scale what Great Britain has done on a large scale for the sake of mankind and of civilization.”

Somewhat out of harmony with this assertion of philanthropic heroism, was the speaker’s next sentence:

“Roumania had achieved that which had been her dream for more than 1,000 years, and was now in a position to say that she was worthy of the sacrifices which this country had made for her.”⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Cocks, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁵⁸ *The Times* (London), 15 Oct. 1920.

Yes: "the appeal of our purest Roumanian blood" in Transylvania had been heard across the mountains during the thirty odd years of pretended friendship with the country from which the cry came. It was unanswered until a time arrived when the friend, exhausted by more than two years of gigantic war-effort, was engaged in her death-struggle. Then, without pretence of justification, other than desire for realization of "her dream," Roumania made war upon her ally.

And she was fortunate beyond the possibilities of prediction. For by her choice of side, she obtained the territories of her former ally (Austria-Hungary), and by the collapse of her new ally (Russia), she was able to seize territory of that ally also—the coveted territory in Bessarabia. How one thrills at the mention of "the last struggle between might and right!" To the credit of the United States, it refused at the peace settlement to be a party to spoliation of Russia.

CHAPTER X

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AUSTRIA-HUNGARY declared war on Serbia on 28 July 1914. Turkey sided with the Central Powers on 29 October of the same year. Italy joined the Entente Allies on 26 April 1915. Bulgaria joined the Central Powers on 11 October of the same year. Roumania joined the Entente Allies on 27 August 1916. The United States of America associated herself with the same side on 6 April 1917. Greece remained neutral — as neutral as circumstances permitted — until 27 June 1917, and then joined the *entente* Allies. Why did she wait? And why, at length, did she act?

INTRODUCTORY

Division of Subject. For answers, we must follow the development of two parallel courses of action through three distinct periods. We must divide the subject into, first, the internal personal contest between King Constantine and M. Venizelos, and second, the external pressure applied by the *entente* Allies. And we must treat of these as they appear in the various periods.

1. In what may be called the Venizelos period, namely, from the beginning of the war until 5 October 1915, Venizelos' premiership was interrupted (6 March 1915) only by the precarious tenure of Gounaris, who was almost immediately overwhelmed at the general elections (13 June); who was defeated in the Boulé shortly after its meeting (16 August); and who, soon afterwards, made way for the restoration of Venizelos (23 August). During this period, the operations of the Allies included the seizure of three islands near the mouth of the Dardanelles in March 1915; and various negotiations with a view to Greece entering the war. Simultaneously with the termination of the period, the Allied troops landed upon Greek soil at Salonica.

2. What may be called the Zaimis-Skouloudis period commenced 11 October 1915. Zaimis held office until 2 November, and was then succeeded by Skouloudis. The period closed with the retirement of Skouloudis, at the dictation of the Allies, 23 June 1916. During these months, the Allies took possession of various Greek islands (including Corfu) and certain railways; compelled retirements and demobilizations of the Greek army; arrested foreign consuls; insisted upon changes in the constabulary; enforced compliance with their demands by blockades of the Greek ports; and finally required the dismissal of Skouloudis himself.

3. The remaining months, which may be referred to as the moribund period, saw a succession of transient premiers — Zaimis from 23 June 1916 to 11 September; then Dimitricopoulos for a few days (unacceptable to the Allies); then Kalogeropoulos (also unacceptable) until 4 October; then Professor Lambros till the beginning of May (1917); then Zaimis again. These months witnessed the rebellion of Venizelos, and the establishment of a rival government at Salonica; seizures by the Allies of the Greek war-fleet, the telegraphs, and the posts; the landing of troops of the Allies at the Piraeus (the port of Athens); the deposition of the King on 10 June; and the entry of Greece upon hostilities against the Central Powers on 27 June. Such is an outline of the story. We must fill in the details.

The King. Greek independence of Turkey was achieved by the war of 1821-28, and was acknowledged in the protocol of the London Conference of 3 February 1830 by the United Kingdom, France, and Russia. In 1833, Prince Otho of Bavaria became "Otho, by the

Grace of God, King of Greece," but, not having behaved himself, he was returned to Bavaria in 1862 by the people of Greece.

"One of the rights," said Lord John Russell (then Foreign Secretary), "which belong to an independent nation . . . is that of changing its governing dynasty upon good and sufficient cause."¹

Recommended by the three Powers, Prince William of Denmark was elected by the Greek National Assembly as George I, Constitutional King of the Hellenes, to the vacant throne. In the treaty of 13 July 1863 between the three Powers and Greece, it was declared that:

"Greece, under the sovereignty of Prince William of Denmark and the guarantee of the three courts, forms a monarchical, independent, constitutional state."²

On 18 March 1913, George I died, and was succeeded by Constantine I, who, in the two Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913, by his gallant and successful military leadership, gained the enthusiastic plaudits of his people and the admiration and affection of his army. During the great war, until constrained by Entente action to contrary course, he pursued a policy of neutrality, resisting from time to time strong pressure by Venizelos to enter the contest upon the side of the *entente* Allies. He feared the land strength of the Central Powers,³ and he was apprehensive, at first, of the attitude of Bulgaria and Roumania; while, on the other hand, he could not afford to risk the wrath of the masters of the Mediterranean. To both sides he gave assurances of friendship and sympathy. On 7 August 1914, in answer to an appeal from the Kaiser,⁴ he wrote:

"The Emperor knows that my personal sympathies and my political views draw me to his side. I shall never forget that it is to him that we owe Cavalla. After mature reflection, however, it is impossible for me to see how I could be useful to him, if I mobilized immediately my army. The Mediterranean is at the mercy of the united fleets of England and France. They would destroy our fleet and our merchant marine, occupy our islands, and especially would prevent the concen-

¹ Despatch of 6 Nov. 1862: British Accounts and Papers, 1863, LXVIII; Strupp: *La situation internationale de la Grèce*, p. 162.

² The texts of the London protocol of 1830; the treaty of 7 May 1832; the treaty of 1863; and the treaty of 1864 uniting the Ionian islands to Greece, may be seen in Hertslet: *Map of Europe by Treaty*, II, pp. 841, 893, 1545; vol. III, p. 1589; in Greek White Bk., 1913-17, pp. 1-19; and in *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp. pp. 67-85.

³ Vice Admiral Kerr personally approved of the King's policy. In an interview with the *New York Herald* (published 31 January 1921), he said: "If Greece had been talked into the war when we wanted, she would have been overrun by [? as was] Serbia, and then the Greek islands would have been Greek submarine bases, and we should have lost every ship in the Mediterranean and the war, because they would have held up the Suez Canal."

⁴ Greek White Bk., No. 19; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 115. See also Kautsky Docs., Nos. 243, 466, 504, 702.

tration of my army, which can only be effected by sea, because there does not yet exist any railway. Without being able to be useful to him in anything, we would be wiped off the map. I am necessarily of opinion that neutrality is imposed upon us, which could be useful to him, with the assurance that I shall not touch his friends, my neighbors, as long as they do not also touch our local Balkan interests.”⁵

On the other hand, as we shall see, assurances of sympathy and support were sent to the *entente* Powers. The precise form of these is not known, but from other sources (quoted upon subsequent pages), we gather that they were somewhat definite. The opinion of Rear Admiral Kerr (the head of a British naval mission to Greece), as to the King's attitude, is important:

“This was the position of Constantine. He was certainly not in favor of Germany. He supplied us with all the information he could. He proved to me from the beginning that Bulgaria was tied to Germany. I informed my Government of this, but they preferred to believe the Minister of Sofia and their own agents, mostly supplied by the Germans, with the result that while we were accepting favors from the Greeks we were trying to bribe Bulgaria with a slice of Greek territory in Macedonia. Certainly not fair play.”⁶

At a later period, after the *entente* Powers had taken possession of Salonica, and after Venizelos in the Chamber had assumed to express determination to enter the war on the side of the *entente* Powers, there can be little doubt that the attitude of the King was one of resentment and hostility, even to the point of an endeavor to embarrass these Powers by military intervention. Mr. Paxton Hibben, in his interesting book, maintains the contrary;⁷ but the many telegrams which passed between Athens and Berlin establish unmistakably that, as early as 14 December 1915, the King was engaged in negotiations for the commencement of operations against the *entente* forces in Macedonia.⁸

⁵ Greek White Bk., 1913-17, No. 21; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 117. The King's telegram was sent through the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs (Streit), but without the knowledge of Venizelos: Speech of Venizelos, 26 August 1917, reported in *The Vindication*, p. 79.

⁶ *N. Y. Herald*, 31 Jan. 1921. See also references in the speeches reported in *The Vindication*, pp. 77-80.

⁷ Mr. Hibben pictures the situation as one in which Constantine was being thwarted by the Allies in his efforts to co-operate with them. The subject is alluded to in his book, *Constantine I and the Greek People*, at pages 96, 104, 111-24, 130, 156-7, 167-72, 197-8, 241-2, 264, 282, 286, 288, 308-9, 331, 336-8, 341-3, 347, 351, 353, 355, 358, 363-6, 368. The King himself has on several occasions asserted that his sympathies had uninterruptedly been on the side of the Entente: See his interview in the *N. Y. Times*, 24 Feb. 1917; his statement of 14 Jan. 1917 in *Current History*, VI, p. 153; his interview in *The Times* (London), 8 Dec. 1920; and his interview in *Le Matin*, republished in *Contemporary Rev.*, Jan. 1921, p. 112.

⁸ Greek White Bk., Supp. Nos. 36-93. To prove complicity of the King with

Venizelos. Eleutherios Venizelos, born in 1864, is a native of Crete — an island which, until 1912, formed part of the Turkish dominions. From 1899 until 1910, he was the most conspicuous figure among the island politicians. In the latter year, he became a member of the Greek National Assembly at Athens and President of the Council. Consistently, from the commencement of the great war, he urged, upon terms, co-operation with the *entente* Allies. He saw in their success⁹ an opportunity for extensive territorial accessions in Asia Minor at the expense of Turkey — even restoration of Greek power in Constantinople. And when, at a later date, Bulgaria commenced hostilities against Serbia, he asserted that Greece was bound by treaty to go to Serbian assistance.

Greco-Serbian Treaty. Greece and Bulgaria had co-operated in the war of 1912; had fought against each other in 1913 over the division of the Turkish spoils; and the defeat of Bulgaria had enabled Serbia and Greece to possess themselves of territory to which Bulgaria deemed herself entitled. A large part of Macedonia thereby became Bulgarian *terra irredenta*, and, fearing renewal of hostilities, the two countries — Greece and Serbia — entered into a defensive treaty and a military convention on 21 June 1913. The difference of opinion between the King and Venizelos as to the true interpretation of these very badly drawn documents will be referred to upon subsequent pages.

Greece and Turkey. The treaty of peace between Greece and Turkey after the war of 1912-13 had left some important questions unsettled. Negotiations as to these proceeded unsatisfactorily, and, contemplating the recommencement of war, Greece appealed for co-operation to her ally Serbia. In a letter to the Greek representative at Belgrade (12 June 1914), the Greek Foreign Minister stated, as the Greek complaint against Turkey, the:

“systematic persecutions to which Hellenism in Turkey has been subjected for several months”;

and he requested that Serbia should come to the assistance of Greece:

“in case Bulgaria should participate in the war, or refuse to defend its neutrality.”¹⁰

Greece intended that hostilities should, if possible, be confined to the sea, pointing out that Turkey had no means of reaching her by land except across Bulgarian territory. To the Greek appeal, Serbia offered temporizing reply (16 June¹¹), but, without delay, made threat at

the Central Powers, Venizelos published a number of communications which passed between the Courts of Athens and Berlin (*ibid.*). The date of the earliest of them is as above — 14 Dec. Readers of the present chapter will know what had happened prior to that date.

⁹ In his opinion, “the local predominance in the East of the group to which England belongs will be complete” (Greek White Bk., Supp., No. 6, pp. 8-9.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 1.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, No. 3.

Constantinople of joining with Greece.¹² The Porte promised speedy restoration of order (17 June), and Greece appears to have subsided.

I. THE VENIZELOS PERIOD

Greek Offer of Co-operation. The opening of the great war changed the situation. Mr. Asquith has recently stated that:

“During the month of August 1914, M. Venizelos offered to place at the disposal of the Entente all the military and naval resources of Greece. It is not clear what was the effect and nature of his authority in making the offer, whether it was an official proposal put forward with the approval of the King and Cabinet, or whether it was a personal overture, to which, in the commanding position he then occupied, he felt little doubt of his capacity to give effect.”¹³

With less hesitation, Mr. Winston Churchill, in his recent book, has said:

“On August 19, 1914, Monsieur Venizelos, then Prime Minister of Greece, with the approval which he had, astonishing to relate, obtained of King Constantine, formally placed at the disposal of the *entente* Powers all the naval and military resources of Greece from the moment when they might be required.”¹⁴

M. Auguste Gauvain, besides affirming that Venizelos offered (August) to place the Greek forces at the disposition of the *entente* Allies, states:

“George V telegraphed to Constantine I in order to thank him and to inform him that he had sent an order to the British Admiralty to come to agreement with the Greek General Staff as to the method of co-operation of the forces of the two countries. Constantine I replied by a friendly telegram saying that the Greek Naval General Staff was ready to confer with the English agents. This exchange of despatches took place through the agency of Admiral Kerr.”¹⁵

The Greek offer was declined. Mr. Churchill relates that:

“Sir Edward Grey, however, after very anxious consideration, moved the Cabinet to decline Monsieur Venizelos’ proposal as he feared, no doubt with weighty reasons, that an alliance with Greece meant immediate war with Turkey and possibly Bulgaria. He feared that it might

¹² *Ibid.*, No. 4.

¹³ *The Genesis of the War*, cap. XXIX.

¹⁴ *The World Crisis*, I, p. 529.

¹⁵ *L’Affaire Grecque*, p. 36. Cf. *The Vindication*, pp. 33-4. That assurances had been given to the *entente* Powers is further established by a later letter (13 Sept. 1914) to the King, in which Venizelos said: “We ought to prevent this danger by giving a tangible proof of the sincerity of our intentions regarding the declaration made to the Entente at the beginning of the war that all our sympathies were with it, and that we should be disposed to fight by their sides if only we could be guaranteed against the Bulgarian peril”: Mélas, *Ex-King Constantine and the War*, pp. 252-3.

jeopardize Greece without our being able to protect her. He was anxious above all things not to foster a Greek enterprise against Constantinople in such a way as to give offence to Russia."¹⁶

Greece was:

"advised to reserve herself as long as Turkey did not intervene."¹⁷

The apparent conflict between these documents and the statement that Constantine was determined to remain neutral may be attributed, partly, to Venizelos' unauthorized assumption of authority to speak for the King, and, partly, to defective recital of the facts. As we shall see, Venizelos (so far agreeing with the King) was clearly of opinion that Greece must remain inactive while Bulgaria continued to be a menace.

Proposals of Allies. War with Turkey was not declared until 5 November (1914), but early in September the British Admiralty sent a telegram to Rear Admiral Kerr¹⁸ suggesting Greek support in an attack upon the peninsula of Gallipoli with a view to forcing the Dardanelles. The reply of the Admiral (on or prior to 9 September) was as follows:

"The Greek Staff have been consulted on the subject of your telegram, and I agree with them in their opinion that, if Bulgaria does not attack Greece, the latter will take Gallipoli with force at their disposal. Greece will not trust Bulgaria, unless she at the same time attacks Turkey with all her force. They will not accept Bulgaria's guarantee to remain neutral. Subject to above conditions, plan for taking Dardanelles Strait is ready."¹⁹

Churchill urged upon Sir Edward Grey that Russian troops could be brought from Archangel or Vladivostock to assist Greece, but Grey replied:

"You will see from the telegram from St. Petersburg that Russia can give no help against Turkey."²⁰

In a letter to the King (7 September), Venizelos objected to the form of the telegram which the Admiral proposed to send to London, and, tendering his resignation, added:

"After the declaration which I was authorized by Your Majesty to make to the representatives of the Entente Powers, and the telegrams exchanged with the King of England by Your Majesty, I do not believe that to the new step of the British Government (Admiralty) Your Majesty will answer that Greece refuses to enter into war against Turkey until attacked by her. As I had the honor of saying

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, I, p. 530. And see II, p. 33. Mr. Asquith concurs in this statement: *op. cit.*, cap. XXIX. See also Sir Edward Grey's statement in the House of Commons, 14 Oct. 1915: *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [167].

¹⁷ Asquith, *op. cit.*, cap. XXIX.

¹⁸ The head of the British naval mission to Greece: Churchill, *op. cit.*, I, p. 532.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 533. And see p. 534.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 534-5.

to Your Majesty, we certainly cannot undertake an offensive war against Turkey as long as we do not secure the co-operation of Bulgaria, or at least her absolute neutrality. But to declare that even on that basis we are not disposed to make war on Turkey as long as she does not attack us, is manifestly contrary to the well-understood interests of the nation.”²¹

The King disclaimed association with the Admiral's telegram. He chided his Minister for assuming that it “represented my views,” and declined to accept the resignation.²² Venizelos' letter is important as indicating that he and the King agreed that, while the attitude of Bulgaria remained uncertain, Greece ought not to engage in an attack upon Turkey. Bulgaria was very uncertain, and afterwards joined the Central Powers.

Turkey having entered the war, the *entente* Powers offered (5 December 1914) South Albania, except Valona, to Greece, if she would immediately join in the war. Venizelos replied demanding that Roumania should guarantee that Bulgaria would not attack Greece. The guarantee could not be obtained, and the proposal was dropped.²³

In January 1915, the *entente* Powers, in order to induce both Greece and Bulgaria to participate in operations in the Balkans, proposed that Greece should transfer to Bulgaria the district of Cavalla; that Serbia should likewise transfer her possessions in Macedonia, as far as the Vardar, or even farther west if necessary; and that Greece should be recompensed, at the expense of Turkey, by large accessions of territory in Asia Minor.²⁴ Venizelos strongly favored acceptance of the proposal. In a letter to the King (24 January 1915), he said:

“Until to-day our policy has consisted in the conserving of our neutrality, at least in so far as our engagement toward Serbia has not demanded our leaving it. But to-day we are called upon to take part in the war—no longer merely to discharge a moral duty, but in exchange for compensations which, realized, will constitute a great and powerful Greece such as even the most optimistic could not have imagined a few years ago.”

“To achieve the successful issue of this plan I believe that important concessions must be made to Bulgaria. Up to this time we have not only refused to discuss this subject, but we have declared that we would oppose any important concessions being made to her by Serbia—concessions which might upset the equilibrium of the Balkans, established by the treaty of Bucharest. Our policy in this connection was always well defined up to the present time. But to-day things have obviously changed: at the moment when there rises before us the realization of

²¹ Greek White Bk., Supp., No. 6.

²² Mélas, *op. cit.*, pp. 244-7.

²³ Cocks: *The Secret Treaties*, p. 81.

²⁴ Cf. Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 42, 43.

our national aspirations in Asia Minor, we might make some sacrifice in the Balkans in order to assure the success of so great a policy.

"We ought above all to withdraw our objections to concessions being made by Serbia to Bulgaria, even if these concessions extend to the right bank of the Vardar. But if these are not sufficient to attract Bulgaria to co-operate with her ancient allies, or at least to induce her to guard a benevolent neutrality, I should not hesitate — painful as the act would be — to advise the sacrifice of Cavalla to save Hellenism in Turkey and to assure the creation of a really great Greece comprising nearly all the countries where Hellenism has exercised her power during her long history through the centuries. This sacrifice would not be made as the price of the neutrality of Bulgaria, but as a compensation for her participation in the war with the other Allies. . . . At the same time, as partial compensation for this concession, we should demand, in the event that Bulgaria should extend her territory beyond the Vardar, that the Doiran-Ghevgheli sector²⁵ be conceded to us in order to acquire, opposed to Bulgaria, a solid northern frontier — deprived as we should be of the excellent frontier which separates us from her on the east.

"Unfortunately, owing to the Bulgarian greed, it is not at all certain that these concessions — considerable as they are — will satisfy Bulgaria and secure her co-operation. But at least the aid of Roumania should be assured; without her, our entrance into the struggle becomes too perilous. . . .

"Opposed to the dangers to which we should be exposed in taking part in the war, there would predominate hope — hope founded, as I trust, on saving a great part of Hellenism in Turkey and of creating a great and powerful Greece. . . . And finally, even if we should fail, we should keep the esteem and the friendship of strong nations, of those very nations who made Greece, and who have, so many times since, aided and sustained her. Whereas our refusal to discharge our obligations of alliance with Serbia would not only destroy our moral existence as a nation and expose us to the dangers cited above, but such a refusal would leave us without friends and without credit in the future."²⁶

Having made to Roumania his proposal of joint action, and having been met with (as he said) a refusal of "all military co-operation if Bulgaria does not participate," Venizelos, in a letter to the King of 30 January 1915, urged territorial cessions to Bulgaria, but agreed that if her co-operation could not be secured, Greek participation in the war would be "checked":

"This being the state of things, it is time, I think, to face resolutely

²⁵ This sector formed part of Serbia.

²⁶ Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 551-5. A slightly different translation appeared in *The Times* (London) of 22 April 1915. Cf. *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [254.

the problem of the sacrifices necessary to obtain, if possible, a pan-Balkan alliance for a common participation in the war."

"The ceding of Cavalla is certainly a very painful sacrifice and my whole being suffers profoundly in counseling it. But I do not hesitate to propose it when I look upon the national compensations which will be assured to us by this sacrifice. I have the conviction that the concessions in Asia Minor, concerning which Sir Edward Grey has made overtures, may, especially if we impose certain sacrifices regarding Bulgaria upon ourselves, take on such dimensions that a Greece equally large, and certainly no less rich, will be added to the Greece that has been doubled by two victorious wars.

"I believe that if we ask for the part of Asia Minor which, situated to the west of a line starting from Cape Phineka in the south, should follow the mountains of Al-Dag, Ristet-Dag, Carli-Dag, Anamas-Dag to reach Sultan-Dag, and which from there would end at Kaz-Dag in the gulf of Adramit (in case we are not given an outlet on the Sea of Marmora), there might be considerable probability of our request being accepted. The extent of this territory exceeds 125,000 square kilometers; thus it has the same area as Greece, as she has been doubled as a result of two wars.

"The part that we should cede (casas of Sali-Chaban, Cavalla, and Drama) has not a surface of over 2,000 square kilometers. It represents, consequently, in extent one sixtieth of probable compensations in Asia Minor without counting the compensation of Doiran-Ghevgheli, which we shall also demand. It is true that, from the point of view of wealth, the value of the territory that we are to cede is very great, and out of proportion to its size. But it is clear that it cannot be compared in wealth to that part of Asia Minor the cession of which we must work for. The matter of ceding Greek populations is certainly of the greatest importance. But if the Greek inhabitants of the portion ceded may be estimated at 30,000, that of the part of Asia Minor which we should receive in exchange can be reckoned at 800,000 souls; this is, therefore, twenty-five times superior to that which we would cede."

"Sire, under these circumstances, I firmly believe that all hesitation should be put aside. It is doubtful—it is improbable that such an occasion as this which presents itself to us to-day will be offered again to Hellenism that she may render so complete her national restoration. . . . Under these conditions, how could we let pass this opportunity furnished us by divine Providence to realize our most audacious national ideals? An opportunity offered us for the creation of a Greece absorbing nearly all the territory where Hellenism has predominated during its long and historic existence? A Greece acquiring stretches of most fertile land assuring to us a preponderance in the Ægean Sea? "

"It is to be noted, however, that the cession of Cavalla does not

make it in any way certain that Bulgaria will consent to leave her neutrality to co-operate with us and the Serbs. It is probable that she may insist either upon obtaining these concessions in exchange merely for her neutrality, or that she may demand that this cession be made to her now before the end of the war, and, consequently, whatever may be the issue of the war.

“We cannot accept any of these conditions. If our participation in the war is checked in consequence of Bulgaria’s attitude, we shall have kept unbroken the friendship and the sympathy of the Powers of the Triple Entente. And if we may not hope for such concessions as we might have obtained in exchange for participation in the war, we may at least expect with certainty that our interests will have the sympathetic support of these Powers, and that we shall not be deprived of their financial aid after the war.”²⁷

The principal points for observation in these frankly imperialistic letters are as follows: (1) There is no reference to the merits of the quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. (2) There is no suggestion of the existence of any obligation to go to the assistance of Serbia as against the attacks of Austria-Hungary. (3) Hitherto “we have refused” to discuss cessions to Bulgaria with a view to co-operation with her in the war. (4) And we have objected to Serbia making cessions “which might upset the equilibrium of the Balkans.” (5) Now “things have obviously changed.” (6) We ought:

“to withdraw our objections to concessions being made by Serbia to Bulgaria, even if these concessions extend to the right bank of the Vardar.” (7) If more were needed in order to move Bulgaria into action, Greece should cede the valuable cazas of Sali-Chaban, Cavalla, and Drama, receiving at the same time the Doiran-Ghevveli sector. (8) Greece should not enter the war without the aid of either Bulgaria or Roumania. (9) The probable compensations for participation in the war on the side of the *entente* Allies would be the constitution of:

“a great and powerful Greece such as even the most optimistic could not have imagined a few years ago.”

Greece would acquire territory in Asia Minor exceeding 125,000 square kilometers — an area equal to the Greece which had recently been doubled. Greece would be assured of “a preponderance in the Ægean sea.”

“How could we let pass this opportunity furnished us by divine Providence to realize our most audacious national ideals?”

Pursuing the purposes indicated in the second of his letters to the King, Venizelos handed to the British Ambassador (2 February) particulars of what he required in exchange for military co-operation, intimating willingness to cede the Cavalla territory to Bulgaria if she also

²⁷ Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 556-60. See also letter of Venizelos to the King of 22 Feb. 1915: Mélas, *Ex-King Constantine and the War*, pp. 248-250.

would enter the war.²⁸ The negotiations failed. Arrangements could be made with neither Bulgaria nor Roumania nor Serbia.²⁹ A large money loan by Berlin to Bulgaria induced Sir Edward Grey to telegraph that "there could be no question of a cession to Bulgaria for the present."³⁰

Allied Proposals for Co-operation at the Dardanelles. Meanwhile, arrangements for an allied attack upon the Dardanelles had been preparing, and on 9 February the British government offered Greece the assistance of the 29th Division, together with a French Division, "if she would join the Allies." Mr. Winston Churchill tells us that he: "did not believe that Greece, and still less Bulgaria, would be influenced by the prospects of such very limited aid. Indeed the exiguous dimensions of the assistance were in themselves a confession of our weakness. This view was justified, and the offer was promptly" (11th) "declined by M. Venizelos."³¹

A letter from Venizelos to the King (22 February 1915) indicates that it was the King, and not Venizelos, who declined the proposal:

"Your refusal to participate, even partially, in the operation against Constantinople could not be considered by England otherwise than as a breach of the promise given at the beginning of the war. This refusal will be attributed to Your Majesty's desire, in order to follow a dynastic policy, not to follow another policy which might lead to a quarrel with the Kaiser."³²

The negotiations appear, however, to have continued. Greece was asked to assist in the enterprise with a land force of 15,000 men and the whole of her fleet, and was to be rewarded with sovereignty over territory in Asia Minor.³³ Venizelos was eager to accept the offer, and at Council meetings of 3 and 5 March, warmly supported his view. But the King refused to agree, and Venizelos resigned — 6 March.³⁴ The proposal had been made unacceptable by the fact that it came only from France and the United Kingdom, while Russia firmly opposed co-operation with Greece, and particularly the approach of Greek troops toward Constantinople.³⁵ Russia wanted neither Germany nor Greece in control at the

²⁸ Cocks: *The Secret Treaties*, pp. 81, 2.

²⁹ Cf. cap. VIII, pp. 296-300; cap. IX, pp. 310-14.

³⁰ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 20. Cf. Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

³¹ Churchill: *The World Crisis*, II, p. 178.

³² Mélas, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

³³ Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-4. Cf. Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

³⁴ He agreed that the King had acted within his constitutional powers in accepting his resignation and ordering a new election: Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-6.

³⁵ Cf. *ante*, cap. II, p. 58. The Russian objections are quoted in Mr. Churchill's book, *The World Crisis*, II, pp. 202-4. Venizelos afterwards asserted that "there exists, on the contrary, a telegram sent by Mr. Romanos (Greek Minister in Paris) two or three days after my resignation, announcing that France had obtained Russia's consent to the participation of Greece unconditionally — without the condition, that is, that we should declare war against Germany" (*The Vindication*,

Straits. She required that any co-operating Greek troops should be used against Austria-Hungary rather than Turkey.³⁶ Commenting upon this, Mr. Churchill says:

“Can one wonder that, with his German consort and German leanings, with every appeal on the one hand and this violent rebuff on the other, King Constantine was thrown back and relapsed into his previous attitude of hostile reserve.”³⁷

Seizure of Islands. The islands of Tenedos, Imbros, and Lemnos, near the entrance to the Dardanelles, being convenient bases from which to conduct the attack, the Allies took possession of them (March 1915). They had been taken by Greece from Turkey in the war of 1912-13, but their ultimate ownership was unsettled. If the arrangements of the London Conference of 1913 were to be put in force, the first two would revert to Turkey,³⁸ but for the moment all three were in the occupation of Greece. The Central Powers had reason to complain of breach of Greek neutrality by unresisting surrender of them to the Entente. If, as alleged, Venizelos gave his personal, although unauthorized assent,³⁹ the breach was all the more flagrant.

Gounaris succeeds Venizelos. Venizelos was succeeded by Gounaris, who, in his press communiqué of 10 March 1915, said:

“Under these circumstances, neutrality from the beginning of the war was a necessity for Greece. She had, and always has the absolute duty to carry out her obligations of alliance and to pursue the satisfaction of her interests, without, however, running the danger of compromising the integrity of her territory — ”⁴⁰

a somewhat non-committal declaration.

Further Proposal of the Allies — Gounaris having expressed a desire to revive the negotiations, the Allies (12 April) offered Greece, among other things, the Aidin vilayet, in Asiatic Turkey, on condition that she would immediately enter the war.

p. 85). Had Mr. Churchill ever heard of such a change on the part of Russia, he would not have written as he did. He wished to disregard the Russian protest: See p. 205. In a mémoire submitted by Basili (Russian Vice-Director of Foreign Affairs) in 1914 with reference to preparation for an attack upon the Straits “in the course of a” (anticipated) “European war,” it was said that “Greece has been sensibly strengthened by the last crisis, and her national ideal has been magnified to such an extent that her dream of Constantinople will probably for the future be an obstacle to all *rapprochement* between us and Greece”: *ante*, cap. II, p. 58.

³⁶ Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-4. Cf. Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-4; Mélas, *op. cit.*, pp. 151, 221-3; Churchill, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 203-4.

³⁷ Churchill, *op. cit.*, II, p. 203. Venizelos' account of the incident appears in his speech of 26 August 1917: *The Vindication*, pp. 81-90.

³⁸ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, pp. 562-4; Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 128. See Strupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 219, 228, 232.

³⁹ Churchill, *op. cit.*, II, p. 178.

⁴⁰ Greek White Bk., No. 28; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 123.

“ On April 1 ” (N. S., April 14) “ M. Gounaris declared the willingness of Greece to enter if the Allies would guarantee her territorial integrity, together with North Epirus and the islands for the period of the war and a certain period after it, while the question of territorial acquisitions in Asiatic Turkey was to be a matter for later discussion. No reply was given to this, and, on May 1, the Greek Minister declared that since the Allies had apparently no intention to guarantee the territorial integrity of Greece the latter had decided to remain neutral.”⁴¹ Guarantee of the territorial integrity of Greece would have meant continuation, as against Bulgaria and Turkey, of Greek sovereignty over that part of Macedonia taken from them in 1912-13. Hoping still to purchase the co-operation of Bulgaria by cession of Greek and Serbian territory,⁴² and being at the moment embarrassed by the conflicting territorial demands of Italy, the Powers declined the proposal.⁴³ They wanted Greek support, but for Greek territorial assurance they declined to give the required guarantees.⁴⁴

Pressure by the Allies. In their search for war-assistance, the *entente* Powers were much embarrassed by the conflicting ambitions of the nations whose co-operation they desired. Italy wanted certain territory in Asia Minor, but Greece also wanted it. Bulgaria required cessions from Serbia and Greece of those portions of Macedonia of which she had been deprived by the treaty of Bucarest; but while Venizelos was willing to make the concessions, the Greek people were firmly opposed to it, and Serbia made stout refusal.⁴⁵ Mr. Churchill alleges, and with reason, that:

⁴¹ Cocks, *op. cit.*, p. 82; Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

⁴² Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

⁴³ The action of the Entente appears to have been a timid approach to the policy advocated (14 April 1915) by the Buxtons, when, referring to Venizelos' resignation, they said: “ Recent events have confirmed the main contentions set forth in this book [*The War and the Balkans*], particularly in Chapter X. The necessity for some concession by Greece to Bulgaria has been proved by the fact that, in spite of the evident difficulties of such a course, the late Prime Minister, M. Venizelos, proposed to King Constantine in January last the concession of Kavala. It was in consequence of this proposal that M. Venizelos was driven from office. If he had been able to urge it as part of the terms dictated by the Triple Entente, in exchange for great acquisitions of territory in Asia Minor, there is evidence that he would not have fallen, but would have been able to carry the country with him in his policy of lending the military help of Greece to England, France, and Russia. It is even possible that he might be reinstated in power if the Triple Entente was now to adopt the course advocated in this volume, and to dictate its terms to all the Balkan States in an absolutely precise form. This policy, fraught with such immense advantage to the Triple Entente, has not yet been adopted by diplomacy. It still holds the field ” (Preface). As late as 17 March 1915, General Sir Arthur Paget reported that Bulgaria was safely on the side of the Entente (Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 25). How wrong he was, the Buxtons well knew, and subsequent events unmistakably proved. Cf. speech of Nicolas Polites, 25 August 1917: *The Vindication*, p. 58, and *ante*, pp. 294-7.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Churchill, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 485-6, 487, 498. *Ante*, cap. VIII, 295-7; 300-1.

“There is nothing in Bulgarian claims as now put forward which is not reasonable and honorable”; and, deeply anxious for Bulgaria’s aid the Allies proposed (29 May) to procure for her — by pressure if necessary — the desired cessions if she would but help them. The movement was, however, full of danger. As Mr. Churchill says:

“In order to gain this supreme advantage, the risk must be run that, having offered everything to Bulgaria, she will not move. In this case, as we are frequently warned, we shall have offended Greece and Serbia without gaining any compensating advantage.”⁴⁶

If, on the other hand, Bulgaria agreed, and Serbia and Greece declined to implement the proposal? In that case, as Mr. Churchill suggested, the purpose would be accomplished:

“only by territorial concessions forced upon Greece and Serbia combined with the granting of loans and the expectation of success in the Dardanelles.”

After reference to the heavy pressure applied to Serbia in order to obtain her assent to requisite territorial concessions, and to Serbia’s obstinate refusals, Mr. Churchill continued as follows:

“It would be unjust at the same time not to recognize the extraordinary difficulties with which Sir Edward Grey was confronted owing to the need of combining the diplomatic action of four separate great Powers in so delicate and painful a business as virtually coercing a then friendly Greece and an allied and suffering Serbia, specially shielded by Russia, to make territorial concessions deeply repugnant to them.”⁴⁷

Bulgaria refusing to move, the Allies escaped, for the moment, further consideration of such villainous projects. Later on (as we shall see) the work of coercing Greece was pressed to successful completion. Meanwhile, as Mr. Churchill foresaw, the Allies had “offended Greece” by offering to purchase, by cession of Greek territory, the military aid of a nation hated by Greece.

Elections — Venizelos reinstated. The Gounaris ministry not being able to command a majority in parliament, a general election was held on 13 June (1915). The nature of the issue submitted to the electors has been a subject of warm dispute. Venizelists assert that it was whether, in the event of Bulgaria attacking Serbia, Greece ought to

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 447.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 485-6. Cf. *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [255; Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 53; Cocks, *op. cit.*, p. 82. At a later date, as a term of an agreement (12 Oct. 1915) by which Roumania was induced to render war-assistance, the Allies promised “to bring into action in the Balkan theatre, not including the forces already in Gallipoli, an army of at least 200,000 men. . . . We are repeating this offer to Greece, and if Roumania is prepared to act immediately, we shall call upon Greece imperatively to fulfil her treaty obligations to Serbia”: Churchill, *op. cit.*, p. 505. Parts of the context of the above extract may be seen *ante*, cap. VIII, pp. 300-1.

intervene. The subject will be dealt with on a subsequent page.⁴⁸ At this place, it will suffice to note that both the Ministerialists and the Liberals (as the Venizelists styled themselves) declared that they were opposed to the cession of any portion of Greek territory to Bulgaria;⁴⁹ and that Venizelos personally abstained from electoral activity because, in his letter to the King (30 January 1915), he had, for the purpose of securing co-operation of Bulgaria, urged the cession to her of the Greek cazas of Sali-Chaban, Cavalla, and Drama.⁵⁰ The Liberals secured a majority of the seats, variously estimated at from 16 to 45.⁵¹ Venizelos was reinstated as President of the Council on 23 August.⁵²

Greece Offended by the Proposal of the Allies. Alluding to the offer of the Allies to Bulgaria (above referred to), the *Annual Register* has the following:

“Whatever King Constantine and M. Gounaris may have thought of these proposals, there is little doubt that M. Venizelos, when he came into power a fortnight later, was disposed to consider them favorably, although even the Venizelist newspapers criticised the tone of the Entente’s note as insulting to a friendly and neutral nation. The Allies did not ask for any Greek assistance in the war, but only demanded the cession of the territory mentioned. The scheme, however, came to nothing, owing to the fact that Bulgaria was by this time secretly committed to the Central Powers, or at least to an entente with Turkey.”⁵³

Referring to the same subject, Mr. Hibben has said:

“To say that this cavalier disposition of the territory of an independent state provoked indignation in Greece would be to fail in describing the feeling the Entente’s move aroused. The Greeks felt precisely as the Americans did when the German foreign minister proposed aiding Mexico to reconquer Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona, save that in this instance the Entente did not promise to aid Bulgaria to take the territory in question; they ceded the territory to her as if it were their own.”⁵⁴

⁴⁸ *Post*, pp. 367-9.

⁴⁹ *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, pp. [254-5.

⁵⁰ *The Vindication*, pp. 36, 94; *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [254. The text of the Venizelos letter appears in Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 556-60. In his speech in the Boulé of 26 Aug. 1917, recounting the history of the preceding years, Venizelos assigned no particular reason for his abstention. He said merely: “You know that the leader of the Liberal party was compelled to withdraw from the contest”: *The Vindication*, p. 94.

⁵¹ *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [255. See also speech of Nicolas Stratos, 23 Aug. 1917, in *The Vindication*, p. 169.

⁵² The delay was due to the serious illness of the King. The Venizelists’ suggestion of the appointment of a Regent was not favorably considered. See speech of Venizelos, 26 Aug. 1917: *The Vindication*, pp. 95-6.

⁵³ *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [255. And see Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 53. According to Cocks (*op. cit.*, p. 82), Greece had previously protested, on both 31 May and 12 August, against proposals made by the Allies for the transfer of Greek territory to Bulgaria.

⁵⁴ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 37. And see p. 12.

The offer to Bulgaria came very inopportunately for Venizelos. Referring to it afterwards (13 March 1917), he said:

"The protecting Powers had proposed the cession by Greece to Bulgaria of eastern Macedonia. This proposition . . . was perfidiously exploited by the Germanophile propaganda and served the royalist cause, which at once entrenched itself on the ground of territorial integrity. I do not exaggerate in saying that, without this action, the King would never have dared to repudiate the obligations flowing from our treaty with Serbia."⁵⁵

ment, Venizelos found himself in still greater embarrassment because

Further Proposals — Mobilizations. Shortly after his reinstatement of further action of the Allies. Bulgaria having given unmistakable evidence of a disposition to co-operate with the Central Powers, the Allies made offer to her of still larger concessions of territory at the expense of Serbia. Upon this the comment of M. Gauvain in *L'Affaire Grecque* is as follows:

"On the 14th September, after long and painful pressure upon Serbia, they offered Sofia the Macedonian conquests. Sad days for M. Pashitch and M. Venizelos. Urged by the Entente, the latter resigned himself to consent to the cession by Serbia of Monastir to Bulgaria, on condition that Albania should be partitioned between Greece and Serbia, so that these two latter countries would have a common frontier."⁵⁶ Bulgaria replied by decreeing general mobilization."⁵⁷

Greece also mobilized (24 September), and the ill-judged attempts of the purchase of Bulgaria with Greek and Serbian territory ceased. Russia delivered an ultimatum to Bulgaria (3 October). War immediately followed.

Salonica. On 2 October 1915, the French Minister at Athens handed to Venizelos the following note:

"By order of my Government I have the honor to announce to Your Excellency the arrival at Salonika of the first detachment of French troops, and to declare at the same time that France and Great Britain, the allies of Serbia, are sending their troops to help that country, as well as to maintain their communications with her, and that the two Powers rely upon Greece, who has already given to them so many proofs of friendship, not to oppose the measures taken in the interests of Serbia, to whom she is equally allied."⁵⁸

Three days later, the troops disembarked and established camp in the neighborhood of the city.⁵⁹ In his recent book, Mr. Churchill offers only the following as reason for this action:

⁵⁵ Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-5.

⁵⁶ The treaty (26 April 1915) by which the Allies induced Italy to enter the war prevented acceptance of this condition.

⁵⁷ P. 56. Mobilization took place 23 Sept.: Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁵⁸ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 564.

⁵⁹ Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 69; Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

“As a military measure to aid Serbia directly, the landing at this juncture of allied forces at Salonika was absurd. The hostile armies concentrating on the eastern and northern borders of Serbia were certain to overwhelm and overrun that country before any effective aid, other than Greek aid, could possibly arrive. As a political move to encourage and determine the action of Greece, the despatch of allied troops to Salonika was justified.”

Mr. Churchill appears to have discovered that this motive, also, was absurd, for he adds:

“The reader who has a true sense of the values in the problem will not be surprised to learn that this despatch of troops from the Dardanelles produced the opposite effect to that intended or desired. King Constantine had been trained all his life as a soldier. . . . When he learned that the allied help was to take the form of withdrawing two divisions from the Dardanelles, he naturally concluded that that enterprise was about to be abandoned. He saw himself, if he entered the war, confronted after a short interval not only with the Bulgarians but with the main body of the Turkish army, now chained to the Gallipoli Peninsula. He read in the British and French action a plain confession of impending failure in the main operation, whose progress during the whole year had dominated the war situation in the East. It proved impossible to remove these anxieties from the Royal mind and, added to his German sympathies, they were decisive. ‘His Majesty,’ said Sir Francis Elliot (October 6), ‘was disturbed by the fact that the troops had been brought from the Dardanelles to Salonika. He thought that it was the beginning of the abandonment of the expedition and would release the whole Turkish army to reinforce the Bulgarians.’”⁶⁰

Upon a later page of Mr. Churchill’s book may be found some better explanation of the landing than the foregoing. Roumania was still neutral. Efforts to secure her co-operation had failed. But more alluring offers might move her. Austro-German concentration and Bulgarian mobilization had made certain that Serbia was about to be attacked.⁶¹ Help must be provided. Will not Roumania provide it, if she is assured of sufficient allied aid? Possibly she will. In support of the negotiations, troops are hurriedly sent to Salonica (whence Bulgaria may be assailed), and promises are made that others will follow. On 12 October, the following declaration was made to both Roumania and Greece:

“The only effective manner in which help can be given to Serbia is by the immediate declaration of war by Roumania and Greece against the Austro-Germans and Bulgaria. The British Government in that event would be prepared to sign forthwith a Military Convention with Roumania, whereby Great Britain will guarantee to bring into action in the Balkan theatre, not including the forces already in Gallipoli, an

⁶⁰ *Op. cit.*, II, pp. 499-500.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 498.

army of at least 200,000 men. If the French send a force, as they contemplate doing, that force would be part of this total; but if not, the British Government would undertake to provide the whole number themselves.

“This force would include a number of our best and most seasoned Divisions, and we shall maintain them in the field, waging war on behalf of our Allies, until the objective is accomplished. A steady flow of troops will commence as soon as transport is available and will be continuously maintained. We estimate that 150,000 men will be available by the end of November, and the total 200,000 will be reached by the end of the year. The Military Convention will state precisely the dates at which the different portions of the army will arrive. We are repeating this offer to Greece, and if Roumania is prepared to act immediately, we shall call upon Greece imperatively to fulfil her treaty obligations to Serbia.”⁶²

It is more than doubtful if any Greek obligations to Serbia existed (see subsequent pages), but, if so, the United Kingdom had no right to enforce performance of them. Fortunately (from one point of view), execution of the threat was unnecessary, for Roumania declined the proposal. In her opinion, the prospect of *entente* success had darkened. Bulgaria was becoming active. Turkish forces (she may well have thought) were about to be set free for Balkan operations. Greece was regarded as inimical.

Justification for the landing upon Greek territory has been placed on various grounds. Their validity will be examined on subsequent pages.

Salonica Sequel. Defeated by the Central Powers and the Bulgarians, the Serbian army fled to the Adriatic. Although the purpose of the landing of the Allies of Salonica (as stated in the note of the Allies) had thus failed, they determined to remain. Not only so: they brought there the remnants of the Serbian army from the Adriatic (December 1915), and, reinforced by about 110,000 of these men, they proceeded to the north.⁶³ Operations commenced there 25 July 1916, and a general offensive followed a few weeks afterwards (20 August). Monastir was taken on 19 November. Throughout the whole of the operations, that is up to the close of the war, the base at Salonica was maintained.⁶⁴

Parliament. On the 4th October 1915, while the attack upon Serbia by the Central Powers and Bulgaria was imminent, and the allied landing at Salonica about to commence, Venizelos, in an impassioned speech in the Greek Chamber, declared that Greece was bound by her treaty to go to the assistance of Serbia when assailed by Bulgaria, and added that if, in discharging a duty to Serbia:

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 505.

⁶³ A detachment had gone to the aid of the Serbians shortly after the landing of the allies at Salonica. It accomplished nothing, and returned to its base.

⁶⁴ Accounts of the operations may be seen in *Current History*, VI, pp. 155, 163.

"we find ourselves confronted by the Powers, I am certain that, while expressing our regret, we will do our duty."⁶⁵

The Chamber indicated its confidence in Venizelos by a vote of 147 to 110.⁶⁶ On the morning of the same day, he gave to the Associated Press a statement which, in effect, supported the King's view of the interpretation of the treaty.⁶⁷ But, treaty or no treaty, Venizelos saw amply sufficient reason for siding with the Entente.⁶⁸

II. THE ZAIMIS-SKOULODIS PERIOD

Zaimis succeeds Venizelos. On the next day (the 5th), the King dismissed Venizelos from office, upon the ground that, without any previous consultation, he had indicated his willingness to engage in war against the Central Powers.⁶⁹ Admitting, afterwards, that in thus acting the King was clearly right, Venizelos said that his speech in the Boulé "rendered impossible my further continuance in office."⁷⁰ He was succeeded by M. Zaimis (inclined to friendship with the Entente) who, in announcing his policy to foreign courts (8 October), said:

"The new Cabinet, having studied the various aspects of the exceedingly complicated international situation before which it now finds itself, is in a position to affirm that its policy will rest on the same essential bases as the policy followed by Greece from the beginning of the European war. Greece, in order the better to insure her vital interests, will remain in a state of armed neutrality, and will adapt herself to events, the evolution of which the new Cabinet will follow with unabated attention."⁷¹

Venizelos promised to support the government:

"so long as it did not subvert the foundations of the Venizelist policy."⁷²

Cyprus. On 20 October, the British Ambassador at Athens offered to cede the island of Cyprus if Greece would enter the war upon the side of the Entente. The Zaimis government having refused the offer (22 October), it was (25th) withdrawn.⁷³

Bulgarian Attack — The Greco-Serbian Treaty. On the 11th October 1915, Bulgaria commenced her attack upon Serbia, and the ques-

⁶⁵ Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-3. The vote, however, "was not a clear-cut mandate for intervention": H. Charles Woods in *Fortnightly Rev.*, Feb. 1921, p. 299.

⁶⁷ The statement is quoted *post*, p. 360.

⁶⁸ *Ante*, pp. 322; 325-8.

⁶⁹ Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-6. Cf. Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-3, and the curious observation of Major Mélas, *op. cit.*, pp. 107 ff.

⁷⁰ Speech of 26 Aug. 1917 in the Boulé: *The Vindication*, p. 110.

⁷¹ Greek White Bk., No. 33; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 126. See Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

⁷² Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

⁷³ Cocks: *The Secret Treaties*, p. 83. Cf. Mélas, *op. cit.*, pp. 113, 151; *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, pp. [170-1, [257, [284; *The Vindication*, p. 222.

tion of the obligation of Greece under the treaty became acute. It appears to be probable that the King, in the previous July, had promised the Kaiser that Greek neutrality would not be interrupted by a Bulgarian attack.⁷⁴ In any case, the government declined to intervene.⁷⁵ Upon the question whether by the treaty⁷⁶ Greece was under obligation to go to Serbia's assistance, the King and Zaimis took one view and Venizelos the other. The point will be discussed on subsequent pages. Meanwhile note, for it is important, that the actions of the Zaimis government were satisfactory to the *entente* Powers, and that they made no complaint of Greek inactivity, nor did they attribute unconstitutional conduct to the King. Venizelos afterwards, in a speech in the Boulé (26 August 1917), said that Zaimis:

"was practicing a policy of genuine neutrality, the result of which you see in the fact that, for the months during which he remained in office, our relations with the Powers of the Entente were quite peaceful, and although he was the man who trampled on the Serbian Treaty, they even supplied him with money and gave his government every proof of friendliness."⁷⁷

Skouloudis succeeds Zaimis. Venizelos' support of Zaimis was not of long duration. On 3 November 1915, a motion of condemnation of the ministry was carried by 147 to 114. Zaimis resigned. Skouloudis succeeded to the Presidency of the Council; chose colleagues, for the most part, from the retiring ministry; and announced (8 November) that:

"The new Cabinet intends to follow in foreign affairs exactly the same policy as its predecessor."⁷⁸

To the representatives of Greece at the courts of the *entente* Allies he telegraphed (8 November 1915) an assurance of the continuation of an attitude of:

"the sincerest benevolence towards the Entente Powers" and "the friendly attitude . . . towards the Allied troops in Salonika."⁷⁹

General Election. The ministry being in a minority in the Boulé, new elections were ordered. Claiming that the action was unconstitutional, Venizelos and his supporters declined to enter the contest. In a manifesto (21 November), Venizelos said of his party — the Liberal party:

⁷⁴ Greek White Bk., No. 30. See, however, telegram of Gounaris of 2 Aug. 1915: Greek White Bk., No. 31; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 124. Cf. *The Vindication*, pp. 97-8. See also p. 222 under date 30 July.

⁷⁵ Zaimis to Greek Ambassador in Serbia, 12 Oct. 1915: Greek White Bk., No. 34; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., pp. 126-8; Strupp, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

⁷⁶ Greek White Bk., No. 2; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 89.

⁷⁷ *The Vindication*, p. 119.

⁷⁸ Greek White Bk., No. 35; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 129.

⁷⁹ The despatch is more fully quoted, *post*, pp. 373-4.

“It leaves to the government, the author of this situation, the full and entire responsibility both for the departure from our political system, and for the disasters to which this policy is conducting the nation. At the same time, our party endeavors also to forfend other dangers, those which might result from an internal struggle, susceptible of becoming rapidly acute, in the midst of an external crisis.”⁸⁰

In his speech in the Boulé of 26 August 1917 (after the dethronement of the King), Venizelos said:

“Our abstention was a measure which would clearly pose the constitutional issue, the question of the liberties of the people, the issue between the sovereignty of the people and the Crown, an issue which we did not want to raise at that moment, for reasons which I explained a short time ago, but the solution of which we should have to look for in good time.”⁸¹

The meaning of this is not as clear as that of a later statement in the same speech, namely that the reason for abstention was that:

“the authorities would have in their hands all the means of imposing their will. What were these means? That the Government, or rather the General Staff, the other and real centre of executive power, had in its hands 300,000 electors, one half, that is, of all the Greek citizens who would take part in the elections, and with this half in its power invited us to proceed to a general election, having decided that on the polling day they would give their own friends leave to exercise their electoral right and would prevent our men from voting by keeping them in barracks. It is clear that an election under such conditions would have been really ridiculous, and that the Liberal Party was justified in declaring that under such conditions it would be a farce to go through an election, and was right in refusing to take part in it.”⁸²

The excuse was weak — not unconstitutionalism but fear of defeat. After careful investigation, Mr. H. Charles Woods was of opinion that the reason for Venizelos' abstention was to be found in the fact that he: “was faced with the alternative of either modifying his programme, or of exposing himself to repudiation by a people who, at any rate at that time, did not wish to enter the war on either side.”⁸³

The government was sustained (19 December). The Boulé met on 20 January of the following year. And afterwards, seeing chances of electoral successes, the Venizelists contested some of the by-elections,⁸⁴ Venizelos himself being returned for Lesbos.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

⁸¹ *The Vindication*, p. 120.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 123.

⁸³ *Fortnightly Rev.*, February 1921, p. 300.

⁸⁴ Speech of Venizelos, 26 August 1917: *The Vindication*, p. 156.

⁸⁵ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 221. The by-elections were in Chios, Lesbos, and eastern Macedonia.

Coercion. We have now reached the stage at which the Allies began their series of domineering demands and coercions. Their expeditionary force from Salonica was fighting on Serbian territory, and, uncertain as to the intentions of the Greek King, General Sarrail demanded the withdrawal of Greek troops from the approaches to the city. The King refused, and the Allies replied with the first of the commercial blockades of Greek ports,⁸⁶ the British legation issuing the following communiqué (19 November 1915):

“Because of the attitude of the Hellenic Government in regard to certain questions touching closely the security and liberty of action to which the Allied troops have right under the conditions of their disembarking on Greek territory, the Allied Powers have deemed it necessary to take certain measures which will have the effect of suspending the economic and commercial facilities which Greece has received from them heretofore.

“It is not the intention of the Allied Powers to constrain Greece to abandon her neutrality which, in their eyes, is the best guarantee of her interests.”⁸⁷

How a neutral government could accord “liberty of action” on its soil to the troops of a belligerent Power was not explained; nor was the nature of the alleged “conditions of their disembarking” indicated. Unable to resist the demand, the King complied.⁸⁸ Six days afterwards (25 November):

“the Entente ministers in Athens presented a formal joint memorandum to the Skouloudis government requiring written assurances confirming those verbal assurances King Constantine had given Lord Kitchener and Mr. Denys Cochin,⁸⁹ and generally looking ‘to the use of Greek territory as a base of field operations.’”⁹⁰

The next day:

“In a new note, the partial demobilization of the Greek army was demanded, as well as the retirement of the bulk of the Greek force from Saloniki, and the right of the Allies to police Greek waters in search of enemy submarines. To insure the Greek acceptance of these exigencies, the ‘commercial and economic blockade’ of Greece was stiffened. No contact between Greece and the outer world was permitted.”⁹¹

To this the King strongly objected. In a message to the United States (4 December), he said:

“The Entente’s demand is too much. They try to drive Greece out

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 143.

⁸⁷ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

⁸⁸ *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [257.

⁸⁹ To the effect that, “under no circumstances, whatever the fate of the Allied expedition in Macedonia, would the Greek troops ever attack the Allies” (Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 96).

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

of neutrality; they come into Greek territory and waters as though they were theirs. At Nautilia, they destroyed tanks of petroleum, intended to kill locusts, on the excuse that they might be used by German submarines. They stop Greek ships; they ruin Greek commerce — as they have done with American ships, too; they want to seize our railways, and now they demand that we take away the troops guarding the Greek frontiers, leaving the country open to invasion of any lawless incursion. I will not do it. I am willing to discuss, reasonably, any fair proposition. But two things I will not concede: Greece shall not be forced or cajoled out of her neutrality; Greece will maintain her sovereignty and her sovereign right to protect herself at need.”⁹²

Brave words; but the stress of the blockade of his ports compelled submission. On the 11th, the King capitulated unconditionally.

Further Coercion. On 28 December, the Allies took possession of the island of Castellorizo — another of the islands taken by Greece from Turkey.⁹³

On 30 December, General Sarrail ordered the arrest of all the Consuls of the Central Powers stationed at Salonica:

“took forcible possession of their consulates, seized their official papers, and finally, with considerable ostentation, deported them and a great number of their nationals who had been arrested at the same time. A score of Greek subjects were also arrested on charges of espionage and propaganda.”⁹⁴

On 2 January 1916:

“the Norwegian consul was likewise arrested and deported, and the consuls of the Central empires and the Dutch consular officer at Mitylene, as well as a number of Greek residents of that island, were taken into custody and expelled from Greek territory. The protest of the Greek Government for these events was couched in no measured terms.”⁹⁵

Early in the same month, General Sarrail destroyed the steel bridge at Demir Hissar over the Struma — a river which divided the eastern section of Greek territory from the western. Fearing attack by Constantine, the General in this way protected himself from the Greek troops in the eastern district, in which were Cavalla, Drama, and Seres.⁹⁶

“On January 20, the Allies placed a net at the mouth of the Greek harbor of Volo, and it became necessary for Greek ships to have the permission of the Allied naval authorities to enter the port.

“On January 28, the Greek fort of Karabournou, at the mouth of the Gulf of Saloniki, was forcibly seized by General Sarrail, and the Greek garrison disarmed and conducted to Saloniki under guard.

⁹² *The Citizen* (Ottawa), 7 Dec. 1916.

⁹³ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 150; *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, pp. [257-8.

⁹⁵ Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-1.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 166, 168-9.

“On February 2, a German aviator, whose machine alighted within Greek lines in eastern Macedonia, and whom the Greek Colonel Orphanidis was preparing to intern, was taken by force by a French detachment and made a prisoner of war of the French.”

On February 5,
 “the French and British ministers officially informed the Greek premier . . . that the Allies would take possession of no more Greek territory, and that ‘whatever might be done in the future would, as in the past, be under the pressure of military necessity,’ adding, however, that ‘the withdrawal of the Greek troops from Macedonia would leave the Allied Powers indifferent.’”⁹⁷

On February 17, the consular officers of the Central empires in the island of Chios were likewise deported, a number of Greeks being arrested there as well.”⁹⁸

Afterwards,
 “The Allies in Saloniki seized and occupied the Greek fort at Dova Tepe, northeast of Lake Doiran, one of the most important Greek frontier strongholds.”⁹⁹

Then followed the seizure of Suda Bay in Crete,¹⁰⁰ and of the great port of Argostoli on the Ionian coast.¹⁰¹

Corfu — The Serbian Army. In January 1916, the Allies seized the island of Corfu,¹⁰² notwithstanding its guaranteed neutrality as declared in the treaty between the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and Greece, of 20 March 1864, article 2 of which was as follows:

“The courts of Great Britain, France, and Russia, in their character of guaranteeing Powers of Greece, declare with the assent of the courts of Austria and Prussia, that the islands of Corfu and Paxo, as well as their dependencies, shall, after their union to the Hellenic Kingdom, enjoy the advantages of perpetual neutrality. His Majesty the King of the Hellenes, on his part, to maintain such neutrality.”¹⁰³

The Allies desired to use the island:

“as a station for the defeated Serbian troops, who had fled through Albania to escape from the Germans and Bulgarians.¹⁰⁴ The Allies justified these actions on the ground that Greece was really an ally of Serbia, and that in being forced to render these services to Serbia and to the Entente, she was still doing less than her duty.”¹⁰⁵

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 181-2.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

¹⁰² Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

¹⁰³ Hertslet: *Map of Europe*, III, p. 1589; Greek White Bk., p. 16; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 82; Strupp, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

¹⁰⁴ In Corfu, the Allies assumed the right to arrest those whom they regarded as German spies: *N. Y. Times*, 17 Jan. 1916.

¹⁰⁵ *Ann. Reg.*, 1916, p. [278].

The contention was, of course, invalid: first, because the Allies had no right to decide the disputed question as to the alleged obligations of the treaty; second, because they had no right to enforce a contract between two other countries; and third, because of the internationally declared neutral character of the island.

Afterwards (April) the Allies announced their intention to transport the troops across Greece to Salonica.¹⁰⁶ The King refused to agree. The railway route lay from Patras on the coast to the Piraeus (the port of Athens), thence through Athens to Salonica. What might have happened to the King and his government while 110,000¹⁰⁷ displeased Serbian soldiers were passing through his capital, might well have been regarded as doubtful. The Allied Ministers insisted, but the King stood firm.¹⁰⁸ The troops, eventually, went safely by water — their passage through the Corinth canal and the Straits of Euboia (Greek territory) being permitted.¹⁰⁹

Bulgarians at Fort Rupel. At the end of May 1916, the Bulgarians, seeking protection against the Salonica forces, crossed the Greek frontier and, in spite of Greek protest,¹¹⁰ occupied certain strategic positions, among others Fort Rupel at the entrance to the defile Demir Hissar from which the Greek garrison withdrew.¹¹¹ In the Boulé (5 June 1916), M. Skouloudis said:

“At 1:00 o'clock in the morning of the 13th to the 14th a telegram was received from the 6th Division, according to which the commander of the Germano-Bulgarian troops opposite Roupel declared to the commander of the fortress that it must be evacuated during the night because it would at all events be occupied by them. Under these circumstances, the government, seeing, on one hand, the determination of the invaders to occupy the fortress, and, on the other hand, that the continuation of armed resistance was likely at any moment to be transformed into a general clash, and lead to an abandonment of the policy of neutrality — which it does not intend to abandon — ordered, through the Ministry of War, first, the cessation of resistance, and later that a declaration should be made to the German commander that in view of the general invasion

¹⁰⁶ See diplomatic correspondence (Nos. 39-43) in Greek White Bk., and in *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., pp. 133-9.

¹⁰⁷ *Current History*, VI, p. 159.

¹⁰⁸ It was quite in accordance with Venizelos' ideas of Greek neutrality that he should have asserted that the refusal of passage to belligerent troops was a breach of neutrality: His speech of 26 Aug. 1917, reported in *The Vindication*, p. 129.

¹⁰⁹ Greek White Bk., No. 43; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 139; *Ann. Reg.*, 1916, p. [278].

¹¹⁰ Greek White Bk., No. 53; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., pp. 145-6.

¹¹¹ The explanations of M. Skouloudis may be seen in Greek White Bk., Nos. 60, 61; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., pp. 150-5. And see Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 226-30.

of the German army in the narrow pass of Demir-Hissar, inside of which the fortress is located, the garrison of the fortress was obliged to withdraw, carrying with it all the war material in the fortress."¹¹²

Shortly after the surrender of the fort, the French Ambassador informed the Greek Premier that the Allies considered it a breach of the promised "benevolent neutrality." It was a curious complaint. In breach of Greek neutrality, the Allied forces were at Salonica — either an unresisted or a permitted breach. From there, the Allies had attacked their enemies in the north; had been compelled to retire; and when apprehensive of being themselves attacked by the advancing Bulgarians, insisted that the Greeks were bound to supply protection.¹¹³

Situation of Allies. Possession of Fort Rupel was rightly regarded by General Sarrail with some apprehension. It was situated, indeed, on the eastern, while he was on the western bank of the Struma, and he had destroyed the only available bridge at Demir Hissar.¹¹⁴ But to the east of the river were the rich districts of Drama, Seres, and Cavalla, which might be added to the Bulgarian conquest, and in which concentration for attack might be expected. Commenting upon the surrender of Fort Rupel, the writer of the *Annual Register* (1916) said:

"This new development placed the Allied army in a somewhat perilous position, not so much because of the presence of the Bulgarians on its front and right wing, but because it was flanked on its left by the Greek army, a very large part of which had been mobilized since 1915. The Greek army was loyal to its pro-German King, and the Allied Governments were not unreasonably suspicious of that Sovereign's intentions."¹¹⁵

On 1 June, the French Director of Political Affairs expressed his view to the Greek Chargé at Paris as follows:

"As for the French Government, it is disposed to accept the explanation that considerations of defense had led the Bulgarians to occupy strategical positions such as the narrow passes which the fortress of Roupel commands, but the advance of the Bulgarian army into the interior of Greek Macedonia, the occupation by it of the environs of cities coveted by Bulgaria, the possible march of the Bulgarians on Cavalla, must necessarily lead it to draw the natural conclusion that Greece must have received assurances guaranteeing the restitution of those regions, of the value of which assurances she ought not to have the slightest illusion.

"In any case, the situation has radically changed by reason of the Bulgarian advance. In fact, Greece, by her passive attitude in the face of

¹¹² Greek White Bk., No. 60; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., pp. 151-2. Cf. Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-6.

¹¹³ Venizelos' view of the surrender of Fort Rupel may be seen in his speech of 26 Aug. 1917, reported in *The Vindication*, pp. 130-7.

¹¹⁴ *Ante*, p. 341.

¹¹⁵ P. [279.

an invasion which might weaken the military situation of the Allies, appears to be abandoning her policy of benevolent neutrality, and, consequently, the Entente cannot but resume the necessary freedom in order to insure the preponderance of its armies acting in the Balkans. This freedom has reference as much to military operations as to measures of internal police, and General Sarrail has to that effect received orders giving him an extent of action larger than heretofore.”¹¹⁶

Further Coercion. On 3 June, General Sarrail assumed military control of Salonica. A Press despatch contained the following:

“While all the Greek troops in the Saloniki district were attending a Te Deum Mass in celebration of the King’s saint day, French troops under Gen. Sarrail assisted by French gendarmes, seized the city. Gen. Sarrail immediately declared Saloniki in a state of siege and under French rule. Tremendous excitement had been aroused among the civil population and the troops as well. Urgent messages have been sent to the King at Athens, begging determined protest and action. The local Greek authorities are furious. They declare their intention of endeavoring to retake the city, come what may. The French *coup* was sprung while practically every Greek was attending a great field Mass, and the city was at the mercy of the allied troops. The French seized the postoffice, occupied the port, and took command of the prefecture. They also occupied the offices of the Chief of Police, ordering that official, Col. Nidriotis, and the Greek Chief of Constabulary, Col. Troupakis, to leave the city. The Greek postal and telegraph staffs were ordered to continue work, but are closely supervised by French officers. The entire system of Greek railways was taken over by the French, and is being operated under their control for military purposes. Gen. Sarrail, commanding the allied troops here, to-day granted an interview and explained the causes of his action. ‘The state of things has a purely military significance,’ he said. ‘Military necessities, of which I alone am judge, accidentally obliged me to take this measure.’ It is believed that the action was taken owing to the peril of a Teuton-Bulgar offensive, following the invasion of Greek territory a week ago.”¹¹⁷

The action at Salonica was followed by the internment of Greek ships in British ports, and by an embargo upon the export of coal from the United Kingdom to Greece.¹¹⁸

On 3 June, Sarrail declared martial law in all parts of Greece occupied by Entente forces,¹¹⁹ a proceeding which, as Venizelos afterwards said, “amounted to a revocation of Greek sovereignty.”¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Greek White Bk., No. 58; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 149.

¹¹⁷ *The Globe* (Toronto), 5 June 1916.

¹¹⁸ *N. Y. Times*, 9 June 1916.

¹¹⁹ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 230; Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

¹²⁰ Speech on 26 Aug. 1917: *The Vindication*, p. 137.

On 6 June, commercial blockade of Greek ports recommenced.¹²¹ It lasted until 3 July.¹²²

About 8 June, the island of Thassos, off Cavalla, was occupied.¹²³

On 12 June, with the hope of getting rid of the blockade, the King ordered demobilization of the Greek army.¹²⁴

III. THE MORIBUND PERIOD

Demands of 21 June 1916. The demands of the *entente* Ambassadors of 21 June 1916 mark the commencement of the Moribund Period — the effacement of the Greek government, the deposition of the King, and the reinstatement of Venizelos. Persisting in their fantastic conception of neutral duty, the Ambassadors declared that:

“the three guaranteeing Powers do not require Greece to leave her neutrality. They have, however, certain complaints against the Greek government, whose attitude is not one of loyal neutrality,”¹²⁵ and they demanded as follows:

“1. The real and complete demobilization of the Greek army, which is to be placed on a peace footing with the least possible delay.

“2. The existing Ministry to be immediately replaced by a Cabinet of Affairs of no political complexion, affording all necessary guarantees for the loyal application of the benevolent neutrality which Greece has undertaken to observe towards the Allied Powers, as well as for the sincerity of a new appeal to the country.

“3. The immediate dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies, followed by a general election immediately after the expiration of the term laid down by the Constitution, and after the general demobilizations shall have restored the electorate to its normal conditions.

“4. The removal, in accord with the Powers, of certain police officials, whose attitude, inspired by foreign influence, has facilitated assaults on peaceful citizens as well as insults offered to the Allied legations and their nationals.”¹²⁶

It was a formidable list of demands to be presented by foreign Powers to a nation whose neutrality they were insisting should be scrupulously observed. All the demands were complied with,¹²⁷ excepting that requiring a new election, which was withdrawn at the request of Venizelos.¹²⁸

¹²¹ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 242.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 235. See Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

¹²⁶ *Ann. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, pp. 797-8. Cf. Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 235-6; *Ann. Reg.*, 1916, p. 129; Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 112; Strupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 243-4.

¹²⁷ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 245, 307.

Zaimis succeeds Skouloudis. Complying with the second of the demands, Skouloudis resigned (23 June), and was succeeded by M. Zaimis, whose government, in the opinion of *The Times* (London), fairly complied with the Allies' requirement of a "business cabinet having no particular color."¹²⁹

Further Coercion. On 21 June, the Greek government delivered to the Allies a note complaining that the Greek coast had been subjected to a limited blockade, ships being held up, searched, and taken to naval bases established by the Allied forces. Various vessels flying the Greek flag had been taken to Bizerta, and had there been converted by the Allies into transports. As a result, the food supplies of Greece had been cut off, and her maritime commerce, "the essential of her national economy," had been stopped.¹³⁰

On 8 August, the Allies decreed that importation of wheat, flour, sugar, coal, and rice should be limited to certain quantities.¹³¹

Cavalla. As General Sarrail had anticipated, the Bulgarians advanced from Fort Rupel. On 27 August (1916), they took possession of Cavalla and, receiving the surrender without opposition of the Greek troops there, sent them to Germany.¹³² The Greek government issued a communiqué announcing disapproval of the action of the Greek commanding officer.¹³³ The Allies declared that the King had connived at the surrender and was thus assisting the Bulgarians.

Roumania and Venizelos. Roumania having declared war on Austria-Hungary (27 August 1916), Venizelos renewed his demand for war. He has related as follows:

"I informed M. Zaimis that if the King, contrary to what had been declared by his *entourage*, refused still to co-operate with the Entente, he would prove by that, in the eyes of the whole world, that he was following a German and not a Greek policy, and I added that I would then consider it my duty to revolt.

"M. Zaimis basing himself upon this declaration, and pointing to the movement of impatience and even of effervescence which was commencing to manifest itself in the army, obtained from the King permission to engage in *pourparlers* with the Entente nations, with a view of emerging from the neutrality of Greece. The King even authorized him to put himself in communication with me, in order to keep me informed of the course of all the negotiations.

"But, meanwhile, the Kaiser telegraphed to the King to assure him that within a month he would surely have overrun the whole of Rou-

¹²⁹ Issue of 22 Sep. 1916.

¹³⁰ *The Citizen* (Ottawa), 22 June 1916.

¹³¹ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

¹³² Venizelos' complaint upon this subject may be seen in his speech of 26 Aug. 1917, reported in *The Vindication*, pp. 142-6.

¹³³ *The Times* (London), 22 Sept. 1916.

mania, and driven the army of Sarrail into the sea. In consequence, he asked him to resist, for four weeks longer, the Venizelist policy. Submissively the King obeyed, yielding to the injunctions of his brother-in-law, and ten days after having appeared to agree to co-operate with the Entente Powers, he threw off the mask and returned to his personal policy.

"M. Zaimis, seeing that he was being treated lightly, refused to play the game of the King and resigned. The moment for action then had sounded. The country had seen clear. The King would never march.

"Admiral Koundouriotis, disheartened (*écœuré*) by such a felony, joined himself to me with General Danglis and we decided to raise the standard of revolt immediately."¹³⁴

Further Coercion. On 1 September 1916, the French Admiral, Dartige du Fournet, began to share with the Ambassadors the direction of the coercive proceedings against Greece. Anchoring the fleet off the Piræus,¹³⁵ he marked his arrival by the seizure of four German and three Austrian merchant ships (interned since the commencement of hostilities), making prisoners of their officers and men. Possession of the Greek government's wireless station was also taken.¹³⁶

On 2 September, the following note was handed by the British and French Ambassadors to the Greek government:

"By instruction of their governments, the undersigned have the honor to bring the following to the knowledge of the Hellenic Government:

"(1) The two Allied Governments, knowing from sure sources that their enemies were kept informed in various ways, and notably by the Hellenic telegraph, demand the control of the posts, the telegraphs, and the wireless telegraph.

"(2) Enemy agents of corruption and espionage must immediately leave Greece, not to return until after the end of hostilities.

"(3) Necessary steps will be taken against Greek subjects who may have been guilty of the acts of corruption and espionage above mentioned."¹³⁷

The demands were complied with.

Successors of Zaimis — Lambros. Owing to the difficulty of arriving at some settlement of the claim of the French minister in connection with what was described as "an attack upon the French legation" in Athens, but what appears not to have been a very serious affair, Zaimis resigned (11 September). He was followed by Dimitricopoulos, who, not being favored with the recognition of the Allies, also resigned. Then came, some days later, Kalogeropoulos (16 September), who, equally unfortunate, retired on 4 October, saying:

¹³⁴ Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-3.

¹³⁵ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 293. The Piræus is the port of Athens.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 297-8.

"The Government not having been able, up to the present, to enter into communication with the representatives at Athens of the Entente Powers, and judging that the situation constitutes an obstacle to the good progress of national affairs, has asked the King to accept the resignation of the Cabinet."¹³⁸

And at last (10 October), in Professor Lambros, a man was found acceptable to the Allies.¹³⁹

Venizelos' Revolution. On 25 September (1916), Venizelos secretly embarked for Crete, issued a revolutionary invocation, and then passed on to Salonica, where he established a "Government of National Defence." Immediately prior to sailing, Venizelos had made a statement to *The Times* (London), in which he said:

"Do not think I am heading a revolution in the ordinary sense of the word. The movement now beginning is in no way directed against the King or his Dynasty.¹⁴⁰ The movement is made by those of us who can no longer stand aside and let our countrymen and our country be ravaged by the Bulgarian enemy. It is the last effort we can make to induce the King to come forth as King of the Hellenes and to follow the path of duty in protection of his subjects. As soon as he takes this course, we, all of us, shall be only too glad and ready at once to follow his flag as loyal citizens led by him against our country's foe."¹⁴¹

Two months afterwards (24 November), Venizelos declared war upon Bulgaria and Germany, assigning reasons as follows:

"... from this day it considers itself in a state of war with Bulgaria for having attacked Serbia, Greece's ally, and invaded, in spite of her promises, the national territory; and with Germany for having incited Bulgaria to fight against Serbia, and to act against Greece; for having violated the guarantees she gave to the Greek Government, with regard to the towns of Seres, Drama, and Kavalla; for having extended to Greek maritime commerce in Greek territorial waters, without plausible reason or previous warning, the criminal attempts of submarines, and for having cynically declared that she intended to persevere in these acts of destruction of defenseless vessels, and the cowardly murder of innocent passengers; and for having finally undertaken to demoralize, humiliate and divide the Greek people to the detriment of their honor and their national interests."¹⁴²

Venizelos claimed to have 60,000 men.¹⁴³

¹³⁸ Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 134. See also Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

¹³⁹ Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

¹⁴⁰ The Powers had insisted that the Venizelist movement should not be anti-dynastic. Cf. Venizelos' speech of 26 Aug. 1917, reported in *The Vindication*, pp. 150, 152-3.

¹⁴¹ Issue of 27 Sep. 1916. Venizelos' negotiations with Zaimis prior to the departure were referred to in his speech of 26 Aug. 1917: *The Vindication*, pp. 147, 8.

¹⁴² *The Citizen* (Ottawa), 20 Dec. 1916.

¹⁴³ His speech of 26 Aug. 1917: *The Vindication*, p. 153.

On 2 January 1917, the appointments of Lord Granville as British and M. de Billy as French representatives to Venizelos' government were announced.¹⁴⁴ Answering a charge in the House of Commons (31 October 1916) that the British government was propping up the King by refusing to recognize Venizelos, Lord Robert Cecil said:

"I may say this, however, that wherever we find part of the Greek community, which is in fact under the Government of M. Venizelos, or his Provisional Government, where the majority of the population recognize him as their Government, we recognize him as *de facto* the ruler of that portion of Greece. More than that, I do not think it right for me to say."¹⁴⁵

Besides according to Venizelos this partial recognition, the *entente* governments furnished him with munitions and money.¹⁴⁶ On the other hand, Major Melas, writing as an enthusiastic Venizelist and a co-operator in the revolution, has complained of the embarrassments caused by the unstable support rendered by the Entente. He has said:

"What a different course events might have taken if the Allies had had Greece with them from the beginning! And it required so little to obtain it, if justice be a little thing! Instead of plainly declaring themselves in favor of the just claims of Greece, the Entente shuffled continually, threw out feelers unceasingly, tried to reconcile the irreconcilable, and blew hot and cold without even coming to a decision; now threatening, now coaxing Greece, now flattering the Bulgarians, letting the Turkish fleet take over the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, at our expense naturally, and even allowing the world to suppose that the fate of Salonica, after the war, would have to remain in suspense. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that without the *coup d'état* of M. Venizelos, it might, at times, have gone hard with the Allied expedition to Salonica.

"No, the Entente policy failed in the East as much towards Greece as towards Serbia, who was not allowed to fall on the Bulgarians at the propitious moment, because of the perpetual fear of 'offending' Bulgaria, which ended by allowing Bulgaria to destroy Serbia.

"Even after our national uprising at Salonica, even after M. Venizelos had set up the provisional Government, we encountered every sort of difficulty in arriving at a good understanding with the Entente. First of all, the Boulogne Conference of October 1916 refused to recognize us. After a thousand tergiversations, the Government of National Defence was finally recognized, but only on the express condition that the movement should not have an anti-dynastic character."¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ *Ann. Reg.*, 1917, p. 1. Lord Granville afterwards (23 Aug.) became Minister at Athens: *ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁴⁵ *The Times* (London), 1 Nov. 1916.

¹⁴⁶ So declared in a statement issued by Venizelos: *The Times*.

¹⁴⁷ *Ex-King Constantine and the War*, pp. 147-8. And see pp. 172, 275-7.

Further Coercion. On 30 September 1916, interference with importation of foodstuffs recommenced.¹⁴⁸ And the French Admiral: "demanded the expulsion within five days of a number of persons, including Greek subjects, a list of whom he appended to his note."¹⁴⁹

On 11 October, the French Admiral seized: "the entire Greek light flotilla of six torpedo boats, fourteen destroyers, the flagship of the flotilla, the *Canaris*, the protected cruiser *Helli*, the two Greek submarines, and even the unarmed despatch vessel *Coriolanus*, sole means of communication between the Piraeus and the Greek naval arsenal at Salamis. The only reason given for the demand was 'the safety of the Allied fleet.' Of the Greek navy only the two battleships, the *Lemnos* and the *Kilkis*, and the armored cruiser *Georgios Averoff*, were to remain under the Greek flag. Some 1500 Greek sailors were to be set ashore on twelve hours' notice, exiled from the ships which they had manned, in 1912, to victory over the hated Turk."¹⁵⁰

"The following day Admiral Dartige de Fournet presented a supplementary note, requiring that the guns of the *Lemnos*, *Kilkis*, and *Georgios Averoff* be rendered useless by delivering up their breech-blocks; and that their crews be reduced to one third strength; and that all the batteries defending the Piraeus be surrendered to French gunners. He demanded, further, full maritime and military jurisdiction over the port of the Piraeus, and, finally, complete control of the police and of the administration of the Athens-Saloniki railway."¹⁵¹

On 13 October, several platoons of French marines were landed and marched to Athens.¹⁵²

At the same time, France and the United Kingdom demanded that all Greek troops should be shut up in the Peloponnesus.¹⁵³ And censorship of the Press was instituted.¹⁵⁴

On 7 November, the French Admiral: "announced his intention of employing the Hellenic light flotilla, heretofore merely sequestered, to combat hostile submarines, and then promptly hoisted the French flag on the ships he had seized less than a month before."¹⁵⁵

On 19 November, the Admiral issued an order: "addressed to the envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary of Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, Germany, and Turkey, summoning

¹⁴⁸ Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 359, 434.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 359.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 368-9.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 379-80.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 387.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 390.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 407.

them to leave the neutral country to which they were accredited by nine o'clock of the morning of November 22."¹⁵⁶

Surrender of Arms. The Greek army having been reduced and assigned to certain quarters, the King was requested to hand over a large part of its equipment. On 16 November, the Admiral: "presented the Hellenic Government with a demand in form for the immediate surrender to the Allies of ten batteries of mountain artillery and the delivery 'within the shortest possible delay' of the following war material:

'Sixteen batteries of field artillery, with 1000 rounds of ammunition for each gun; 16 [that is, 6 in addition to the 10 already mentioned] batteries of mountain artillery, with 1000 rounds for each gun; 40,000 manlicher rifles, with 8,800,000 rounds of rifle ammunition; 140 machine-guns, with a proportionate quantity of ammunition; and 50 military trucks.'

"Save in the matter of machine-guns and rifles, this was virtually the entire available equipment of the Hellenic army."¹⁵⁷

In his note, the Admiral said that:

"the Entente Powers have recognized formally the right of Greece to remain neutral in the present conflict. . . ." "Nevertheless," he added, "the delivery to the Bulgarians of Fort Rupel and Cavalla and especially the abandonment in those places of important war material has upset the equilibrium to the profit of the Entente's enemies in a manner of very grave import."¹⁵⁸

Almost certainly, the French Admiral intended that the demanded war-material should be used in the equipment of troops which Venizelos had collected at Salonica.¹⁵⁹ In some respects, this was the most serious, for the most humiliating of the demands yet made, and compliance with it was refused (22 November¹⁶⁰). The Admiral replied (24 November):

"I find it difficult to admit that public opinion, in a country as enlightened as Greece, can regard as insupportable the idea of ceding to Powers for which Greece affirms a benevolent neutrality, arms and munitions, not in the hands of her army, but completely unused in her arsenals. . . . Referring, therefore, to my previous note of November 16, I have the honor to confirm to the royal Hellenic government that, as a proof of its good-will, I demand ten batteries of mountain artillery not later than December 1, the date of the delivery of the rest of the war material demanded not to be later than December 15. . . . If my demand is not complied with, I shall be obliged to

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 427.

¹⁵⁷ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 415. See Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

¹⁵⁸ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 416. And see *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 803.

¹⁵⁹ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 421.

¹⁶⁰ Strupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-6; Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 423-431.

take, after December 1, whatever measures the situation may require." ¹⁶¹

On the 30th, Lambros repeated his refusal, affirming that although the arms were not in present use, they might be needed in the future. ¹⁶²

The Battle of Athens. The next day (1 December), the Admiral, true to his word, landed 3,000 marines ¹⁶³ and marched them upon Athens equipped for their task, and with full instructions as to the intended operations. ¹⁶⁴ As anticipated on both sides, fighting ensued, producing as Greek casualties three officers and twenty-six men dead, and five officers and fifty-six men (including civilians) wounded; and as Allied casualties, two officers and forty-five men dead, and two officers and ninety-six men wounded. ¹⁶⁵ During the ensuing night, a compromise was arranged, the King agreeing to surrender six batteries of mountain artillery, in addition to the two already seized at Corfu — making one half of the quantity demanded. ¹⁶⁶

Simultaneously with fighting the *entente* invaders, the King's forces and friends had to encounter the local adherents of Venizelos, with the usual result of civic contentions — nineteen of the royal forces and five unarmed civilians were, it is said, killed by shots from Venizelist houses, while the other side suffered not only casualties but destruction of property.

"The presses of the Venizelist newspapers were generally wrecked. . . . In Venizelos' house alone were found 66 rifles, 6,000 rounds of rifle ammunition, 49 revolvers with cartridges, 2,500 dynamite capsules with 40 yards of fuse, and 15 hand grenades." ¹⁶⁷

As part reply to the opposition met with in Athens, the Admiral proceeded to the seizure of further Greek islands — Zante, Naxos, Ithaca, Tinos, Paros, Kea, and Santorin — and the establishment in them of Venizelist office-holders. ¹⁶⁸ The French naval officer, when occupying Kea, posted a proclamation stating:

"As a result of the ambush of Athens, in the course of which Allied sailors were treacherously shot without warning by the Greeks, the French Government, as a first measure of pression, has declared a blockade of Greece. . . . The application of this measure, dictated by the murderers of Athens themselves, will enormously strike at Greece from a material, commercial, and industrial point of view. . . . From a feeling of justice, the French admiral regrets that the innocent must suffer the same as the guilty." ¹⁶⁹

¹⁶¹ Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 433-4. Cf. Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-3.

¹⁶² Strupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 246-7; Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 453-4.

¹⁶³ *Ann. Reg.*, 1916, p. [280.

¹⁶⁴ Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 446-8.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 478.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 473. Cf. Gauvain, pp. 153-4.

¹⁶⁷ Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 488-9.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 504.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 505.

Further Coercion. Replying to the suggestion of Lambros that "a mixed commission of enquiry be named," for the purpose of establishing responsibility for the encounters between the marines and the Greek troops, the Admiral wrote (14 December):

"The recent events in Greece have proved, in an indisputable way, that neither the King nor the Hellenic Government exercises sufficient authority over the Hellenic army to keep it from constituting a menace to the peace and security of the Allied troops in Macedonia. Under these circumstances, the Allied governments are obliged, with a view to assuring their forces against an attack, to demand the immediate removal of the troops enumerated in the technical note attached. These removals must begin within 24 hours and be completed as quickly as possible. On the other hand, all movements of troops towards the north must immediately cease.

"In case the Hellenic Government should not accept these exigencies, the Allies will consider that such an attitude constitutes an act of hostility toward them.

"The undersigned ministers have received orders to quit Greece with the personnel of their legations if, at the expiration of 24 hours from the delivery of the present note, they have not received the pure and simple acceptance of the royal government.

"The blockade of the Greek coasts will continue until the Hellenic Government shall have given full reparation for the last attack, made without provocation by the Greek troops on the Allied troops at Athens, and until sufficient guarantees for the future have been furnished."¹⁷⁰ Reduced to helplessness, the Greek government submitted.¹⁷¹

On 31 December, the Admiral (now de Marilave) demanded a public salute of the *entente* flags; and the discharge of the Commander of the first army corps:

"unless the royal government can satisfy the allied Powers that this measure should be applied to another general officer upon whom the responsibility for the orders issued December 1 rests" —

meaning the King. Moreover, all the Venizelists implicated in the abortive plot of 1 and 2 December were to be liberated immediately, without enquiry, and the property belonging to Venizelists which had been destroyed during the two days was to be paid for. The Greek forces were to be reduced, under the surveillance of agents of the Allies:

"to the number of men strictly necessary to the maintenance of order and police protection."

And further:

"The Powers, guarantors, inform the Hellenic Government that they

¹⁷⁰ Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 507-8.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 512.

reserve full liberty of action in case the Government of His Majesty the King of the Hellenes gives new cause of complaint.”¹⁷²

To all of these demands the Greek Government submitted.¹⁷³ On 29 January 1917, the government, by saluting the flags of the Allies, acknowledged the commission of a fault of which they held themselves to be guiltless.

Removal of the King. It was a curious sort of neutrality and constitutional government which the Allies had now established; but, for the accomplishment of their purpose, there still remained such steps as were necessary to secure the active aid of the Greek army, and, unable to move the King in this respect, they determined to depose him. For this purpose, the United Kingdom and France appointed M. Jonnart, a French Senator, who, after first arranging with Venizelos at Salonica, returned to Athens, and handed to M. Zaimis (11 June 1917) the following letter:

“Monsieur le Président, — The protecting Powers of Greece have decided to reconstitute the unity of the Kingdom without making any attack on the constitutional monarchical institutions which they have guaranteed to Greece. His Majesty King Constantine having manifestly violated the Constitution of which France, Great Britain, and Russia are the guarantors, I have the honor to declare to your Excellency that the King has lost the confidence of the protecting Powers, and that they consider themselves released, so far as he is concerned, from the obligations resulting from their rights of protection. I have in consequence the mission, with a view to re-establishing true constitutionalism, to demand the abdication of H. M. King Constantine, who will himself designate, in agreement with the protecting Powers, a successor from among his heirs. It is my duty to demand a reply from you within twenty-four hours.”¹⁷⁴

At the same time, by an “*aide-mémoire*,” Jonnart declared that, as successor to the King:

“the Diadoque¹⁷⁵ not presenting the guarantees which France, Great Britain, and Russia are at the present time under obligation to exact on the part of the constitutional Sovereign of the Hellenes, they can agree only to the designation of another of his sons.”¹⁷⁶

In what respect the King had “manifestly violated the constitution,” M. Jonnart, of course, did not say. Nor could he have indicated what “true constitutionalism” meant — in Russia particularly.¹⁷⁷

Shortly after the receipt of the Jonnart note, the Greek government learned that, for the purpose of enforcing the demand, 4,000 soldiers

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 523, 4. And see *Ann. Reg.*, 1917, p. [265.

¹⁷³ Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 529-31.

¹⁷⁴ Strupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 248-9; *Current History*, VI, Pt. 2, p. 281.

¹⁷⁵ The eldest son.

¹⁷⁶ Strupp, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

¹⁷⁷ *Post*, p. 366-7.

had occupied the isthmus of Corinth on the night of the 10th-11th; that the army of General Sarrail had entered Thessaly and was marching toward Larissa; and that a corps of 10,000 men was ready to land at the Piræus.¹⁷⁸ Within the time limited, Zaimis informed Jonnart that:

"His Majesty the King, careful, as ever, only of the interest of Greece, has decided to leave the country with the Prince Royal, and has designated as his successor Prince Alexander"¹⁷⁹

— the second son of the King. Thereupon the King embarked on a French ship, and afterwards found asylum in Switzerland.

Venizelos in Power. That accomplished, Venizelos reappeared on the 21st June. On the 26th, the Allied troops entered Athens. On the 27th, Venizelos, as President of the Council, completed the formation of his cabinet, and on the same day the declaration of war against Bulgaria and Germany which he had issued at Salonica became generally effective. Shortly afterwards, disregarding the elections of 19 December 1915, the new King, at the dictation of Venizelos, summoned, as the Boulé, the men who had been returned at the elections of the previous June. The reason for that action was that, in the earlier body, Venizelos had a majority, whereas in the later he was one of the minority. That was not, of course, the reason assigned. It was, as Venizelos himself said, that:

"the King's dissolution of the Chamber of 31 May (13 June)" was "an illegal and unconstitutional action,"

wisely adding, however, as apology, that his own action in the:

"summoning of the Chamber of 31 May (13 June) will not be judged as cases are decided in the Law Courts. There will be no judicial decision; and it will be judged as a political measure."¹⁸⁰

Venizelos, being thus re-established in power, persuaded the Boulé (25 August) to adopt the following resolution:

"The Boulé, declaring that international agreements have a sacred character and likewise the obligations of the alliance of Greece towards Serbia, conveying a brotherly greeting to the heroic Serbian nation, and convinced that the entire nation is ready for every sacrifice so that by her participation on the side of the Allied States in the world war for the liberty of the people she may re-establish the national honor, recover the lost territories, and in general safeguard the national interests, approves the answer to the royal speech of the majority of the committee *ad hoc* and expresses its full confidence in the Government."¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-200; *Ann. Reg.*, 1917, pp. [265-6; *Current History*, VI, Pt. 2, pp. 84-5.

¹⁷⁹ Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 200; *Current History*, VI, Pt. 2, p. 83; Strupp, *op. cit.*, p. 249. The King's announcement to his people may be seen in Strupp, *op. cit.*, p. LX.

¹⁸⁰ Speech, 26 Aug. 1917: *The Vindication*, p. 156.

¹⁸¹ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 337.

WHY DID GREECE ENTER THE WAR ?

The foregoing recital makes clear the answer to the question, Why did Greece enter the war?

1. The merits of the quarrel between Austria-Hungary and Serbia were not a factor.

2. The Greco-Serbian war-treaty was a popularly appealing pretext — like the Belgian treaty in the United Kingdom. Had Venizelos not desired to enter the war, his interpretation of the treaty would have coincided with that of the King.

3. Greece entered the war because of the Entente promises of territorial expansion. When, prior to the eruption of Bulgarian activity, Venizelos urged the King to take up arms, he said (24 January 1915):

“Until to-day our policy has consisted in the conserving of our neutrality, at least in so far as our engagement toward Serbia has not demanded our leaving it. But to-day we are called upon to take part in the war — no longer merely to discharge a moral duty, but in exchange for compensations which, realized, will constitute a great and powerful Greece such as even the most optimistic could not have imagined a few years ago.”¹⁸²

There lay the powerful motive which induced Venizelos to urge the King to take advantage of the

“opportunity offered us for the creation of a Greece absorbing nearly all the territory where Hellenism has predominated during its long and historic existence.”¹⁸³

The resolution of the Boulé of 25 August 1917 did indeed contain the customary platitudinous reference to “the national honor,” but if Venizelos’ vision of “a great and powerful Greece,” by her participation on the side of the Allied States had ceased to point his course, there can be little doubt that he would have excused inactivity by the lapse of the appropriate period, and Serbia’s failure to perform her stipulated part.

4. Venizelos was enabled to pursue his purpose by the exercise of dominating force on the part of the *entente* Allies.

The Germans manoeuvred Turkey into the war on one side.¹⁸⁴ The *entente* Allies forced Greece into the war on the other side. Hard is the lot of the “smaller nationalities.”

THE GRECO-SERBIAN TREATY

To avoid interruption of the foregoing narrative, consideration of the effect of the Greco-Serbian treaty, and of the alleged right of the *entente* Allies to pursue the course above described, was postponed. These subjects will now be dealt with.

Quarrel being imminent at the close of the successful war of the

¹⁸² *Ante*, p. 325.

¹⁸³ *Ante*, p. 327.

¹⁸⁴ *Ante*, cap. VI.

Balkan confederates (Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro) against Turkey (1912-13), over the disposition of the acquired territory, Serbia and Greece entered into a treaty (5 May 1913)¹⁸⁶ for the purpose, as recited, of preserving "a durable peace in the Balkans." The treaty and accompanying military convention were very badly drawn,¹⁸⁶ and over its meaning, King Constantine and Venizelos came to sharp disagreement. They concurred in the view that the original attack by Austria-Hungary on Serbia did not raise the *casus foederis*,¹⁸⁷ but Venizelos asserted and the King denied that when Bulgaria joined with Austria-Hungary the treaty required Greece to assist Serbia.

Attack by Austria-Hungary on Serbia. The first article of the treaty was as follows:

"The two high contracting parties covenant, expressly, the mutual guarantee of their possessions, and bind themselves, in case, contrary to their hopes, one of the two kingdoms should be attacked without any provocation on its part, to afford to each other assistance with all their armed forces, and not to conclude peace subsequently except jointly and separately."

This article, standing by itself, would have applied to the attack on Serbia by Austria-Hungary — if that action could properly have been regarded as unprovoked by Serbia. Article 1 of the accompanying military convention was as follows:

"In case of war between one of the allied states and a third Power, arising in the circumstances provided for by the treaty of alliance between Greece and Serbia, or in the case of a sudden attack by important masses — at least two divisions — of the Bulgarian army against the Hellenic or Serbian army, the two states, namely Greece and Serbia, promise to each other mutual military support, Greece with all her land and sea forces, and Serbia with all her land forces."

The comprehensive words "a third Power" derive additional significance from the fact that the language employed in a previous unratified convention (14 May) was of specifically limited character:

"In case of war between Greece and Bulgaria, or between Serbia and Bulgaria, or in case of a sudden attack by the Bulgarian army."

These two articles appear to be clear enough: If Serbia, "without any provocation on its part," is attacked by Austria-Hungary, by Bulgaria,

¹⁸⁵ The treaty and associated documents may be seen in Greek White Bk., pp. 20-42; and in *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., pp. 86-108.

¹⁸⁶ Venizelos said that "the military agreement was made by soldiers who were not sufficiently informed as to the views of their governments": *The Vindication*, p. 181.

¹⁸⁷ Venizelos to Greek Minister at Belgrade, 26 July 1914: Greek White Bk., No. 15; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 111; Venizelos to Streit, 29 July 1914: Greek White Bk., No. 17; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 113; Streit to Greek Minister at Nish, 2 Aug. 1914: Greek White Bk., No. 18; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 114.

or by any other Power, Greece must afford assistance with all her armed forces. Venizelos held that if Austria-Hungary alone were the attacking party, Greece was under no obligation to aid Serbia; but he contended that obligation arose when Bulgaria joined in the attack. Clearly the articles quoted do not indicate the existence of such a distinction. But let us see: (1) whether other provisions qualify the inference supplied by the two articles; (2) whether the treaty applied in the event of a combined attack by Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Bulgaria; and (3) whether in that case the King's inaction was without excuse.

Articles 2 and 3 of the military convention are significant, for they provide that "in the beginning of the hostilities," Greece is to place 90,000 men, and Serbia 150,000 men, *on the Bulgarian front*; and that both nations:

"are bound to bring to the zone of operations their remaining military forces, as soon as they shall be available":

a disposition that would, of course, be ridiculous in case of an attack by Austria-Hungary, or by any Power other than Bulgaria, or by any Power in conjunction with Bulgaria. Article 4 is also significant, for it provides that:

"if Serbia should be in need of defending herself against an attack by a Power other than Bulgaria, she shall be bound to go to the assistance of Greece, attacked by Bulgaria, by a number of troops fixed by common agreement."

The event provided for is an attack by Bulgaria on Greece. If, in that case, Serbia has a war of her own on hand, her liability to Greece is modified. And, significantly, there is nothing to indicate liability on the part of Greece to help Serbia against her assailant — who might be Austria-Hungary. If Bulgaria attacks, the *casus fœderis* arises. Otherwise, if any other Power is an assailant. Pointing in the same direction, article 6 provides that:

"The military operations against Bulgaria should be based on a common plan of operations;"

and there is no provision with reference to military operations against any Power other than Bulgaria. Passing article 7, which has similar significance, article 8 is almost conclusive in favor of the King's interpretation of the treaty (*Italics now added*):

"The ultimate object of the military operations of the allied Greek and Serbian armies being *the destruction of the military forces of Bulgaria*, if one of the two armies cannot attain that object in its own theatre of operations, it is bound to accept the assistance of the other in the same theatre of operations."

These clauses ¹⁸⁸ flagrantly contradict the two articles first quoted, for

¹⁸⁸ Others might be referred to, for example, the provisions delimiting the geographical boundaries to be accorded to **Bulgaria**.

they indicate that the treaty was not intended to apply to the case of an attack by any Power other than Bulgaria.

Attack by Bulgaria and Another Power. Translation of the words "a third Power," in article 1 of the military convention, into *Bulgaria* raises the more difficult question, whether the treaty applied to an attack by Bulgaria in association with two other Powers. It may very well be, as Serbia argued, that in that case her need would be greater than if she were confronted by Bulgaria alone.¹⁸⁹ And on the other hand, it may very well be, as Greece contended, that while her forces were sufficient for defence against Bulgaria, she would not have pledged them for service as against the Great Powers. But such considerations — to some extent cancelling one another — are irrelevant, for the true solution is to be found merely in the interpretation of the treaty, and there we see as follows:

- (1) The one case provided for is an attack by Bulgaria.
- (2) An attack by any other Power was not within the contemplation of the parties.
- (3) Nor was a combined attack by Bulgaria and another Power.
- (4) For Serbia's agreement to place 150,000 men on the Bulgarian front "in the beginning of the hostilities" would not apply to such a case.
- (5) Nor would the agreement as to "a common plan of operations against Bulgaria."
- (6) Nor would the statement that "the ultimate object" was "the destruction of the military forces of Bulgaria."

Venizelos himself indicated that the King's interpretation of the treaty was correct when he (Venizelos) said (5 October 1915):

"More, the Greco-Serbian treaty foresaw only the possibility of a Balkan war. When it was made, none could predict the present European conflict with its widespread complications. But the spirit of alliance was one of mutual defence, and because the dangers threatening our ally have increased with unforeseen conditions, there is no excuse for hiding behind the verbiage of the treaty to escape the responsibility of our pledge."¹⁹⁰

Excuses for Non-compliance. There still remains the third question, whether, if the treaty did apply to a co-operative attack, the King's inactivity was without excuse, and, to that, the answer is not difficult. For, first, Serbia being unable to perform her part of the agreement, namely, to place 150,000 men on her Bulgarian frontier, the obligation of Greece did not arise. If it be said that the forces of the Allies which were landed at Salonica ought to have been accounted as the fulfillment of the Serbian obligation, the answers are:

- (1) These forces, during the early period, numbered less than 50,000 men, of whom only 35,000 advanced into Serbia.

¹⁸⁹ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 131.

¹⁹⁰ Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 65, 80, 81.

(2) These forces landed at Salonica only on the 5th October 1915; commenced their march up the Vardar valley only on the 14th; were too late and too few to be of any service; and never reached the place specified by the treaty — the frontier between Serbia and Bulgaria.¹⁹¹

(3) Greece would not have been bound to accept vicarious performance of the treaty obligation of Serbia, even if it had been effectively supplied.

The King contended, secondly, that Greek intervention as against the overwhelming forces of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Bulgaria would have been useless. It would have meant not only the destruction of Greece, but the establishment of the Central Powers at Athens. *Ultra posse nemo obligatur*.¹⁹² When a representative of *The New York Times* asked the King (July 1916) whether Greece would have been strong enough to resist the attack upon Serbia, he said:

“No, Greece could not fare any better than any other small nation has fared on entering this war. We simply could not withstand, for longer than a fortnight, the blows of the Austro-German and Turco-Bulgarian troops launched against us. And the Greek army once destroyed, all the powers of the universe could not save the Greek race from a Turco-Bulgarian onslaught carried in full force against our non-combatant populations in European and Asiatic Greece, with the whole world simply looking on. This is the fate that threatens the Hellenic people when they enter the war, and from this fate I want to save them, sacrificing for this, if need be, not only my throne but my life as well.”¹⁹³

Venizelos himself had said in his letter to the King of 24 January 1915:

“Unfortunately, owing to the Bulgarian greed, it is not at all certain that these concessions — considerable as they are — will satisfy Bulgaria and secure her co-operation. But at least the aid of Roumania should be assured; without her, our entrance into the struggle becomes too perilous.”¹⁹⁴

The co-operation of Roumania had not been obtained, and Bulgaria was a belligerent enemy.¹⁹⁵ The King might well have added, as a third reason, that the obligation of the treaty arose only in case Serbia was being “attacked without any provocation on its part”; and the whole contention of Austria-Hungary (with whom Bulgaria was acting) was that the attack had been induced solely by Serbia’s provocative conduct.

The foregoing considerations make clear (1) that the treaty did not

¹⁹¹ Within two months after starting, the larger number went back to Salonica.

¹⁹² No one is bound to attempt the impossible.

¹⁹³ *N. Y. Times*, 14 June 1917.

¹⁹⁴ Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 554.

¹⁹⁵ Serbia’s contention was that “Greece by her present attitude gives to this coalition the opportunity of subduing first Serbia and afterwards Greece, while it is certain that it cannot vanquish them simultaneously”: Greek White Bk., No. 38; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 133.

apply to an attack by Bulgaria in conjunction with Austria-Hungary; and (2) that if it did, the circumstances requiring Greek intervention did not exist.¹⁹⁶

THE ALLIES AND THE GREEK CONSTITUTION

The Allies have attempted to justify their general conduct in Greece upon three grounds: (1) treaty-right to compel the King to act constitutionally; (2) Greek invitation to send troops to Salonica; and (3) reprehensible actions of Greece in aid of the Central Powers.¹⁹⁷ The last of these contentions has already been sufficiently dealt with. A few pages must be devoted to the other two.

Sir Edward Grey's Contention. As justification for the landing of the Allied forces at Salonica, Sir Edward Grey, in a Press *communiqué* (8 December 1916), quoted from the treaty of 13 July 1863 between France, the United Kingdom, Russia, and Greece, the following article:

"Greece, under the sovereignty of Prince William of Denmark and the guarantee of the three courts, forms a monarchical, independent, and constitutional state."¹⁹⁸

and added:

"It is therefore the duty of the protecting Powers to insure that the Greek State should retain the three characteristics mentioned in the third article, and the means by which they must do so, in a last resort, are indicated in an unrepealed article in the protocol treaty of Feb. 1, 1830, when King Otto was placed on the throne, to the effect that 'No troops belonging to one of the contracting Powers shall be allowed to enter the territory of the new Greek State without the consent of the two other courts who signed the treaty.' The unconstitutional behavior of King Constantine, his refusal to abide by the terms of the Greek treaty with Serbia, and the flouting of the decisions of M. Venizelos and his Parliamentary majority, hardly admit of denial by the Germans themselves, who content themselves with saying that he acted for what he believed to be the best interests of his country. As Great Britain, France, and Russia have uniformly acted together, the whole matter of their landing

¹⁹⁶ Interpretation of the treaty underwent discussion in the debate in the Boulé on 23 and 25 Aug. 1917. *The Vindication*, pp. 179-81. See also *Contemporary Rev.*, Jan. 1918, p. 29.

¹⁹⁷ Oakes and Mowat, in *The Great European Treaties of the Nineteenth Century* (p. 114), offer in justification of the landing at Salonica, that Greek "independence was in danger, owing to the action of the Central Powers." That idea had not occurred to the Allies. Danger of loss of independence would be a curious excuse for violently terminating it. Justification for the occupation of Corfu was placed upon Greek failure of duty under the treaty with Serbia.

¹⁹⁸ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 75.

troops to neutralize the King's unconstitutional action was both their right and their duty."¹⁹⁹

Sir Edward was hard pushed, and must be forgiven. The clause of the treaty of 1830 declaring that the troops of one of the Powers should not enter Greece without the consent of the other two cannot be construed into a provision that with that assent invasion shall always be lawful. That clause, moreover, was in the treaty of 1830, and had no relation to any guarantee of a "constitutional state," which did not appear until the treaty of 1863—as we shall presently see. Whether, upon other grounds, the landing at Salonica can be justified requires consideration of the following points: (1) what the word "constitutional" meant as applied to Greece; (2) how the Allies themselves regarded the word; (3) the contentions of those opposed to the King; and (4) whether what the Allies did was directed to the neutralization of "the King's unconstitutional action."

Meaning of "Constitutional." Survey of the history of the treaty indicates that the meaning intended to be attached to the word "constitutional" was very different from that assumed by Sir Edward Grey. After the establishment of Greek independence of Turkey (1830), the United Kingdom, France, and Russia arranged, by treaty (7 May 1832) with the King of Bavaria, that his son Otho should become King in Greece,²⁰⁰ and announcement was made that on his becoming of age a constitution would be granted.²⁰¹ The sort of constitution was not mentioned, and it was entirely improbable that Russia and France could have been induced to specify one of British pattern. Afterwards, out of the struggle between the Philorthodox and the Constitutional parties²⁰² came the constitution of 1844, which, while it contained some advance towards popular forms of government, really left control in the hands of the King,²⁰³ who acted the part of an autocrat until 1862, when a revolution terminated his reign.

In the treaty between the three Powers and Bavaria with reference to the accession of Otho (7 May 1832) was the following clause:

"*Article IV.*: Greece under the sovereignty of Prince Otho of Bavaria and the guarantee of the three Courts will form a monarchical, independent state according to the protocol signed between the said Courts the 3 February 1830, and accepted as well by Greece as by the Ottoman Porte."²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁹ *N. Y. Times*, 9 Dec. 1916. The contention had previously been formulated in *The Times* (London), 28 and 29 Nov. 1916.

²⁰⁰ Strupp, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

²⁰¹ Larned: *History for Ready Reference*, III, p. 1647; Ashley, *Life of Lord Palmerston*, II, p. 131.

²⁰² Larned, *op. cit.*, III, p. 1647.

²⁰³ Cf. Ashley, *op. cit.*, II, p. 132. A better constitution was framed in 1864 (21 November). Its provisions are, for present purposes, immaterial. The guarantee relied upon is of earlier date.

²⁰⁴ Strupp, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

Provision for Otho's successor, George I, was made by a treaty between the three Powers and Denmark (13 July 1863), and it is that treaty which contains the clause:

"Greece, under the sovereignty of Prince William of Denmark and the guarantee of the three Courts, forms a monarchical, independent, and constitutional state."²⁰⁵

The word "constitutional" was added to the words "monarchical and independent" of the treaty of 1832 merely because, meanwhile, the constitution of 1844 had come into existence, and it was that sort of constitution which was in the mind of the parties. The protocols which preceded the treaty contain nothing which would lead to other conclusion — to the view that Prince William was to pattern his conduct on that of the British sovereign. On the contrary, they indicate that the guarantee in the new treaty was to be of precisely the same character as in the old. The protocol of 27 May 1863, for example, contained a declaration that the Powers:

"cannot defer indefinitely the time when it will be proper to replace Greece conformable to the monarchical principles which they are interested to maintain in the new state founded by their efforts."²⁰⁶

Again, the protocol of 5 June 1863 commenced with the words:

"The plenipotentiaries of France, Great Britain, and Russia recognize the necessity to consider without delay the means of replacing Greece under a régime conformable to the principles of which the protocol of 27 May maintains the inviolability."²⁰⁷

And in the protocol of 26 June, it is stated:

"that with reference to the guarantee of the political existence of the Kingdom, the Powers maintain the terms in which it was announced in the convention of 7 May 1832."²⁰⁸

The phraseology of the treaty containing the guarantee was probably by that time agreed upon. The document was signed seventeen days afterwards. Very evidently, the meaning intended to be attached to the words "constitutional state" was a state with a written constitution, as opposed to one of purely autocratic character.

Allies' Interpretation of "Constitutional." That the British government, shortly after the establishment of the constitution in 1844, did not regard it as one of "constitutional" character in the sense applied to the adjective by Sir Edward Grey is clear. For damage sustained by Don Pacifico and Finlay at the hands of Greek subjects, Lord Palmerston, British Foreign Minister, demanded reparation by the Greek government, and, during the course of the negotiations, wrote as follows (20 April 1847) concerning Coletti, the Greek Prime Minister, and the method of enforcing the demands (*Italics now added*):

²⁰⁵ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 76.

²⁰⁶ Strupp, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. XLIX.

"I have no doubt that Coletti would, as Wallenstein says, prefer France to the gallows, but I do not see why he should be reduced to that alternative. To be sure, St. Aulaire said to me the other day that Coletti was a necessary Minister, for that he is the chief and leader of all the robbers and scamps of Greece, and that if he was turned out of office he would put himself at their head, and either make incursions into Turkey or ravage the provinces of Greece. To this I replied that it seemed an odd qualification for a Minister that a man was a robber by profession, but that I did not share St. Aulaire's apprehension of what might happen if Coletti was turned out, because if in that case he invaded Turkey he would probably be shot, and if he plundered Greece he would no doubt be hanged. But he will not be turned out; *Otho loves him as a second self, because he is as despotic as Otho himself; and as long as a majority can be had for Coletti in the Chambers, by corruption and intimidation, by the personal influence of the King, and by money from France, Coletti will remain Minister. With this we cannot meddle*; all we can insist upon is justice for our subjects and payment of the interest on that part of the debt which we have guaranteed. If we cannot get these things, we must have recourse to compulsion. If we do get them, we cannot interfere further; and I daresay Coletti will be wise enough to satisfy our demands, and not to drive us to extreme measures." ²⁰⁹

In the same letter, Lord Palmerston enables us to see how divided the Powers were upon the subject of "constitutional" government in Greece — France, Austria, Prussia, and Russia being all opposed to its development:

"As to Lyons, there has been a standing conspiracy against him for several years past among all his diplomatic colleagues, headed by the Greek Government. Lyons has been looked upon as the only advocate of constitutional government. Otho and Coletti wish it at the devil. Piscatory detests it, because the French Government think they can exercise more influence over Ministers and Courts than over popular assemblies; the Bavarian Minister has, like his King, been hitherto all for despotism; Prokesch, obeying Metternich, goes into convulsions at the very notion of popular institutions; the Prussian Minister has been told implicitly to follow the Austrian; and the Russian only dares support the Constitutional party when there is a chance of Otho being frightened away and of his making room for the Grand Duke of Oldenburg. All these gentlemen, therefore, combined to suppress all information as to the disorders and abuses going on in Greece, and united to run down Lyons." ²¹⁰

Such being the sort of "constitutional" government which existed in

²⁰⁹ Ashley: *Life of Lord Palmerston*, II, p. 134.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 135. Lyons was British Minister at Athens.

Greece when the guarantee of 1863 was signed, and such being the previous attitude toward democratic forms by four out of five interested Powers, it is impossible to believe that France and Russia intended, in 1863, to guarantee that the King of Greece should adapt himself to the ideas of kingly prerogative in vogue in the United Kingdom.

If we are to speculate as to the meaning of the phrase "true constitutionalism," in the notice to King Constantine of his dethronement handed to him by Jonnart on behalf of the United Kingdom, France, and Russia, we must remember what that meant in the country of the autocratic Czars — a country which was described in the *Almanach de Gotha* of 1910 as "a constitutional monarchy under an autocratic tsar"; and the title of whose sovereign was "Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias." The first of the Russian parliaments did not meet until 1906. The lower House — the Duma — at once demanded the appointment of a ministry responsible to itself (what British people would call constitutional government), and the Czar replied by dissolving the chamber and directing new elections. The second Duma, being still more objectionable, was permitted to function for little more than three months (6 March–16 June 1907). Autocratically proclaimed changes in the methods of election provided a more subservient Duma. In 1915, a further movement for a more popular form of government was met by suspension of the session. Once again, and for the last time, on 12 March 1917 (about three months after Sir Edward Grey's complaint of unconstitutional conduct in Greece), the Czar dissolved the Duma merely because it disagreed with him. Three days later, he was forced to sign his abdication. Jonnart's demand for the abdication of the King, "with a view to re-establish true constitutionalism," was delivered just three months after the installation of a revolutionary government in Petrograd — a government which itself was superseded a few months later (7 November) by the Bolsheviks. There was very little honesty in Jonnart's demand.

Venizelist Interpretation of "Constitutional." The Venizelist view of the position of the Greek King was stated by M. George Kafantares, the spokesman for the majority of the committee on the answer to the King's speech, 24 August 1917 (that is, after Constantine's dethronement), as follows:

"It is that whilst in other constitutional forms of government, the will of the monarch is recognized as a legitimate factor, taking a lead in the adjustment of public questions, in a monarchical democracy the King is nothing but a passive organ of the State in the administration of public affairs — a mere transmitter of the public will, and all political authority is centred in the hands of the people and of the House and Government emanating from it."²¹¹

²¹¹ *The Vindication*, p. 11.

It may be confidently asserted that the Czar of 1863 — the Czar whose power was “autocratic and unlimited” — would not have guaranteed the institution and the perpetuation of that sort of constitution in Greece.

M. Theodore P. Ion. In an article in *The American Journal of International Law*, M. Theodore P. Ion said:

“The Hellenic crisis which, from the beginning of the European war up to the present time (December 15, 1916), baffled all political calculations and brought Greece to the very verge of destruction, is principally due to the fundamental difference in the conception of the constitution by the King of the Hellenes on one side, and the Hellenic nation at large on the other.”²¹²

The difference alluded to emerged, M. Ion said, in June 1915:

“Limiting ourselves to the actual controversy between ruler and premier, we see that the latter contends that, after the general election of June 1915, the King should have abided by the national will.”²¹³

Upon these statements, there are two obvious comments:

(1) The date of “the beginning of the European war” was more than ten months prior to the elections of June 1915. There was not, therefore, during these ten months any ground of complaint.

(2) After the elections the King (in August) recognized the result by reinstating Venizelos as President of the Council, where he remained until the following October.

M. Ion makes complaint of the second dissolution of the Boulé, followed by further general elections on 19 December 1915. He refers to it as:

“the subsequent high-handed proceedings of the sovereign in again dissolving the Legislature in order to impose upon the nation his own personal policy.”²¹⁴

Of this dissolution, Venizelos also complained, alleging its unconstitutionality.²¹⁵ Justification is found in the fact that since the June elections the international situation had been totally changed by Bulgaria's attack upon Serbia — a fact which made eminently proper that the question between the King and Venizelos (whether, under these circumstances, Greece should commence hostilities) should be submitted to the electors. M. Ion, however, at several places, asserts that the elections of June had settled that question, they having been contested:

“on the clear issue of carrying out, or not, the treaty obligations towards Serbia,”²¹⁶

and if that were the fact, the King would have had little excuse for a

²¹² Vol. XI, p. 46.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 328.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 351-2. After Venizelos and his party had won several subsequent by-elections, assertion of their unconstitutionality became difficult.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, XII, p. 322. And see pp. 318, 571.

second submission of the same question in December. But M. Ion was clearly in error.

1. Until October, the *entente* Powers had been negotiating for Bulgaria's co-operation in the war. Until these negotiations ceased, there could hardly have been a general election to decide the attitude which Greece would assume in the event of Bulgaria joining the enemy.

2. That is one answer to M. Ion; and the other is that until October no dispute had arisen between the King and Venizelos as to what should be done in case of Bulgaria attacking Serbia. The diplomatic correspondence makes that sufficiently clear, but M. Ion himself asserts it:

"That the binding character of the Greco-Serbian Treaty was recognized in Greece up to the overthrow of the Venizelos Cabinet in October 1915, is proved by the official declaration above quoted of the Greek Government, irrespective of party. That even the King had recognized that the *casus foederis* would arise in case of an attack against Serbia is evident not only from the official despatches which undoubtedly were sent with his approval, inasmuch as some of them were written by Mr. Streit, the pro-German Foreign Minister, but is attested by the interviews that Constantine, at that time, gave to a well-known British correspondent who was very friendly with the King."²¹⁷

How there could be "a clear issue" in June between men who until October were in agreement, M. Ion does not explain.

3. On a subsequent page, he added:

"It was then that the first serious clash occurred between King and Premier, which brought so many complications and ultimately resulted in the expulsion of Constantine from the country."²¹⁸

"Then" was as late as September or October — three or four months subsequent to the elections at which the "clash" had been "the clear issue."

4. When arguing with the King (23 September 1915), Venizelos could put such a contention as that of M. Ion no higher than (in Venizelos' own language) in this way:

"By the elections of 31 May (13 June) the people have approved my policy and given their confidence; and the electorate knew that the foundation of my policy was that we should not allow Bulgaria to crush Serbia and expand overmuch so as to crush us to-morrow."²¹⁹

5. And when in his *apologia* speech of 26 August 1917, replying to the assertion of absence of identity in the political situations of June and December, all that Venizelos could say with reference to the earlier elections was as follows:

²¹⁷ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, pp. 330-1. And see Crawford Price: *Venizelos and the War*, p. 53.

²¹⁸ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 569. See also *Contemporary Rev.*, Jan. 1918, p. 34.

²¹⁹ *The Vindication*, p. 105.

“The things said by the different candidates on the lists of the Liberal Party then have this meaning — a reservation which the government made — that it was not certain that, with the accession to power of the Liberal Party, Greece would immediately join in the war. We should see what the circumstances were which would allow us to take part in the Dardanelles expedition, and on that point the Liberal Party reserved its opinion. No one of the candidates friendly to me then standing has cast any doubt on the fact that, if we came into power and the Bulgarians attacked Serbia, we should fulfil the obligations of an ally.”²²⁰

Very certainly, then, there was not at the June elections any such issue as that asserted by M. Ion. Very certainly, the issue as to Greek policy because of Bulgarian intervention arose only by the fact of the imminence of that intervention. And very certainly, that issue was one which ought to have been submitted to the electorate. In his message to the United States, through the Associated Press (4 December 1915), the King said:

“It is said that I have exceeded the constitution. What I have done is to apply the constitution. The constitution gives me the power to dissolve the chamber to prevent just such disasters as the Venizelos policy would have proved at this juncture. My duty under the constitution was to exercise that power. I did exercise it, and will continue to exercise it so long as it is necessary to save my people from destruction.”²²¹

Object of the Allies. Whether it is true, as Sir Edward Grey intimated, that Allied troops were landed in order “to neutralize the King’s unconstitutional action,” and whether M. Jonnart’s demand for the abdication was really for the purpose of “re-establishing true constitutionalism,”²²² may be tested by observation of what the Allies did.

1. The announcement to Greece of the intended landing made no reference to such purpose. It declared that:

“the Allies of Serbia are sending their troops to help that country as well as to maintain their communications with her . . . the two Powers rely upon Greece, who has already given to them so many proofs of friendship, not to oppose the measures taken in the interests of Serbia, to whom she is equally allied.”²²³

2. Prior to the landing of the troops, no complaint had been made by the Allies of unconstitutional action. On the contrary, as we have already seen,²²⁴ the Allies, after the landing, gave Zaimis (who refused to declare war on Bulgaria) “every proof of friendliness,” and “even supplied him with money.”²²⁵

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 167. See also pp. 201-7.

²²¹ *The Citizen* (Ottawa), 7 Dec. 1915; *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 May 1921.

²²² *Ante*, p. 355.

²²³ *Ante*, p. 334.

²²⁴ *Ante*, p. 338.

²²⁵ *Ante*, p. 338.

3. Prior to the landing, Venizelos himself made no complaint of unconstitutional conduct on the part of the King. It was the subsequent elections (November 1915) which he said were unconstitutional.

4. After the landing, so far from proceeding "to neutralize the King's unconstitutional action," the Allies continued to negotiate with him for co-operation in the war. M. Gauvain says:

"As to the protecting Powers, they flattered themselves to regain Constantine by means of new advantageous proposals. England offered him, as the price for help to Serbia, cession of the island of Cyprus which she had possessed since 1878 by virtue of the treaty concluded 4 June of that year with Turkey."²²⁶

Venizelos' successor, Zaimis, refused the offer. The French government sent M. Cochin, and the United Kingdom sent Lord Kitchener (landed 20 November), to Athens with other proposals.²²⁷ The comment of M. Gauvain was as follows:

"If the cabinets of Paris and London had acted as energetically as that of Berlin, M. Venizelos would have found in their support the force requisite for the control of the King. They alleged that it was not permitted them to interfere in the internal affairs of a foreign state. This excuse, which the official organs repeated to satiety, is pitiable."²²⁸

5. The December (1915) elections, of which M. Venizelos complained, were not objected to by the Allies.

6. Not until twelve months after the elections, was the first complaint made, by any of the allied governments, of unconstitutional action. It formed part of Sir Edward Grey's press *communiqué* of 8 December 1916.²²⁹ At the moment of writing, Greece appears to be on the verge of becoming a republic, but no one seems to imagine that it is:

"the duty of the protecting Powers to insure that the Greek State should retain the three characteristics . . . a monarchical, independent, and constitutional State."

Independence. Asserting, through M. Jonnart, the right to depose the King by military force "with a view to re-establishing true constitutionalism," upon the ground that he had "lost the confidence" not of his people but "of the protecting Powers,"²³⁰ the Allies disregarded the fact that, by the treaty, Greece was to form an "independent" as well as a "constitutional" state; and that while rendering, by the establishment of a foreign military dictatorship, the exercise of what British people would call constitutional government impossible, they, at the same time, completely destroyed all semblance of national independence. For there can be no independence in a country which is subject to the military

²²⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

²²⁷ *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [257.

²²⁸ *Op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

²²⁹ *Ante*, p. 362.

²³⁰ *Ante*, p. 355.

intervention of three foreign governments with widely different views, in a dispute between its King and Prime Minister merely on the ground that the King failed to fulfil the ideal of each of the guarantors. That the action of the King was quite unobjectionable to a Russian Czar, may be regarded as certain.

Comment. In view of all this, Sir Edward Grey's pretence that the Salonica landing had its justification in the guarantee by the three Powers of a "constitutional state," and that the troops were landed in order "to neutralize the King's unconstitutional action," must be attributed solely to the pressure upon him of war-necessity.

ALLIES AT SALONICA

M. Gauvain, a well-informed writer, has stated that on 23 September²³¹ 1915 — the day upon which Greek mobilization was decreed — Venizelos asked the Allies to send 150,000 fighting men, as substitutes for the number which Serbia had agreed to place on the Bulgarian front.²³² Lord Robert Cecil, too, at the end of October 1916, said:

"It has been suggested that we are under special obligations to M. Venizelos, because we went there at his invitation. . . . But I do not think it is a true or useful statement to say that we went there at the invitation of M. Venizelos. We went there at the invitation of the Greek government. It was the Greek government that invited us, and not an individual."²³³

In a subsequent statement handed to the Press (8 December 1916), Sir Edward Grey was less emphatic. He said that:

"our troops went to Salonica with the expressed approval of the then head of the Greek Government, and that he had himself suggested the stipulation in the Greco-Serbian treaty for a provision by which the Serbian Government needs could, in view of the default of Greece on this point, be fulfilled by the despatch into Greek territory of a force by Great Britain and France."²³⁴

— "approval" by "the then head of the Greek Government," it will be observed, instead of "invitation of the Greek Government." Both statements are inaccurate. In his speech in the Boulé of 4 October 1915 (above referred to²³⁵), Venizelos said that the fact was that he had asked the representatives of the Powers whether in the event of an attack by Bulgaria on Serbia, they would be willing to furnish the military aid which Serbia was unable to provide because her army was occupied elsewhere.

²³¹ The date is sometimes given as the 24th: *ante*, p. 334.

²³² *Op. cit.*, p. 68. Cf. Churchill, *op. cit.*, II, p. 499.

²³³ *The Times* (London), 1 Nov. 1916.

²³⁴ *N. Y. Times*, 9 Dec. 1916. Evidently the word *Serbia* ought to be substituted for "Greece" in the phrase "the default of Greece on this point."

²³⁵ *Ante*, p. 336.

"I said at the same time," he added (to quote his own words), "that there should be no misunderstanding, because I proposed the sending of this force not in order to assume new obligations, but to know whether in case the *casus fœderis* should arise, this force would be supplied."²³⁶

At first the King had agreed that this enquiry should be made, but shortly afterwards he countermanded the permission. Venizelos, however, declared that he had already communicated with the Ambassadors, and he appears to have taken no revoking step. The representatives telegraphed for instructions. Forty-eight hours afterwards, they gave Venizelos an affirmative reply, and, notwithstanding express intimation that nothing should be done until Bulgaria attacked, and without any assent to action even in that event, they proceeded to land troops. They said that they had already ordered the despatch of troops (part of them from a neighboring island — Lemnos), and, moreover, that as the Bulgarian movement was certain to occur, they did not see why they should delay. "In this respect, we undertake full responsibility," they said. Venizelos then entered what he called a "friendly protest" (2 October), and promised a cordial reception. The King concurred in the protest, stipulating, however, that it should be "emphatic." Venizelos always denied that the landing had taken place at the invitation, properly speaking, of the Greek government.²³⁷ And, in any case, neither he nor the King had power to authorize the entrance of foreign troops upon Greek territory. By article 99 of the constitution, the sanction of the legislature was necessary. It is as follows:

"No foreign army can be admitted to the Greek service without a special law, nor can it sojourn or pass through the state."²³⁸

King and Minister had been at cross-purposes. Venizelos had determined that if Bulgaria attacked Serbia, Greece would fight. He knew that Bulgaria's attack was certain and imminent. And he was anxious that the United Kingdom and France should co-operate. The King, on the other hand, was determined to remain neutral. He was unable to oppose by force the proposed landing, and he required that a protest against it should be made. In a message to the United States, through the Associated Press (4 December 1915), he said:

"Another thing I want to make clear: It is said that M. Venizelos,

²³⁶ Quoted in *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 568.

²³⁷ See discussion of the subject in *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, pp. 564-71; and Venizelos' speech of 26 Aug. 1917 in the Boulé, reported in *The Vindication*, pp. 107-9. Venizelos made no pretence of having secured the assent of the King to the landing of the Allies. In the course of the same speech, he said: "I do not tell you this, Gentlemen, in order to be able to assert that the King at that moment consented, if the French and English gave us 150,000 first-line troops, to abandon neutrality. The man was determined in any circumstances not to fight": *ibid.*, p. 107. Cf. Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-51.

²³⁸ Strupp, *op. cit.*, p. 256; Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 52. See also *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 572.

with my assent, invited the allied troops to come to Saloniki. Nothing could be further from the truth. M. Venizelos may have expressed the personal opinion that if the allied troops landed at Saloniki, Greece would not resist — how could she resist? — but that M. Venizelos ever, as the responsible head of the Greek government, formally invited foreign troops to enter Greek territory is untrue.”²³⁹

The Allies thoroughly understood the situation; and that they did not misinterpret the inquiry of Venizelos is clear from the form of the notification of their intention to land, in which, as already noted, they intimated:

“that the two Powers rely upon Greece, who has already given to them so many proofs of friendship, not to oppose the measures taken in the interests of Serbia, to whom she is equally allied.”²⁴⁰
Had the Greek government requested the landing of the troops, there would have been no expression of a hope that Greece would “not oppose the measures.”

Greek Complaisance. On the other hand, the protest against the landing was not intended by Venizelos to be of a deterring character, and that the invasion was regarded with a certain amount of complacency by the King himself may be gathered from three sources: First, in a letter to Venizelos of 22 February 1915 (written in connection with the change from Venizelos to Zaimis in the Presidency of the Council), the King said:

“Consequently, Salonica will remain at the disposal of the Serbs for such transit as they may find necessary.”²⁴¹

Second, in a statement made by Zaimis to the Ambassadors of the Allies in October 1915 (immediately after the landing) was the following:

“Your troops will continue to be received with sympathy in Macedonia.”²⁴²

And, third, still stronger assurances were telegraphed by Skouloudis (the successor of Zaimis) to the courts of the Allies (8 November 1915) as follows:

“In speaking with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, please give on my behalf the most categorical assurance of our firm resolution to continue our neutrality with the character of the sincerest benevolence towards the Entente Powers. Please add that the new Cabinet adopts as its own the repeated declarations of Mr. Zaimis about the friendly attitude of the Royal Government towards the Allied troops in Saloniki; that it is too conscious of its real interests, and of what it owes to the Protecting Powers of Greece to deviate in the least from this line of conduct. It therefore hopes that the sentiments of friendship of these

²³⁹ *The Citizen* (Ottawa), 7 Dec. 1915.

²⁴⁰ *Ante*, p. 334.

²⁴¹ Mélas, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

²⁴² Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

Powers for Greece will not at any time be influenced by the malicious and misleading news which is circulated intentionally in the vain hope of impairing the good relations of the Entente with Greece.”²⁴³

The Coercive Actions. For justification of the coercive actions which followed the landing, Sir Edward Grey argued that they “followed as a natural consequence” of the landing. But that can hardly be conceded. Seizure of the Greek islands, for example, cannot be excused upon that ground. Some others of the actions may be attributed to apprehension of possible attack by Greek troops. The King indeed gave repeated assurances in this respect, but when he asked Mr. Paxton Hibben “What was wrong,” the reply was, “They do not trust you, Sire.”²⁴⁴ For the military occupation of Athens, the dethronement of the King, the reinstatement of Venizelos, and the substitution of the Boulé of the June 1915 elections for the Boulé elected five months afterwards, the only defence is war-necessity. The *entente* Allies were not satisfied with Greek neutrality. They wanted the assistance of the Greek army. They were strong enough to compel compliance with their demands; and they made effective use of their strength.

EPILOGUE

Venizelos Overthrown. The Central Powers having been defeated; the forces of the *entente* Allies having left Greece; and return to civic normality having made necessary the holding of general elections, the people of Greece had at last an opportunity of expressing their opinion of the dethronement of their King and the installation of Venizelos with the assistance of foreign bayonets. The electoral advantages were all on the side of Venizelos. He was in power, and had made the arrangements for the voting in the newly added territory. Nevertheless, his party was beaten by more than two to one (December 1920). They were successful in the new districts of Epirus and Thrace; but in old Greece and old Macedonia the vote against them was overwhelming. Venizelos himself sustained humiliating defeat in his chosen constituency. Whereupon, following the King whom he had deposed, he took ship for a foreign port. At the ensuing referendum to determine whether Constantine should be recalled, only a negligible minority, notwithstanding the threats of the Allies, voted Nay. “At few voting booths were any hostile votes cast.”²⁴⁵ The Yeas numbered 999,954 out of 1,013,724.

The Explanation. Explanation of the voting is not difficult. The indignation of the Greek people, as they witnessed the assumption of governmental control by foreign military officers, may well be imagined;

²⁴³ Greek White Bk., No. 37; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., pp. 129-30. Cf. Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-3; and the speech of Venizelos of 26 Aug. 1917, reported in *The Vindication*, pp. 120-1.

²⁴⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 386.

²⁴⁵ *The Times* (London), 7 Dec. 1920.

but it is interesting to note the effect upon one who had been the King's Secretary; who had joined in the Venizelos revolution; who in his book unreasonably denounced his former master; who from Salonica accompanied M. Jonnart to Athens; and who there witnessed the dethronement of the King, and the installation of Venizelos as President of the Council — Major Mélas. Here are a few of his jottings:

“I had suffered too much when on the 12th June 1917, the *Vérité*, having cleared for action at dawn, slowly entered the harbor of the Piraeus, her big guns trained, her gunners at their posts. That was a terrible moment when I saw the armed detachments land and hasten in all directions towards the heights of Piraeus, in fighting formation, as if to attack under the guns of the Squadron. What a nightmare!

“When I was a child and read the history of my country, I could find no words to express my indignation against our ancestors who called the stranger into Greece to settle their quarrels, and here was I, in almost the same cruel situation. Circumstances were different, it is true; the French and the British came but as friends to help Greece to do her duty, but that duty, all the same, had to be enforced by foreign bayonets.”

“During these latter days at the Piraeus, I had left nothing undone to induce M. Jonnart and General Regnault to allow none but Greek troops to enter Athens. But in vain. . . . I told the President [Venizelos] my fears of what history would say of our having had recourse to foreign bayonets for our entry into Athens.”

“The afternoon of the same day I accompanied the General to the Acropolis. Another pang was mine! I cannot say what I felt on seeing French machine-guns placed for action on the immortal Acropolis. They were soon removed. . . . General Castaing, a poet as well as a good soldier, owned to me that he stationed himself on the Acropolis, far more for the poetry of the situation than for its possibilities as a machine-gun position.

“No, it was neither Venizelos nor the Allies. Accursed be they who were the cause that, even for an instant, those machine-guns had to be placed on the sacred mount.”²⁴⁶

“On the 5th July another cruel alternative arose. M. Jonnart had, that day, to lay a wreath on the grave of the French victims of the fanaticism of the Constantine faction. By a delicate attention for which I am still profoundly grateful, General Regnault let me know the evening before that he would not have need of my services the next morning. I understood; but I attended him nevertheless. I would drink the cup to the dregs.”²⁴⁷

Not only Major Mélas, but the Greek people drank “the cup to the

²⁴⁶ The Major meant Constantine, who, however, could not fairly be said to have arranged that guns “had to be placed on the sacred mount,” on account of “the poetry of the situation.”

²⁴⁷ Mélas, *op. cit.*, pp. 233-4, 237-8.

dregs." By their votes they have recorded in history the expression of their:

"indignation against" the man "who called the stranger into Greece to settle their quarrels."

An English writer, who visited Greece since the war — Professor Toynbee — has written as follows:

"The Greek nation cannot forgive Mr. Venizelos for having resorted to foreign support against his political opponents. . . . The King's policy may have been wrong, but Mr. Venizelos had no business to associate himself with foreign Powers in coercing him. . . . Mr. Venizelos failed in Greece for the same fundamental reason as Generals Kolchak and Denikin and Wrangel in Russia, and foreign intervention did the same service to King Constantine and Mr. Gounaris as to Trotsky and Lenin." ²⁴⁸

A stout defender of Venizelos, in summing the reasons for his overthrow, does not omit the fact emphasized by Major Mélas:

"One other cause finally influenced the vote of the Greek people — the suspicion that Venizelos was the tool and agent of the Entente. It is an undoubted fact that Englishmen have always been popular in Greece, and from all accounts they have never been more popular than they are to-day, largely, I like to think, because of the admirable behavior of our Army. But without any inconsistency, many Greeks resented the return of Venizelos to Athens, because they considered that he had been imposed on them by the Entente task-masters . . . he was never quite able to withstand the accusation, however unfair, that he had been dumped down on Athens like so much derelict luggage of England and France." ²⁴⁹ Indeed, Venizelos himself recognized the fact. In conversation with the writer of the preceding quotation, after referring to Greek desire for cessation of war, with which, "in the popular mind," he had become identified, he said:

"It was not that they did not want a greater Greece, as some Englishmen have thought, but they wished to be rid of me, and at the same time to retain what I had acquired. On the other hand, the very fact that his expulsion had been effected by foreign intervention assured Constantine a certain popularity. . . . I do not think that the Greeks are naturally attached to monarchical government; but the peculiar nature of Constantine's expulsion has endowed monarchy with a definite, if only a temporary glamour." ²⁵⁰

The later events — the second dethronement of the King; the re-establishment of Venizelos; his second withdrawal; and the institution of a republic lie outside the scope of the enquiry, Why did Greece enter the War ?

²⁴⁸ *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey*, pp. 81-3.

²⁴⁹ *Fortnightly Rev.*, April 1921, p. 617.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 614.

CHAPTER XI

WHY DID JAPAN ENTER THE WAR?

Japan's Statement, 377.—The Anglo-Japanese Treaties, 378.—Ultimatum to Germany, 380.—Declaration of War, 381.—Count Okuma's Declaration, 382.—Japan's Repudiation, 382.—Evidence of Japanese Motive, 383.—China's Desire and Japan's Obstruction, 384.—Japan's Twenty-one Demands, 385.—Japanese-Russian Treaty, 1916, 386.—Japan and the German Properties, 387.—The Peace Treaty, 390.—Why did Japan enter the War, 391.—Sino-Japanese Settlement, 391.

Japan's Statement. On 5 September 1914, Baron Kato, the Japanese Foreign Minister, addressing the Diet, said:

“Great Britain was at last compelled to take part in the contest, and early in August the British Government asked the Imperial Government for assistance under the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Agreement of Alliance. . . . Therefore, inasmuch as she is asked by her Ally for assistance at the time when commerce in Eastern Asia, which Japan and Great Britain regard alike as one of their special interests, is subjected to constant menace. Japan, which regards that alliance as the guiding principle of her foreign policy, cannot but comply with such request and do her part.”¹

Duty under treaty — acknowledged, or only alleged as in this case — always coincides with interest, and so the Baron was able to add:

“Besides in the opinion of the Government the possession by Germany, whose interests are opposed to those of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, of a base of her powerful activities in one corner of the Far East is not only a serious obstacle to the maintenance of permanent peace of Eastern Asia, but is also in conflict with the more immediate interests of our own Empire. The Government, therefore, resolved to comply with the British request and, if necessary in doing so, to open hostilities against Germany and, after the imperial sanction was obtained, they communicated this resolution to the British Government. Full and frank exchange of views between the two Governments followed and it was finally agreed between them to take such measures as may be necessary to protect the general interest contemplated by the Agreement of Alliance.”²

In other words, Germany's possession of Kiao-Chou was inimical to Japanese interests, and, as excuse for ousting her, a non-existing treaty

¹ American Ass'n for International Conciliation pamphlet No. 85, pp. 36-7.

² *Ibid.*, p. 37.

obligation was asserted. Rivalling the hypocrisies of European statesmen, Count Okuma, the head of the Japanese government, said:

"It will be our ambition at this time to show the West what it is slow to believe, that we can work harmoniously with great Occidental Powers to support and protect the highest ideals of civilization even to the extent of dying for them. Not only in the Far East, but anywhere else that may be necessary, Japan is ready to lay down her life for the principles that the foremost nations will die for. It is to be in line with these nations that she is at this time opposing and fighting what she believes to be opposed to these principles. Japan's relation to the present conflict is as a defender of the things that make for higher civilization and a more permanent peace."

That was not only quite untrue, but quite inconsistent with the previous assertion of performance of treaty obligation in pursuance of predatory purpose. Nevertheless, the Right Rev. Bishop Frodsham said of it that:

"Nothing finer has been said in this country than the dignified statement made in 1914 by Count Okuma."³

The "full and frank exchange of views" having resulted in satisfactory agreement as to the disposition to be made of the German properties, Japan (as the Baron said) believing:

"that she owed it to herself to be faithful to the Alliance and strengthen its foundation by ensuring the permanent peace of the East, and by protecting the special interests of our two allied Powers,"⁴

entered the war. Upon all of which the proper comment is that: Nations act upon their interests, and disregard treaties. Italy left the Triple Alliance on the ground that the war was not a defensive war. And Japan joined with the other side, on the pretence that she was fulfilling her obligations to Great Britain.⁵

The Anglo-Japanese Treaties. We may be reasonably certain that the British government made no demand for Japanese intervention in pursuance of the Anglo-Japanese treaty of 13 July 1911, for the treaty had no application to the occasion; and, hidden underneath Baron Kato's words, "full and frank exchange of views between the two Governments," may easily be seen the nature of the bargain which Japan insisted should be agreed to before entering the war. The only relevant clauses in the treaty are as follows:

Preamble. The Government of Great Britain and the Government of Japan, having in view the important changes which have taken place in the situation since the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese agree-

³ *The Nineteenth Century*, May 1919, p. 1031. *Falser* ought to be substituted for "finer."

⁴ Am. Ass'n for International Conciliation pamphlet No. 85, p. 37.

⁵ See article by James Brown Scott in *Am. Soc. Int. Law, Prods.*, 1917, pp. 101-7.

ment of the 12th August 1905, and believing that a revision of that agreement responding to such changes would contribute to general stability and repose, have agreed upon the following stipulations to replace the agreement above mentioned, such stipulations having the same object as the said agreement, namely:

(a) The consolidation and maintenance of the general peace in the regions of Eastern Asia and of India;

(b) The preservation of the common interests of all the Powers in China by insuring the independence and integrity of the Chinese Empire, and the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations in China;

(c) The maintenance of the territorial rights of the high contracting parties in the regions of Eastern Asia and of India, and the defense of their special interests in the said regions."

"Article II. If by reason of an unprovoked attack or aggressive action, wherever arising, on the part of any Power or Powers, either high contracting party should be involved in war in defense of its territorial rights or special interests mentioned in the preamble of this agreement, the other high contracting party will at once come to the assistance of its ally, and will conduct the war in common, and make peace in mutual agreement with it."⁶

That Japan was under no obligation to enter the war is clear, for:

1. There had been neither "unprovoked attack" nor aggressive action," as against the United Kingdom, on the part of Germany. It was the United Kingdom who had declared war on Germany, because her interests so required.⁷

2. If it could be said that Germany was the attacking party, there would still remain, for Japan, the difficulty that the United Kingdom was not "involved in war in defence of its territorial rights" in either Eastern Asia or India. Germany was making no attack upon either of those places, and was not in position to undertake operations there.

3. Nor was the United Kingdom "involved in war in defence of its . . . special interests mentioned in the preamble."

4. If it be said that the maintenance of "general peace" was one of the "special interests" (although it was not), the reply is that it was the Japanese attack upon the Germans in Kiao-Chou which disturbed the peace.⁸

⁶ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, V, Supp., pp. 276-7.

⁷ The subject is fully discussed in cap. V.

⁸ On 12 Aug. 1914, the German Foreign Minister sent the following telegram to the German Ambassador in Japan: "East Asiatic squadron instructed to avoid hostile acts against England in case Japan remains neutral. Please inform Japanese Government": German White Bk., 1914, No. 28.

5. Mr. Winston S. Churchill, First Lord of the British Admiralty at the outbreak of the war, has said in his recent book, *The World Crisis*:

“No clause in the Anglo-Japanese Treaty entitled us to invoke the assistance of Japan. But it became evident before the war had lasted a week that the Japanese had not forgotten the circumstances and influences under which they had been forced, at the end of the Chinese war, to quit Port Arthur. They now showed themselves resolved to extirpate all German authority and interests in the Far East.”⁹

6. In the Diet in December 1914, Baron Kato said (as we shall see) that:

“The purpose of the ultimatum to Germany was to take Kiao-Chou from Germany and so to restore peace in the Orient”

Very clearly, the reasons for Japan's action were that the presence of the Germans in China “conflicted with the immediate interests of the Japanese Empire,” and that Japan desired to substitute herself for Germany in Kiao-Chou and elsewhere. It was the removal of Germany's political and economic competition, and the disposition to be made of Germany's assets in the Pacific that were the principal subjects discussed in the “full and frank exchange of views.” The following considerations will amply sustain these assertions.

Ultimatum to Germany. Immediately after the arrangement between the United Kingdom and Japan had been made, the latter sent to Germany (15 August 1914) an ultimatum as follows:

“Considering it highly important and necessary, in the present situation, to take measures to remove all causes of disturbance to the peace of the Far East and to safeguard the general interests contemplated by the Agreement of Alliance between Japan and Great Britain, in order to secure a firm and enduring peace in Eastern Asia, establishment of which is the aim of the said Agreement, the Imperial Japanese Government sincerely believe it their duty to give advice to the Imperial German Government to carry out the following two propositions:

“First. To withdraw immediately from the Japanese and Chinese waters German men-of-war and armed vessels of all kinds, and to disarm at once those which cannot be so withdrawn.

“Second. To deliver on a date not later than September 15, 1914, to the Imperial Japanese Authorities, without condition or compensation, the entire leased territory of Kiao-chou with a view to eventual¹⁰ restoration of same to China.

“The Imperial Japanese Government announce, at the same time, that, in the event of their not receiving by noon August 23, 1914, the answer of the Imperial German Government signifying an unconditional acceptance of the above advice offered by the Imperial Japanese Government,

⁹ I, pp. 214-5.

¹⁰ Did that mean at the end of the lease to Germany? If so, Japan was asking for an assignment of the lease to herself, and nothing for China.

they will be compelled to take such action as they may deem necessary to meet the situation.”¹¹

On the same day, the Japanese government advised their ambassador at Vienna of the presentation of the ultimatum, adding that:

“The grounds on which the Imperial Government base their present attitude is, as already mentioned, none other than to maintain the common interests of Japan and Great Britain, which are set out in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, by establishing a basis of a lasting peace in the territory of Eastern Asia. The Japanese Government have in no respect the intention of embarking upon a policy of territorial expansion, nor do they entertain any other selfish designs. For this reason the Imperial Government are resolved to respect with the greatest care the interests of third Powers in Eastern Asia, and to refrain from injuring them in any degree.”¹²

The language misled nobody. It was not out of harmony with the generally accepted conventions of diplomatic proprieties.

Declaration of War. No reply having been received to the ultimatum, the Japanese Emperor, on 23 August, declared war, saying:

“Since the outbreak of the present war in Europe, the calamitous effect of which We view with grave concern, We on our part have entertained hopes of preserving the peace of the Far East by the maintenance of strict neutrality, but the action of Germany has at length compelled Great Britain, Our Ally, to open hostilities against that country, and Germany is at Kiaochou, its leased territory in China, busy with war-like preparations, while its armed vessels, cruising seas of Eastern Asia, are threatening Our commerce and that of Our Ally. Peace of the Far East is thus in jeopardy.

“Accordingly Our Government and that of His Britannic Majesty, after full and frank communication with each other, agreed to take such measures as may be necessary for the protection of the general interests, contemplated in the Agreement of Alliance, and We on Our part being desirous to attain that object by peaceful means, commended Our Government to offer with sincerity an advice to the Imperial German Government. By the last day appointed for the purpose, however, Our Government failed to receive an answer accepting their advice. It is with profound regret that We, in spite of Our ardent devotion to the cause of peace, are thus compelled to declare war, especially at this early period of Our reign and while we are still in mourning for Our lamented

¹¹ American Ass'n for International Conciliation pamphlet No. 85, p. 38; Hornbeck, *Contemporary Politics in the Far East*, pp. 286-7. What would Japan have done had Germany complied with the two demands? Would she have changed her alleged view as to her treaty obligation to the United Kingdom — taken Kiaochou and remained neutral? A statement by Baron Kato in December 1914 (*post*, p. 383) indicates that that is what would have happened.

¹² *Aus. Red Bk.*, 1914, No. 66.

Mother. It is Our earnest wish that by the loyalty and valor of Our faithful subjects, peace may soon be restored and the glory of the Empire be enhanced.”¹³

It will be observed that in neither the ultimatum nor the declaration of war is there any reference to British “territorial rights or special interests.” The reason assigned is maintenance of:

“the common interests of Japan and Great Britain, which are set out in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, by establishing a basis of a lasting peace in the territory of Eastern Asia.”

By the treaty, Japan’s obligation arose only in case the “territorial rights or special interests” in Eastern Asia or India of the United Kingdom were under attack.

Count Okuma’s Declaration. In answer to unpleasant suggestions that the object of the Japanese was to secure more Chinese territory for themselves, Count Okuma cabled to the *New York Independent* on 24 August 1914 (the day after the declaration of war) a “message to the American people” in which he said:

“Every sense of loyalty and honor obliges Japan to co-operate with Great Britain to clear from these waters the enemies who in the past, the present, and the future menace her interests, her trade, her shipping, and her people’s lives. The Far Eastern situation is not of our seeking.

“As Premier of Japan, I have stated and now again state to the people of America and of the world that Japan has no ulterior motive, no desire to secure more territory, no thought of depriving China or other peoples of anything which they now possess. My Government and my people have given their word and their pledge, which will be as honorably kept as Japan always keeps her promises.”¹⁴

Not defence, therefore, of either “common interests” or “special interests” was Japan’s motive, but the ending of “the past, the present, and the future menace” by the presence of Germany at Kiao-Chou. Japan had made no promise to assist in removal of that menace.

Japan’s Repudiation. It will be observed that the Japanese ultimatum required Germany to hand over Kiao-chou to Japan, “with a view to the eventual restoration of the same to China.” Why the territory should go to Japan on its way to China, is something that Japan did not explain, but, having regard to her subsequent conduct, can easily be imagined. For, on several occasions, she repudiated the existence of any obligation to part with the property. In December 1914, for example, the following questions were put in the Diet to the Japanese government:

“(a) Whether Kiao-chou will be returned to China?

¹³ *Am. Ass’n Int. Conciliation* pamphlet, No. 85, p. 31; Hornbeck, *op. cit.*, pp. 287-8.

¹⁴ Hornbeck, *op. cit.*, p. 289; Millard: *Democracy and the Eastern Question*, pp. 81-2.

“(b) Whether the Imperial Government of Japan were pledged to China, or to any other Power, in the matter of the final disposition of Kiaochou?”

“(c) Whether the clause in the ultimatum referring to the final restitution of Kiaochou to China did not bind the action of Japan?”

The replies of Baron Kato were as follows:

“(a) The question regarding the future of Kiaochou was, at present, unanswerable.

“(b) Japan has never committed herself to any foreign Power on this point.

“(c) The purpose of the ultimatum to Germany was to take Kiaochou from Germany and so to restore peace in the Orient. Restitution after a campaign was not thought of and was not referred to in the ultimatum.”¹⁵

Again, by one of the twenty-one demands made by Japan (18 January 1915), China was required to agree to any disposition of the Shantung property to which Japan could force Germany to submit.¹⁶ And finally, in the ultimatum which Japan delivered to China on 7 May 1915, the Japanese government declared:

“From the commercial and military points of view, Kiaochou is an important place, in the acquisition of which the Japanese Empire sacrificed much blood and money, and, after the acquisition, the Empire incurs no obligation to restore it to China.”¹⁷

Evidence of Japanese Motive. The action of Japan, with reference to China, in the early part of 1917, indicates, incontrovertibly, the character of the motive which induced her to enter the war. The Allies, for two reasons, were naturally anxious that China should declare war against the Central Powers; first, because a large number of German ships, which were enjoying the immunity of Chinese ports, would become available for the work of the Allies,¹⁸ and secondly, because of the immense number of men whom, for labor purposes, China could supply. But Japan, who during the war established herself as dictator in China, declined to agree until assured that the war-booty which she coveted should be hers. She was unwilling that China should be given either a lesson in war, or a seat at the anticipated peace conference. Among the charges of unreasonable conduct with which Japan in May 1915 assailed China was that she had:

¹⁵ Millard, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 373.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 402. The ultimatum is quoted at greater length *post*, p. 386. Cf. Hornbeck, *op. cit.*, p. 290.

¹⁸ Mr. Denman, who, as Chairman of the United States Shipping Board in 1917, discussed the subject with British representatives, has raised a corner of the curtain, and promised to lift it altogether if permitted by the President. Some of the phases, he said, approached the realms of the secret treaties affecting Shantung: *N. Y. Times*, 17 Dec. 1920.

“declared that she has the right of participation at the future peace conference to be held between Japan and Germany.”¹⁹

China's Desire and Japan's Obstruction. Well aware that joining with Japan and the United Kingdom in the contemplated attack upon Kiao-Chou would give her beneficial standing, China offered to take part in the operations.²⁰ The offer was refused for the reasons above mentioned. Chinese assistance would have interfered with Japanese design, and the *entente* Powers were not in a position to quarrel with Japan. On 23 November 1915, the Ambassadors of the United Kingdom, France, and Russia, in an audience with Viscount Ishii (Japanese Foreign Minister), formally requested that he would join with them in an invitation to China to declare war on Germany.²¹ Purporting to relate the reasons given by Viscount Ishii for his refusal, Mr. Millard alleged that:

“He said that Japan considered developments with regard to China as of paramount interest to her, and she must keep a firm hand there. Japan could not regard with equanimity the organization of an efficient Chinese army such as would be required for her active participation in the war, nor could Japan fail to regard with uneasiness a liberation of the economic activities of a nation of 400,000,000 people.”²²

Denying part of this, but sufficiently admitting what is now asserted, Ishii, in a *communiqué* issued at Washington (24 April 1919), said that Japan had been endeavoring to educate and enlighten the Chinese:

“But inducing China to participate in the war of 1915 was another affair which I could not in conscience indorse.”

China, he said, was at the time:

“on the verge of revolution and anarchy. . . . Again, from a humanitarian point of view, it was the duty of every belligerent to endeavor to restrict the spheres of war calamity, unless substantial military advantage were to accrue from their extension. I know my successor at the Foreign Office, took, two years later, a different view on this question. He had probably his own reason in the presence of the changed situation.”²³

The “different view” was not because China had emerged from her difficulties, but because the American rupture of diplomatic relations with

¹⁹ In Japan's ultimatum of 7 May 1915: Millard, *op. cit.*, p. 403.

²⁰ Dillon: *The Inside Story of the Peace Conference*, p. 338.

²¹ Mr. Denman (Chairman of the U. S. Shipping Board), having stated that the French government had asked Japan to co-operate in the invitation to Japan, an official in the French Foreign Office said: “Well, France was fighting for her life against Germany and could not afford to miss any chances. China's entry into the war gave the Allies German ships at a time when ships were vitally needed. But any action that France may have taken was done not alone, but in concert with the Allies, and if the French Ambassador at Tokio undertook the *démarche* which Denman mentions, he was simply acting as the spokesman of the Allies as a body”: *N. Y. Times*, 21 Dec. 1920.

²² *Op. cit.*, p. 99.

²³ *Current History*, VIII, Pt. 1, p. 443.

Germany, and the American request to China to do likewise, had made continuation of Japanese obstruction impossible. Let us look at the intervening facts.

Japan's Twenty-one Demands. On 7 November 1914, Tsingtao, the German port in Shantung, surrendered, and Japan entered into possession. On 18 January 1915, taking full advantage of the war-engrossments of the European Powers—knowing that the *entente* Powers would not interfere and that the Central Powers could not²⁴—Japan presented to China a formidable list of twenty-one demands,²⁵ including in Group V:

“*Article I.* The Chinese Central Government shall employ influential Japanese as advisers in political, financial, and military affairs.

“*Article III.* . . . the police departments of important places (in China) shall be jointly administered by Japanese and Chinese, or that the police departments of these places shall employ numerous Japanese, so that they may at the same time help to plan for the improvement of the Chinese Police Service.

“*Article IV.* China shall purchase from Japan a fixed amount of munitions of war (say 50 per cent. or more of what is needed by the Chinese Government), or that there shall be established in China a Sino-Japanese jointly-worked arsenal. Japanese technical experts are to be employed and Japanese material to be purchased.

“*Article VI.* If China needs foreign capital to work mines, build railways and construct harbor-works (including dock-yards) in the Province of Fukien, Japan shall be first consulted.”

After protracted negotiations,²⁶ Japan presented (26 April) a revised list of demands,²⁷ accompanying it with the statement that:

“on the acceptance of the revised proposals, the Imperial Government would, at a suitable opportunity, restore with fair and proper conditions, to the Chinese Government the Kiao-chou territory, in the acquisition of which the Imperial Government had made a great sacrifice.”²⁸

To this the Chinese government replied (1 May) by proposing certain concessions.²⁹ The negotiations then terminated, and Japan handed (7

²⁴ Japan owed her success in her Chinese depredations partly to the pendency of the war, but partly also to the fact that revolution against Yuan-Shih-Kai had broken out in the south under the leadership of Dr. Sun-Yat-Sen.

²⁵ Millard, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-4, 373-6; Gibbons: *The New Map of Asia*, pp. 499-502. Japan had previously exerted pressure by sending troops to South Manchuria and Shantung (22 March), and declaring that they would not be withdrawn until negotiations as to the twenty-one demands had been brought to a satisfactory conclusion: Millard, *op. cit.*, p. 383.

²⁶ They are detailed in a statement issued by the Chinese government: Millard, *op. cit.*, pp. 382-94.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 377-81.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 402.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 394-401.

May) China an ultimatum³⁰ complaining that with reference to Japan's offer regarding Kiao-Chou, the Chinese government:

"did not manifest the least appreciation of Japan's good will and difficulties. From the commercial and military points of view, Kiao-chou is an important place, in the acquisition of which the Japanese Empire sacrificed much blood and money, and, after the acquisition, the Empire incurs no obligation to restore it to China. . . . Furthermore, the Chinese Government not only ignored the friendly feelings of the Imperial Government offering the restoration of Kiao-chou Bay, but also, in replying to the revised proposals, they even demanded its unconditional restoration; and again China demanded that Japan should bear the responsibility of paying indemnity for all the unavoidable losses and damages resulting from Japan's military operations at Kiao-chou; and still further in connection with the territory of Kiao-chou, China advanced other demands and declared that she has the right of participation at the future peace conference to be held between Japan and Germany. Although China is fully aware that the unconditional restoration of Kiao-chou and Japan's responsibility of indemnification for the unavoidable losses and damages can never be tolerated by Japan, yet she purposely advanced these demands and declared that this reply was final and decisive."

After these complaints, and an undertaking:

"to detach the Group V from the present negotiations and discuss it separately in the future,"

the document terminated with the following:

"The Imperial Government again offer their advice, and hope that the Chinese Government upon this advice will give a satisfactory reply by 6 o'clock P.M. on the 9th day of May. It is hereby declared that if no satisfactory reply is received before and at the designated time, the Imperial Government will take steps they may deem necessary."³¹

China submitted.³² Japan had established control. She had made clear that her engagement not to "deprive China or other peoples of anything which they now possess" was not among the promises which "Japan always keeps."

Japanese-Russian Treaty, 1916. On 3 July 1916, Japan and Russia signed a war-treaty by which they agreed as follows:

"*Article I.*: Japan will not be a party to any political arrangement or combination directed against Russia. Russia will not be a party to any political arrangement or combination directed against Japan.

"*Article II.*: Should the territorial rights or the special interests in the Far East of one of the contracting parties recognized by the other con-

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 401-5.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 402-4.

³² The text of the submission may be seen *ibid.*, pp. 405-6. The ensuing agreements are in *ibid.*, pp. 406-20.

tracting party be threatened, Japan and Russia will take counsel of each other as to the measures to be taken in view of the support or the help to be given in order to safeguard and defend those rights and interests.”³³

The British Foreign Office was pleased — so it said. It was not aware that, simultaneously, a secret treaty had been signed aimed at:

“the safeguarding of China against political domination by any third Power entertaining hostile designs towards Russia or Japan.”³⁴

Japan and the German Properties. The American rupture of diplomatic relations with Germany on 3 February 1917, and the invitation by that Power to others to do likewise³⁵ — an invitation immediately (4 February) delivered by the American Ambassador at Peking to the Chinese Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs — raised again, under altered circumstances, the question of China's relations with Germany, and, in the attitude then assumed by Japan, we shall have some evidence of her purpose in entering the war. On 8 February, M. Krupensky, the Russian Ambassador at Tokio, telegraphed to Petrograd as follows (*Italics now added*).

“I never omit an opportunity for representing to the minister for foreign affairs the desirability, in the interests of Japan herself, of China's intervention in the war, and only last week I had a conversation with him on the subject. Today I again pointed out to him that the present moment was particularly favorable, in view of the position taken up by the United States, and the proposal made by them to the neutral Powers to follow their example, and more particularly in view of the recent speeches of the American minister at Peking. Viscount Motono replied that he would be the first to welcome a rupture between China and Germany, and would not hesitate to take steps in this direction at Peking if he were sure that the Chinese Government would go in that direction. So far, however, he had no such assurance, and he feared lest unsuccessful representations at Peking might do harm to the Allies. He promised me to sound the attitude of Peking without delay, and, in case of some hope of success, to propose to the cabinet to take a decision in the desired direction.

“On the other hand, the minister pointed out the necessity for him, in view of the attitude of Japanese public opinion on the subject, *as well as with a view to safeguard Japan's position at the future peace conference if China should be admitted to it, of securing the support of the Allied Powers to the desires of Japan in respect of Shantung and the Pacific islands.* These desires are for the succession to all the rights and privileges hitherto possessed by Germany in the Shantung province, and for the acquisition of the islands to the north of the equator which are now occupied by the Japanese.

³³ Gibbons, *The New Map of Asia*, pp. 503-4; Cocks, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-1.

³⁴ Cocks, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

³⁵ Millard, *op. cit.*, pp. 105, 110-11.

“Motono plainly told me that the Japanese Government would like to receive at once the promise of the Imperial [Russian] Government to support the above desires of Japan. In order to give a push to the highly important question of a break between China and Germany, I regard it as very desirable that the Japanese should be given the promise they ask; this the more so as, so far as can be seen here, the relations between Great Britain and Japan have been of late such as to justify a surmise that the Japanese aspirations would not meet with any objections on the part of the London cabinet.”³⁶

To the Japanese requirement of support in her designs, the British government made prompt reply (16 February), bargaining, at the same time, for Japanese support with reference to British desire for acquisition of some islands. The British Ambassador said that:

“His Majesty’s Government accede with pleasure to the request of the Japanese Government for an assurance that they will support Japan’s claims in regard to the disposal of Germany’s rights in Shantung and possessions in the islands north of the equator on the occasion of the Peace Conference; it being understood that the Japanese Government will in the eventual peace settlement treat in the same spirit Great Britain’s claims to the German islands south of the equator.”³⁷

On 19 February, Viscount Motono (Japanese Foreign Minister) addressed to the Russian and French Ambassadors at Tokio identical notes declaring that:

“in view of recent developments in the general situation, and in view of the particular arrangements concerning peace conditions, such as arrangements relative to the disposition of the Bosphorus, Constantinople, and the Dardanelles,³⁸ being already under discussion by the Powers interested, the Imperial Japanese Government believes that the moment has come for it also to express its desires relative to certain conditions of peace essential to Japan and to submit them for the consideration of the Government of the French Republic.

“The French Government is thoroughly informed of all the efforts the Japanese Government has made in a general manner to accomplish

³⁶ Millard, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-7; Cocks, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-5.

³⁷ *Current History*, X, Pt. 1, pp. 441-2; Dillon, *The Inside Story of the Peace Conference*, p. 339. It may well be assumed that none of the negotiating Powers overlooked the political and economic advantage of the extrusion of Germany from China. In a telegram of 9 March to the Russian Ambassador at Paris, containing instructions with regard to the impending conference of the Allies, the Russian Foreign Minister said that “the question of driving the Germans out of the Chinese market is of very great importance, but must be postponed till Japan could have a representative present”: Loreburn, *How the War Came*, p. 295.

³⁸ The allusion is to the arrangement of two years before by which the United Kingdom and France agreed that at the conclusion of peace Russia should have Constantinople, &c.

its task in the present war, and particularly to guarantee for the future the peace of Oriental Asia and the security of the Japanese Empire, for which it is absolutely necessary to take from Germany its bases of political, military, and economic activity in the Far East.

"Under these conditions, the Imperial Japanese Government proposes to demand from Germany at the time of the peace negotiations the surrender of the territorial rights and special interests Germany possessed before the war in Shantung and the islands situated north of the equator in the Pacific Ocean.

"The Imperial Japanese Government confidently hopes the Government of the French Republic, realizing the legitimacy of these demands, will give assurance that, her case being proved, Japan may count upon its full support on this question."³⁹

It will be observed that in these notes there is no suggestion of Shantung being passed on to China. No assurance of support for that purpose would have been required. The next day, the Russian Ambassador gave the required undertaking.⁴⁰ The French reply (1 March) intimated assent, but contained the following:

"M. Briand demands, on the other hand, that Japan give its support to obtain from China the breaking of its diplomatic relations with Germany, and that it give this act desirable significance. The consequence of this in China should be the following:

"First, handing passports to the German diplomatic agents and Consuls.

"Second, the obligation of all under German jurisdiction to leave Chinese territory.

"Third, the internment of German ships in Chinese ports and the ultimate requisition of these ships in order to place them at the disposition of the Allies following the example of Italy and Portugal. According to the information of the French Government, there are fifteen German ships in Chinese ports totalling about 40,000 tons."⁴¹

On 23 March, Italy undertook to raise no objection to Japanese acquisition of the properties.⁴² Not waiting for this last assurance, Japan withdrew her opposition to Chinese intervention in the war, and China (14 March) handed the German Ambassador his passports.⁴³

On 6 April, the American Congress adopted a resolution declaring war on Germany. That China did not at once follow the American

³⁹ *Current History*, X, Pt. 1, p. 442.

⁴⁰ Gibbons, *op. cit.*, p. 506; *Current History*, X, Pt. 1, p. 443. Motono seems to have required more formal assurance, and on 1 March asked the Ambassador if he had heard from Petrograd (Millard, *op. cit.*, p. 107; Cocks, *op. cit.*, p. 85). On the 21st, the request was complied with (Cocks, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-6). The outbreak of the revolution in Russia was probably the reason for the delay.

⁴¹ *Current History*, X, Pt. 1, p. 442.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 443.

⁴³ Gibbons, *op. cit.*, p. 514.

example was due partly to internal considerations which need not now be considered.⁴⁴ It is sufficient to say that at length (14 August) China issued her declaration of war.

The Peace Treaty. Disposition of German territories being one of the items for settlement at the Peace Conference, and four of the Great Powers being pledged to allot the Shantung interests and the islands north of the equator to Japan, articles 156-58 of the treaty effected the transfer of the former, and a mandate gave control over the latter.⁴⁵ President Wilson (who theretofore had never heard of the agreements) offered objection, but (probably under Japan's threat to withdraw from the Conference) finally accepted some sort of assurance from Japan of her intention to return the territory to China, and assented.⁴⁶ He appears to have desired that the promise should be embodied in the treaty; but Japan declined, and neither in nor outside the treaty would she agree to fix a time for the fulfillment of her asserted purposes. In what terms the assurance was couched has not been revealed.⁴⁷ And in his evidence before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Lansing, said that:

"President Wilson alone approved the Shantung decision; that the other members of the American delegation made no protest against it; and that President Wilson alone knows whether Japan has guaranteed to return Shantung to China."⁴⁸

Outside the Peace Conference, the cession to Japan was generally and bitterly assailed. That it was quite in line with much else that was done was usually overlooked. An American journal, describing the interest aroused, said:

⁴⁴ See Millard, *op. cit.*, pp. 111, 114-6, 123-35; Gibbons, *op. cit.*, pp. 445-9.

⁴⁵ The mandate not having been concurred in by the United States (one of the five Powers to whom the German colonies had been assigned by the peace treaty) its provisions were the subject of subsequent negotiations.

⁴⁶ Cf. cap. XVIII of Mr. Lansing's book, *The Peace Negotiations*, pp. 243-67.

⁴⁷ At the Peace Conference at Paris, Baron Makino, as head of the Japanese delegation, issued the following: "Japan is now pledged to return to China this harbor and port built with German money, together with the territory of Kiaochou, which China will receive eighty years sooner than she could possibly have secured it. The treaty of 1915, under which this restoration is to be made, contains no secret clauses, and an agreement entered into in September 1918, regarding future Chino-Japanese co-operation in Shantung contains no stipulation which is more or less than a just and mutually helpful settlement of outstanding questions" (Millard, *op. cit.*, p. 83). But pledge of that sort was valueless, for the "treaty" and the "agreement" referred to had been repudiated by China as having been forced upon her. Dr. Dillon has alleged that, at the Peace Conference, Japan on three occasions gave specific promises to transfer the Shantung property to China (*The Inside Story of the Peace Conference*, p. 340); but the only statement he quotes is the following: "The acquisition of property belonging to one nation which it is the intention of the country acquiring it to exploit to its sole advantage is not conducive to amity or good will" (p. 336).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 340.

“Shantung was at least a moral explosion. It blew down the front of the temple, and now everybody sees that behind the front there was a very busy market.”⁴⁹

China's protest may be seen in *Current History*, X, Pt. 1, pp. 444-6.

Why did Japan Enter the War? The question, Why did Japan enter the war? is easily answered.

1. It was not because of obligation under her treaty with the United Kingdom. Existence of obligation was mere pretence and excuse.

2. One reason for Japan's declaration of war was, as Baron Kato said, that Germany's possession of Kiao-Chou “conflicted with the more immediate interests of our own Empire.”⁵⁰

3. The other reason was Japan's desire to possess herself of Kiao-Chou; the associated German possessions; and German islands in the south Pacific.

The situation is not unfamiliar. In earlier days, the United Kingdom had to get rid of French association in Egypt; France had to get rid of British, Italian, and German interests in Morocco; Italy had to get rid of British, French, German, and Austro-Hungarian opposition in Tripoli and Cyrenaica; and, quite in accordance with precedent, Japan, taking opportunity by the forelock, bargained for assent of the Allies to her acquisitions in China. From the point of view of current international morality, no fault can be found with the operation. *Sacro egoismo* is as useful a principle in Japan as in Italy⁵¹ and elsewhere. Might is right as well in China as in the Balkans and elsewhere. Nations “act upon their own interests,” and disregard or misinterpret treaties.⁵² The United Kingdom pretended that she was under obligation to defend Belgium. And Japan took vast interests in Shantung from Germany, on the pretence that she was fulfilling an obligation to the United Kingdom.

Sino-Japanese Settlement. The treaty between China and Japan of 4 February 1922⁵³ necessitates no alteration in what has been said. While it is true that Japan has, in large measure, agreed to transfer the Shantung properties to China, much is left to negotiation between the two Powers, and certain properties in Kiao-Chou are to be retained by Japan. Japan is to transfer to China the Tsing-tao-Tsinanfu Railway. And:

“*Article XV.* China undertakes to reimburse to Japan the actual value of all the Railway properties mentioned in the preceding article.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 341.

⁵⁰ *Ante*, p. 377.

⁵¹ See cap. VII.

⁵² *Cf.* Address by James Brown Scott: *Am. Soc. Int. Law, Prcdgs.*, 1917, pp. 101-7.

⁵³ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XVI, Supp., pp. 84-90; *Current History*, XV, pp. 1030-33.

The actual value to be so reimbursed shall consist of the sum of fifty-three million, four hundred and six thousand, one hundred and forty-one (53,406,141) gold Marks (which is the assessed value of such portion of the said properties as was left behind by the Germans), or its equivalent, plus the amount which Japan, during her administration of the Railway, has actually expended for permanent improvements on or additions to the said properties, less a suitable allowance for depreciation."

"*Article XVIII.* To effect the reimbursement under Article XV of the present treaty, China shall deliver to Japan simultaneously with the completion of the transfer of the Railway properties, Chinese Government Treasury Notes, secured on the properties and revenues of the Railway, and running for a period of fifteen years, but redeemable whether in whole or in part, at the option of China at the end of five years from the date of the delivery of the said Treasury Notes, or at any time thereafter upon six months' previous notice.

"*Article XIX.* Pending the redemption of the said Treasury Notes under the preceding Article, the Government of the Chinese Republic will select and appoint, for so long a period as any part of the said Treasury Notes shall remain unredeemed, a Japanese subject to be Traffic Manager, and another Japanese subject to be Chief Accountant jointly with the Chinese Chief Accountant and with co-ordinate functions. These officials shall all be under the direction, control, and supervision of the Chinese Managing Director, and removable for cause."

One of four special understandings, as recorded in the minutes of the conversations and explained by the American Secretary of State at the plenary session of 1 February, was as follows:

"The redemption of the Treasury Notes under Article XVIII of the Treaty will not be effected with funds raised from any source other than Chinese."⁵⁴

In other words, China has to pay Japan the sum mentioned for a railway to which Japan had no title, as a method (presumably) of making China, instead of Germany, pay the Japanese war-expenditure; and until China can pay that amount without borrowing, Japan retains a fairly tight hold on the railway.

Of more importance (for present purposes) than are the terms of the treaty is the fact that if China had been unsupported in her negotiations with Japan, no such terms, hard as they are, could have been secured. Previous to the meeting at Washington, Japan stood upon her "treaty rights" and her twenty-one demands, while China insisted that the "rights" had been obtained by coercion, and that the demands were unconscionable. Facing the world at Washington, Japan was much more reasonable.

⁵⁴ *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XVI, p. 93; *Current History*, XV, p. 1034.

CHAPTER XII

WHY DID THE UNITED STATES ENTER THE WAR?

PRIOR TO THE DECLARATION OF WAR, 393.

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ALTHOUGH it is perfectly clear that the United States entered the war in defence of American lives and property as against attack by German submarines,¹ that is by no means the generally accepted view. It is much too self-regarding. It supplies no basis for self-laudation. Nobler and more magnanimous motives have been substituted for it. Reiterated pæans of self-applause have made assertion of it extremely unpopular. The inexorable facts, nevertheless, remain. Note them as they occurred in the two periods: (1) prior to the declaration of war; and (2) at the time of the declaration; and contrast them with (3) the subsequent assertions.

PRIOR TO THE DECLARATION OF WAR

Mr. President Wilson stated in his address to the Chamber of Deputies in Brussels, on 19 June 1919, that:

“it was the violation of Belgium that awakened the world to the realization of the character of the struggle.”²

In other words, on 4 August 1914 (the day of the invasion of Belgium), the world realized that it had become necessary, as Mr. Wilson afterward said:³

“to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and autocratic power.”

If that be the fact, the course pursued by the President and the language which he used are inexplicable. In a letter to the Kaiser, for example, of 16 September of the same year, he said:

“I speak thus frankly because I know that you will expect and wish me to do so as one friend speaks to another, and because I feel sure that such a reservation of judgment until the end of the war, when all its events and circumstances can be seen in their entirety and in their true relations, will commend itself to you as a true expression of sincere neutrality.”⁴

¹ Cf. Scott: *Diplomatic Correspondence*, p. viii.

² *N. Y. Times*, 20 June 1919.

³ *Post*, p. 401.

⁴ *Current History*, I, p. 375.

Shortly afterwards, in his address to Congress (1 December 1914) — four months after “the violation of Belgium” — he expressed the friendship of the United States with all other nations — including Germany — as follows:

“We are at peace with all the world. No one who speaks counsel based on fact, or drawn from a just and candid interpretation of realities, can say that there is reason to fear that from any quarter our independence, or the integrity of our territory, is threatened. Dread of the power of any other nation we are incapable of. We are not jealous of rivalry in the fields of commerce, or of any other peaceful achievement. We mean to live our lives as we will; but we mean also to let live. We are, indeed, a true friend to all the nations of the world, because we threaten none, covet the possession of none, desire the overthrow of none. Our friendship can be accepted, and is accepted without reservation, because it is offered in a spirit, and for a purpose which no one need ever question or suspect. Therein lies our greatness.”⁵

On 27 January of the next year (1915), Mr. Wilson sent birthday congratulations to the Kaiser:

“On behalf of the Government and people of the United States, I have the pleasure to extend to Your Majesty cordial felicitations on this anniversary of your birth, as well as my own good wishes for your welfare.”⁶

On 4 February 1915, the German Government notified the United States that, by way of retaliation for the British declaration of a war-zone in the North Sea, it:

“will prevent by all the military means at its disposal all navigation by the enemy in those waters. To this end, it will endeavor to destroy, after February 18 next, any merchant vessels of the enemy which present themselves at the seat of war above indicated, although it may not always be possible to avert the dangers which may menace persons and merchandise. Neutral Powers are accordingly forewarned not to continue to intrust their crews, passengers, or merchandise to such vessels. Their attention is furthermore called to the fact that it is of urgency to recommend to their own vessels to steer clear of these waters. It is true that the German Navy has received instructions to abstain from all violence against neutral vessels recognizable as such; but in view of the hazards of war, and of the misuse of the neutral flag ordered by the British Government, it will not always be possible to prevent a neutral vessel from becoming the victim of an attack intended to be directed against a vessel of the enemy.”⁷

In the course of his reply (10 February), the American Secretary of State said:

⁵ Scott: *President Wilson's Foreign Policy*, p. 79.

⁶ *The Ottawa Journal*. A similar message was sent in 1916.

⁷ Scott: *Diplomatic Correspondence*, pp. 26-7.

“The Government of the United States views these possibilities with such grave concern that it feels it to be its privilege, and indeed its duty in the circumstances, to request the Imperial German Government to consider, before action is taken, the critical situation in respect of the relations between this country and Germany which might arise were the German naval forces, in carrying out the policy foreshadowed in the Admiralty’s proclamation, to destroy any merchant vessels of the United States or cause the death of American citizens.”⁸

The German Government protested (16 February) that its action:

“merely represents an act of self-defence which Germany’s vital interests force her to take against England’s method of conducting maritime war in defiance of international law, which no protest on the part of neutrals has availed to bring into accordance with the legal status generally recognized before the outbreak of hostilities. . . . It is conceded that the intention of all these aggressions is to cut off Germany from all supplies and thereby to deliver up to death by famine a peaceful civilian population, a procedure contrary to law of war and every dictate of humanity. . . . If England invokes the powers of famine as an ally in its struggles against Germany with the intention of leaving a civilized people the alternative of perishing in misery or submitting to the yoke of England’s political and commercial will, the German Government are to-day determined to take up the gauntlet and to appeal to the same grim ally. They rely on the neutrals who have hitherto tacitly or under protest submitted to the consequences, detrimental to themselves, of England’s war of famine to display not less tolerance toward Germany, even if the German measures constitute new forms of maritime war, as has hitherto been the case with the English measures. . . . Proceeding from these points of view the German Admiralty has declared the zone prescribed by it the seat of war; it will obstruct this area of maritime war by mines wherever possible, and also endeavor to destroy the merchant vessels of the enemy in any other way.

“It is very far indeed from the intention of the German Government, acting in obedience to these compelling circumstances, ever to destroy neutral lives and neutral property, but on the other hand, they cannot be blind to the fact that dangers arise through the action to be carried out against England which menace without discrimination all trade within the area of maritime war. This applies as a matter of course to war-mines, which place any ship approaching a mined area in danger, even if the limits of international law are adhered to most strictly.

“The German Government believe that they are all the more justified in the hope that the neutral powers will become reconciled with this, just as they have with the serious injury caused them thus far by England’s measures, because it is their will to do everything in any way compatible

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-8.

with the accomplishment of their purpose for the protection of neutral shipping even within the area of maritime war.

"They furnish the first proof their good will by announcing the measures intended by them at a time not less than two weeks beforehand, in order to give neutral shipping an opportunity to make the necessary arrangements to avoid the threatening danger. The safest method of doing this is to stay away from the area of maritime war. Neutral ships entering the closed waters in spite of this announcement, given so far in advance, and which seriously impairs the accomplishment of the military purpose against England, bear their own responsibility for any unfortunate accidents. The German Government on their side expressly decline all responsibility for such accidents and their consequences. . . . The German Government resign themselves to the confident hope that the American Government will recognize the full meaning of the severe struggle which Germany is conducting for her very existence, and will gain full understanding of the reasons which prompt Germany and the aims of the measures announced by her from the above explanations and promises."⁹

The American Secretary of State thereupon fruitlessly proposed (20 February) friendly conciliation of British and German methods.

Knowledge of "the character of the struggle" and the receipt of the German notification did not prevent the President saying in an address to the Associated Press, New York, 20 April 1915:

"We are, therefore, able to understand all nations; we are able to understand them in the compound, not separately, as partisans, but unitedly as knowing and comprehending and embodying them all. It is in that sense that I mean that America is a meditating Nation. The opinion of America, the action of America, is ready to turn, and free to turn, in any direction."¹⁰

Shortly afterwards, following upon the destruction of the *Falaba* (28 March), and the *Gulflight* (1 May), came the sinking of the *Lusitania* (7 May) with the death of more than one hundred American citizens. Nevertheless, while sending a protest to Germany, the American Secretary of State accompanied it (13 May) with a character-testimonial in the following form:

"Recalling the humane and enlightened attitude hitherto assumed by the Imperial German Government in matters of international right, and particularly with regard to the freedom of the seas; having learned to recognize the German views and the German influence in the field of international obligation as always engaged upon the side of justice and humanity. . . . Long acquainted as this Government has been with the character of the Imperial German Government and with the high prin-

⁹ Scott: *Diplomatic Correspondence*, pp. 29-35.

¹⁰ Scott: *President Wilson's Foreign Policy*, p. 87.

ciples of equity by which they have in the past been actuated and guided, the Government of the United States cannot believe that the commanders of the vessels which committed these acts of lawlessness did so, except under a misapprehension of the orders issued by the Imperial German naval authorities.”¹¹

That was written and forwarded nine months after “the violation of Belgium.” In the various public speeches of the President during the rest of the year, no reference was made to the German attacks. Even in his annual address to Congress on 7 December 1915, no word of condemnation can be found. On the contrary, in his address at the Manhattan Club on 4 November, he said:

“No thoughtful man feels any panic haste in this matter. The country is not threatened from any quarter. She stands in friendly relations with all the world.”¹²

The destruction of the *Sussex*, a French cross-Channel steamer, entailing the death of several Americans (24 March 1916), produced a somewhat sharp note from the American Secretary of State (18 April) in which he said that:

“the Government of the United States is forced by recent events to conclude that it is only one instance, even though one of the most extreme and most distressing instances, of the deliberate method and spirit of indiscriminate destruction of merchant vessels of all sorts, nationalities, and destinations which have become more and more unmistakable as the activity of German undersea vessels of war has, in recent months, been quickened and extended. . . . The Government of the United States has been very patient. . . . It has made every allowance for unprecedented conditions, and has been willing to wait until the facts became unmistakable and were susceptible of only one interpretation. It now owes it to a just regard for its own rights to say to the German Imperial Government that that time has come. . . . If it is still the purpose of the Imperial Government to prosecute relentless and indiscriminate warfare against vessels of commerce by the use of submarines, without regard to what the Government of the United States must consider the sacred and indisputable rules of international law and the universally recognized dictates of humanity, the Government of the United States is at last forced to the conclusion that there is but one course it can pursue. Unless the Imperial Government should now immediately declare and effect an abandonment of its present methods of submarine warfare against passenger and freight-carrying vessels, the Government of the United States can have no choice but to sever diplomatic relations with the German Empire altogether.”¹³

¹¹ Scott: *Diplomatic Correspondence*, pp. 44, 46.

¹² Scott: *President Wilson's Foreign Policy*, p. 121.

¹³ Scott: *Diplomatic Correspondence*, pp. 84-6.

In reply, the German Government, while insisting upon the necessity for continuation of submarine warfare, announced (4 May) its determination:

“to make a further concession in adapting the methods of submarine warfare to the interests of neutrals. . . . The German Government, moreover, is prepared to do its utmost to confine the operations of war for the rest of its duration to the fighting forces of the belligerents, thereby also insuring the freedom of the seas, a principle upon which the German Government believes, now as before, to be in agreement with the Government of the United States. The German Government, guided by this idea, notifies the Government of the United States that the German naval forces have received the following orders: In accordance with the general principles of visit and search and destruction of merchant vessels recognized by international law, such vessels, both within and without the area declared as naval war zone, shall not be sunk without warning and without saving human lives, unless these ships attempt to escape or offer resistance.”

The new policy was, however, made contingent upon the United States insisting that:

“the British Government shall forthwith observe the rules of international law universally recognized before the war, as they are laid down in the notes presented by the Government of the United States to the British Government on December 28, 1914, and November 5, 1915. Should the steps taken by the Government of the United States not attain the object it desires to have the laws of humanity followed by all belligerent nations, the German Government will then be facing a new situation, in which it must reserve itself complete liberty of decision.”¹⁴

The Secretary of State replied (8 May) that, accepting:

“the Imperial Government’s declaration of its abandonment of the policy which has so seriously menaced the good relations between the two countries, the Government of the United States will rely upon a scrupulous execution henceforth of the now altered policy of the Imperial Government, such as will remove the principal danger to an interruption of the good relations existing between the United States and Germany.”

At the same time, the Secretary declared that the United States:

“cannot for a moment entertain, much less discuss, a suggestion that respect by German naval authorities for the rights of citizens of the United States upon the high seas should in any way, or in the slightest degree, be made contingent upon the conduct of any other Government affecting the rights of neutrals and noncombatants. Responsibility in such matters is single, not joint; absolute, not relative.”¹⁵

On 27 May, in the course of an address to *The League to Enforce Peace*, Mr. Wilson said:

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 91, 93-4.

¹⁵ Scott: *Diplomatic Correspondence*, pp. 94-5.

“We are participants, whether we would or not, in the life of the world. The interests of all nations are our own also. We are partners with the rest. What affects mankind is inevitably our affair as well as the rest of the nations of Europe and of Asia.”

Referring to the war, he made the astounding statement that:

“With its causes and its objects we are not concerned. The obscure fountain from which its stupendous flood has burst forth we are not interested to search for, or to explore.”¹⁶

The German note of 31 January 1917 indicated a complete change of policy. Throwing the blame upon the intensified rigor of the methods of the *entente* Powers, the United States was notified that:

“Under these circumstances Germany will meet the illegal measures of her enemies by forcibly preventing after February 1, 1917, in a zone around Great Britain, France, Italy, and in the Eastern Mediterranean all navigation, that of neutrals included, from and to England, and from and to France, etc. All ships met within that zone will be sunk.”¹⁷

THE DECLARATION OF WAR PERIOD

Thereupon the United States severed diplomatic relations with Germany, the Secretary of State announcing (3 February 1917) as follows:

“In view of this declaration, which withdraws, suddenly and without prior intimation, the solemn assurance given in the Imperial Government’s note of May 4, 1916, this Government has no alternative consistent with the dignity and honor of the United States but to take the course which it explicitly announced in its note of April 18, 1916, it would take in the event that the Imperial Government did not declare and effect an abandonment of the methods of submarine warfare then employed, and to which the Imperial Government now purpose again to resort.

“The President has, therefore, directed me to announce to Your Excellency that all diplomatic relations between the United States and the German Empire are severed, and that the American Ambassador at Berlin will be immediately withdrawn, and in accordance with such announcement to deliver to Your Excellency your passports.”¹⁸

On the same day, in an address to Congress, the President said:

“Notwithstanding this unexpected action of the German Government, this sudden and deeply deplorable renunciation of its assurances given this Government at one of the most critical moments of tension in the relations of the two governments, I refuse to believe that it is the intention of the German authorities to do in fact what they have warned us they will feel at liberty to do. I cannot bring myself to believe that

¹⁶ Scott: *President Wilson’s Foreign Policy*, p. 190.

¹⁷ Scott: *Diplomatic Correspondence*, p. 301.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

they will indeed pay no regard to the ancient friendship between their people and our own, or to the solemn obligations which have been exchanged between them, and destroy American ships and take the lives of American citizens in the wilful prosecution of the ruthless naval programme they have announced their intention to adopt. Only actual overt acts on their part will make me believe it even now.”¹⁹

On the 26th of the same month (February), the President again addressed Congress. The “overt acts” had not yet occurred, but apprehensions had increased:

“No thoughtful man can fail to see that the necessity for definite action may come at any time, if we are in fact, and not in word merely, to defend our elementary rights as a neutral nation. It would be most imprudent to be unprepared. . . . No one doubts what it is our duty to do. We must defend our commerce and the lives of our people in the midst of the present trying circumstances, with discretion but with clear and steadfast purpose. Only the method and the extent remain to be chosen, upon the occasion, if occasion should indeed arise. Since it has unhappily proved impossible to safeguard our neutral rights by diplomatic means against the unwarranted infringements they are suffering at the hands of Germany, there may be no recourse but to *armed* neutrality, which we shall know how to maintain, and for which there is abundant American precedent. . . . I am not now proposing or contemplating war, or any steps that may lead to it.”²⁰

On 23 March, Germany gave notice of extension of the submarine blockade to that part of the Arctic ocean lying east of the 24th degree of east longitude and south of the 75th degree of north latitude.²¹ On 2 April, the President in an address to Congress, said:

“When I addressed the Congress on the twenty-sixth of February last I thought that it would suffice to assert our neutral rights with arms, our right to use the seas against unlawful interference, our right to keep our people safe against unlawful violence. But armed neutrality, it now appears, is impracticable. Because submarines are in effect outlaws when used as the German submarines have been used against merchant shipping, it is impossible to defend ships against their attacks as the law of nations has assumed that merchantmen would defend themselves against privateers or cruisers, visible craft giving chase upon the open sea. It is common prudence in such circumstances, grim necessity indeed, to endeavor to destroy them before they have shown their own intention. They must be dealt with upon sight, if dealt with at all. . . . With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesi-

¹⁹ Scott: *Diplomatic Correspondence*, p. 308.

²⁰ Scott: *President Wilson's Foreign Policy*, pp. 264-5.

²¹ Scott: *Diplomatic Correspondence*, pp. 309-10.

tating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the government and people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it; and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense, but to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.”²²

Acting upon the recommendation of the President, Congress adopted the following joint resolution (6 April):

“Whereas the Imperial German Government has committed repeated acts of war against the Government and the people of the United States of America, Therefore be it

“Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the state of war between the United States and the Imperial German Government which has thus been thrust upon the United States is hereby formally declared; and that the President be, and he is hereby authorized and directed to employ the entire naval and military forces of the United States, and the resources of the Government, to carry on war against the Imperial German Government; and, to bring the conflict to a successful termination, all the resources of the country are hereby pledged by the Congress of the United States.”²³

SUBSEQUENT TO THE DECLARATION OF WAR

The foregoing recital appears to make indisputable the thesis with which we started — that the United States entered the war in defence of American lives and property against the operations of German submarines; and we are now to notice the transformation from praise of “the humane and enlightened attitude hitherto assumed by the Imperial German Government in matters of international right,” to condemnation of “autocratic governments” in which “we can never have a friend”; and from the war-motive of mere self-defence, to actuation by regard for “suffering humanity” and “the civilization of the world.”

Losing no time, in the same speech in which he had recommended war, the President supplied clever cues which the press and the platform assiduously developed. He said:

“Our object now, as then,²⁴ is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and autocratic power, and to set up among the really free and self-governed peoples of the

²² Scott: *President Wilson's Foreign Policy*, pp. 277-9.

²³ Scott: *Diplomatic Correspondence*, pp. 338-9.

²⁴ The reference is to his speech of 26 February.

world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth ensure the observance of those principles. Neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable where the peace of the world is involved, and the freedom of its peoples, and the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments."

"A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic governments could be trusted to keep faith within it, or observe its covenants. . . . One of the things that has served to convince us that the Prussian autocracy was not and could never be our friend is that from the very outset of the present war it has filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of government with spies, and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot against our national unity of counsel, our peace within and without, our industries, and our commerce."

"We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose because we know that in such a government following such methods, we can never have a friend; and that in the presence of its organized power, always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, there can be no assured security for the democratic governments of the world. . . . The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty."

"But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts — for democracy; for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments; for the rights and liberties of small nations; for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free."²⁵

During the two years and eight months of neutrality — the period which had elapsed since

"the violation of Belgium" had "awakened the world to the realization of the character of the struggle" —

no such language had appeared to the President to be appropriate. On the contrary, he had proffered friendship with Germany; had praised its "high principles of equity"; had sent "cordial felicitations" to the Kaiser; had declared that America was "free to turn in any direction"; had repudiated interest in the causes and objects of the war; and had refused to believe evil intentions on the part of Germany until proved by "actual overt acts." Shortly after the declaration of war, in an address at the dedication of the Red Cross building, Washington (12 May), Mr. Wilson gave further fillip to popular enthusiasm, and further evidence of his insincerity (chargeable, let us say, to war-necessity), by making the following astonishing statements:

²⁵ *President Wilson's Foreign Policy*, pp. 281, 282-3, 284-5, 287.

“I say the heart of the country is in this war because it would not have gone into it if its heart had not been prepared for it. It would not have gone into it if it had not first believed that here was an opportunity to express the character of the United States. We have gone in with no special grievance of our own, because we have always said that we were the friends and servants of mankind. . . . We look for no profit. We look for no advantage. . . . We go because we believe that the very principles upon which the American Republic was founded are now at stake and must be vindicated.”²⁶

Waxing much more violent and reckless, Mr. Wilson, in his Flag Day address (14 June 1917), expanded his charges against Germany as follows:

“It is plain enough how we were forced into the war. The extraordinary insults and aggressions of the Imperial German Government left us no self-respecting choice but to take up arms in defense of our rights as a free people and of our honor as a sovereign government. The military masters of Germany denied us the right to be neutral. They filled our unsuspecting communities with vicious spies and conspirators, and sought to corrupt the opinion of our people in their own behalf. When they found that they could not do that, their agents diligently spread sedition amongst us, and sought to draw our own citizens from their allegiance — and some of those agents were men connected with the official Embassy of the German Government itself in our own capital. They sought by violence to destroy our industries, and arrest our commerce. They tried to incite Mexico to take up arms against us and to draw Japan into a hostile alliance with her — and that, not by indirection, but by direct suggestion from the Foreign Office in Berlin. They impudently denied us the use of the high seas, and repeatedly executed their threat that they would send to death any of our people who ventured to approach the coasts of Europe. And many of our own people were corrupted. Men began to look upon their own neighbors with suspicion, and to wonder in their hot resentment and surprise whether there was any community in which hostile intrigue did not lurk. What great nation in such circumstances would not have taken up arms? Much as we had desired peace, it was denied us, and not of our own choice. The flag under which we serve would have been dishonored had we withheld our hand.

“But that is only part of the story. We know now as clearly as before we were ourselves engaged that we are not enemies of the German people, and that they are not our enemies. They did not originate or desire this hideous war or wish that we should be drawn into it; and we are vaguely conscious that we are fighting their cause, as they will some day see it, as well as our own. They are themselves in the grip of the

²⁶ Scott: *President Wilson's Foreign Policy*, p. 297.

same sinister power that has now at last stretched its ugly talons out and drawn blood from us. The whole world is at war because the whole world is in the grip of that power and is trying out the great battle which shall determine whether it is to be brought under mastery or fling itself free.

“The war was begun by the military masters of Germany, who proved to be also the masters of Austria-Hungary. These men had never regarded nations as peoples, men, women, and children of like blood and frame as themselves, for whom governments existed and in whom governments had their life. They have regarded them merely as serviceable organizations which they could by force or intrigue bend or corrupt to their own purpose. They have regarded the smaller states, in particular, and the peoples who could be overwhelmed by force, as their natural tools and instruments of domination. Their purpose has long been avowed. The statesmen of other nations, to whom that purpose was incredible, paid little attention; regarded what German professors expounded in their class-rooms and German writers set forth to the world as the goal of German policy as rather the dream of minds detached from practical affairs, as preposterous private conceptions of German destiny, rather than as the actual plans of responsible rulers; but the rulers of Germany themselves knew all the while what concrete plans, what well advanced intrigues lay back of what the professors and the writers were saying, and were glad to go forward unmolested, filling the thrones of Balkan states with German princes, putting German officers at the service of Turkey to drill her armies and make interest with her government, developing plans of sedition and rebellion in India and Egypt, setting their fires in Persia. The demands made by Austria upon Serbia were a mere single step in a plan which compassed Europe and Asia, from Berlin to Bagdad.”²⁷ Than this and the quotation which follows, there can be found, in the literary product of war-disturbed mentality, no wilder exhibitions of foolish rhodomontade. Nevertheless, they suited the occasion, and they answered the purpose—the implantation of war fervor.

In an address to Congress on 4 December 1917, Mr. Wilson said:

“I believe that I speak for them when I say two things: First, that this intolerable Thing of which the masters of Germany have shown us the ugly face, this menace of combined intrigue and force which we now see so clearly as the German power, a Thing without conscience or honor or capacity for covenanted peace, must be crushed, and, if it be not utterly brought to an end, at least shut out from the friendly intercourse of the nations; and, second, that when this Thing and its power are indeed defeated and the time comes that we can discuss peace . . . we shall be willing and glad to pay the full price for peace, and pay it ungrudgingly.”

²⁷ Scott: *President Wilson's Foreign Policy*, pp. 309-11.

“We can do this with all the greater zeal and enthusiasm because we know that for us this is a war of high principle, debased by no selfish ambition of conquest or spoliation; because we know, and all the world knows, that we have been forced into it to save the very institutions we live under from corruption and destruction. The purposes of the Central Powers strike straight at the very heart of everything we believe in; their methods of warfare outrage every principle of humanity and of knightly honor; their intrigue has corrupted the very thought and spirit of many of our people; their sinister and secret diplomacy has sought to take our very territory away from us and disrupt the Union of the States. Our safety would be at an end, our honor forever sullied and brought into contempt were we to permit their triumph. They are striking at the very existence of democracy and liberty.”²⁸

And, reversing his assertion that with the causes and objects of the war “we are not concerned,” Mr. Wilson, in an address to Congress on 12 February 1918, gave to the crowd this lead also:

“This war had its roots in the disregard of the rights of small nations and of nationalities which lacked the union and the force to make good their claim to determine their own allegiances and their own forms of political life.”²⁹

In adopting his altered phraseology, the President was, no doubt, acting upon the principle formulated by M. Ollivier, the head of the French government in 1870 — when war has become inevitable, it is our duty to make it popular.³⁰ What better pleas than that:

“we have no special grievance of our own;” that we are fighting “to vindicate the principles of peace and justice;” “for the rights and liberties of small nations;” “for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments;” for the release of “the whole world” from “that power;” for the overthrow of “autocratic governments;” for “the very principles upon which the American Republic was founded;” for the suppression of spies, intrigues, and secret diplomacy, in order that the world may “be made safe for democracy?”

Many Americans contemned the responding and resounding popular chorus, but it remained for Colonel Harvey (the Ambassador at London appointed by the new President) conspicuously to challenge it all in a notably courageous speech at the annual dinner of the Pilgrims Society (London, 19 May 1921). He said:

“Even to this day, at rare intervals, an ebullient sophomore seeks applause and wins a smile by shouting that ‘we won the war.’ Far more prevalent until recently was the impression — and this was, and

²⁸ *President Wilson's Foreign Policy*, pp. 341-2, 352.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 369.

³⁰ See *post*, cap. XVIII.

still is, in a measure sincere — that we went into the war to rescue humanity from all kinds of menacing perils. Not a few remain convinced that we sent our young soldiers across the sea to save this kingdom, and France, and Italy. That is not the fact. We sent them solely to save the United States of America. We were not too proud to fight, whatever that may mean. We were not afraid to fight. That is the real truth of the matter. And so we came along toward the end and helped you and your Allies to shorten the war. That is all we did, and all we claim to have done.”³¹

But the truth was explosively unpopular in the United States, and President Harding, by way of dissociating himself from it, when alluding to deceased soldiers, said (23 May 1921):

“These heroes . . . saw democracy challenged and defended it. They saw civilization threatened and rescued it.”³²

A few days afterwards (29 May), he said:

“We unsheathed a sword in behalf of suffering humanity and were brought into a supreme and sublime effort to save the civilization of the world.”³³

Mr. Charles E. Hughes, Mr. Harding’s Secretary of State, in an address at Brown University added his contradiction of Colonel Harvey:

“Our men did not go forth to fight for this nation as one of imperialistic designs and cunning purpose, or to protect a land where avarice might find its surest reward. They offered their lives, and all the energies of the country were harnessed in the supreme effort, because we loved the institutions of liberty and intended to maintain them, because we hated tyranny and the brutality and ruthlessness which found expression in the worship of force, and because we found our fate linked with that of the free peoples who were struggling for the preservation of the essentials of freedom. With them we made common cause, and, as from one end of the country to the other, rang appeals in the name of civilization itself, the whole nation responded. . . . It was America, the exemplar of free institutions, aiding humanity in their preservation, that called forth the supreme endeavor.”³⁴

But the truth, nevertheless, survived, and it was the same Mr. Hughes who, at the Washington Conference (November 1921–February 1922) read to its members a memorandum in which was the following:

“The unlimited use of submarines by Germany against commerce brought down upon her the wrath of the world, solidified it against the common enemy, and was undoubtedly the popular cause of the United States entering the war.”³⁵

³¹ *The Times* (London), 20 May 1921.

³² *N. Y. Times*, 1 June 1921.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *N. Y. Times*, 16 June 1921.

³⁵ *Current History*, XV, p. 705.

Why did the United States enter the war of 1914-18? There ought to be, one would imagine, some simple and unanimously agreed reason. But, as a matter of fact, while Congress confined itself to an unqualified statement of the simple truth, Americans, like other people, want to believe that they were actuated by generous, unselfish, and heroic motives; that they were fighting for liberty and democracy and civilization — that they were “aiding humanity in their preservation,” &c., &c. Some excuse for pandering to crowd-desire of that sort existed during the war.

CHAPTER XIII

WHY DID CANADA ENTER THE WAR?

Offer of Assistance, 408. — The Motive, 409. — The Chain, 410. — The Future, 411.

Offer of Assistance. On 1 August 1914 (The United Kingdom was not at war until the 4th), Canada's Governor General sent a cable message to the Colonial Secretary as follows:

"In view of the impending danger of war involving the Empire, my Advisers are anxiously considering the most effective means of rendering every possible aid, and they will welcome any suggestions and advice which Imperial Naval and Military authorities may deem it expedient to offer. They are confident that a considerable force would be available for service abroad. A question has been mooted respecting the status of any Canadian force serving abroad as, under section sixty-nine of the Canadian Militia Act, the active militia can only be placed on active service beyond Canada for the defence thereof. It has been suggested that regiments might enlist as Imperial troops for stated period, Canadian Government undertaking to make all necessary financial provision for their equipment, pay and maintenance. This proposal has not yet been maturely considered here, and my advisers would be glad to have views of Imperial Government thereon."¹

On the same day, the Governor General sent another cable, as follows:

"My Advisers while expressing their most earnest hope that peaceful solution of existing international difficulties may be achieved, and their strong desire to co-operate in every possible way for that purpose, wish me to convey to His Majesty's Government, the firm assurance that, if unhappily war should ensue, the Canadian people will be united in a common resolve to put forth every effort, and to make every sacrifice necessary to ensure the integrity and maintain the honor of our Empire."²

On the 4th, King George cabled all the Dominions as follows:

"I desire to express to my people of the Overseas Dominions with what appreciation and pride I have received the messages from their respective Governments during the last few days. These spontaneous assurances of their fullest support recalled to me the generous self-sacrificing help given by them in the past to the Mother Country. I shall be strengthened in the discharge of the great responsibilities which rest

¹ Canada: *Docs. relating to the European War*, p. 41.

² *Ibid.*

upon me by the confident belief that, in this time of trial, my Empire will stand united, calm, resolute, trusting in God.”³

The Canadian Governor General replied:

“In the name of the Dominion of Canada, I humbly thank Your Majesty for your gracious message of approval. Canada stands united from the Pacific to the Atlantic in her determination to uphold the honor and tradition of our Empire.”⁴

Early on the 4th, Germany crossed the Belgian frontier; and on the same day, the Colonial Secretary cabled to the Governor General:

“Though there seems to be no immediate necessity for any request on our part for an expeditionary force from Canada, I think, in view of their generous offer, your Ministers would be wise to take all legislative and other steps by which they would be enabled, without delay, to provide such a force in case it should be required later.”⁵

On the 5th, the Governor General cabled to the Colonial Secretary:

“My Government being desirous of putting beyond doubt status of Canadian volunteers, request that His Majesty may be pleased to issue an order bringing these volunteers under Sections 175 and 176 of the Army Act.”⁶

On the 6th, the Colonial Secretary cabled:

“With reference to my telegram of August 4th, His Majesty’s Government gratefully accept offer of your Ministers to send expeditionary force to this country, and would be glad if it could be despatched as soon as possible. Suggested composition follows.”⁷

On the 7th, the Colonial Secretary cabled:

“My telegram of 6th August, Army Council consider one division would be suitable composition of expeditionary force.”⁸

The Motive. The motive actuating Canada’s offer of assistance was not the Austro-Hungarian attack upon Serbia. Canada knew nothing of the merits of the Balkan quarrel, and, as we have already seen,⁹ the United Kingdom had declared herself to be uninterested in a Balkan war.

Nor was it because of the invasion of Belgium. That did not occur until three days afterwards.

Nor was it because of the British “obligation of honour” to co-operate with France.¹⁰ Canadians knew nothing of the secret arrangements in which it was embodied. Sir Edward Grey did not deliver his revealing speech until the 3d August.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁹ *Ante*, p. 113.

¹⁰ *Ante*, pp. 115-122.

The only reason for the offer was Canada's political association with the United Kingdom.¹¹ Canada did not know what reason for entering the war would be alleged by the United Kingdom. Indeed, the British government had not decided to become belligerent. It was still considering what it would do if Belgium should be invaded.¹² Nevertheless:

"Canada stands united from the Pacific to the Atlantic in her determination to uphold the honor and tradition of our Empire" — so said the Canadian Government. And not one of its members had the slightest idea what was meant by the words — indeed, there was no meaning. Assertion that Canada's political association was the only reason for Canada entering the war, does not, of course, exclude operation of the sentiment which supported that association, or any feeling of pride in the association, or any belief in its advantages. What is meant is that but for the existence of the political association, the telegrams of 1 August would not have been sent.

The Chain. Lord Loreburn said in his notable book *How the War Came*:

"It arose in the way we all know. Serbia gave offence to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, cause of just offence, as our Ambassador admits in the published despatches. We had no concern in that quarrel, as Sir Edward Grey says in terms. But Russia, the protectress of Serbia, came forward to prevent her being utterly humiliated by Austria. We were not concerned in that quarrel either, as Sir Edward Grey also says. And then Russia called upon France under their treaty to help in the fight. France was not concerned in that quarrel any more than ourselves, as Sir Edward Grey informs us. But France was bound by a Russian treaty of which he did not know the terms, and then France called to us for help. We were tied by the relations which our Foreign Office had created, without apparently realizing that they had created them."¹³

Taking in inverse order the links by which Canada was dragged into the war, we have the following:

Canada entered the war because she was tied to the United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom entered the war in pursuance of obligation to France,¹⁴ and in order to save France from subordination to Germany.

France entered the war because she was tied to Russia.

Autocratic Russia desired to occupy Constantinople, and, in order to block Germany and Austria-Hungary, aligned herself with Serbia.

¹¹ At the Imperial War Conference of 1917, Mr. Massey, the Premier of New Zealand, said: "We came into the war as oversea Dominions of the Empire, because we are part of the Empire, and because the Empire to which we belong was being attacked." Proceedings, p. 45. The first reason was accurate. Everybody at the Conference knew that the second was not.

¹² *Ante*, pp. 132-5.

¹³ Pp. 16, 17. And see p. 107.

¹⁴ So Lord Loreburn, but see *ante*, cap. V, pp. 129-130.

And democratic Russia afterwards declared that she had no desire to occupy Constantinople or any other foreign territory — that the whole enterprise was a mere bit of Czaristic imperialism, which must be repudiated.¹⁵ With this Russian declaration:

The reason for Russia entering the war stood acknowledged as a mistake.

The reason for France entering the war disappeared.

The reason for the United Kingdom entering the war ceased.

And the engulfment of Canada became a needless tragedy.

The Future. General Smuts, having on one occasion said that "The British Empire came to an end in 1914," afterwards explained himself by saying:

"What I meant was this: From unavoidable causes, Great Britain, on being suddenly thrust into the late war, was unable to consult the Dominions. She went on in the faith that they would not fail her, and trusted in their coming to her aid. But I do not think that can happen again. The self-governed Dominions in future must exercise the right to say whether, after full deliberation, they will join in a war in which any portion of the Empire may be engaged."¹⁶

Mr. Lloyd George is of different opinion. When speaking in the House of Commons (14 December 1921) on the Irish question, he said:

"The position of the Dominions in reference to external affairs has been completely revolutionized in the course of the last four years. I tried to call attention to that a few weeks ago when I made a statement. Since the war, the Dominions have been given equal rights with Great Britain in the control of the foreign policy of the Empire. . . . They said: 'You are putting us in this position — either we have to support you in a policy which we might or might not approve, or we have to desert the old country in the time of trouble. That is a dilemma in which you ought never to put us. Therefore in future you must consult us before the event.' That was right, that was just. That was advantageous to both parties. We acceded to it gladly.

"The machinery is the machinery of the British Government — the Foreign Office, the Ambassadors. The machinery must remain here. It

¹⁵ Prince Lvoff, in his manifesto of 9 April 1917, announced that: "The Government deems it to be its right and duty to declare now that free Russia does not aim at dominating other nations, at depriving them of their national patrimony, or at occupying by force foreign territories; but that its object is to establish a durable peace on the basis of the rights of nations to decide their own destiny. The Russian nation does not lust after the strengthening of its power abroad at the expense of other nations. Its aim is not to subjugate or to humiliate anyone": *Ann. Reg.*, 1917, p. [248]. In the Russian declaration of the following month (1 May), the phrase "a peace without annexations or indemnities" first officially appeared: *ibid.*, p. [249]. Cf. *The Nineteenth Century*, Nov. 1917, p. 1022.

¹⁶ In conversation with Dr. Miller, Principal of Ridley College, St. Catharines, Ont.

is impossible that it could be otherwise, unless you had a Council of Empire, with representatives selected for the purpose. Apart from that, you must act through one instrument. The instrument of the foreign policy of the Empire is the British Foreign Office. That has been accepted by all the Dominions as inevitable. But they claim a voice in determining the lines of our future policy. At the last Imperial Conference they were there discussing our policy in Germany, our policy in Egypt, our policy in America, our policy all over the world, and we are now acting upon the mature, general decisions arrived at with the common consent of the whole Empire. The sole control of Britain over foreign policy is now vested in the Empire as a whole. That is a new fact, and I would point out what bearing it has upon the Irish controversy.

“The advantage to us is that joint control means joint responsibility, and when the burden of Empire has become so vast it is well that we should have the shoulders of these young giants under the burden to help us along. . . . Ireland will share the rights of the Empire and share the responsibilities of the Empire. She will take her part with other Free States in discussing the policy of the Empire. That, undoubtedly, commits her to responsibilities which I believe her people will honor, whatever may ensue as a result of the policy agreed upon in the Council Chamber of the Empire. That is a general summary of the main proposition which is involved in these Articles of Agreement. . . . We shall welcome her co-operation just as we would welcome the co-operation of the great Dominions in naval defence and in all the other defence that is necessary for the Empire.”¹⁷

There is much objection to doctrine of that sort in Canada.

¹⁷ Hansard, CXLIX, cols. 28-29, 30-31, 38; *The Lloyd George Liberal Magazine*, Jan. 1922, pp. 341-2, 345.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BELGIAN TREATY

- BELGIAN HISTORY, 413. — Belgium in 1815, 413. — Union with Holland, 414. — Separation of Holland and Belgium, 415. — Conferences of 1830-9, 415. — The Eighteen Articles, 415. — The Twenty-four Articles, 416. — The Belgian Treaty, 416. — British Insistence upon New Arrangements, 417. — Neutrality not wanted by Belgium, 417.
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BELGIAN HISTORY

THAT the United Kingdom did not enter the war because of the invasion of Belgium has been demonstrated in a previous chapter.¹ The following pages will be devoted to an exposition of the treaties of 1839 (usually referred to as the Belgian treaty) for the purpose of showing that the United Kingdom was not bound, by anything contained in them, to intervene in the war. And this is necessary, for, without it, notwithstanding what already has been said, many people will assert that the United Kingdom must have joined in the war because she was under obligation so to do.

Belgium in 1815. Freedom from menace on the North Sea coast having been the reason for British intervention in the war of Prussia and Austria against revolutionary France,² the most important question for the United Kingdom, on the conclusion of that war, was the disposition to be made of Belgium. Prior to the war, Holland had been

¹ Cap. V.

² *Post*, cap. XX.

(since 1648) an independent state, but Belgium had been first Spanish and afterwards Austrian. Napoleon had added both countries to France, and on his disappearance, while Holland resumed her status, Belgium, through Austrian indifference, was derelict. What was to become of her?

Union with Holland. As early as 1799, Pitt had determined that Belgium should be united to Holland, under the Dutch king, and, largely through the insistence of Castlereagh (the British plenipotentiary at the Congresses of Paris and Vienna), that policy was adopted by the Powers and established by the treaty. The assent of Belgium was not asked, nor were her interests or her inclinations considered. The United Kingdom wanted two things: first, that neither France nor Prussia should acquire Belgium, and, secondly, that Belgium should be strong enough to offer resistance to annexation projects from both sides. Pitt believed that these objects could be achieved by uniting Belgium with Holland.³

For the accomplishment of his purpose, however, he found that the support of Russia was necessary, and that, for such support, some consideration must be given. Terms were arranged. Russia having required payment by the Netherlands of fifty million florins (by way of compensation for securing release from French domination), the British Government agreed (19 May 1815) to pay one half of the amount in annual instalments, but under two conditions: (1) that payments should cease if the new political arrangements were interrupted; and (2) that Russia:

“would, on all questions concerning Belgium, identify her policy with that which the Court of London has deemed the best adapted for the maintenance of a just balance of power in Europe.”⁴

Russian influence having, in this way, been secured, Pitt's plan went into operation. Of the union, Mr. C. Grant Robertson has said:

“A France ‘of the natural frontiers’ was a menace to the balance of power and the independence of the central European States. . . . Belgium (the former Austrian Netherlands), not strong enough in itself, must be artificially stiffened, and the requisite ‘buffer State’ was created by uniting Holland and Belgium into a single Kingdom under the friendly and allied House of Orange — the realization of an idea never out of the minds of our Foreign Office since 1689 and 1713. No principle, indeed, of British policy was more tenacious in its grip on Whig and Tory alike than that the littoral opposite our shores from the Helder to Ushant must not be in the occupation of a single, and possibly hostile, Power. The sea frontier, broken at Calais, must be colored differently to the east, from its coloring to the west of that arbitrary point.”⁵

The Cambridge Modern History refers to the same subject in this way:

³ Hassall: *Viscount Castlereagh*, p. 185.

⁴ Fuehr, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

⁵ *England under the Hanoverians*, pp. 464-5.

“ Thus was introduced into the European family of States, a Power of considerable strength, though of secondary rank, deliberately intended to serve as a barrier against France, in the interests, more especially of the Low Countries themselves, of Germany, and of Great Britain.”⁶

Separation of Holland and Belgium. The union was unnatural and ephemeral. In 1830, Belgium declared for separation, and, after a period of fighting and negotiating, succeeded in establishing her independence. In his *Life of Palmerston*, Mr. Ashley has said:

“ We had sufficiently learned the danger and the cost of having to watch, and defend ourselves against an enemy possessing the long line of coast by which we had been hostilely confronted during the reign of Napoleon. We had desired at his fall to take all possible precautions against being again exposed to similar dangers; and our main object at the Congress of Vienna was to guard the Netherlands from future invasion. We had imagined that we had done so by uniting Holland with Belgium, hoping thus to have created a powerful kingdom, of which we had protected the frontier by fortresses raised under our inspection and in some degree at our expense.”⁷

Pitt's plan had failed.

Conference of 1830-39. Afraid of both France and Prussia, but especially France — afraid that one or both might, by expansion over Belgium, become a menace on the North Sea coast — British statesmen arranged a conference of the Powers at London, out of which eventually emerged the treaties of 1839.⁸ On 20 December 1830, the Conference declared the principle upon which it intended to proceed, as follows:

“ In forming, by the treaties in question, the union of Belgium with Holland, the Powers who signed those treaties, and whose plenipotentiaries are at this moment assembled, had in view to found a just equilibrium in Europe, and to secure the maintenance of general peace. . . . The Congress will consequently proceed to discuss and to concert new arrangements, most calculated to combine the future independence of Belgium with the stipulations of the treaties, with the interest and the security of the other Powers, and with the preservation of the balance of Europe.”⁹

The Eighteen Articles. By 27 January 1831, the Conference had agreed upon a series of eighteen articles styled:

“ Bases destined to establish the separation of Belgium from Holland.”¹⁰

⁶ IX, p. 655. And see pp. 605-6, 654.

⁷ I, p. 215.

⁸ The proceedings of the Conference and other documents may be seen in the British *Accounts and Papers*, and in the *Ann. Reg.* 1831, pp. 361-407 [372-415; and 1839, pp. 421-7. An article relating to the history of the treaty appeared in the *Quarterly Rev.* of April 1918, p. 321

⁹ *Ann. Reg.*, 1831, p. 361.

¹⁰ Fuehr, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

On 26 June of the same year, some alterations were made in these articles, clauses V and VI taking the following form (Italics now added):

“*Article IX.* Belgium, within the limits such as they shall be traced in conformity with the principles laid down in the present preliminaries, shall form a perpetually neutral state. The five Powers, without wishing to interfere in the internal administration of Belgium, *guarantee to it* that perpetual neutrality, as well as the integrity and the inviolability of its territory within the limits mentioned in the present Article.

“*Article X.* By a just reciprocity, Belgium shall be bound to observe the same neutrality towards all other States, and not to make any attempt against their internal or external tranquillity, reserving itself, however, the right of defending itself against all foreign aggression.”¹¹

The Twenty-Four Articles. Holland having refused assent to the eighteen articles, the Conference framed a series of “Twenty-Four Articles,” declaring that they contained “the final and irrevocable decision” of the Powers, and agreeing that the execution of them would be guaranteed. In these articles (in partial substitution for the above IX and X) was the following important clause:

“*Article VII.* Belgium, within the limits specified in Articles I, II, and IV, shall form an independent and perpetually neutral State. It shall be bound to observe such neutrality toward all other States.”¹²

Belgium having agreed to the twenty-four articles, they were, with three additions, embodied in treaty form (15 November 1831). One of the added clauses was as follows:

“*Article XXV.* The Courts of Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, and Russia guarantee to His Majesty the King of the Belgians the execution of all the preceding Articles.”¹³

Note that thus far the proposed guarantee is to Belgium.

The Belgian Treaty. Holland was still recalcitrant, and it was not until 1839 that finality was reached. In that year three treaties were executed. One — the separation treaty between Belgium and Holland — was largely a reproduction of the twenty-four articles. Article VII, above quoted, remained unchanged, but Article XXV was dropped. Of the other two treaties, one was between the five Powers and Belgium, and the other between the five Powers and Holland. To each of these latter treaties were annexed the articles of the separation treaty; and in each was the following clause (Italics now added):

“*Article II.* Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary and Bohemia, His Majesty the King of the French, His Majesty the King of Prussia, and His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, declare that the articles mentioned in the preceding article¹⁴

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

¹⁴ The reference is to the twenty-four articles.

are considered as having the same force and validity as if they were textually inserted in the present Act, and that *they are thus placed under the guarantee of their said Majesties.*"¹⁵

Inasmuch as these treaties superseded the uncompleted treaty of 1831, its twenty-fifth article is useful only so far as it may serve to throw light upon the interpretation of the guarantee of 1839. Upon the construction of Article VII (transferred from the separation treaty) and Article II last above quoted (considered with reference to the circumstances then existing), turns the question of the nature of the obligation of the five Powers.¹⁶

British Insistence upon New Arrangements. The great importance which the United Kingdom attached to the maintenance of freedom from menace on the Belgian coast was illustrated by two of the incidents of the proceedings of the Conference. First, as in 1814-15,¹⁷ the support of Russia was purchased by British re-assumption of the payments above referred to;¹⁸ and second, when France dallied in her retirement of troops sent into Belgium as aid against Holland, Palmerston demanded unconditional withdrawal.

"One thing is certain," he said (17 August 1831), "the French must go out of Belgium, or we have a general war, and war in a given number of days."¹⁹

France proposed partition of Belgium, but Palmerston was obdurate and the troops were withdrawn. For maintenance of freedom on the North Sea coast, the United Kingdom was willing to war with France and to pay tribute to Russia.

Neutrality not wanted by Belgium. One of the attending circumstances which must not be lost to view is that Holland and Belgium had very little to say as to the terms upon which they were being separated. The five Powers settled these as they wished, and forced their acceptance upon both Belgium and Holland.²⁰ How little Belgium wanted a

¹⁵ Sanger and Norton: *England's Guarantee to Belgium and Luxemburg*, p. 126.

¹⁶ It may be interesting to notice that the neutrality of Switzerland is founded upon nothing but her own voluntary declaration, which she may rescind at any moment. Her integrity is guaranteed by the Powers, who, by the Paris Act of 20 Nov. 1815, declared "their formal and authentic acknowledgment of the perpetual Neutrality of Switzerland, and they Guarantee to that country the Integrity and Inviolability of its Territory . . . ;" they "acknowledge, in the most formal manner, by the present Act that the Neutrality and the Inviolability of Switzerland, and her Independence of all foreign Influence enter into the true Interests of the Policy of the whole of Europe"; Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, p. 31. See *The Nineteenth Century*, June 1916, pp. 1233-35.

¹⁷ *Ante*, p. 414.

¹⁸ Fuehr, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-8.

¹⁹ Ashley: *Life of Lord Palmerston*, I, p. 267.

²⁰ See *Ann. Reg.*, 1831, pp. 361-407; and [372-415].

guarantee of neutrality may be gathered from a letter to Queen Victoria (15 February 1856) in which the King of the Belgians said:

“This neutrality was in the real interest of this country, but our good Congress here did not wish it, and even opposed it; it was *imposé* upon them.”²¹

In the *Fortnightly Review* of April 1916²² was the following:

“Belgium did not ask for a condition of neutrality. There was as much opposition to it as support for it in the National Congress. It was imposed or forced upon her, not for her good or advantage, but as the diplomatists’ device for ‘preserving the peace of Europe and maintaining the balance of power’ at that particular juncture.”

That was the view of a Commission appointed during the Peace Conference at Paris, after the 1914–18 wars, by the Supreme Council. The Chairman, M. André Tardieu, has summarized part of the report as follows:

“Following the same line, the Commission showed the Treaty of 1839 originally negotiated not on behalf of Belgium but against her by the authors of the Treaty of 1815; all the Belgian claims of 1839 concerning the freedom of the Scheldt, Limburg, and Luxemburg ruthlessly rejected by the future guarantors; Belgium, eight years later declaring on the eve of the signature that ‘she was yielding to the imperious law of necessity.’ Our report established that these Treaties born of a so-called ‘higher interest’ — foreign in any case to Belgium and to Holland — had, in no degree and at no time, expressed the self-determination of the two principal countries involved; and that moreover if they had imposed on Belgium undisputed and onerous servitudes, they had not in the hour of danger given her the promised security.”

The Commission recommended a revision of the treaty of 1839 in order: “to liberate Belgium from the limitations of sovereignty imposed upon her by the Treaty of 1839, and to suppress, as much for her sake as for that of peace in general, the various risks and inconveniences resulting from the said Treaties.”²³

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

We are now in position to enquire whether, by the terms of the treaties of 1839, any obligation of armed intervention in defence of Belgian independence and neutrality was imposed upon the United Kingdom, and for that purpose the following questions must be considered:

I. Do the words “placed under the guarantee” impose a duty of military activity in defence of Belgian neutrality?

²¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, III, p. 172. And see Oakes and Mowat: *The Great European Treaties of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 136, note.

²² P. 660. See *Ann. Reg.*, 1851, pp. 361–407, and [372–415; and Fuehr, *op. cit.*, p. 58 and *passim*.

²³ Tardieu: *The Truth about the Treaty*, pp. 219–20.

II. If any such obligation was intended, was it one of joint, or of joint and several, character?

I. "PLACED UNDER THE GUARANTEE"

Meaning of "Guarantee." Reply to the first of the above questions will be aided by consideration of the meaning to be attached to the word "guarantee" in other treaties.

By the peace treaty of 1763 between the United Kingdom and France (The italics in the following quotations are now added):

"His Most Christian Majesty renounces all pretensions which he has heretofore formed, or might have formed, in Nova Scotia or Acadia in all its parts, and *guarantees* the whole of it, and with all its dependencies, to the King of Great Britain."

"His Most Christian King cedes and *guarantees* to his Britannick Majesty, in full right, the islands of Grenada and the Grenadines."²⁴ Very clearly, these clauses imposed no obligation upon France to supply armed, or any other kind of support to the British King, in case of an attack upon the ceded territories. On the other hand, the word *guarantee* in the treaty between France and the United States of 1778 might be taken to include a promise of armed assistance.²⁵

"*Article XI.* The two parties *guarantee* mutually, from the present time and for ever, *against all other powers*, to wit — The United States to His Most Christian Majesty the present possessions of the crown of France in America, as well as those which it may acquire by the future treaty of peace; and His Most Christian Majesty *guarantees* on his part to the United States, their liberty, sovereignty, and independence, absolute and unlimited, as well in matters of government as commerce, and also their possessions."

The treaty between France, Austria, and the United Kingdom of 15 April 1856 was intended to make obligation of activity clear:

"The High Contracting Parties *Guarantee, jointly and severally*, the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire, recorded in the Treaty concluded at Paris on the 30th of March 1856."

"Any infraction of the stipulations of the said Treaty will be considered by the Powers signing the present Treaty as a *casus belli*."²⁶

In each of the cases just referred to, interpretation of the word is aided by the circumstances of the treaty and by the context. In other

²⁴ Secs. 4 and 9. See also sec. 10.

²⁵ The absence of any limit of time for the duration of the guarantee would be a strong argument in favor of the negative.

²⁶ Arts. 1 and 2: Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, p. 34. See speech of Lord Derby, 6 Feb. 1877: *Hansard*, III, Vol. 232, col. 41: quoted Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-9. The precision of the language was due to the fact that Russia disclaimed obligation of activity under the quadruple treaty which had been signed ten days previously — 30 March.

cases, however, no help is afforded, and interpretation becomes more difficult. For example, what is to be made of the following clause in the treaty of 1815:

"Austria, Russia, Great Britain, and France *guarantee* to His Majesty the King of Prussia, his descendants and successors, the possession of the countries marked out in Article XV, in full property and sovereignty"? ²⁷ And what of the following in the treaty of 13 July 1863:

"Greece, under the sovereignty of Prince William of Denmark, and *the Guarantee of the three Courts*, forms a Monarchical, Independent, and Constitutional State"? ²⁸

And what of a clause in the treaty of 30 March 1856, between the United Kingdom, Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, Sardinia, and Turkey, by which, after referring to a recited stipulation with regard to the navigation of rivers, the Powers:

"declare that its arrangement henceforth forms a part of the Public Law of Europe, and take it under their guarantee"? ²⁹

And what of the following (in the same treaty):

"The Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia shall continue to enjoy under the suzerainty of the Porte, and *under the Guarantee of the Contracting Powers*, the Privileges and Immunities of which they are in possession"? ³⁰

And what of the clause (in the same treaty) by which the six monarchs: "declare the Sublime Porte admitted to participate in the advantages of the Public Law and System (concert) of Europe. Their Majesties engage, each on his part, to respect the independence and the Territorial Integrity of the Ottoman Empire; *Guarantee in common the strict observance of that engagement*; and will, in consequence, consider any act tending to its violation as *a question of general interest*"? ³¹

The protocols of the negotiations which preceded this last treaty make clear that, in signing it, Russia did not recognize that she was assuming any obligation to be active in upholding "the independence and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire." And it was because of that announced attitude that the other three Powers (Austria, France, and Prussia), two weeks afterwards (15 April), entered into the treaty (above referred to) by which they, "jointly and severally," guaranteed "the independence and integrity" of Turkey, and declared that any infraction should be "*a casus belli*." ³²

Guarantee as a Right to Intervene. These and other instances

²⁷ Art. 17: Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

²⁸ Treaty, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and Denmark, art. 3; *ibid.*, p. 35. See *ante*, cap. X, p. 362.

²⁹ Art. 15: *ibid.*, p. 33.

³⁰ Art. 22: *ibid.*

³¹ Art. 7: *ibid.*

³² The clauses appear *ante*, p. 419.

indicate that the word *guarantee* frequently occurs in treaties; that it is used loosely and without settled meaning; and that it cannot, in itself, be said to imply obligation of military activity. In the opinion of some British statesmen (prior to the recent war), the usual effect of guarantee treaties is merely to give a right of intervention. Mr. Gladstone, for example, when dealing (10 August 1870) with the effect of the Belgian Treaty, said:

"It is not necessary, nor would time permit me, to enter into the complicated question of the obligations of that treaty; but I am not able to subscribe to the doctrine of those who have held in this House what plainly amounts to an assertion, that the simple fact of the existence of a guarantee is binding on every party to it irrespectively altogether of the particular position in which it may find itself at the time when the occasion for acting on the guarantee arises. The great authorities on foreign policy to whom I have been accustomed to listen — such as Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston — never, to my knowledge, took that rigid, and, if I may venture to say so, that impracticable view of a guarantee. The circumstance that there is already an existing guarantee in force is of necessity an important fact and a weighty element in the case, to which we are bound to give full and ample consideration."³³

Upon a subsequent occasion (12 April 1872), Mr. Gladstone said (*Italics now added*):

My honourable friend "appears to be of opinion that every guarantee embodied in a Treaty is in the nature of an absolute unconditional engagement, binding this country, under all circumstances, to go to war for the maintenance of the state of things guaranteed in the Treaty — irrespectively of the circumstances of this country itself; irrespectively of the causes by which that war might have been brought about; irrespectively of the conduct of the Power on whose behalf the guarantee may have been invoked, and which may itself have been the cause of the war; and irrespectively of those entire changes of circumstances and relations which the course of time frequently introduces, and which cannot be overlooked in the construction of these engagements. I have often heard Lord Palmerston give his opinion of guarantees both in this House and elsewhere; and it was a familiar phrase of his, which, I think, others must recollect as well as myself, that *while a guarantee gave a right of interference it did not constitute of itself an obligation to interfere*."³⁴ Without adopting that principle as a rigid doctrine or theory applicable to this subject — on which it is very difficult and perhaps not very convenient

³³ *Hansard*, III, v. 203, col. 1787; Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, pp. 96–7. The above extract was quoted by Sir Edward Grey in his speech of 3 Aug. 1914.

³⁴ Lord Palmerston also said, in the House of Commons on 8 June 1855: "I know that obligatory treaties have guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium, but am hardly disposed to attach great importance to declarations of this kind": *op. cit.*, p. 63.

to frame an absolute rule — yet I think there is very great force in Lord Palmerston's observation; and that . . . it ought to remove that apprehension with respect to a guarantee under which the honourable Mover and Seconder of the Resolution appear more or less to labour." ³⁶

Guarantee as a Declaration of Policy, or Moral Sanction. In the course of the speech just quoted, Mr. Gladstone referred to the Turkish treaty of 1856, ³⁷ which contained a guarantee of "the independence and the integrity of the Ottoman Empire," followed by agreement to treat infraction as a *casus belli*, and then proceeded:

"But undoubtedly that Treaty constitutes an exception, and other Treaties which exist are rather in the nature of general declarations and strong declarations of policy and general intention, than in the nature of covenants of a specific and determinate character the obligation of which can, under all circumstances, be exacted."

"It is not possible, I think, to contend from the nature of these general guarantees that they are such as to exclude a just consideration of the circumstances of the time at which they may be supposed to be capable of being carried into effect. I believe that consideration of circumstances will always have a determining influence, not only without derogation to good faith, but in perfect consistency with the principles of good faith, upon the practical course to be pursued." ³⁷

Lord Stanley declared (14 June 1867) that the guarantee in the Luxemburg treaty of 11 May 1867 ³⁸ had:

"rather the character of a moral sanction to the arrangements which it defends than that of a contingent liability to make war. . . . Take an instance from what we have done already. We have guaranteed Switzerland; but if all Europe combined against Switzerland, although we might regret it, we should hardly feel bound to go to war with all the world for the protection of Switzerland. We were parties to the arrangements which were made about Poland; they were broken, but we did not go to war. I only name those cases as showing that it does not necessarily and inevitably follow that you are bound to maintain the guarantee under all circumstances by force of arms." ³⁹

II. WAS THE GUARANTEE JOINT, OR JOINT AND SEVERAL?

It may have been observed that in the treaties above referred to the word *guarantee* sometimes appears without qualification, while on other occasions it is accompanied by an associated word — "under the collective guarantee," or "guarantee in common," or "guarantee, jointly and severally." Have the associated words any qualifying effect?

³⁶ *Hansard*, III, v. 210, cols. 1178-9.

³⁸ *Ante*, p. 419.

³⁷ *Hansard*, III, vol. 210, col. 1180; Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, pp. 98, 9.

³⁸ *Post*, p. 423.

³⁹ *Hansard*, III, vol. 187, col. 1922; Fuehr, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

Legal View. Lawyers are very familiar with the difference between a joint and a several obligation. In the former case, all the obligors are regarded as a unit. No one of them can be sued, or be required to act in the absence of any of the others; and if one of them be released, the obligation is gone. In the latter case, the obligation is that of each individual; there is no association between the obligors; each one is separately responsible for performance of the obligation in its entirety.

According to English law, the unqualified obligation of several persons is a joint, and not a several obligation. For example, a promissory note commencing with the words "We promise to pay" is a joint note. It means "We jointly promise to pay." The insertion of the word *severally* after the word *we*, or the employment of some equivalent expression, is necessary for the formation of a several obligation. If the same rule be carried into the interpretation of treaties, there is no difference between the words "guarantee," "guarantee in common," and "jointly guarantee." In each case the obligation is of joint, and not of separate character.⁴⁰ And if that view be accepted, the guarantee of the Belgian treaties ("placed under the guarantee of their said Majesties") is one of joint character. That is clear enough to a lawyer; but British statesmen have expressed opposing opinions.

The Luxemburg Treaty. The question arose in connection with the latter part of a clause in the Luxemburg treaty of 11 May 1867. The whole clause is as follows (*Italics now added*):

"The Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, within the limits determined by the Act annexed to the Treaties of the 19th of April 1839 under the guarantee of the Courts of Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, and Russia, shall henceforth form a perpetually neutral State.

"It shall be bound to observe the same neutrality towards all other States.

"The High Contracting Parties engage to respect the principle of neutrality stipulated by the present Article.

"That principle is and remains placed *under the sanction of the collective guarantee* of the Powers, signing parties to the present Treaty, with the exception of Belgium, which is itself a neutral State."⁴¹

Defending, in parliament, the making of this treaty, Lord Stanley, who negotiated its terms, and Lord Derby (his father), the Prime

⁴⁰ Misunderstanding of such a simple, although technical, point may be noted in books even as useful as that of Oakes and Mowat, *The Great European Treaties of the Nineteenth Century*, in which, after saying that the Luxemburg guarantee was collective while the Belgian was individual, the authors added: "An individual guarantee is, if anything, more emphatic than a collective one, but the moral obligation imposed by one or the other is just the same" (p. 135).

⁴¹ Art. II: Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, p. 143. The treaty is in *Accounts and Papers*, vol. 74, p. 415.

Minister, had no difficulty in maintaining that the obligation was of joint, and not of separate character. Lord Derby said, on 4 July 1867:

“I can give no further interpretation of the Treaty than this — that, as far as the honor of England is concerned, she will be bound to respect the neutrality of Luxemburg; and I expect that all the other Powers will equally respect it; but she is not bound to take upon herself the quixotic duty, in the case of a violation of the neutrality of Luxemburg by one of the other Powers, of interfering to prevent its violation — because we have only undertaken to guarantee it in common with all the other Great Powers of Europe.”⁴²

In the same speech, Lord Derby, falling into unaccountable error, when combating the suggestion of having misled the Prussian government as to the meaning of the treaty, said:

“The Prussian Minister must have been perfectly well aware of the terms of that Treaty (1839) by which the five Powers, acting individually, guaranteed the independence of Belgium; yet if he thought the one kind of guarantee equal to the other, I want to know why should he have studiously altered the words and asked not for a separate and several guarantee, but for a collective guarantee by the Great Powers for the integrity and independence of Luxemburg.”⁴³

“The engagement ‘each on his part’ and ‘guarantee in common’ are precisely the terms introduced into the Treaty of May 1867 on the request of the Prussian Minister, and the security his government desired to obtain.”⁴⁴

The statement is full of inaccuracies: (1) The draft treaty submitted to the Conference contained the first three sentences of the clause as above quoted. It contained no guarantee of any kind. There was merely an engagement “to respect the principle of neutrality.” (2) The Prussian Minister did not propose an alteration of any of the words; nor did he ask for a collective, in preference to a separate and several, guarantee. (3) The words “each on his part” were not introduced into the treaty. (4) If the Prussian Minister wanted a collective guarantee, and not a several guarantee, he certainly would not have asked for introduction of the words “each on his part”; for these import a several guarantee. (5) In truth, Lord Stanley’s draft of the treaty remained unaltered, with the exception that, at the request of the Prussian Minister, a fourth sentence (as above) was added to it. (6) That there was no idea of suggesting a collective rather than a separate guarantee, was made clear to Stanley⁴⁵ by the language of the Prussian Minister, who expressed:

⁴² *Hansard*, III, vol. 188, p. 974; Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, pp. 79–80. Lord Derby had previously (20 June) spoken to the same effect: *Hansard*, III, vol. 188, p. 157.

⁴³ *Hansard*, III, vol. 188, pp. 971–2; Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

⁴⁴ *Hansard*, III, vol. 188, p. 972; Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

⁴⁵ “To Stanley,” for that gentleman believed that the obligation of the Belgian treaty was one of separate character.

“the hope of seeing the same guarantee given by the Powers to the neutrality of Luxemburg as is enjoyed by that of Belgium.”⁴⁶

During the course of the debate, Lord Clarendon said (20 June 1867):

“I look upon the guarantee in our case of Belgium as an individual guarantee, and have always so regarded it; but this is a collective guarantee. No one of the Powers, therefore, can be called upon to take single action, even in the improbable case of any difficulty arising.”⁴⁷

Lord Granville pointed out that if the treaty really amounted to nothing, as the previous speaker had indicated, it was difficult to understand the importance which Prussia attached to it:

“without which” (he said), “she was prepared to go to war with the greatest military nation in the world;”

or why Lord Stanley, the British plenipotentiary, had shown so much hesitation in assenting to it.⁴⁸ Speaking at a later date (10 August 1870), Lord Granville said:

“We are not now in a position like that described by a Conservative Government, when we joined in a treaty guaranteeing Luxemburg, and when, almost before the ink which signed it was dry, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of this country announced, to the surprise of France and the indignation of Prussia, that we had signed as a collective guarantee, and as the co-operation of the Powers was the only case in which the guarantee could possibly be brought into question, England had brought herself under no new obligation at all.”⁴⁹

Treaties of 30 March and 15 April 1856. Discussing the words “guarantee in common the strict observance,” as they occur in the Turkish treaty of 30 March 1856, above quoted,⁵⁰ Lord Derby (the Lord Stanley of 1867) said (8 February 1877):

“We guarantee in common the strict observance of that engagement — that is, we each undertake to observe it, and to do what we can to make others observe it; but there is no shadow of a promise in that treaty to make non-observance by other Powers a *casus belli*.”⁵¹

⁴⁶ Protocols in *Accounts and Papers*, 1867, vol. 74, p. 425. In a despatch of 7 May 1867, the British Ambassador at Berlin reported that Bismarck had said that such a proposal as that of Lord Stanley “would not be of any value for the case of Luxemburg; and Prussia must demand a more complete safeguard for the German frontier which could only be afforded by a European guarantee”: *Ibid.* According to the British interpretation of the guarantee agreed to, it amounted to nothing at all.

⁴⁷ *Hansard*, III, vol. 188, col. 152; Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

⁴⁸ *Hansard*, III, vol. 188, col. 154; Fitzmaurice: *Lord Granville*, II, p. 360. And see Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-5.

⁴⁹ *Hansard*, III, vol. 203, col. 1756; Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, p. 85. The diplomacies which preceded the treaty are shortly referred to in Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-21.

⁵⁰ *Ante*, p. 420.

⁵¹ *Hansard*, III, vol. 232, col. 41; Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

Note the confusion—a guarantee “in common” is said to be an undertaking by “each.”⁶² The earlier Derby had been better advised when he said that a “collective guarantee” is a joint obligation only. This Turkish treaty is a good example of the indeterminate employment of the phrases under consideration. Articles 15 and 22 have “under the guarantee.” Article 28 has “under the collective guarantee.” Article 7 has “guarantee in common.” And yet there is no reason for thinking that any difference in the nature of the obligation was intended.

Lord Birkenhead. While still known as Sir F. E. Smith, the one-time Lord Chancellor of England wrote in his *International Law* as follows:

“Such treaties” (that is of guarantee) “are sometimes difficult to construe, especially when the guarantee is jointly made by several powers. . . . Of a collective guarantee a well known instance was the treaty by which the great powers in 1831 asserted the perpetual neutrality of Belgium. It has been much disputed whether, if the other parties to such a guarantee decline to intervene on occasion, a single signatory is released from his obligations.”

After stating Lord Derby’s doctrine, the learned author continued:

“On principle Lord Derby’s contention is unanswerable. If a State undertakes a duty in concert with others, on what principle is it committed to an isolated performance? It was never pledged to such action, and its unassisted resources may fall far short of the occasion.”⁶³

Doubts Removed. It has not been observed that the United Kingdom and France, by their treaty of 22 October 1832, sufficiently declared that, by the use of the word “guarantee” in the Belgian treaties, they meant to provide for a joint obligation. After Holland had refused to agree to the twenty-four articles, as settled by the Powers in 1831, France sent military forces into Belgium as protection against the Dutch. And the United Kingdom, fearing that the troops might remain there, secured the assent of France to a treaty which stated its purposes as being (*Italics now added*):

“to carry into execution the stipulations of the Treaty relative to the Netherlands, concluded at London on the 15th of November 1831, the execution whereof, by the terms of Article XXV of the said Treaty, *has been jointly guaranteed* by their said Majesties, and by their Majesties the Emperor of Austria, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor of Russia.”⁶⁴

In other words, article 25 of the treaty of 1831, which was as follows:

“The Courts of Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia and Russia

⁶² On 6 March 1871, Lord Salisbury said that the obligation was “joint and several”: *Hansard*, III, vol. 204, col. 1363; Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

⁶³ 4th ed., p. 99. Quoted by Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

⁶⁴ Hertslet: *Map of Europe by Treaties*. Quoted by Fuehr, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

guarantee to His Majesty the King of the Belgians the execution of all the preceding articles,"⁵⁵ was declared to be a joint guarantee. The same Powers, by the use of the same word in 1839, must have meant the same thing.

Now that Sir Edward Grey has indicated, in effect, that in his view the Belgian treaty did not impose upon the United Kingdom an obligation to defend Belgian neutrality in the recent war,⁵⁶ no further doubt can be entertained. And that the view of the Foreign Office, seven weeks after hostilities had commenced, coincided with that previously expressed by its chief, was made clear by the "Introductory Narrative of Events" issued by that Office on 28 September 1914 (*Italics now added*):

"This was the situation when very early on Sunday morning, the 2nd August, German troops invaded Luxemburg, a small independent State whose neutrality had been guaranteed by all the Powers with the same object as *the similar guarantee of Belgium*."⁵⁷ Admittedly, the Luxemburg treaty imposed no obligation of individual action.⁵⁸ It was, in terms, a "collective guarantee." And the guarantee of the Belgian treaty was of "similar" character.

Oxford Faculty. It is noteworthy that the "Members of the Oxford Faculty of Modern History," who wrote the widely-circulated pamphlet "*Why We Are At War*," declared that:

"Under existing treaty law the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg stands for all practical purposes in the same legal position as its northern neighbor; and the ruler of Luxemburg has protested against the German invasion⁵⁹ of her territory no less emphatically than King Albert, though with less power of giving expression in action to her just resentment. If the defence of Belgium has appealed more forcibly to the ordinary Englishman, it is because he is more familiar with the past history of Belgium and sees more clearly in her case the ultimate issues that are involved in the German violation of her rights. As the following narrative will show, the neutrality of Luxemburg was guaranteed in the interests and at the instance of the Prussian state, as a protection against French aggression. The legal case could not be clearer, and it might perhaps be asked why the attack on Luxemburg, which preceded that on Belgium, was not treated by this country as a *casus belli*. England's attitude towards Luxemburg is that which she has consistently adopted towards those smaller states of Europe which lie outside the reach of naval power. It is an attitude which she has maintained in the case of Servia even more clearly than in that of

⁵⁵ *Ante*, p. 416.

⁵⁶ *Ante*, pp. 132-3.

⁵⁷ Price: *The Diplomatic History of the War*, pp. viii-ix.

⁵⁸ *Ante*, pp. 423-5.

⁵⁹ Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 147.

Luxemburg. England holds herself bound to exert her influence in procuring for the smaller states of Europe equitable treatment from their more powerful neighbors. But the duty of insisting upon equitable treatment falls first upon those Powers whose situation enables them to support a protest by effective action. Just as Servia is the special concern of Russia, so Luxemburg must look to France in the first instance for protection against Germany, to Germany if she is assailed from the French side. In either case we should hold ourselves bound to exercise our influence, but not as principals. Any other course would be impossibly quixotic, and would only have the effect of destroying our power to help the states within our reach.”⁶⁰

It is not very clear whether the authors were of opinion that the United Kingdom was or was not under obligation to defend Belgian neutrality. But, agreeing that the legal obligations under the Belgian and Luxemburg treaties were identical, they endeavor to explain why the United Kingdom took up arms in one case and not in the other. (She did not even enter a protest in the other). It was, they argue, because Luxemburg:

“must look to France in the first instance,” while “we should hold ourselves bound to exercise our influence, but not as principals. Any other course would be impossibly quixotic.”

To which the replies are: (1) The treaty makes no reference to primary and secondary responsibility. (2) If British action would have been quixotic, that ought to have been thought of before obligation was assumed. (3) War against Germany would have been no more quixotic because she violated the Luxemburg treaty than because she violated the Belgian. (4) The real reason why the United Kingdom defended Belgium and refrained from protest against the invasion of Luxemburg — did not even “exercise our influence” — was that the United Kingdom had a supreme interest in keeping Germany off the North sea coasts, and not enough interest in Luxemburg to raise a quarrel about her submergence.

Viscount Haldane. The opinion of Viscount Haldane (who at the outbreak of the war was Lord Chancellor⁶¹) as to the existence of a treaty-obligation to defend Belgian neutrality coincided with that of Sir Edward Grey. In his book *Before the War*, the Viscount wrote:

“We were among the guarantors of Belgian neutrality, and it was of course conceivable that, if she called on us to do so, we might have had to defend her.”⁶²

An obligation which entails action not upon demand for performance, but only contingently upon the happening of unstated circumstances (“we might have had”), is clearly not one of categorical

⁶⁰ Pp. 20-1.

⁶¹ He had previously been Secretary of State for War.

⁶² P. 181.

character. Viscount Haldane no doubt used the word "guarantee" in the sense which it customarily carries in treaties.

Lord Loreburn. The Lord Chancellor who preceded Lord Haldane held the same view. In his book *How the War Came*, Lord Loreburn said:

"Very few people will be found to deny that we have great interests in preventing a great military Power, be it Germany or be it France, from securing a mastery of the Belgian coast. . . . In these circumstances it does not much signify whether or not we were in 1914 bound by Treaty to defend Belgium against invasion. For the sake of historical accuracy, however, it is right to say that we were not so bound, either by the Treaty of 1839 or by any other instrument. All that we did in 1839 was to sign, together with Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, and Holland, an agreement that Belgium should be a perpetually neutral State. We bound ourselves, as did others, not to violate that neutrality, but did not bind ourselves to defend it against the encroachment of any other Power."⁶³

In *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy* is the following:

"The Guarantee of 1839, as Palmerston pointed out, gave a right, but did not impose an obligation, to defend Belgian neutrality. Gladstone's Treaties with France and Russia in 1870 were only necessary because that of 1839 did not automatically invoke action."⁶⁴

The considerations developed in this and the preceding pages amply warrant the assertions, (1) that the language of the Belgian treaties imposed no duty of military defence of the neutrality of Belgium; and (2) that if it did, the liability was one of joint, and not individual character.

THE TREATIES OF 1870

The Treaties. At the commencement of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, the United Kingdom — Mr. Gladstone being then Prime Minister — entered into treaties (9 and 11 August) with Prussia and France respectively, providing that if either of the belligerents should violate the neutrality of Belgium, the United Kingdom would co-operate with the other Power:

"for the defence of the same in such manner as may be mutually agreed upon."

"and, on the expiration of that time, the independence and neutrality of Belgium will, so far as the high contracting parties are respectively concerned, continue to rest as heretofore on the 1st article of the Quintuple Treaty of the 19th of April 1839."⁶⁵

Reason for the Treaties. Very clearly, if by the treaty of 1839,

⁶³ Pp. 227-8.

⁶⁴ P. 503, note.

⁶⁵ *Ann. Reg.*, 1870, p. 205.

each of the signatory Powers was under separate obligation to defend single-handed (if need be) the neutrality of Belgium, the treaties of 1870 would have been quite necessary. For they provided, merely, that at least two of the Powers would fulfil their obligations. If there had been no new treaties, and France had invaded Belgium, the United Kingdom and Prussia would each have been bound, under the old treaty, to co-operate against the invaders. And if Prussia had violated the neutrality, the United Kingdom and France would each have been under the same obligation. No new promises of similar character could have made co-operation more obligatory or more secure. As Mr. Osborne said during the debate in the House of Commons:

“The Treaty is entirely superfluous, if the Treaty of 1839 is worth anything at all.”⁶⁶

But the old treaty was worth very little. It fell short in two respects: (1) in Gladstone's opinion, the guarantee did not necessarily imply a promise to take up arms;⁶⁷ and (2) the guarantee was of collective character only. Explaining, in the House of Commons, his reason for new treaties, Mr. Gladstone said:

“we should have had to act under the treaty of 1839 without any stipulated assurance of being supported from any quarter whatever against any combination, however formidable; whereas by the treaty now formally before parliament, under the conditions laid down in it, we secure powerful support in the event of our having to act — a support with respect to which we may well say that it brings the object in view within the sphere of the practicable and attainable, instead of leaving it within the sphere of what might have been desirable, but which might have been most difficult, under all the circumstances, to have realized.”⁶⁸

In other words, either because the old treaty contained no obligation at all — no “stipulated assurance of being supported” — or because the obligation was merely collective, and therefore under the circumstances inapplicable,⁶⁹ new treaties, which created obligations of concerted action, were agreed to. Writing to John Bright (4 August — a few days prior to the date of the treaties), Gladstone said:

“The sole or single-handed defence of Belgium would be an enterprise which we incline to think Quixotic; if these two great military Powers” (Prussia and France) “combined against it — that combination is the only serious danger; and this it is which by our proposed engagements we should, I hope, render improbable to the very last degree.”⁷⁰

⁶⁶ *Hansard*, III, vol. 203, p. 1777. Quoted by Fuehr, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

⁶⁷ *Ante*, pp. 421-2.

⁶⁸ *Hansard*, III, vol. 203, col. 1789; *Ann. Reg.*, 1870, pp. [107-8.

⁶⁹ Inapplicable, because two of the joint obligors could not act together.

⁷⁰ *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, pp. 40-1.

If the 1839 treaty had contained a several obligation, and if the "two great military Powers" had combined against Belgium, the United Kingdom would have been bound to undertake the "quixotic" enterprise. Very evidently, the new treaties were arranged because the old treaty contained no individual obligation to take up arms.

BRITISH ATTITUDE IN 1887

The British attitude in 1887 (when danger of war between France and Germany appeared) toward the guarantee clause of the Belgian treaty, if not very creditable, was at all events quite in accord with international practice. That some sort of obligation of military intervention on behalf of Belgium existed, was popularly assumed, and, just as popularly, some "convenient pretext" was devised as reason for failure in performance. Sir Charles Dilke opened the discussion (January) with a series of articles in the *Fortnightly Review* on European policies,⁷¹ and in the forefront raised the question whether, in the event of the violation of Belgian neutrality, the United Kingdom would intervene.

Diplomaticus. Very shortly afterwards (4 February) there appeared in *The Standard*, the principal organ of the governmental party,⁷² a letter, signed "Diplomaticus,"⁷³ which was generally regarded as semi-official. It was as follows (*Italics now added*):

"Sir:—It is with no wish to add to the fears that prevail on all sides at the present moment, but simply from a desire, which I think you will hold to be pardonable, that the English people should reflect, in good time, what may prove to be the nature and extent of their difficulties and responsibilities in the event of war between France and Germany, that I take up my pen to urge you to lay before them the following considerations.

"Military experts are of opinion that France has spent so much money, and spent it so well, during the last sixteen years in providing herself with a fresh military frontier, that a direct advance by the German armies into France, past the new fortresses and forts that have been erected and linked together, would be, even if a possible, a very hazardous undertaking.

"But if Germany was, or considered itself to be, provoked into a struggle of life and death with France, would Prince Bismarck, with the mighty forces he can set in motion, consent to be baffled by the artificial obstacles to which I have alluded so long as there existed a

⁷¹ Afterwards included in his book, *The Present Position of European Politics*.

⁷² In its issue of the same day (afternoon), *The Pall Mall Gazette* referred to *The Standard* as "at present the Governmental Salisburian organ."

⁷³ Supposed to be Alfred Austin, a keen Conservative and a contributor to the editorial columns of *The Standard*.

natural and undefended road by which he could escape from his embarrassment.

“Such a road or way out does exist. It lies in Belgian territory. *But the neutrality of Belgium is protected by European guarantee, and England is one of the guarantors.*

“In 1870, Earl Granville, then at the head of the English Foreign Office, alive to this danger, promptly and wisely bound England to side with France if Prussia violated Belgian territory, and to side with Prussia if France did so.

“Would Lord Salisbury act prudently to take upon himself a similar engagement in the event of a fresh conflict between those two countries? It is for Englishmen to answer the question. But it seems to me, as one not indifferent to the interests and the greatness of England, that such a course at the present moment would be unwise to the last degree. However much England might regret the invasion of Belgian territory by either party to the struggle, *she could not take part with France against Germany* (even if Germany were to seek to turn the French flank by pouring in armies through the Belgian Ardennes), *without utterly violating and destroying the main purposes of English policy all over the world.*⁷⁴

“But, it will be asked, *must not England honour its signature and be faithful to its public pledges?* I reply that your Foreign Minister ought to be equal to the task of meeting this objection without committing England to war. *The temporary use of a right of way is something different from a permanent and wrongful possession of territory;*⁷⁵ and surely England would easily be able to obtain from Prince Bismarck ample and adequate guarantees that, at the close of the conflict, the territory of Belgium should remain intact as before?

“You will see, Sir, I raise, in a very few words, an exceedingly important question. It is for the English people to perpend and pronounce. But it is high time they reflected on it.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

DIPLOMATICUS.”⁷⁶

The Standard. Upon this letter, *The Standard* (of the same date) commented as follows (*Italics now added*):

“We are reminded this morning, by a Correspondent who speaks with high authority, that while *we are all wondering how long it will be before a fresh conflict breaks out between France and Germany*, Englishmen are shutting their eyes to a question closely, and perhaps inevitably allied with that contingent event, and affecting the interests

⁷⁴ At that date, British foreign policy was strongly anti-French, and inclined to be pro-German.

⁷⁵ During the Boer war, Portugal, a neutral nation, permitted the passage of British troops through Portuguese territory: Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁷⁶ Quoted, *ibid.*, pp. 99-101.

of this country more vitally than they could be affected even by any probable result from the struggle between these two powerful States. 'Diplomaticus' writes with unprofessional terseness; but his observations are to the point, and are expressed with significant lucidity. Nor can there be any doubt as to the nature or as to the gravity of the question raised in his communication. In the event of war between Germany and France, and in case either Germany or France were to disregard the neutrality of Belgian territory, what ought England to do? That is the question, and *he indicates pretty plainly a reply with which, we may say at once, we do not believe the English people will be disposed to quarrel.* In order, however, to enable them to respond to the inquiry with full knowledge and deliberate judgment, it is necessary to lay before them the facts and contingencies of the situation somewhat more amply and more *in extenso* than is done by 'Diplomaticus.' On the Declaration of War by France against Prussia in 1870, Earl Granville, as we all know, with more promptness and decision than he usually displayed, sought to secure respect for Belgian territory by notifying that, should either combatant ignore the neutrality secured to it by public treaty, England would side actively with the other combatant. It may be said why cannot the same course be pursued once more in the event of a similar condition of affairs coming into play? *The answer is, that a similar condition of affairs no longer exists.* In the first place, in 1870 neither of the combatants had any pressing temptation to resort to a violation of Belgian territory, in the execution of their military designs. The territory of Germany was avowedly vulnerable in several places; and France was so assured of its military superiority, and so confident that 'A Berlin!', not 'nach Paris!', would prove the successful war cry of the struggle, that no precautions had been taken against the possibility of France being invaded. As the event proved, even such magnificent fortresses as Metz and Strasburg, with their large civil population and their imperfect stores of provisions, proved an encumbrance and a source of danger rather than one of safety; and these once invested, there was nothing to stop the march of the victors of Sedan towards the French capital. Metz and Strasburg are now German fortresses; and no one requires to be told that Germany has neglected no precautions or expedients to render an invasion of the Fatherland a difficult, if not an impracticable undertaking. Armed to the head for offence, Germany is likewise armed to the heel for defence. She is more invulnerable than Achilles for there is no point uncovered.

"How stands it with France as regards defence against invasion? During the last sixteen years all that money profusely spent, and military skill judiciously applied, could do to provide her with a strong military frontier against Germany, has been quietly, but steadily and unremittingly, carried forward. Not only does France possess a first line of fortresses, contiguous to German territory in Belfort, Epinal,

Toul, and Verdun; but all four are linked with each other, in succession, by another line of detached forts. Not to encumber ourselves here with military details, the full exposition of which would demand considerable space, we may say that 'Diplomaticus' is guilty of no exaggeration when he declares that military experts are of opinion that France has spent so much money, and spent it so well, since the last war in providing herself with a fresh military frontier, that a direct advance by the German armies into France past the new fortresses and forts that have been erected and linked together would be, even if a possible, a very hazardous undertaking. There are, however, two other ways of entering France from Germany. One is through Switzerland; the other is through Belgium. Both are what is understood by 'neutral territory'; but the mountainous character of Switzerland renders access to France through its passes more arduous and less available than through the territory of Belgium. In case the German armies found themselves practically prevented from engaging in offensive military operations against France by the admirable line of defence with which she has provided herself, *would Prince Bismarck, and the great soldiers whom he would inspire, consent to be thwarted by the inviolability of Belgium as guaranteed by European Treaty?* 'Diplomaticus' put the question with undiplomatic bluntness. He forbears from answering it; and so must we. But it will be obvious to everybody that there is a possibility, a danger, of Germany not being willing to be debarred from invading France by *an obstacle that has grown up since the Treaty guaranteeing the neutrality of Belgium was signed.* Our readers will at once perceive that the situation is absolutely different from the one that existed in 1870, when Earl Granville quickly and cheerfully imposed on England the obligation to take part against either combatant that violated Belgian soil. Neither combatant was much tempted to do so; and thus the engagement assumed by England — a very proper one at the time — was not very serious or onerous, and saved appearances rather than created responsibility. *Now the position is entirely changed.* If England, with a view to securing respect for Belgian territory, were to bind itself, as in 1870, to throw its weight into the balance against either France or Germany, should either France or Germany violate Belgian ground, we might, and probably should, *find ourselves in a war of giants on our own account.*

"We think that 'Diplomaticus' understands the English people when he hints his suspicions that such a result would be utterly alien alike to their wishes and to their interests. For, over and above the fact that, as we have seen, the temptation to violate Belgian territory by either side is much greater than it was in 1870, *the relations of England with the European Powers have necessarily and naturally undergone considerable modification during that period.* We concur with our Correspondent in the opinion he expresses that for England

and Germany to quarrel, it matters not upon what subject, would be highly injurious to the interests of both. Indeed, he is right when he says that the main outlines of our policy would be blurred and its main purposes embarrassed, if not defeated, were we suddenly to find ourselves in a state of hostility to Germany, instead of one of friendliness and sympathy. No doubt if Germany were to outrage the honour, or to disregard the interests of England, we should be ready enough to accept the challenge thrown down to us. *But would the violation of Belgian territory, whether by Germany or France, be such an injury to our honour and such a blow to our interests? . . . It might be so, in certain circumstances; and it would assuredly be so if it involved a permanent violation of the independence of Belgium.* But, as 'Diplomaticus' ingeniously suggests, there is all the difference in the world between the momentary use of a 'right of way,' even if the use of the right of way be, in a sense, wrongful, and the appropriation of the ground covered by the right of way.⁷⁷ We trust that both Germany and France would refrain even from this minor trespass. But if they did not? If one or the other were to say to England, 'All the military approaches to France and Germany have been closed; and only neutral approaches lie open to us. This state of things is not only detrimental, but fatal to our military success, and it has arisen since the Treaty guaranteed the sacredness of the only roads of which we can now avail ourselves. We will, as a fact, respect the independence of Belgium and we will give you the most solemn and binding guarantees that, at the end of the conflict, Belgium shall be as free and independent as before.' If Germany — and, of course, our hypothesis applies also to France — were to use this language — though we trust there will be no occasion for it — *we cannot doubt what would be the wise and proper course for England to pursue, and what would be the answer of the English Government. England does not wish to shirk its true responsibilities. But it would be madness for us to incur or assume responsibilities unnecessarily, when to do so would manifestly involve our participation in a tremendous war.*⁷⁸

The Morning Post. *The Morning Post* expressed its view as follows:

⁷⁷ An argument in support of this view may be deduced from a comparison of the language of clause 5 of the proposed treaty of eighteen articles between Belgium and Holland with clause 7 of the twenty-four articles by which the earlier draft was superseded. Originally the guarantee was to extend to "perpetual neutrality as well as the integrity and inviolability of its territory." That language was reduced to "an independent and perpetually neutral state" — the word "inviolability" being omitted. Only in more modern times has permission to pass through a state been deemed a breach of neutrality. It was forbidden by the Hague "Convention respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in case of War on Land."

⁷⁸ Quoted, Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-7; Fuehr: *The Neutrality of Belgium*, pp. 237-42.

“It is not likely that *we should allow treaties to be violated with impunity without a protest*. People may remark that protests are a very poor sort of compensation. But it will be far more natural and far more dignified for us to protest against a violation of Belgian territory, than to look complacently on while such Powers as France and Germany march their armies across Belgium, satisfying themselves with the assurance that at the close of the conflict the territory of Belgium shall remain intact as before.”⁷⁹

The Spectator. *The Spectator* of 5 February had the following:

“. . . the general idea is that England will be kept out of this war. . . . That she will try to do so we do not doubt, but there is the Belgian difficulty ahead. *Our guarantee for her is not a solitary one, and would not bind us to fight alone*; but there are general interests to be considered. The probability is that we shall insist on her not becoming a theatre of war but shall not bar — as indeed we cannot bar — the traversing of her soil.”⁸⁰

The Pall Mall Gazette. In its issue of 4 February, *The Pall Mall Gazette*, then a Liberal organ, had a special article headed:

“England and Belgium: Are we bound to intervene? There is no Guarantee.” It discussed the treaties, and declared that “There is, therefore, no English guarantee to Belgium.”⁸¹

Sir Charles Dilke. Various other articles appeared, and, in the June number of *The Fortnightly*, Dilke summed the result of the discussion as follows (*Italics now added*):

“In January last, there was the gravest doubt in my mind as to what would be the response that the questions asked by me with regard to Belgium would produce; I did not know whether or not England meant to fight for Belgium, but I did feel certain that England ought to know her mind upon the point, and I thought it right that marked attention should be directed to a matter so important. *A great discussion followed, but that discussion has been all one way, and my questions of last January now read like some of the speculations of ancient history*. The principal party organ of the Conservatives of England has declared that our intervention in support of Belgium, which up to last year was assumed as a matter of course by both parties in the State, ‘would be not only insane, but impossible.’ It has been suggested by ‘Diplomaticus’ and the *Standard* that we are to allow Belgium to be temporarily utilized as ‘a right of way,’ and the *National Review* has endorsed the suggestion of ‘Diplomaticus,’ and told us that it might be possible to obtain a guarantee that the territory of Belgium,

⁷⁹ Issue of 4 Feb. 1887. Quoted by Dilke in *Fortnightly Rev.* of June 1887: See Egerton, *British Foreign Policy in Europe*, pp. 24-7.

⁸⁰ Quoted by Fuehr, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

⁸¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 243-6. On the following day, *The Pall Mall Gazette* published another article; *ibid.*, p. 246.

if traversed for military purposes, should not be permanently violated, and that, at the end of the struggle, the neutrality and independence of that country should be religiously respected.

“It is hardly necessary to argue seriously upon the religious respect which the neutrality of Belgium would receive after the non-permanent violation. My belief remains as strong as when I wrote in January and February last that, *when once the neutrality is violated, the independence of Belgium is gone*. It is the Belgians who, when Germany and France fall out, if the struggle is a long or doubtful one, will have to pay the piper. The erection of Belgian fortresses on the Meuse, and the proposed adoption of personal service . . . has caused a great accumulation of books and papers upon my table, but I put them aside into their drawers with the feeling that *a question which was worth arguing at length six months ago has now been solved in England*.”

After discussing the measures proposed to be taken by the Belgians for their own defence, Dilke added:

“They will be safer in their own hands than the outcome of the recent discussion shows them to have been in ours.”

He then referred to the language of the *Morning Post* above quoted, and proceeded:

“‘Diplomaticus’ and the *Standard* would have us come to an understanding to give the right of way, while the *Morning Post* would have us protest against its use. I do not myself think the Belgians, who are after all the people most concerned, would see much difference.

“*The response to my first chapter has been virtually unanimous, and it is clear that my question, whether we intend to fight for Belgium according to our treaty obligations, or to throw treaty obligations to the wind, under some convenient pretext, is already answered*. On the other hand, it is now plain that Belgium desires, although still in a rather tepid way, to preserve her neutrality, and, through it, her independence. She is gradually learning the lesson that she will have to preserve it by the power to give hard knocks. Unfortunately we have misled Belgium for many years. The highest modern strategic opinion upon the existing system of defences in Belgium, written only in 1884, runs as follows: ‘All has been sacrificed to the intention to afford a landing-place to the army of succour to be furnished by a great naval power. It is England that is meant, for the neutrality and independence of Belgium have no more firm defender than Great Britain.’ This was written three years ago when a Liberal Government was in power; but it could not be repeated now, although we are under the rule of the party which is supposed to be the most inclined to interfere abroad. Treaties, no doubt, die out in time. The treaty of 1839 with regard to Belgium is after all much older than the treaty of the 21st November, 1855, with regard to Sweden. *France and England would now think it an insane idea that they should attempt to preserve*

the integrity of Sweden against Russia, and similarly to all appearances, thinks England with regard to Belgium now."⁸²

The integrity of Sweden had been provided for by article 11 of the treaty of Stockholm (21 November 1855), between the United Kingdom, France, and Sweden and Norway. It was as follows (*Italics now added*):

"In case Russia should make to His Majesty the King of Sweden and Norway any Proposal or Demand having for its object to obtain either the Cession or the Exchange of any part whatsoever of the Territories belonging to the Crowns of Sweden and Norway, or the power of occupying certain points of the said Territories, or the Cession of Rights of Fishery, of Pasturage, or of any other Right upon the said Territories and upon the Coasts of Sweden and Norway, His Majesty the King of Sweden and Norway engages forthwith to communicate such Proposal or Demand to Her Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the Emperor of the French; and their said Majesties, on their part, *engage to furnish to His Majesty the King of Sweden and Norway sufficient Naval and Military Forces* to co-operate with the Naval and Military Forces of His said Majesty, for the purpose of resisting the Pretensions of Aggressions of Russia. The description, number, and destination of such Forces shall, if occasion should arise, be determined by common agreement between the three Powers."⁸³

Dilke thought that "England" would not implement that promise.

Comment. The foregoing extracts afford food for reflection. Dilke evidently believed that the United Kingdom ought:

"to fight for Belgium according to our treaty obligations, or to throw treaty obligations to the wind under some convenient pretext;"⁸⁴

and he was furnished with a whole sheaf of pretexts for inactivity:

1. Intervention would be "unwise in the last degree." It would not be possible.

"without violating and destroying the main purposes of English policy all over the world."

2. "The temporary use of a right of way is something different from a permanent and wrongful possession of territory."

3. The situation has "necessarily and naturally undergone considerable modification" since the guarantee was given.

4. "But it would be madness for us to incur or assume responsibilities unnecessarily, when to do so would manifestly involve our participation in a tremendous war" — "in a war of giants."

5. A protest would be sufficient.

6. The guarantee was of joint character. It "would not bind us to fight alone."

⁸² Quoted by Egerton in *British Foreign Policy in Europe*, pp. 24-27.

⁸³ Sanger and Norton, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-11.

⁸⁴ *Ante*, p. 437.

7. "There is no English guarantee to Belgium."

Dilke himself declared that:

"France and England would now think it an insane idea that they should attempt to preserve the integrity of Sweden against Russia; and similarly, to all appearance, thinks England with regard to Belgium now."

And he summed popular opinion as follows:

"The response to my first chapter has been virtually unanimous, and it is clear that my question, whether we intend to fight for Belgium according to our treaty obligations, or to throw treaty obligations to the wind, under some convenient pretext, is already answered."⁸⁵

Effect in Brussels and Vienna. Dilke's article, the Diplomatic letter, and the newspaper comment created great interest in Belgium, and, thanks to the publication of documents discovered by the Germans when recently at Brussels,⁸⁶ we are able to follow some of the diplomatic interchanges of the period. On 27 January (1887), Lord Vivian (British Ambassador at Brussels) assured the Belgian government that "Belgium might count upon England in case of war." This, however, was prior to the issue of *The Standard* (4 February), although after the raising of the question by Dilke, and was a statement which, in accordance with previously understood policy, the Ambassador, acting on his own responsibility, might very well have made. Shortly after the 4th February, Vivian had another conversation with the Belgian Minister, Prince Chimay, in which he indicated a complete change of attitude. It is referred to in a Belgian governmental notebook marked "Garantie de Neutralité," under the heading "Conversations of the Minister with the British Envoy"; it indicates the arrival of a communication from London; and continues:

"Belgium wants to make sure if England would act as she did in 1870. London evades giving assurances to meet a mere possibility. It would be best for us, says Lord Vivian, to make preparations as if we had to act for ourselves."

The ensuing perplexity of the King of the Belgians is indicated by his letter to Count Lambermont, Minister of State and General Secretary (13 February 1887):

"It would be vain to hope that the English will now make a new treaty to guarantee our neutrality, but it would not be impossible that the French should undertake towards us an obligation to respect our neutrality if we can defend it. I should not even be surprised if they wanted more, viz., the promise that Belgium should become an ally of France if the Germans violate her neutrality. If it comes to that, we must manoeuvre so as to avoid this, and to induce France to declare,

⁸⁵ *Ante*, p. 437.

⁸⁶ Their authenticity has not been impeached.

as formally as possible, that she abandons this in favor of our neutrality. When we have prevailed upon the French to do this, we shall request the Germans kindly to give us similar assurances."

There was a simultaneous and similar change of British attitude at Vienna. The notebook (alluded to above) refers to a report from Count Jongha d'Ardoye (the Belgian Ambassador at Vienna) of a conversation with Sir Augustus Paget, the British Ambassador there:

"Conversations of our Envoy at Vienna with the British Ambassador re the article by Sir Charles Dilke in the *Fortnightly Review* (January 12). Sir Augustus Paget declared that England must certainly defend the Belgian neutrality, as she did in 1870, if she does not want to resign her influence hitherto exercised in Europe."

The conversation was prior to the issue of *The Standard*. The entry in the notebook is followed by another with reference to a later report from Vienna—evidently after Sir Augustus had received his later directions:

"*Ibidem* re article signed 'Diplomaticus' in the *Standard* (February 12). The Ambassador first of all said, as a general remark, that newspaper articles are without great importance, and then added that England was not under a different obligation from that of the other guaranteeing Powers; that she was not bound to defend our neutrality if the other Great Powers remained inactive. Belgium would do well to look to her defence herself."

The notebook continues:

"This language which, as our Vienna Envoy points out, is so diametrically opposite to that of a former conversation, proves the alteration which the traditional policy of England has undergone. The *Standard* has doubtless the task of preparing public opinion."⁸⁷

Diplomaticus and *The Standard* had not assumed to speak for the British government, but evidently they had succeeded in indicating very accurately the governmental view. And observe that the reason assigned by Sir Augustus Paget for the absence of obligation to defend Belgium was that the guarantee of the Belgian treaty was one of joint, and not of individual character. That was correct interpretation of the language of the treaty.

Documents from another source enable us to see not only the reason for the British change of attitude, but why it was necessary to tell Belgium that she "would do well to look to her defence herself." For the United Kingdom was at the time engaged in arranging a treaty (by exchange of letters) with Austria-Hungary and Italy (two members of the Triple Alliance) with reference to the maintenance of the *status quo*:

⁸⁷ The above statements with reference to Lord Vivian and Sir A. Paget are taken from the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (Berlin semi-official) of 19 Aug. 1917, as translated by the *Cambridge Magazine* of 3 Nov. 1917.

“on the shores of the Euxine, the Ægean, the Adriatic, and the northern coast of Africa.”⁸⁸

Negotiations leading to this treaty (aided by Bismarck) had been carried on simultaneously with negotiations for a renewal of the Triple Alliance and of two associated treaties—one between Germany and Italy, and the other between Austria-Hungary and Italy; and the British treaty was intended to be complementary to these other treaties. Observe the sequence of events:

Negotiations for renewal of the Triple Alliance and the two associated treaties: (1) Germany and Italy and (2) Austria-Hungary and Italy. Simultaneous negotiations for the treaty between the United Kingdom, Austria-Hungary, and Italy.

Dilke's article in <i>The Fortnightly Review</i>	January.
Lord Vivian's assurance of support to Belgium	27 January.
Sir Augustus Paget's assurance about same time.	
Diplomaticus in <i>The Standard</i> , and <i>The Standard</i> article	4 February.
Letters of Count Conti (Italy) and Lord Salisbury formulating the British treaty	12 February.
Belgian King's perplexity	13 February.
Signatures affixed to the Bismarck treaties	20 February.
Letter of Count Karolyi (Austria-Hungary) adhering to the formulation of the Anglo-Italian treaty, and so completing it	24 March.

These facts make clear why it was impossible for Lord Salisbury to permit Belgium to remain under the impression derived from Lord Vivian's assurances—why the Ambassador was instructed to substitute the suggestion that she “would do well to look to her defence herself.” The British treaty has, not inaptly, been referred to as a moral extension of the Triple Alliance across the English Channel.⁸⁹

Diplomaticus Repudiated. During the recent war, the British government issued the following statement:

“On January 18 the Foreign Office issued a categorical denial to statements made in the German Press to the effect that, in 1887, the British Government had determined not to oppose a violation of Belgian neutrality by foreign troops, provided that all damage done by the invaders were paid for.”⁹⁰

“In spite of this denial, the German Press continues its endeavors to

⁸⁸ Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 94.

⁸⁹ H. Oncken: *Das alte und das neue Mitteleuropa*, p. 47; referred to by Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 83. Bismarck assisted in the negotiation of the British treaties, see *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, p. 246; *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, p. 162.

⁹⁰ The denial may be seen in *The Times*, 19 Jan. 1917. In *The Times* of 29 Jan., there is reference to a reply to this “categorical denial” which covered a whole page of *The North German Gazette*.

excuse the violation of Belgium in 1914 by falsely attributing to the British Government of 1887 certain views which were expressed in an anonymous letter written to the *Standard* on February 4, 1887. It is true that such a letter appeared in the *Standard* on the date mentioned, and that it was afterwards commented on in the British Press. As it was feared that misrepresentations of the official British attitude might be possible in consequence of the Press statements, H. M. Minister at Brussels (Lord Vivian), with the approval of the British Government, informed the Belgian Government that no importance should be attached to newspaper articles on the subject of Belgian neutrality, as they were not inspired by, and did not represent the views of the British Government. Lord Vivian, moreover, told the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs (the Prince de Chimay) that if the Belgian Government thought that the British Government endorsed the views of the newspapers in question, it would cause the British Government most serious concern. The British Government never had at any time contemplated the violation of Belgian neutrality. Nor did they, as a party to the treaty of 1839, by which the five Powers guaranteed the independence of Belgium, contemplate condoning the violation of that neutrality by any other Power. The events of 1914 are clear proof of this, if proof be needed."⁹¹

The *démenti* was carefully phrased, and falls far short of the first assurances of Vivian and Paget, namely, that "Belgium might count upon England in case of war." The chief significance, moreover, of the Diplomatic incident is not its relation to governmental attitude, but the fact that, as Dilke said:

"The response to my first chapter has been virtually unanimous, and it is clear that my question, whether we intend to fight for Belgium according to our treaty obligation, or to throw treaty obligations to the wind, under some convenient pretext, is already answered." Such being the attitude of the public, the government would no doubt have limited its action to a more or less peremptory refusal to "condone" an invasion of Belgium, or, at the best, to arrange for restoration and recompense after the hostilities had ceased.

BRITISH ATTITUDE IN 1914

Such was the British attitude toward the Belgian treaty in 1887. When, in 1914, Germany proposed to invade Belgium, and offered "at the conclusion of peace to guarantee the possessions and independence of the Belgian Kingdom in full."⁹² that attitude was entirely changed. Why? Because of the change in British feeling toward Germany. In 1887, a guarantee from

⁹¹ *The Times*, 14 March 1917.

⁹² Belgian Grey Book, No. 20.

Germany that she would not permanently occupy Belgium would have sufficed as a pretext for acquiescence in German encroachment. But in 1914, pretexts for acquiescence were not wanted. On the contrary, Mr. Asquith gave, as a popular pretext for activity, a breach of the Belgian treaty. Excuses for any desired course of action, or inaction, are easily found. That the United Kingdom was under no treaty-obligation to defend Belgium or Belgian neutrality, the reader, it is hoped, has been convinced by his perusal of the earlier part of the present chapter. That, in Sir Edward Grey's opinion no such obligation existed, and that he declined to agree to the maintenance of British neutrality on condition that Germany refrained from invasion of Belgium, have been demonstrated in a previous chapter.⁹³

CONCLUSIONS

From what has been said, the following conclusions may safely be deduced:

1. Belgium, in 1831-9, did not desire to be transformed into a neutral state. That status was forced upon her in the supposed interests of the Great Powers, and chiefly in the interest of the United Kingdom.

2. The word *guarantee* is of uncertain import. Usually, it cannot be interpreted as an obligation to military activity.

3. Unless there is a clear indication to the contrary, guarantee treaties

“are rather in the nature of general declarations, and strong declarations, of policy and general intention, than in the nature of covenants of a specific and determinate character, the obligation of which can, under all circumstances, be exacted.”⁹⁴

4. As used in the Belgian treaty, the word *guarantee* cannot be construed as a promise of military action.

5. Russia's known attitude with reference to the Turkish treaty of 30 March 1856, makes improbable the assertion that she intended in 1839 to assume an obligation of military activity. The obligation of the other Powers could not be of a character different from Russia's.

6. If the word *guarantee* in the Belgian treaty can be treated as a promise, it is one of joint, and not of several character—a promise, therefore, which one party was not obliged to implement without the co-operation of the other four.

7. Geographical considerations are alone sufficient to indicate that military activity cannot have been within the intention of the parties. It is inconceivable that Russia or the United Kingdom contemplated individual action without the co-operation of the other four Powers—or, possibly, in opposition to the other four.

⁹³ Cap. V.

⁹⁴ *Ante*, p. 422.

8. The action of the United Kingdom in 1870 was inconsistent with the idea of existing obligation to defend Belgian neutrality.

9. British opinion in 1887 repudiated liability to withstand the passage of German armies through Belgium.

10. Sir Edward Grey's attitude in 1914, as revealed in the diplomatic correspondence, was inconsistent with the idea of the existence of treaty obligation to defend Belgian neutrality.

11. It is clear therefore that the United Kingdom was under no treaty obligation to intervene in the war.⁹⁵

SCRAPS OF PAPER

Nevertheless, by the treaty of 1839, Germany was bound to respect the neutrality of Belgium. She violated her promise. Justification for that action upon grounds of purely ethical value is impossible. What can be urged in her defence?

This first, that nobody believed that either Germany or France would respect her obligation if success could be obtained, or failure be averted, by its violation. Indeed, it is an oft-time repeated accusation against Germany that, by her construction of strategic railways and adaptation to military purposes of those leading to Belgium, she had made her purpose clear.⁹⁶ And when Holland commenced the fortification of Flushing (at the mouth of the Scheldt), at the instance, it was said, of Germany, the French government saw in it but another evidence of the same design. Reporting on 2 February 1911, the Russian Ambassador at Paris said:

"If Pichon and his colleagues retain their composure, it is due to the fact that the conviction prevails here that Germany, in a new Franco-German war, would in any case violate Belgian neutrality. For this reason, the fortification of Flushing is considered a less important detail of the general German plan of attack upon France."⁹⁷

The elaborate preparations of the United Kingdom, France, and Belgium for the purpose of countering German invasion through Belgium⁹⁸ make unnecessary further proof of the existence of the general anticipation.

Repudiations. Furthermore, students of history will agree with the following from Dr. James Brown Scott, the Editor in Chief of *The American Journal of International Law* and the author of many valuable books:

⁹⁵ Cf. an address by James Brown Scott, and the discussion by which it was followed, as reported in the American Society of International Law Proceedings, April 1917, pp. 101-24. Even in Belgium, jurists disagreed upon the point (*ibid.*, p. 126).

⁹⁶ See, for example, Sir Charles Oman: *The Outbreak of the War, 1914-18*, pp. 122-3; Mr. Winston S. Churchill: *The World Crisis*, I, pp. 53-4.

⁹⁷ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 545-6

⁹⁸ See cap. XVII.

“For, if you examine any collection of treaties, you will find that not merely one nation, or a second nation, or a third nation, has failed in its international agreements, but that all nations are tarred with the same stick. Whenever a treaty has been entered into which has borne rather hardly or harshly against a nation, that nation has either interpreted the obligation out of existence, or it is declared not to be binding, or it has flatly refused to honor its obligations, alleging, if you please, a change of circumstances . . . the fact is that, in times past, nations have insisted on living up to agreements when in harmony with their interests, and they have not lived up to them when they have not been to their interest. I bemoan this fact. I wish it were not so, but you do not cure this tendency in nations merely by duplicating evils. . . . My proposition is that nations, in the long run, act upon their own interests; that they act upon those interests whether those interests are stated and guaranteed by treaty; that after they put their hands and seals to a treaty, and it is not to their interest to observe the terms of that treaty, there are diplomats and there are lawyers shrewd enough to prove to the unwary and to the layman and to the world at large that the nation is not bound by the terms of the treaty.”⁹⁹

Among the more customary excuses for inattention to treaty obligations are the following:

Salus reipublicæ est suprema lex. The safety of the state is the supreme law. It is supreme in the sense in which “self-preservation is the first law of nature.” Machiavelli taught it, and has ever since been villified in language, and approved in practice. “We must first secure a livelihood, and then practice virtue,” said Aristotle, and if Dr. Johnson peevishly declared that he saw no necessity for livelihood, he would probably not have gone to his death in support of his assertion. Hugo Grotius, the father of international law, declared that:

“Necessity, the great protectress of human infirmity, breaks through all human laws, and all those made in the spirit of human regulations.”¹⁰⁰

Captain Mahan’s reputation is better than Machiavelli’s, but he agrees that self-preservation is:

“the first law of States even more than that of men; for no Government is empowered to assent to that last sacrifice, which the individual may make from the noblest motives.”

Sir Francis Piggott, speaking as an upholder of British naval operations during the war, quotes Mahan approvingly, and adds:

“That this is the fundamental principle of warlike action in its relation to neutrals, that the rightness and wrongness of that action must

⁹⁹ *Am. Soc. Int. Law Procdgs.*, April 1917, pp. 102-4.

¹⁰⁰ *Rights of War and Peace*, vol. 2, cap. 2, para. 7. Quoted by Fuehr, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

ultimately be referred to that simple criterion, is the thesis of this article." ¹⁰¹

Bismarck was equally frank. He said:

"All contracts between great states cease to be unconditionally binding as soon as they are tested by 'the struggle for existence.' No great nation will ever be induced to sacrifice its existence on the altar of fidelity to contract when it is compelled to choose between the two." ¹⁰²

In Mr. Hall's book, *A Treatise on International Law*, is the following:

"The right of self-preservation in some cases justifies commissions of acts of violence against a friendly or neutral state, when from its position and resources it is capable of being made use of to dangerous effects by an enemy, when there is a known intention on his part to make use of it, and when, if he is not forestalled, it is almost certain that he will succeed, either through the helplessness of the country or by means of intrigues with a party within." ¹⁰³

From a military point of view, the German Chancellor was quite right when he explained to Sir Edward Grey in August 1914 that:

"If we have violated the neutrality of Belgium, we were constrained by the duty of self-preservation." ¹⁰⁴

In his book, *Reflections on the World War*, the Chancellor admitted that German invasion of Belgium was wrong, but:

"at the same time adduced our dire need as both compelling and condoning it." ¹⁰⁵

To the question whether Germany feared that, during the course of the war, Belgium would be made use of by France, a conclusive answer was given by the "Introductory Narrative of Events" which emanated from the British Foreign Office on 28 September 1914: ¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ *The Nineteenth Century*, April 1918, p. 869. The decision of the British Privy Council in the *Stigstad* case (1919, A. C. 279) amply justifies the view of Sir Francis Piggott. For it was there held that when the British navy was engaged in retaliatory operations against Germany (that is to say, in operations forbidden by international law, and to be justified as against Germany only as reply to other forbidden actions), the rights of neutrals very largely disappeared. The court said that: "Its function is, in protection of the rights of neutrals, to weigh on a proper occasion the measures of retaliation which have been adopted, and to inquire whether they are in their nature or extent other than commensurate with the prior wrong done, and whether they inflict on neutrals, when they are looked at as a whole, inconvenience greater than is reasonable under all circumstances." After many years of experience in world affairs, Lord Dufferin, the great British diplomatist, felt himself justified in saying that "force and not right is still the dominant factor in human affairs" (Speech in Belfast 28 Oct. 1896, quoted in *Fortnightly Review*, 1896, p. 904).

¹⁰² *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, p. 270.

¹⁰³ P. 275.

¹⁰⁴ Telg. to London, 3 Aug. 1914; Kautsky Docs., No. 790.

¹⁰⁵ Pp. 146-9.

¹⁰⁶ May be seen in Price: *The Dip. Hist. of the War*, pp. iii-ix. The document was not included in *Coll. Dip. Docs.*

“Germany’s position must be understood. She had fulfilled her treaty obligations in the past; her action now was not wanton. Belgium was of supreme military importance in a war with France; if such a war occurred, it would be one of life and death; Germany feared that, if she did not occupy Belgium, France might do so. In face of this suspicion, there was only one thing to do. The neutrality of Belgium had not been devised as a pretext for wars, but to prevent the outbreak of wars. The Powers must reaffirm Belgian neutrality in order to prevent the war now threatened. The British Government, therefore, on Friday the 31st July, asked the German and French Governments for an engagement to respect Belgium’s neutrality, and the Belgian Government for an engagement to uphold it. France gave the necessary engagement the same day; Belgium gave it the day after; Germany returned no reply. Henceforward there could be no doubt of German designs.”

Germany feared, as well she might, that France, notwithstanding her treaty-promise of 1839, would attack her through Belgium; and, in order to remove that fear, the British government asked France to give a further promise of the same unreliable kind! She gave it; but if, because of German concentration upon Verdun and Belfort in the south, a flank attack by France through Belgium had become necessary for the salvation of Paris, excuse for it would, most assuredly, not have been wanting. Germany’s view is embodied in the first four sentences of the quotation.

The action of the United Kingdom and France in Greece, during the war, can be justified only upon the *salus reipublicæ* doctrine.¹⁰⁷ A friend endeavored to quiet my doubts as to the propriety of British and French action in that country by asking me whether “the present was a proper time to stand on ceremony”! The British government, just prior to the commencement of the war, took possession of two warships of neutral Turkey, and the British King offered as excuse “the exigencies of the defence of his dominions.”¹⁰⁸ For justification of the action of Japan in entering Chinese territory in order to cooperate with the British in an attack upon Tsing-tao, the doctrine under discussion is not sufficient excuse.

Ultra posse nemo obligatur. No one is bound to attempt the impossible. It is a maxim of English civil law that impossibility of accomplishment excuses non-performance of contracts, and the reason of the rule is applicable to international treaties. That British action in defence of the neutrality of Luxemburg “would be impossibly quixotic,” was offered by some “Members of the Oxford Faculty of Modern History”

¹⁰⁷ See cap. X. The seizure of Corfu was a breach of a neutrality guarantee. Cf. Phillimore: *Three Centuries of Treaties of Peace*, p. 142.

¹⁰⁸ *Ante*, cap. VI, p. 210.

as an excuse for confining action to the "exercise of our influence."¹⁰⁹ And the King of Greece pleaded similarly with reference to his war-treaty with Serbia.¹¹⁰ Bismarck held the same view. He said:

"The maxim '*ultra posse nemo obligatur*' holds good in spite of all treaty formulas whatsoever; nor can any treaty guarantee the degree of zeal and the amount of force that will be devoted to the discharge of obligations, when the private interest of those who lie under them no longer reinforces the text and its earliest interpretation."¹¹¹

If circumstances had made necessary the formulation of an excuse for non-performance by the United Kingdom of obligation under the Swiss and Polish treaties,¹¹² one reason, no doubt, would have been the maxim under discussion. When Lord Salisbury was asked to protect the Armenians against Turkey, in pursuance of the treaty of 4 June 1878, part of his reply was that the Admiralty had not been able to discover any means by which the British fleet could get through the Taurus mountains. Sir Charles Dilke declared, as we have seen,¹¹³ with reference to the treaty with Sweden, that:

"France and England would now think it an insane idea that they should attempt to preserve the integrity of Sweden against Russia, and similarly, to all appearance, thinks England with regard to Belgium now." Whether that was upon the ground of *ultra posse*, or of the maxim next to be referred to, Dilke did not say.

Rebus sic stantibus. Obligation continues only while circumstances remain unchanged. This rule has been said to be a tacit stipulation of every treaty.¹¹⁴ It was pleaded by Russia in 1871, in justification of her disregard of treaty obligations with reference to the Black Sea and Batoum; but, when brought to book, she agreed to the London protocol declaring:

"that it is an essential principle of the law of nations that no power can liberate itself from the engagements of a treaty, nor modify the stipulations thereof, unless with the consent of the contracting powers, by means of an amicable arrangement."¹¹⁵

In Bismarck's opinion:

"International policy is a fluid element which under certain conditions will solidify, but on a change of atmosphere reverts to its original diffuse condition. The clause *rebus sic stantibus*¹¹⁶ is tacitly understood in all treaties that involve performance."¹¹⁷

¹⁰⁹ *Ante*, p. 428.

¹¹⁰ Cap. X, p. 361.

¹¹¹ *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, p. 270.

¹¹² Lord Stanley's statement, *ante*, p. 422.

¹¹³ *Ante*, pp. 437-8.

¹¹⁴ Bynkershoek: *Quest. jur. pub.*, II, c. 10.

¹¹⁵ *Ency. Brit.* (11th ed.), XXVII, p. 230.

¹¹⁶ Conditions remaining unchanged.

¹¹⁷ *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, p. 280.

President Wilson's argument in support of his contention that the *entente* Allies were, in April 1919, not bound by the treaty of 1915 upon the faith of which Italy entered the war, is a striking illustration of the ease with which an obligation may be repudiated. The treaty had made disposition of territory on the east side of the Adriatic, contrary to the President's idea of the principles:

"for which America fought . . . upon which she can consent to make peace,"

and he urged that it had ceased to be obligatory because:

"When Italy entered the war she entered upon the basis of a definite private understanding with Great Britain and France, now known as the Pact of London. Since that time the whole face of circumstances has been altered. Many other powers, great and small, have entered the struggle, with no knowledge of that private understanding. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, then the enemy of Europe, and at whose expense the Pact of London was to be kept in the event of victory, has gone to pieces and no longer exists. Not only that, but the several parts of that empire, it is agreed now by Italy and all her associates, are to be erected into independent States and associated in a League of Nations, not with those who were recently our enemies, but with Italy herself and the powers that stood with Italy in the great war for liberty. We are to establish their liberty as well as our own. They are to be among the smaller States whose interests are henceforth to be safeguarded as scrupulously as the interests of the most powerful States."¹¹⁸

Treaty Interpretation. A method of avoiding treaty-obligation, often quite as simple as that employed by President Wilson, is to twist its interpretation. When, in 1887, the United Kingdom was disinclined to take up arms in defence of Belgian neutrality, argument was at hand to prove her freedom to refrain. But when, in 1914, she desired to avail herself of an appealing reason for war with Germany, the existence of obligation was asserted. War in defence of Luxemburg in 1914 not being popular, the guarantee treaty was interpreted by the "Members of the Oxford Faculty of Modern History" as meaning that the United Kingdom was not a principal, and was bound only "to exercise our influence."¹¹⁹ When Japan wanted to join in the war against Germany, she alleged a non-existing obligation under her treaty with the United Kingdom.¹²⁰ If Italy and Roumania had desired to implement their war-treaties with Germany and Austria-Hungary, they would have alleged their obligation, upon the ground that Russia was the assailant. Desiring (in order to acquire territory from Austria-Hungary) to join the *entente* Allies, they declared that Germany and Austria-Hungary were not engaged defensively. Were Bismarck alive to-day, he might

¹¹⁸ *N. Y. Times*, 24 April 1919.

¹¹⁹ *Ante*, p. 428.

¹²⁰ *Ante*, p. 377-80.

very well, in view of recent occurrences, including the scandalous departure of the Versailles peace treaty from the terms agreed to in the armistice, supersede his various statements with the simple declaration that treaties, no matter how "plain and searching" the language, are not now regarded as obligations.

"Conscientiousness" disliked. In conclusion, we may note that the impatience of imperialistically inclined peoples with considerations of international morality¹²¹ which stand in their way, was well illustrated by Dr. Conan Doyle's reference to the negotiations which preceded the Boer war. He said that:

"throughout the negotiations the hand of Great Britain was weakened, as her adversary had doubtless calculated that it would be, by an earnest but fussy minority. Idealism and a morbid, restless conscientiousness are two of the most dangerous evils from which a modern progressive State has to suffer."¹²²

Unprofitable scraps of paper are very easily scrapped, and other action must not be expected.

¹²¹ For the purpose of the above sentence, "international morality" is assumed to forbid wanton attack by one nation upon another.

¹²² *The Great Boer War*, p. 46. Defending his country, in language singularly out of harmony with so much that we have recently heard, a representative Englishman, Colonel Amery (for a time Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and now First Lord of the Admiralty), said: "Much sympathy has been wasted on little peoples 'rightly struggling to be free,' whose chief struggle has been to wreck satisfactory political institutions and create unprovoked discords, for the sake of politically isolating some stray fragment from the world's ethnological scrap heap, or of propagating some obscure and wholly superfluous dialect. Little sympathy is bestowed on the great peoples rightly struggling for mastery, for the supremacy of higher civilization, and higher political principle" (*The Times History of the War in South Africa*, I, p. 22).

CHAPTER XV

GERMANY AND WORLD DOMINATION

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GERMAN AMBITION

THAT the cause of the war was the ambition of Germany to dominate the whole world, has been alleged by scores of speakers and writers, in language similar to that used by Mr. Lloyd George in the House of Commons on 24 December 1917:

“But what brought the war about? Does any one doubt who has read the whole history of that restless and vicious, arrogant military caste of Prussia, determined to force their dictation and domination over Europe, and through Europe over the world? They planned and they plotted for years for this war. They were even prepared (and everybody in Germany knew it) to overthrow their own ruler in order to help another ruler who was more in sympathy with their ambitious designs. It was common talk in Germany and there were pamphlets on the subject circulated through Prussia and the whole of Germany.”

In a former speech (London, 4 August 1917), Mr. Lloyd George said that if Germany won, the Monroe doctrine would be treated as a scrap of paper:

“. . . we know her ambitions in South America. Not a year after the termination of this peace would have elapsed before she would have started realizing them, and America would have been helpless.”

Sir Robert Borden, in a speech at the Savoy Hotel, London, said:

“We know now, beyond peradventure, that this war was cruelly, foully, and deliberately planned and forced upon the world, to gratify an insensate lust of power dwelling in spirits of evil that bore the guise of men. The foulness of the purpose was unequalled save by the

deliberate and brutal savagery of the methods through which its consummation was attempted. Neither in the purpose, monstrous as it was, nor yet in the still more horrible methods of its attempted execution, did the people of the enemy nations hold back. That most significant and deplorable fact will not easily fade from our memories. Germany sought to conquer the world and failed.”¹

In the same vein, *The Round Table* declared that:

“the real cause of the war was . . . a state of mind in the German and Magyar peoples,” namely, “such a spirit of aggression, so deep a passion to impose German will on the world, coupled with so boundless a confidence in Germany’s power to enforce it. . . . Russia and France were to be crippled first, then Britain, and lastly America. When once all this was achieved, South America, Africa and Asia would have lain at the German’s feet.”²

Mr. Lansing, the United States Secretary of State, in an address at Sacket Harbor, N. Y. (9 July 1917), said:

“Imagine Germany victor in Europe, because the United States remained neutral. Who, then, think you, would be the next victim of those who are seeking to be masters of the whole earth? Would not this country with its enormous wealth arouse the cupidity of an impoverished, though triumphant Germany? Would not this democracy be the only obstacle between the autocratic rulers of Germany and their supreme ambition? Do you think that they would withhold their hand from so rich a prize?”³

During the first two years and eight months of the war, while his country remained neutral, Mr. Lansing had no such apprehension, and subsequent necessity for rousing the war-spirit would probably be his apology for his speech.

After the war, M. Clemenceau, as part of *The Reply of the Allied and Associated Powers to the Observations of the German Delegation on the Conditions of Peace*, said:

“For many years the rulers of Germany, true to the Prussian tradition, strove for a position of dominance in Europe. They were not satisfied with that growing prosperity and influence to which Germany was entitled, and which all other nations were willing to accord her in the society of free and equal peoples. They required that they should be able to dictate and tyrannize to a subservient Europe, as they dictated and tyrannized over a subservient Germany.”⁴

The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, when referring to the period of the ascension to the German throne of William II, has the following:

¹ *The Times* (London), 29 Nov. 1918.

² March 1919, pp. 240-1.

³ *N. Y. Times*, 30 July 1917. See also *ante*, p. 12, and *post*, p. 493.

⁴ P. 2.

“The German people were being gradually trained under their young Sovereign’s ambitious aspiration to look upon ‘world-dominion’ as their rightful goal, and the British Empire as the chief obstacle to its attainment.”⁵

Several pages might easily be filled with quotations such as the foregoing. One more, especially vivid, must suffice. It is from the pen of Mr. E. Bruce Mitford:

“The neutrality of Belgium relegated to the limbo of polite fictions, that hapless State should form at once an avenue through which the invasion of Russia’s western ally could be swiftly and remorselessly achieved, and a *pied à terre* for still more imposing schemes. By this, no doubt, the deluge, but upon its crest the Fatherland would ride to world-power, while among the flood-wrack lay the débris of the British Empire.”⁶

Replying to such assertions, the German Foreign Minister, von Kuhlmann, said (July 1918) as follows:

“This legend does not become truer through constant repetition. I do not believe that any intelligent man in Germany ever entertained, before this war, the hope or the wish that Germany should attain world domination. I do not believe that any responsible man in Germany (not to speak of the Kaiser or the Imperial Government) ever, even for a moment, thought that they could win world-dominion in Europe by unchaining war. The idea of world domination in Europe is Utopian. Napoleon’s example showed that. A nation which tried to achieve it would, as happened in France, bleed to death in useless battle, and would be most grievously injured and lowered in her development.”⁷

Hysteria. That the attribution to Germany of such a wildly impracticable purpose as world domination was accepted by millions of people, can be explained only by the mental unsettlement produced by the war.⁸ For, conceding that sixty-five, or even seventy-five⁹ million Germans might possibly be able eventually to establish their military predominance over¹⁰ 160 million Russians; 35 million Turks; 14 million Czecho-Slavs; 8 million Yugo-Slavs; 15 millions more in the Balkan States; 12 million Poles; 10 million Magyars; 34 million Italians; 40 million French; 4 million Swiss; 24 million Spaniards; 5 million Portu-

⁵ III, p. 273. It is a pity that an otherwise excellent work should have been to some extent spoiled by an attempt to combine (as the editors say in their Preface) with “a strict adherence to historical truth” “a national point of view — in other words, an avowed regard for the interests, and above all for the honour of Great Britain.”

⁶ *Fortnightly Rev.*, July 1916, p. 48.

⁷ *The Times* (London).

⁸ Von Bethmann-Hollweg traced the notion to “boyish and unbalanced ebullience”: *Reflections*, p. 95; and see p. 163.

⁹ Adding the Austro-Germans.

¹⁰ The figures are only approximations.

guese; 10 million Scandinavians; 6 million Dutch; and 7 million Belgians — conceding that 75 million Germans might succeed in establishing their rule over these 380 million Europeans, there would still remain for them the difficult task of rendering their position so secure over the subject territory (permanent military occupations everywhere) that they could devote sufficient of their remaining strength to the reduction of the 45 millions in the British Isles, who, by that time, would, no doubt, have secured the willing assistance of the whole of the yet unconquered world.

The British subdued, the work of world-domination would still be only half done, or rather not done at all. For as Napoleon could defeat one nation after another, but could neither persuade nor compel them to remain defeated, so Germany would find that, pending the completion of her enterprise, Russia would recuperate and fight as at Leipsic; Prussia would revive and fight as at Leipsic and Waterloo; Spain would turn and drive the invaders across the Pyrenees; the British, the Turks, the Magyars, the Italians, the Scandinavians would break their bonds and fight again.¹¹

Europe, including the United Kingdom, in constant insurrection, we are asked to believe that from it could be spared a sufficient number of Germans to attack the one hundred millions in the United States, assisted by the many more millions in the American hemisphere, who, having been witnesses of the progressive subjugation of all Europe, would have been rapidly preparing for the proposed invasion; and preparing in such a way as to make the transportation of troops across the Atlantic somewhat impracticable.

North and South America having all been occupied and dominated, they too must be kept in subjection while Germans still available for further enterprise proceed to cross the Pacific for the subjugation of fifty million Japanese, who meanwhile have not neglected to prepare for attack upon the transport ships during their three weeks' voyage.

The difficulties of conquest by Germany of the world may, in some measure, be realized if we ask what would have been her prospects of success had she undertaken to subdue the United States alone, or Japan alone, or even the United Kingdom alone.¹²

Probably the charge of intended world-domination ought, in many cases, to be attributed to the prevailing habit of indulgence in exaggerated phraseology. If not, how can it be explained that Lord Northcliffe

¹¹ Writers and speakers who think that in Germany's efforts for world-domination, Austria-Hungary (apart from the Germans there), Turkey, and Bulgaria would fight steadily upon the German side, know little either of the races which inhabit those countries, or of human nature.

¹² Paradoxically, Germany could more easily have defeated the United Kingdom and France in alliance, than the United Kingdom alone — unweighted by responsibility for protection of France. See *post*, cap. XXVII.

repeated, as exhibiting the opinion of "one of our most distinguished authorities in the Far East," the following colloquy:

"What is the object of Japan?" "The control of China?" "And then?" "The control of the world: for who controls China could control the world."¹³

GERMAN AUTHORS

Popular acceptance of the idea that Germany instituted the war for the purpose of securing world-domination was due, very largely, to the belief that Nietzsche, Treitschke, and Bernhardi, by their advocacy of German domination of the world, had made it a national ambition¹⁴ — an ambition which was enthusiastically proclaimed in the national song, *Deutschland über Alles*. Nothing could be farther from the truth. This is not the place for elaborate discussion of the works of the men just mentioned; but a few words as to each may be useful.

Nietzsche. Nietzsche was a poet-philosopher whose writings, brilliantly analytical as they undoubtedly are, contain such masses of contradictions that hardly one of his statements is left without confutation. He was not an historian like Treitschke, nor a military officer like Bernhardi. His enquiry was as to the impulses which move mankind. The hedonists had insisted that in pleasures and pains could be found the incentives which determine action. Schopenhauer had postulated the universal spirit of pity. Christians had made self-denial their stimulus. Benthamites argued for utility. And Nietzsche, differing with them all, declared that "the will to power" was that which dominated conduct: The truly healthy man, and all other organisms, he said, undegenerated by weakly sentimentalities, desiderated power and the opportunity to exercise it. To him, war — any war — is biologically good, and peace on earth a character-softening evil:

"Ye shall love peace," he said, "as a means to new wars, and the short peace more than the long."¹⁵

But, at the same time, as an individualist, he made:

"constant protest against that dominance of the State which is the first

¹³ *The Times*, 18 April 1922, under the caption "Watch Japan."

¹⁴ Dernburg, a former Colonial Secretary of the German Empire, said that "three men, Nietzsche, Treitschke, and Bernhardi, are being pilloried by the foreign press as typical spokesmen of German statecraft" (*Saturday Evening Post*, 21 Nov. 1914; referred to by Prof. J. L. Stewart of Dalhousie University in *Nietzsche and the Ideals of Modern Germany*, p. 149). Mr. Frederick Bausman, for example, in his book *Let France Explain*, has the following: "Very justly do we condemn those German writers who at one time preached world dominion and the superman, some of whom in the language of Burke may be called cannibal philosophers" (p. 96).

¹⁵ *Zarathustra*, vol. I, p. 10. And see Stewart: *Nietzsche and the Ideals of Modern Germany*, p. 98.

principle of Treitschke, and which notoriously pervades the Prussian régime." ¹⁶

He found:

"the spirit of Nationality, no less than the spirit of Socialism, inimical to outstanding genius, and one might conjecture that he had the Prussian bureaucracy in mind when he wrote of those who 'hate and envy prominent self-evolving individuals, who do not willingly allow themselves to be drawn up in rank and file for the purpose of a collective effort.'" ¹⁷

He made:

"several direct attacks upon the rising military spirit which seemed to menace German culture, and he had occasional sneers, more or less thinly veiled, against the system of Bismarck." ¹⁸

Concerning Prussian success against France in 1870-1871, he said:

"The State and civilization are antagonistic; Germany has gained as to the former, but lost as to the latter." ¹⁹

He condemned militarism on the ground that it was opposed to civilization, and because it interfered with individual choice in the activities of life. He repudiated the name of patriot, and asserted the propriety of a detached heart "even from a victorious Fatherland." ²⁰

"He thus earned the hatred of Treitschke, who thought him a 'bad Prussian'; while for the historian at Berlin, Nietzsche has only a passing sneer." ²¹

"Nietzsche denounced race hatred, and looked for a cosmopolitan blending of nations" ²²

¹⁶ Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, quoting from *Human, All-too Human*, p. 480.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 155-6. "'The State—what is that?' cried Zarathustra in Nietzsche's favourite work: 'The State is called the coldest of cold monsters. And coldly it lieth. And this lie creepeth out of its mouth: 'I, the State, am the people. . . . On earth there is nothing greater than I: God's regulating finger am I,' thus the monster howleth. And not only those with long ears and short sight fall upon their knees. . . . The new idol would fain surround itself with heroes and honest men. It liketh to sun itself in the sunshine of good consciences—the cold monster! It will give you anything if you adore it, the new idol; thus it buyeth for itself the splendour of your virtue and the glance of your proud eyes. . . . What I call the State is where all are poison-drinkers, the good and the evil alike": Quoted in *Round Table*, March 1915, pp. 419, 420.

¹⁹ Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

²¹ Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 157. Prof. A. S. Ferguson, in an article, "Nietzsche and German Culture," in *The University Magazine*, April 1915, wrote as follows: "One of the minor ironies of this war is the coupling of Nietzsche and Treitschke as joint inspirers of the German mind, and the Cosmic Spirit has equal cause to smile at the efforts of Nietzsche's defenders to prove him perhaps more blameless than he is" (218). "In a word, when the distinction between Nietzsche and Treitschke is pushed to an issue, the latter is a decorous authoritarianism, while Nietzsche shatters all authority and all institutions and many men to give the rare individual his full scope" (227).

²² Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

—but under some dominant ‘exploiting’ class. And, as one might imagine, being a Pole:

“he saw in Germany much to despise”; “he had no high opinion of the Germans”; and “sometimes he saw the root of permanence in Russia.”²³

In a magazine article of 1915, Professor A. S. Ferguson asked:

“Would the ideal of a greater Germany, with a hegemony over Europe, unite Nietzsche’s ideal and Treitschke’s?”

and, answering for Nietzsche negatively, he replied that:

“It would still further impoverish civilization, by imposing uniformity upon the healthy variety of cultures.”

Quoting from Nietzsche, the Professor added:

“As many international powers as possible, so as to produce world-perspective.” “If men occupy themselves with power, world-trade, parliamentarianism, military interests—if they squander on this side the amount of intelligence, interest, will, self-mastery, that makes them, then there is a gap on the other side. Culture and State—be not deceived—are antagonists. Culture-state is a purely modern notion.” (It is Treitschke’s.) “The one lives upon the other, the one spreads at the cost of the other.”²⁴

Very evidently, it is not in Nietzsche that we can find advocacy of German domination of the world.

Treitschke. If Treitschke were being indicted as a contributor to the crime of the invasion of Belgium in breach of treaty obligation, something could be said in support of the charge.²⁵ But so far from urging the reduction of the world to the dictation of one controlling power, Treitschke would have seen in such a proposal the destruction of the nobility of life—both in the conquering and in the conquered nations.

“The State is power,” he said, “precisely in order to assert itself as against other equally independent powers. War and the administration of justice are the chief tasks of even the most barbaric States. But these tasks are only conceivable where a plurality of States are found existing side by side. Thus the idea of one universal empire is odious—the ideal of a state co-extensive with humanity is no ideal at all.”²⁶

“The grandeur of history lies in the perpetual conflict of nations, and it is simply foolish to desire the suppression of their rivalry.”²⁷

After reference to the attempted world-empires of Alexander and Napoleon, Treitschke said:

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 157, 161, 162.

²⁴ *The University Magazine*, April 1915, pp. 224, 225.

²⁵ See his *Politics* (the English translation), vol. I, pp. 15, 27-9; vol. II, pp. 596, 602-4.

²⁶ Vol. I, p. 19.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

“The unhappy attempt to transform the multiplicity of European life into the arid uniformity of universal sovereignty has produced the exclusive sway of nationality as the dominant political idea. Cosmopolitanism has receded too far. These examples show clearly that there is no prospect of a settlement of international contradictions.”²⁸

“It was a sin against the spirit of history which strove to turn the rich diversity of nations, knit by a bond of brotherhood, into the empty form of a single World Empire.”²⁹

“The rational task of a legally constituted people, conscious of a destiny, is to assert its rank in the world’s hierarchy, and, in its measure, to participate in the great civilizing mission of mankind.”³⁰

“. . . we see at once that it cannot be the destiny of mankind to form a single state, but that the ideal towards which we strive is a harmonious comity of nations, who, concluding treaties of their own free will, admit restrictions upon their sovereignty without abrogating it.”³¹

“The blind worshipper of an eternal peace falls into the error of isolating the state, or dreams of one which is universal, which we have already seen to be at variance with reason.”³²

Notwithstanding all this (very much more in the same line could be quoted), Sir Percy Fitzpatrick has permitted himself to say:

“The prize³³ has been defined by Germans themselves in the single phrase, ‘World Power,’ and both the aim and the means have been national public property for a generation and more. The great German historian and most influential writer and political teacher, Treitschke, whose works are a kind of National Bible to Germany, taught consistently that Germany’s destiny was to rule the world, that this must be achieved by war deliberately planned.”³⁴

In proof of his statements, Sir Percy proceeded to quote, not from any of the writings of Treitschke, but:

“some extracts from the writings of one who himself looked to Treitschke as the great teacher.”

He referred to Bernhardi, from whose book (*Germany and the Next War*) the various extracts were taken. Every one of them, however, is irrelevant for the purpose indicated, except the title of the fifth chapter, “*Weltmach oder Niedergang*,” the meaning of which Sir Percy evidently misunderstood.³⁵

Bernhardi. Bernhardi has been brought into jeopardy of conviction for stimulating German ambition for world-domination by first,

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 65.

³³ The prize for which Germany risked the war.

³⁴ *The Origin, Causes, and Object of the War*, p. 66.

³⁵ *Post*, p. 459.

an unfortunate rendering of his language by his English translator, and, secondly, by the misrepresentations of his prosecutors. Bernhardi placed at the head of the fifth chapter of his book the caption above quoted, but by "*Weltmach*" he did not mean, as Germany's enemies have been taught to believe, world-dominion or world-domination. Germany was a European Power — was she to become a World Power? Bernhardi used the word in the same sense as did John Bassett Moore when he wrote:

"Nothing could be more erroneous than the supposition that the United States had, as the result of certain changes in its habits, suddenly become within the past few years a 'world-power.' The United States has always been, in the fullest and highest sense, a world-power."³⁶

The Messrs. Hurd employed the phrase with the same significance when they said of the United Kingdom:

"This country is no longer a European Power, but a world-Power."³⁷

President Wilson was not misunderstood when (10 July 1919) he said to the Senate of the United States:

"There can be no question of our ceasing to be a world power. The only question is whether we can refuse the moral leadership that is offered us, whether we shall accept or reject the confidence of the world."³⁸

And Mr. James Fairgrieve of the University of London, in giving to his book the title *Geography and World Power*, had no idea that anybody would think that he meant "Geography and World Domination."

Although Bernhardi's meaning is unmistakable, his translator has been the means of misleading many thousands — perhaps (through newspaper and magazine repetitions) many millions of people, by rendering *Weltmach* as "World Power." Not that the word *power* is altogether unwarranted (for it may be taken to signify strength or might), but that it is ambiguous, and, when prefaced by *world* without the indefinite article *a*, World Power suggests the idea of power over the world. Sir Percy Fitzpatrick evidently so understood the word when, in proof of his assertion that Germany's object was to rule the world, he wrote:

"General von Bernhardi, with characteristic candour, boldly states it in the headlines of the most important chapter of his book: 'World Power or Downfall.' That is the terse, and, one must admit, inspiring title that he flings to his people."³⁹

It is more surprising to find Mr. Frederick Scott Oliver saying:

"Power, more power, world-power; these according to German

³⁶ *American Diplomacy*, Preface.

³⁷ *The New Empire Partnership*, p. 110.

³⁸ *Current History*, X, Pt. 2, p. 214.

³⁹ *The Origin, Causes, and Object of the War*, p. 79.

theory, as well as practice, should be the dominant principles of the State."⁴⁰

Lord Roberts well understood the *Weltmach* at which Germany was aiming and, in his propaganda speech at the Mansion House, 22 July 1912, said:

"At the same time there is Germany, a great homogeneous State with a population of 66,000,000, which is consciously aiming at becoming a world-Power with 'a place in the sun,' where its vigorous progeny may develop a German life, actuated by German thought and ideals."⁴¹

In various places in the English edition of Bernhardt's book, the article *a* precedes "world-power."⁴² He frequently refers to the "other world Powers,"⁴³ and all that he insisted upon was a "place among the world Powers."⁴⁴ It may well be assumed that if he desired German *Weltmach* in the sense of world-domination, advocacy of it would be found in the chapter carrying the caption above referred to, *Weltmach oder Niedergang*; but search for it there (as elsewhere) would be fruitless. In his chapter, the author reminds us that:

"There is no standing still in the world's history. All is growth and development"; and adds:

"We must make it quite clear to ourselves that there can be no standing still, no being satisfied for us, but only progress or retrogression, and that it is tantamount to retrogression when we are contented with our present place among the nations of Europe, while all our rivals are straining with desperate energy, even at the cost of our rights, to extend their power. The process of our decay would set in gradually, and advance slowly, so long as the struggle against us was waged with peaceful weapons; the living generation would, perhaps, be able to continue to exist in peace and comfort. But should a war be forced upon us by stronger enemies under conditions unfavorable to us, then, if our aims met with disaster, our political downfall would not be delayed, and we should rapidly sink down."⁴⁵

In these words, the author indicates the tendencies which end in *Weltmach oder Niedergang*. Advocating progress, he devotes all but a few of the thirty pages of his chapter to a review of international relationships,⁴⁶ and to recommendations as to German policy. He then deplors the fact that:

"The political and national development of the German people has

⁴⁰ *The Ordeal by Battle*, p. 144. But see pp. 174, 5.

⁴¹ *Message to the Nation* (pamphlet), p. 36.

⁴² For example, at pp. 114, 164.

⁴³ For example, p. 81.

⁴⁴ For example, pp. 85, 164, 239, 241.

⁴⁵ Pp. 104-105.

⁴⁶ He himself so describes his work, pp. 86, 112.

always, so far back as German history extends, been hampered and hindered by the hereditary defects of its character — that is, by the particularism of the individual races and states, the theoretic dogmatism of the parties, the incapacity to sacrifice personal interests for great national objects, from want of patriotism and of political common sense; often, also, by the pettiness of the prevailing ideas. Even to-day it is painful to see how the forces of the German nation, which are so restricted and confined in their activities abroad, are wasted in fruitless quarrels among themselves.”⁴⁷

The conclusion is:

“Our primary and most obvious moral and political duty is to overcome these hereditary failings, and to lay a secure foundation for a healthy, consistent development of our power. . . . We must rouse in our people the unanimous wish for power in this sense, together with the determination to sacrifice on the altar of patriotism, not only life and property, but also private views and preferences in the interests of the common welfare. Then alone shall we discharge our great duties of the future, grow into a World Power, and stamp a great part of humanity with the impress of the German spirit.”⁴⁸

Recognizing in France an irreconcilable enemy, Bernhardi argued that, in the war which he regarded as inevitable,⁴⁹ she should be crushed.⁵⁰ Colonies needed for “the overflow of our population” may be obtained, as previously, by negotiation, and in pursuance of an existing agreement with the United Kingdom as to the Portuguese estates. “If necessary, they must be obtained as the result of a successful European war.”⁵¹ To that extent Bernhardi envisaged territorial expansion. He sought no annexations in Europe, and of the crushing of any nation, other than France, he said not a word. In one of his chapters, he quoted what Lord Rosebery, in a patriotic speech (1 March 1893) had declared:

“It is said that our Empire is already large enough and does not need expansion. . . . We shall have to consider not what we want now, but what we want in the future. . . . We have to remember that it is part of our responsibility and heritage to take care that the world, so far as it can be moulded by us, should receive the Anglo-Saxon and not another character.”⁵²

Bernhardi’s comment was as follows:

“That is a great and proud thought which the Englishman then expressed. If we count the nations who speak English at the present day, and if we survey the countries which acknowledge the rule of England,

⁴⁷ Pp. 112-113.

⁴⁸ Pp. 113-114.

⁴⁹ P. 103.

⁵⁰ P. 105.

⁵¹ P. 107.

⁵² P. 79.

we must admit that he is justified from the English point of view. He does not here contemplate an actual world-sovereignty, but the predominance of the English spirit is proclaimed in plain language.”⁵³

Bernhardi's ambition was to:

“secure to German nationality, and German spirit throughout the Globe, that high esteem which is due to them.”⁵⁴

To put into Bernhardi's *Weltmach* the idea of world-domination would be not merely to do violence to his meaning, but to attribute to him an aspiration which he would repudiate as being both undesirable and unattainable. For to him, war is to national life what moisture is to vegetable growth, and world-domination would eliminate it. The book is full of such sentences as the following:

“From this standpoint I must first of all examine the aspirations for peace, which seem to dominate our age and threaten the soul of the German people, according to their true moral significance. I must try to prove that war is not merely a necessary element in the life of nations, but an indispensable factor of culture, in which a true civilized nation finds the highest expression of strength and vitality.”⁵⁵

“This desire for peace has rendered most civilized nations anæmic, and marks a decay of spirit and political courage such as has often been shown by a race of Epigoni. ‘It has always been,’ H. von Treitschke tells us, ‘the weary, spiritless, and exhausted ages which have played with the dream of perpetual peace.’”⁵⁶

“Struggle is, therefore, a universal law of nature, and the instinct of self-preservation which leads to struggle is acknowledged to be a natural condition of existence. ‘Man is a fighter.’”⁵⁷

“Wars are terrible, but necessary, for they save the State from social petrification and stagnation. It is well the transitoriness of the goods of this world is not only preached, but is learnt by experience. War alone teaches this lesson.”⁵⁸

“If we sum up our arguments, we shall see that, from the most opposite aspects, the efforts directed towards the abolition of war must not only be termed foolish, but absolutely immoral, and must be stigmatized as unworthy of the human race. To what does the whole question amount? It is proposed to deprive men of the right and the possibility to sacrifice their highest material possessions, their physical life, for ideals, and thus to realize the highest moral unselfishness.”

“With the cessation of the unrestricted competition, whose ultimate appeal is to arms, all real progress would soon be checked, and a moral

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ P. 81.

⁵⁵ *Germany and the Next War*, p. 14.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

and intellectual stagnation would ensue which must end in degeneration." ⁵⁹

"We can imagine a Court of Arbitration intervening in the quarrels of the separate tributary countries when an empire like the Roman Empire existed. Such an empire never can or will rise again. Even if it did, it would assuredly, like a universal peace league, be disastrous to all human progress, which is dependent on the clashing interests and the unchecked rivalry of different groups." ⁶⁰

Bernhardi's aspiration for Germany was limited to the attainment of "an adequate share in the sovereignty of the world." ⁶¹

"A reckless policy," he said, "would be foreign to our national character and our high aims and duties. But we must aspire to the possible, even at the risk of war." ⁶²

In his opinion, the United Kingdom and France exercised unduly preponderant influence in extra-European affairs; and he insisted upon Germany's right to "that fit recognition" to which her recently acquired strength gave her good title. He said (*Italics now added*):

"The openly declared claims of England and France are the more worthy of attention since an *entente* prevails between the two countries. In the face of these claims the German nation, from the standpoint of its importance to civilization, is fully entitled not only to demand a place in the sun, as Prince Bülow used modestly to express it, but *to aspire to an adequate share in the sovereignty of the world far beyond the limits of its present sphere of influence*. But we can only reach this goal by so amply securing our position in Europe, that it can never again be questioned. Then, only, we need no longer fear that we shall be opposed by stronger opponents whenever we take part in international politics. We shall then be able to exercise our forces freely *in fair rivalry with the other World Powers*, and secure to German nationality and German spirit throughout the globe that high esteem which is due to them." ⁶³

"Then alone shall we discharge our great duties of the future, grow into a *World Power*, and stamp a great part of humanity with the impress of the German spirit." ⁶⁴

Speaking, by anticipation, of the recent war, Bernhardi said:

"In this war we *must* conquer, or, at any rate, not allow ourselves to be defeated, for it will decide whether we can attain a position *as a World Power by the side of, and in spite of, England*." ⁶⁵

"If we do not to-day stake everything on strengthening our fleet, to

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁶¹ See *infra*.

⁶² *Germany and the Next War*, p. 85.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

insure at least the possibility of a successful war, and if we once more allow our probable opponent to gain a start which it will be scarcely possible to make up in the future, we must renounce for many years to come *any place among the World Powers.*"⁶⁶

"The difficult plight in which we are to-day, as regards our readiness for war, is due to two causes in the past. It has been produced in the first place because, from love of the pleasures of peace, we have in the long years since the founding of the German Empire neglected to define and strengthen *our place among the Powers of Europe.*"⁶⁷

"The policy of peace and restraint has brought us to a position in which we can only assert *our place among the Great Powers* and secure the conditions of life for the future by the greatest expenditure of treasure, and, so far as human conjecture can go, of blood."⁶⁸

On 23 April 1915, appeared in *The Times* (London) the first part of an article from Bernhardt's pen. In it he said:

"'World power or decline?' In my book, *Germany and the Next War*, I have put this question as decisive for the future of the German nation; not world *dominion*, but world *power*. There is a tremendous difference! It has never been our intention to conquer and subjugate foreign States; in doing so we should only create new enemies."

To the foregoing observations and quotations may well be added that Bernhardt's teaching as to the beneficial effects of war had made little impression in Germany. Prior to the war, few people imagined that it had. And since the outbreak of the war Viscount Bryce wrote as follows:

"What are these doctrines? I do not for a moment attribute them to the learned class in Germany, for whom I have profound respect, recognizing their immense services to science and learning; nor to the bulk of the civil administration, a body whose capacity and uprightness are known to all the world; and least of all to the German people generally. That the latter hold no such views appears from Bernhardt's own words, for he repeatedly complains of, and deplores, the pacific tendencies of his fellow countrymen."⁶⁹

Lord Roberts. To the present writer, a great deal that Bernhardt has said is objectionable, and his adulation of war is particularly offensive. But to a man like Lord Roberts, he appeared in a very different light, for it was Lord Roberts who said of him:

"For how was this Empire of Britain founded? War founded this Empire — war and conquest! When we, therefore, masters by war of one-third of the habitable globe, when we propose to Germany to dis-

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

⁶⁹ *Essays and Addresses in War Time*, pp. 4-5; *Current History*, I, pp. 344,

arm, to curtail her navy or diminish her army, Germany naturally refuses; and, pointing, not without justice, to the road by which England, sword in hand, has climbed to her unmatched eminence, declares openly, or in the veiled language of diplomacy, that by the same path, if by no other, Germany is determined also to ascend! Who amongst us, knowing the past of this nation, and the past of all nations and cities that have ever added the lustre of their name to human annals, can accuse Germany, or regard the utterance of one of her greatest Chancellors a year and a half ago,⁷⁰ or of General Bernhardt three months ago, with any feelings except those of respect?"⁷¹

Joseph Chamberlain. While detached passages from the writings of the three German writers above referred to may, if one wishes, be construed into a desire for world-domination, little, if anything, can be found to equal in that respect the language of some Englishmen. Mr. Chamberlain, for example, while a member of the British government, preached fervently from the "think Imperially" text. Early in 1897, at the Jewellers' dinner in Birmingham, he (as summarized by his biographer):

"complained that the leaders of the Opposition gave excessive attention to domestic controversies — 'which after all, whichever way they are settled, are of minor importance' — and forgot the great part which the country had played and was called upon to play in the history of the world. 'Let the Little Englanders say what they like, we are a great governing race, predestined by our defects as well as by our virtues, to spread over the habitable globe, to enter into relations with all the countries of the earth. Our trade, the employment of our people, our very existence depends upon it. We cannot occupy an insular position, and we cannot occupy ourselves entirely with parochial matters.'"⁷²

At Glasgow on 4 November 1897, he said:

"We believe in the greatness of the Empire. We are not afraid of its expansion. We think that a nation, like an individual, is the better for having great responsibilities and great obligations."⁷³

Shortly afterwards, promising (with the same curious confidence as had Kaiser Wilhelm) that God would give success, Mr. Chamberlain said:

"The Providence that shapes our ends intended us to be a great governing power — conquering, yes conquering, but conquering only to civilize, to administer and to develop vast races in the world, primarily for their advantage, but no doubt for our advantage as well."⁷⁴

⁷⁰ The reference is to von Bethmann-Hollweg's speech of March 1911.

⁷¹ *Message to the Nation* (1912), pp. 8-9. See other quotation from Lord Roberts, *ante*, p. 460.

⁷² Mackintosh: *Joseph Chamberlain*, pp. 216-7.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

⁷⁴ Mackintosh, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

Cecil Rhodes. There is nothing new in the patriotic idea of domination with God's assistance. The Old Testament is full of it. The curious thing is that it still persists, and that men like Chamberlain and Cecil Rhodes should in the twentieth century be found claiming, as did Moses, a monopoly of Jehovah as a war-ally. Of Rhodes, his most recent biographer (Mr. Basil Williams) gives us this picture:

"[On] the broadest view of life and history, he argued, God was obviously trying to produce a type of humanity most fitted to bring peace, liberty, and justice to the world and to make that type predominant. Only one race, so it seemed to him, approached God's ideal type, his own Anglo-Saxon race; God's purpose, then, was to make the Anglo-Saxon race predominant, and the best way to help on God's work and fulfil his purpose in the world was to contribute to the predominance of the Anglo-Saxon race, and so to bring nearer the reign of justice, liberty, and peace."⁷⁵

No two men of their time appealed more to British imagination than Chamberlain and Rhodes. It was they and Mr. (now Viscount) Milner who helped "on God's work" by subjugating the Boer republics, concerning which Professor Cramb very truly has said:

"For it grows ever clearer, as month succeeds month, that it is by the invincible force of this ideal, this of Imperial Britain, that we have waged this war and fought these battles in South Africa."

"The war in South Africa, as we saw in the opening lecture, is the first event or series of events upon a great scale, the genesis of which lies in this force named Imperialism. . . . No other war in our history is, in its origins and its aims, so evidently the realization, so exclusively the result of this imperial ideal."

"This, then, is the first characteristic of the war of conflict between the two principles, the moribund principle of nationality — in the Transvaal an oppressive, an artificial nationality — and the vital principle of the future."⁷⁶

Mr. Oliver. The present writer sees no reason for differing with Mr. Frederick Scott Oliver, who, in sharp contradiction of the passage already quoted from him,⁷⁷ said (*Italics now added*):

"It is clear from all this that the greater part of the German people regarded war in exactly the same light as the whole of the English people did. In itself, it was a curse; and the man who deliberately contrived it for his own ends, or even for those of his country, was a criminal. The German people applied the same tests as we did, and it is not possible to doubt that in so doing they were perfectly sincere. They acted upon instinct. They had not learned the later doctrines of the pedantocracy, or how to steer by a new magnetic pole. They still held by the old

⁷⁵ *Cecil Rhodes: Makers of the Nineteenth Century Series.* Quoted from review in *The Times* (London).

⁷⁶ *Origins and Destiny of Imperial Britain*, pp. 23, 89, 96.

⁷⁷ *Ante*, pp. 459-60.

Christian rules as to duties which existed between neighbours. To their simple old-fashioned loyalty, what their Kaiser said must be the truth. And what their Kaiser said was that the Fatherland was attacked by treacherous foes. That was enough to banish all doubts. For the common people that was the reality and the only reality. *Phrases about world-power and will-to-power — supposing they had ever heard or noticed them — were only mouthfuls of strange words, such as preachers of all kinds love to chew in the intervals of their discourses.*"⁷⁸

DEUTSCHLAND ÜBER ALLES

That a poet wrote, and the German people sang, *Deutschland über Alles*, is taken by many as conclusive proof of Germany's determination to dominate the world. It may be translated as follows:

*"Deutschland, Deutschland over everything, over everything in the world,"*⁷⁹

*If it always holds together fraternally for defence and offence,
From the Meuse to the Memel, from the Adige to the Belt,
Deutschland, Deutschland over everything, over everything in the
world!*

*German women, German fidelity, German wine and German song,
Shall in the world retain their old beautiful clang,
Us to nobler deeds inspiring our whole life long.
German women, German fidelity, German wine and German song!*

*Unity and Right and Freedom for the German Fatherland,
For that let us strive like brothers with heart and hand,
Unity and Right and Freedom are the pledges of happiness.
Bloom in the splendor of this good fortune, flourish German Father-
land!"*

With the outbreak of war, it came to be asserted that *Deutschland über Alles* meant physical domination by Germany over the world. The words carry no such signification, and the other words of the song are inharmonious with it. *Das geht mir über alles* means *That is dearer to me than anything else*. *Ich liebe dies über alles* means *I love this above everything*. And so the words which are supposed to express a desire for world domination mean merely *Germany is dearer to me than anything else in the world*.⁸⁰ The Ontario educational authorities had no idea of

⁷⁸ *The Ordeal by Battle*, pp. 174-5.

⁷⁹ The German words are: *Deutschland, Deutschland, über alles, über alles in der Welt*.

⁸⁰ M. Poincaré, in his book *The Origins of the War*, adopted the fanciful meaning of the words. He said that when France "hears the singing on the other side of the Rhine of the chorus of '*Deutschland über alles*,' she understands full well that it is against her that the threat is primarily directed" (p. 35).

spreading a German world-domination idea when it included *Deutschland über Alles* in the German school reader.

English verse of similar sort is properly regarded as poetic expression of patriotic feeling rather than as declaration of national determination; while English enjoyment of undisputed sea-domination is, comfortably and quite boastfully, declared in enthusiastic prose. Three centuries ago, Raleigh, in his *Discourse on the First Invention of Ships and the Several Parts thereof*, declared that:

“Whosoever commands the sea commands the trade; whosoever commands the trade of the world commands the riches of the world; and consequently the world itself.”

And he confidently and joyfully asserted that:

“the shipping of England, with the great squadron of his Majesty’s Navy Royal, are able, in despite of any prince or State in Europe, to command the great and large fields of the ocean.”⁸¹

During the last hundred years the United Kingdom has unchallengeably occupied that happy eminence. At the time of the 1812 war, the motto of the *Naval Chronicle* was:

“*The winds and waves are Britain’s wide domain,
And not a sail but by permission spreads.*”⁸²

Tennyson’s verse did good service during the recent war:

“*We sailed wherever ships could sail,
We founded many a mighty state,
Pray God our greatness may not fail
Through craven fears of being great.*”⁸³

The favorite British song, with its assumption of Britannia’s heavenly origin attended by angels singing *Rule Britannia* would, were it taken seriously, be more objectionable to the Germans than is *Deutschland über alles* to the British. Observe, particularly, the last two lines of the penultimate verse:

“*When Britain first, at Heaven’s command,
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of the land,
And guardian Angels sang the strain:
Rule, Britannia, rule the waves!
For Britons never will be slaves!*”

⁸¹ Quoted by Archibald Hurd: *Fortnightly Rev.*, Dec. 1918, p. 856.

⁸² *National Intelligencer*, 1 Nov. 1814. Quoted by Updyke: *The Diplomacy of the War of 1812*, p. 371.

⁸³ The verse was displayed on the cover of *Overseas*, the monthly journal of the Overseas Club and the Patriotic League of Britons, in Dec. 1915.

“*The nations not so blest as thee
Must, in their turn, to tyrants fall;
Whilst thou shalt flourish, great and free,
The dread and envy of them all.
Rule, Britannia! etc.*”

“*Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
As the loud blasts that tear the skies
Serve but to root thy native oak.
Rule, Britannia! etc.*”

“*Thee, haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
And work their woe — but thy renown.
Rule, Britannia! etc.*”

“*To thee belongs the rural reign;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine;
And thine shall be the subject main,
And every shore it circles thine.
Rule, Britannia! etc.*”

“*The Muses, still with Freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair;
Blest Isle! with matchless beauty crowned,
And manly hearts to guard the fair.
Rule, Britannia! etc.*”⁸⁴

The refrain of another favorite song, *Land of Hope and Glory*, is:

“*Wider still and wider
May thy bounds be set.
God, who made thee mighty,
Make thee mightier yet.*”⁸⁵

While the United Kingdom was engaged in adding the South African states to her empire, Canon F. G. Scott of Quebec produced the *Hymn of Empire*, one verse of which is as follows:

“*Strong are we? Make us stronger yet:
Great? Make us greater far.
Our fleet antarctic oceans fret,
Our crown the polar star.*”

⁸⁴ James Thomson (1700-1748). May be found in *A Library of Poetry and Song* compiled by William Cullen Bryant.

⁸⁵ The song may be seen in the Music shops.

*Round Earth's wild coasts our batteries speak,
Our highway is the main,
We stand as guardians of the weak,
We burst the oppressor's chain."*⁸⁶

With little care for the adaptation of sentiment to period of time, Mr. Arthur Bennett, while his country was waging the recent war against (as some said) world-dominating ambitions, published his *God Save the Empire*:

*"God save our Empire grand,
The freeman's fatherland,
Wide as the world!
Still may its frontiers grow,
Its sons be swift to go
To greet all winds that blow,
With flag unfurled!"*⁸⁷

Mr. Bennett's prayer for frontier-growth has been abundantly answered. Finally, if *Deutschland über Alles* be reprehensible, what must — or rather ought to be said of the following?

*"And this our glory: — to bear the palm
In all true enterprise,
And everywhere, in tempest and in calm,
To front the future with unfearing eyes,
And sway the seas where our advancement lies.
With freedom's flag uplifted, and unfurled;
And this our rallying-cry, whate'er befall,
Goodwill to men, and peace throughout the world,
But England, — England, — England over all!"*⁸⁸

For the assertion that Austria desired to dominate the world, there was better proof than patriotic poetry, for on the *façade* of the imperial palaces at Vienna are the words, "*Austriæ est imperare orbi universo.*"⁸⁹ That, too, may well be regarded as ostentatious boast, rather than as fixed resolution.

⁸⁶ Mr. Joseph Chamberlain made good use of the hymn. See *Overseas Poetry*, by Sir Herbert Warren: *United Empire*, July 1918, p. 322.

⁸⁷ *United Empire*, Dec. 1918, p. 484.

⁸⁸ Written by Eric Mackay (1851-1899), son of the Scotch writer Charles Mackay, and known principally by his *Love Letters of a Violinist*. He was the foster brother of Miss Marie Corelli. The whole poem may be seen in a 350-page volume entitled *Patriotic Songs*.

⁸⁹ Larmeroux: *Austria-Hungary: Foreign Policy*, p. v.

THE CHIEF INFLUENCE

If, instead of charging Germany with a determination to dominate the world, we were to attribute to her a desire to exercise the chief influence in world affairs, as, from time to time, questions for solution arose, we would evoke no denial. On the contrary, Germany would ask in return, Is there in that ambition any impropriety? Is not that a position which every nation with world interests desiderates? Is not that precisely what the United Kingdom has had, and has insisted upon having, during the last hundred years? Distinction between world-domination and chief influence is important, but very frequently overlooked. And it is probably due, to some extent, to confusion of thought that the indictment of Germany for aiming at world-domination has found such easy acceptance. When Lord Cromer, in his *Political and Literary Essays*, wrote:

“Nevertheless, at a moment when a desperate effort is being made to substitute German for British world-power,”⁹⁰ he meant not domination of the world, but chief influence in it.

The United Kingdom. It would be foolish to charge the United Kingdom with a desire to dominate the world in the sense of dictating all that takes place in it. But her people assert, quite frankly and with much truth, that they do exercise the chief influence in the world, adding that their merits entitle them to the place to which God himself has assigned them. Lord Salisbury, for example, asserted that: “the course of events, which I should prefer to call the acts of Providence, have called this country to exercise an influence over the character and progress of the world such as has never been exercised in any Empire before.”⁹¹

Mr. J. R. Green’s prediction, in 1874, was as follows:

“In the centuries that lie before us, the primacy of the world will lie with the English people. English institutions, English speech, English thought, will become the main features of the political, the social, and the intellectual life of mankind.”⁹²

Mr. Evans Lewin has said that the United Kingdom:

“is the predestined owner of a great part of African soil.”⁹³

The title of Professor Cramb’s book, *The Origins and Destiny of Imperial Britain*, indicates his thesis, and he writes as follows:

“With the rise of this spirit, this consciousness within the British race of its destiny as an imperial people, no event in history can fitly be compared.”

“As an artist, by the very law of his being, is compelled to body forth

⁹⁰ P. 5.

⁹¹ Quoted in Hobson: *Imperialism*, p. 205.

⁹² *Short History of England*, IV, p. 263.

⁹³ *The Germans and Africa*, p. 264.

his conceptions in color, in words, or in marble, so the race dowered with the genius for empire is compelled to dare all, to suffer all, to sacrifice all for the fulfilment of its fate-appointed task."

"Thus in a race dowered with the genius for empire, as Rome was, as Britain is, Imperialism is the supreme, the crowning form, which in this process of evolution it attains."

"Rome does not die there. Her genius lives on in the Gothic race, deep, penetrating, and all-informing, and, in the picked valor of that race, which for six hundred years spends itself in forging England, it is deepest, most penetrating, and all-informing. . . . And now in this era, and at this latest time, behold in England the glory has once more alighted, as once for a brief space by the Rhine and Seine, but surely to make here its lasting mansionry. For, in very truth, in all that freedom and all that justice possess of power towards good amongst men, is not England as it were earth's central shrine and this race the vanguard of humanity?"

"Nature seems pondering some vast and new experiment, and an empire has arisen whose future course, whether we consider its political or its economic, its physical or its mental resources, leaves conjecture behind."⁹⁴

In continental Europe, specifically and for Europe's good, the United Kingdom ought, as Mr. Oliver thinks, to wield the chief influence:

"Europe's greatest need therefore was that Britain should possess an army formidable not only in valor, but also in numbers. . . . For by reason of England's peculiar interests — or rather perhaps from her lack of all direct personal interests in European affairs, other than in peace and the balance of power — she was marked out as the natural mediator in Continental disputes."⁹⁵

Indeed, to Sir J. A. R. Marriott, the United Kingdom already exercises "the world-power":

"For some years past Germany has been consumed by the ambition to challenge the world-power of the British Empire. . . . But this, as it seemed to the disciples of this school [the "Prussian school of historians"], could be accomplished only by the development of sea-power and by a successful challenge to the world-empire of Britain."⁹⁶

The author credits Queen Elizabeth with the re-establishment of:

"England's position as the sustainer of the European equilibrium, and the arbiter in European diplomacy."⁹⁷

That the result of the recent war has intensified British desire for dictatorial authority — either alone or in conjunction with others (preferably the United States and France) — is very clear. The speech of

⁹⁴ Pp. 5, 13, 91, 186, 196-7.

⁹⁵ *Ordeal by Battle*, p. 316.

⁹⁶ *The European Commonwealth*, p. 95.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson (Chief of the Imperial General Staff), at the Empire Day dinner (24 May 1921), was typical of many utterances:

“I would like to suggest that . . . we should try to rise to such a position that we can say at any given time at any given place (if we think it right to say so) — ‘There shall be no war,’ and there will be no war (Cheers).”⁹⁸

British determination to wield the chief influence is indicated in the United Kingdom’s frankly expressed determination to dominate the seas — a domination that is held to be necessary not merely for home defence, but for the exercise of diplomatic power. In a letter to *The Times* (London), Mr. T. Gibson Bowles very truly said:

“Our resources are vast. For so long as we keep our Sea Power we keep the ocean in fee, and a mortgage over half the land of the world.”⁹⁹

Mr. Winston Churchill, in a speech at Dundee, 26 November 1918, said:

“From the battle of Trafalgar to the end of the nineteenth century, nearly 100 years, we were absolutely supreme at sea. All the other nations together could not have faced us.”

“Nothing in the world that you can think of, or dream of, or anyone may tell you; no arguments, however specious; no appeals, however seductive, must lead you to abandon that naval supremacy on which the life of our country depends.”

A League of Nations is very good, Mr. Churchill said:

“But a League of Nations is no substitute for the supremacy of the British Fleet.”¹⁰⁰

The Rev. Canon Barry, referring to the concentration of the British fleet in home waters, said:

“Our flag has all but disappeared from the ports and harbors which had seen it year after year waving over those squadrons whereby we patrolled the Central Sea, teaching East and West the lesson of ages, and vindicating our right to hold the gateways of Continents.”¹⁰¹

When, in negotiation with the German Chancellor, von Bethmann-Hollweg, in 1912, Lord Haldane, referring to the expenditure in naval construction, said:

“This was vital from our point of view, because we were an island-Power dependent for our food supplies on the power of protecting our commerce, and for this we needed the two-Power standard and a substantial preponderance in battle fleets.”¹⁰²

⁹⁸ *The Times* (London), 25 May 1921; *United Empire*, June 1921, p. 437.

⁹⁹ July 1918. That there must be a British domination in the Mediterranean is asserted in an article in the *Fortnightly Rev.*, Nov. 1917, p. 763.

¹⁰⁰ *The Times* (London), 27 Nov. 1918.

¹⁰¹ *The Nineteenth Century*, June 1918, p. 1104.

¹⁰² *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, pp. 593-4.

Discussing the possibility of an agreement for reduction in expenditure upon fleet construction, Sir Edward Grey said in the House of Commons (29 March 1909):

“On what basis would an arrangement have to be proposed? Not the basis of equality. It must be the basis of a superiority of the British Navy.”¹⁰³

Nothing but the overwhelming financial power of the United States of America, and its announced determination to construct the largest navy in the world, could have induced the United Kingdom to forego her sea-supremacy.

The United States. National and natural egoism is to be found in every country. The *Seven Seas Magazine* — the organ of the Navy League of the United States — for example, produced the following (November 1915):

“The imperialism of the American is a duty and credit to humanity. He is the highest type of imperial master. He makes beautiful the land he touches; beautiful with moral and physical cleanliness. . . . There should be no doubt that even with all possible moral refinement, it is the absolute right of a nation to live to its full intensity, to expand, to found colonies, to get richer and richer by any proper means such as armed conquest, commerce, diplomacy. Such expansion, as an aim, is an inalienable right, and in the case of the United States it is a particular duty, because we are idealists and are therefore bound by establishing protectorates over the weak to protect them from unmoral Kultur.”¹⁰⁴

Russia. With no less patriotism, a Russian has couched his faith in his country in poetic and picturesque phraseology:

“Is it not thus, like the bold troïka which cannot be overtaken, that thou art dashing along, O Russia, my country? The roads smoke beneath thee, the bridges thunder; all is left, all will be left behind thee. The spectator stops short, astounded as at a marvel of God. Is this the lightning which has descended from heaven? he asks. What does this awe-inspiring movement betoken? And what uncanny power is possessed by these horses, so strange to the world? Ah, horses, horses, Russian horses! What horses you are! Doth the whirlwind sit upon your manes? Doth your sensitive ear prick with every tingle in your veins? But lo! you have heard a familiar song from on high; simultaneously in friendly wise you have bent your brazen breasts to the task; and hardly letting your hoofs touch the earth, you advance in one tightly stretched line flying through the air. Yes, on the troïka flies, inspired by God! O Russia, whither art thou dashing? Reply! But she replies not; the horses’ bells break into a wondrous sound; the shattered air becomes a tempest, and the thunder growls; Russia flies past everything else on

¹⁰³ Quoted in *Round Table*, March 1915, p. 374.

¹⁰⁴ Quoted by Walter E. Weyl: *American World Policies*, pp. 153-4.

earth; other peoples, kingdoms, and empires gaze askance as they stand aside to make way for her.”¹⁰⁵

Other Nations. Greece looks back on her glory-days, and has recently made heroic endeavor to reconstitute the Empire of Constantine Palæologus, while Italy, with no less pride, recalls the Cæsar-periods, and prates about her “mission.”

“For thirty years,” Signor Crispi has recently said, “Mazzini himself preached that we had a ‘mission of universal civilization’ to carry out, a mission upon which we had entered by the force of our arms in the days of Rome’s greatness, which the example set by free communes had continued to preach in mediæval times, and which our learning and our arts had carried far afield at the time of the Renaissance.”¹⁰⁶

IMPERIALISM

All Guilty. To a charge of imperialism, as to a charge of effort after chief influence in the world, all nations which have attained maturity must plead guilty. For imperialism signifies expansion (although falling short of an ambition for world-domination), and expansion outside the original limits of a state is as natural as prior consolidation within it. Methods are various. Looking, said Seeley, at the colonial part of the British Empire alone:

“we see a natural growth, a mere extension of the English race into other lands, which for the most part were so thinly peopled that our settlers took possession of them without conquest. If there is nothing highly glorious in such an expansion, there is at the same time nothing forced or unnatural about it.”¹⁰⁷

That is one method of expansion. Another was illustrated by Seeley when he said:

“This fact then, that, both in America and in Asia, France and England stood in direct competition for a prize of absolutely incalculable value, explains the fact that France and England fought a second Hundred Years’ War.”¹⁰⁸

And a third method of expansion may be termed dollar-imperialism, for it operates through loans, concessions, and various other economic exploitations.

German Imperialism. German expansion was as natural as British. In 1874 (27 October), Lord Lytton, Secretary of the British Embassy at Paris, wrote to Lord Lyons as follows:

“Odo’s [Lord Odo Russell’s] impression (communicated to you) that Bismarck does not want colonies rather surprises me. It seems to

¹⁰⁵ Gogol: *Dead Souls*: quoted from English translation in Dickinson, *The Choice Before Us*, p. 98.

¹⁰⁶ *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ *The Expansion of England*, p. 296.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

me a perfectly natural and quite inevitable ambition on the part of a Power so strong as Germany not to remain an inland state a moment longer than it can help, but to get to the sea, and to extend its seaboard in all possible directions. Is there any case on record of an inland state suddenly attaining to the military supremacy of Europe without endeavoring by means of its military strength and prestige to develop its maritime power? . . . Anyhow, there seems to be now a pretty general instinct throughout Europe, and even in America, that a policy of maritime and colonial development must be the natural result of Germany's present position; and such instincts, being those of self-preservation, are generally, I think, what Dizzy calls 'unerring' ones."¹⁰⁹

As Dr. J. Holland Rose has said:

"Is it surprising that she" (Germany) "feels land-hunger? Endowed with a keen sense of national pride, she was certain to experience some such feeling; and we, who have expanded partly by force of arms, partly by a natural overflow of population, shall be foolishly blind if we do not try to understand the enemy's point of view."

"After the formation of the German Empire under the headship of Prussia, the polyglot Hapsburg dominions could expand only towards the Balkans. Hence the principle of growth, which pushes the Germans towards the North Sea and into new lands, also urges Austria towards the Ægean. We must recognize that, in both cases, an impulse natural to a vigorous people is driving on these movements."¹¹⁰

Since the War. The naive belief of President Wilson and many others that, with the defeat of Germany, militarism and imperialism would disappear from the world had, as they now realize, no foundation. The disillusionment of Mr. Wilson had in it much that was tragic, and his despairing cries, as he realized the truth, pathetically reveal the deep sincerity of his vanishing conviction. Struggling against the treaties by which, during the war, the *entente* Allies had made wrongful dispositions of territories and peoples, and urging that right, as he regarded it, should be done, the President, at the end of his note of 10 February 1920, wrote as follows:

"If substantial agreement on what is just and reasonable is not to determine international issues; if the country possessing the most endurance in pressing its demands, rather than the country armed with a just cause, is to gain the support of the Powers; if forcible seizure of coveted areas is to be permitted and condoned, and is to receive ultimate justification by creating a situation so difficult that decision favorable to the aggressor is deemed a practical necessity; if deliberately incited ambition is, under the name of national sentiment, to be rewarded at the expense of the small and the weak; if, in a word, the old order of things which brought so many evils on the world is still to prevail, then the time is

¹⁰⁹ Newton: *Lord Lyons*, II, pp. 60-1.

¹¹⁰ *The Origins of the War*, pp. 48, 118.

not yet come when this Government can enter a concert of Powers, the very existence of which must depend upon a new spirit and a new order."¹¹¹

During his endeavor to secure ratification of the peace treaty, Mr. Wilson declared in a letter to Senator Hitchcock (8 March 1920) that Article X of the treaty:

"represents the renunciation by Great Britain and Japan, which before the war had begun to find so many interests in common in the Pacific, by France, by Italy, by all the great fighting Powers of the world, of the old pretensions of political conquest and territorial aggrandizement."¹¹²

Article X was, in truth, a part of the treaty which ratified the conquests and territorial aggrandizements, upon enormous scale, of the preceding four and a half years of war, and which preceded the various other treaties (notably that of Sèvres) dealing with the huge conquests and territorial acquisitions in still other parts of the world.

Somewhat inconsistently, in a later part of the same letter, Mr. Wilson said:

"Militaristic ambitions and imperialistic policies are by no means dead, even in counsels of the nations whom we most trust and with whom we most desire to be associated in the tasks of peace. Throughout the sessions of the conference in Paris, it was evident that a militaristic party, under a most influential leadership, was seeking to gain ascendancy in the counsels of France. They were defeated then, but are in control now. The chief arguments advanced in Paris in support of the Italian claims on the Adriatic were strategic arguments; that is to say, military arguments, which had at their back the thought of naval supremacy in that sea. For my own part, I am as intolerant of imperialistic designs on the part of other nations as I am of such designs on the part of Germany."

To Italian statesmen, Mr. Wilson's "vision of a new day" took the form of wide territorial annexations.

CONCLUSIONS

From what has been said, the following conclusions may safely be drawn:

1. That Germany sought to dominate the world is a very ridiculous assertion.
2. That Nietzsche, Treitschke, or Bernhardi advocated world-domination is untrue.
3. That Germany desired to be able to exercise the chief influence in world affairs is as true as that the United Kingdom has occupied that position for the last hundred years.

¹¹¹ *N. Y. Times*, 27 Feb. 1920.

¹¹² *Current History*, XII, p. 28.

4. Germany's desire for a strong navy was based upon the same reasons as those which actuated the United Kingdom, namely (1) protection of coasts, (2) protection of commerce, (3) protection of colonies, and (4) diplomatic influence.

5. Of imperialism, all virile nations have been guilty. The victors in the recent war, and their friends, made the most of their opportunities. Previous to her defeat, Germany was no exception to the general rule.

6. The prose and poetry of all nations boastfully assert superiorities, and reveal imperialistic proclivities. German authors were and are as foolish as the others.

CHAPTER XVI

GERMANY AND MILITARISM

"CRUSH MILITARISM," 479. — What is Militarism? 479. — Five Concepts, 480. THE CRUSHING OF MILITARISM, 481. — The Clergy, 481. — Military Men, 482. — Professor Cramb, 484. — Mr. Harold F. Wyatt, 484. — British and German Militarism, 486. — Geographical Considerations, 489. — Russian and Japanese Militarism, 490.

HAS MILITARISM BEEN CRUSHED? 490.

"CRUSH MILITARISM"

IN enumerating the objects of the war, Mr. Asquith, in a now classic sentence, declared that the United Kingdom would not sheathe her sword:

"until the military domination of Prussia is wholly and finally destroyed."

M. Trepoff is reported to have said to the Russian Duma:

"The war must continue until German militarism is destroyed."

M. Briand used similar language. Dr. Prince said that:

"The people of England are literally inspired, as by a religion, to make no peace until Prussian militarism is destroyed."¹

Sir Edward Grey, in a letter to *The Times* of 9 May 1914, said:

"It is against German militarism that we must fight."

What is Militarism? If from the many definitions of militarism are eliminated those which, to the general mind, are untainted with sinister significance, and if we endeavor to state what it is that, among the objectionable connotations of the word,² is meant, we shall say that militarism is an attitude of approval of war as an elevating, ennobling occupation, as the purifying salt in the otherwise nauseous human compound; that, usually, the approval rises to a desire for national glory as the product of military success, welcoming quarrel in order that war's beneficent influence may have full operation; and that the approval and the desire have, as result, the endowment of the military profession with a rank and worthiness higher and more meritorious than attaches to

¹ These extracts are quoted by Henry Dwight Sedgwick, American historian and essayist, in an article in *Current History*, V, p. 931.

² Major-General Sir George Aston has unwittingly declared various British governments to have been "militarists" by defining the word as: "Those who use military forces aggressively, either against other States, or against members of their own State upon whom they wish to enforce their views" (*Nineteenth Century*, Oct. 1919, p. 637). The definition was framed to fit Germany. Sir George overlooked the Boer war, as well as Ireland.

avocations of civil character — a preëminence which found its expression in the idea (not altogether displaced) that the church and the army were the only honorable careers. Men who can refer to the recent years of slaughter and misery as “Days of Glory”³ are actuated by the militaristic conception.

Five Concepts. Distinguish between five concepts which are frequently confused:

1. *Militarism* as defined above.
2. *Jingoism*, a horrid but expressive word, meaning a truculent, intolerant, domineering, fight-desiring frame of mind: War may be an evil, but it is better than “a dishonorable peace.” The other nation is impertinent, audacious, aggressive, and must be given a lesson. The Jingo is the opposite of the Pacifist, and, not asserting the ennobling effect of the war, falls short of being a Militarist.
3. *Imperialism* connotes territorial expansion. Representatives of these three classes — the Militarist, the Jingo, and the Imperialist — are distinguishable by their motives. The first favors war for its own sake; the second favors it as gratifying to his own arrogant, swaggering nature; while the third regards war as perhaps an unfortunate but as, nevertheless, a justifiable pre-requisite of the expansion to which his particular nation is pre-destined “for the benefit of the world.”
4. *World-domination* is sublimated imperialism. Nobody advocates it. Nobody really believes it to be a possible possession of any Power.
5. *War-preparation* may be the result of the preponderating influence of militaristic, jingoistic or imperialistic feeling, but it may also be undertaken wisely as a necessary safeguard against threatened aggression. What may be the character of the preparation in any particular case is always a subject of dispute, for it depends very largely upon estimates of danger which the Militarist and Jingo exaggerate, which the Pacifist underrates, and which nobody can accurately gauge. Your view, moreover, of what is necessary and what is improperly designed is apt to depend, to large extent, upon whether you are speaking of your own country which, as you say, is unaggressive and peaceful, or of some other country which, as you imagine, is planning your subversion. Observe, for example, that, while thinking of England, Mr. Frederick Scott Oliver could write of the military profession in this way:

“The school of political thought which remained predominant throughout the great industrial epoch (1832-1886) bitterly resented the assumption made by certain classes, that the profession of arms was more honorable in its nature than commerce and other peaceful pursuits. The destruction of this supposed fallacy produced a great literature, and even a considerable amount of poetry.”

“But the much-resented claim to a superiority in the matter of honor is well founded, and no amount of philosophising or political economis-

³ The title of a book by Frederick Villiers.

ing will ever shake it. Clearly it is more honorable for a man to risk his life, and what is infinitely more important — his reputation and his whole future career — in defence of his country, than it is merely to build up a competency or a fortune.”⁴

How the writer’s view changes when he thinks of Germany, may be seen on another page of the same book:

“More especially is it difficult for the military caste to resist the influence of the priesthood when, as in Germany of recent years, they have insisted upon giving the warrior the most important niche in their temple, and on burning incense before him day and night.”⁵

Let us endeavor to be impartial as well as analytical.

THE CRUSHING OF MILITARISM

It is improbable that Sir Edward Grey, or any other rational being, imagined that militarism, as an attitude of mind, could be “crushed” by war. For militarists have always been aware of the horrors and disappointments of war; and it is war, with all its accompaniments, that they glorify, and declare to be beneficent. Thus Mr. Oliver, himself a militarist, has testified as follows:

“We are constantly being told by high authorities that the moral objective of the present war is ‘to put down militarism,’ and ‘abolish it’ off the face of the earth. There are few of us who do not wish that this aim may be crowned with success; but militarism is a tough weed to kill, and something more than the mere mowing of it down by some outside scythesman will be necessary, one imagines, in order to get rid of it.”⁶

“Tough,” Mr. Oliver says, because, in his opinion: “with all its vices and extravagances,” it “is rooted in instincts which are neither depraved nor ignoble.”⁷

Defeat will not destroy such a state of mind as (for example) that of Mr. Oliver. Defeat of a virile nation will intensify rather than obliterate its militaristic feeling.

The Clergy. If British statesmen thought that militarism could be crushed and extinguished, they might well have commenced at home — and upon the clergy. For if there be one revelation of the war more depressing than another, it is the fact that, among these men, in proportion to their numbers, may be found more militarists, than among the members of other groups of the civil populations. Look, for example, at the language of the Bishop of London shortly after the outbreak of hostilities:

“It is a glorious thing to be alive to-day. The present is one of the

⁴ *Ordeal by Battle* (1915), pp. 403, 5. And see p. 409.

⁵ P. 139.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 146-7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

great days of God that only come once in about two hundred years." ⁸ Or look at the language of the Bishop of Carlisle, who, referring to British freedom from European war between 1815 and 1914, asked:

"Has it been a good peace or bad? Are we as a nation better for it? To what high and noble uses have we put this gift of a hundred years of peace?"

and then proceeded to debit peace with all the social evils:

"Money has been made at an appalling rate. So also have slums. Success and sweating have both gone ahead like wild fire: success enriched by sweating, and sweating increased by success. Political economy has had little companionship with morals: and competition has been almost a stranger to mercy," etc., etc.

The Bishop finished his paragraph with the words:

"The nineteenth century would almost lead to the conclusion that a worldly peace is among the most deadly foes of peace divine."

As one of his horrible examples, the Bishop pointed to the United States, saying:

"In the fifty years of prosperous peace which have elapsed since the Civil war and the death of Lincoln, dollar dignity has been quite as prominent as moral sovereignty."

And he appears to attribute the recent war to the fact that:

"Rich nations are more prone to war than poor nations. . . . This has been the case with Germany. Fifty years of peace, and its attendant success, have drugged her moral sense."

From all this, the Bishop hopes that war will deliver us:

"Such are some of the perils with which peace, political and prosperous peace — the peace of physical security and protected sloth and bodily ease — has been menacing the modern world; and from which happily there are hopeful signs that this world-wide war, despite all its wickedness, may achieve our deliverance." ⁹

The character of the age in which Martin Luther lived furnished some excuse for his assertion that war:

"is a business divine in itself, and as needful to the world as eating and drinking."

Not the same apology can be found for British bishops in the twentieth century. In Canada, too, the apostles of Christ are, too often, the belauders of war. A Toronto clergyman, bothered by the conflict between his Sunday and week-day principles, denounced and, at the same time, preached militarism:

"I am against this pacifism. I am against militarism with all my soul. But I think the best thing in the world is a good fight." ¹⁰

Military Men. We must not be surprised if among British military

⁸ Reported by "Windermere" in the *Montreal Star*, 28 Oct. 1914.

⁹ *The Nineteenth Century*, Feb. 1917, pp. 256-9.

¹⁰ Rev. Charles A. Eaton: *Canadian Defence*, June 1916, p. 14.

men we find many whose militarism it would be difficult to crush. Bernhardi's opinions were quoted during the war many hundreds of times. Very rarely, on the other hand, were references made to the fact that Lord Roberts — a man infinitely better known in the United Kingdom than was Bernhardi in Germany, a man referred to by Professor Gilbert Murray as:

“a great and chivalrous soldier, admired and loved by his fellow-countrymen,”¹¹

held and preached the same opinions. Read the following from his pen:

“History repeats itself. The present is the past entered through another gate, and war is as inevitable as death. It is not, and never was an accident. In every instance, from the beginning of time, it is a well-deserved punishment, worked up to and earned. It will come again with the swing of the pendulum. It is salutary, necessary, and is the only national tonic that can be prescribed. . . . Peace begets over-civilization, and over-civilization degeneracy. Then comes war. If a country has any health left in its constitution, it revives, gathers itself together, makes the most tremendous sacrifices, puts forth an effort of strength of which no man thought it capable, and rises like the phoenix.”¹²

Professor Murray, regretting that Lord Roberts should have uttered such sentiments, excuses him in this way:

“My defence must be the rather speculative one, that I do not believe he really accepted the doctrines that he seemed to preach.”¹³

Professor Murray offers no such charitable excuse for Bernhardi, or, indeed, for Colonel Sir Frederick Stanley Maude, one of the best known and most highly respected of British officers. On the contrary, he quotes two sentences, one from Bernhardi and the other from Maude:

“War gives a biologically just decision, since its decisions arise from the very nature of things.”

“War is the divinely appointed means by which the environment may be readjusted, till ‘ethically fittest’ and ‘best’ become synonymous”; and asks his readers to guess:

“Which of these two is German? Which is the more remote from good sense? which the more characteristic in its mixture of piety and muddle-headedness?”¹⁴

¹¹ *Faith, War and Policy*, p. 121.

¹² Taken from an essay read by Lord Roberts before a New York club, and reported in the *New York Tribune*. Cf. G. Lowes Dickinson: *The Choice Before Us*, p. 74; *Common Sense*, 2 Dec. 1916; *The Journal* (Ottawa), 14 Oct. 1916; *Canadian Defense*, 16 Dec. 1916.

¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 121.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 122. The first is Bernhardi; and the second, Maude, in *War and the World's Life*.

The Professor's general reply to these and other instances of highly-placed militarists in the United Kingdom is as follows:

"What, then, is the answer to my friend's challenge? I confess myself still unshaken by it. We must admit that these militarists, these enthusiastic spurners of international law, these eloquent would-be torturers of civil populations, these rejectors and despisers of arbitration and peace, do exist among us; they exist among us, but, thank Heaven and our own common sense, they do not control our Government."¹⁵

Reference to British military officers may fittingly be closed with the following from Colonel J. F. C. Fuller, D.S.O.:

"The world of 1914 has been purified by fire. To-day this world is a better world than it ever was before, for it has vanquished the greatest of all evils — the spiritual enchainment of liberty. Certainly it is a poorer world, yet 'Blessed be ye poor,' for poverty means struggle, and struggle means self-sacrifice, and self-sacrifice means progress."¹⁶

Professor Cramb. The German Professors had their English counterpart in Professor J. A. Cramb (Queen's College, London), who said:

"War, therefore, I would define as a phase in the life-effort of the State towards completer self-realisation, a phase of the eternal *nisus*, the perpetual omnipresent strife of all being towards self-fulfilment. Destruction is not its aim, but the intensification of the life, whether of the conquering or of the conquered State. War is thus a manifestation of the world-spirit in the form the most sublime and awful that can enthrall the contemplation of man."¹⁷

Referring to Treitschke, Professor Cramb said:

"To him, the army is simply the natural expression of the vital forces of the nation; and just as those vital forces of the nation increase, so shall the German army and the German navy increase. A nation's military efficiency is the exact coefficient of a nation's idealism. That is Treitschke's solution of the matter. His answer to all our talk about the limitation of armaments is: Germany shall increase to the utmost of her power, irrespective of any proposals made to her by England, or by Russia, or by any other State upon this earth. And I confess it is a magnificent and a manly answer, an answer worthy of a man whose spirit of sincerity, of regard for the reality of things, is as great as Carlyle's. The teaching of Treitschke's disciple, General von Bernhardi, is the same."¹⁸

Mr. Harold F. Wyatt. Mr. Wyatt, at the instance of the Royal

¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 123. It is not often that the Professor so far forgets himself as to class British militarists as "spurners," "torturers," and "rejectors and despisers."

¹⁶ *The Reformation of War*, quoted in *Manchester Guardian*, 16 March 1923.

¹⁷ *Origins and Destiny of Imperial Britain*, p. 121.

¹⁸ *Germany and England* (1914), pp. 64-5.

Colonial Institute, travelled through the Dominions, preaching "preparedness," and may be taken as holding views not distasteful to his patrons. In *The Nineteenth Century* for April 1911, he published, under the caption, *God's Test by War*, an article which the Editor, immediately after the outbreak of the recent war, republished,¹⁹ deeming it "appropriate to the present moment" because of its "many truths." The following are some extracts:

"Thus, then, efficiency in war, or rather efficiency for war, is God's test of a nation's soul. By that test it stands, or by that test it falls. This is the ethical content of competition. This is the determining factor of human history. This is the justification of war."

"Ruthless, inexorable, the law of the survival of the fittest trampled on the corrupt. Of that law, war is the supreme instrument; and of war, in the long passage of the centuries, the deciding factor is the soul."

"Victory in war is the method by which, in the economy of God's Providence, the sound nation supersedes the unsound, because in our time, such victory is the direct offspring of a higher efficiency, and the higher efficiency is the logical outcome of the higher morale."

"Hence it follows that if the dream of short-sighted and superficial sentimentalists could be fulfilled — that is to say, if war could suddenly be rendered henceforth impossible upon earth (which is at present impracticable) — the machinery by which national corruption is punished and national virtue rewarded would be ungeared. The higher would cease to supersede the lower, and the course of human evolution would suffer arrest."

"The paradox, therefore, is true, that in this globe of ours (as probably in all other worlds throughout space which life inhabits) death is the condition of the increase of life. But of death, war is the scythe. Throughout the periods of biological time, war has been the road to food, and since man was developed, war has been the condition of human advance. . . . Death and war, those grim twin brethren, ride the rush of this world's tide and put the bit in the mouth of man."

"If this argument possesses validity, then the deduction follows that while human nature remains what it is at present, war must retain its place beside death as a vital and essential part of the economy of God. The Lord of Hosts has made righteousness the path to victory. In the crash of conflict, in the horrors of battlefields piled with the dead, the dying, and the wounded, a vast ethical intention has still prevailed."

"The truth is that armaments are the reflection of the national soul. The immense naval and military strength of Germany is the reflex of moral and social conditions better than our own. The excess of her birth-rate over ours (and still more over that of France) is in itself the proof of that superiority. For the growth of her population involved, not the production of degenerates, but of a sound and vigorous

¹⁹ Sep. 1914.

race. Patriotism, public spirit, frugality and industry are the essential moral factors which render possible the vast armed force which Germany wields. And in all these factors it must be admitted, with whatever shame and sorrow, that she surpasses England."

"Yet the cry of weakness is sporadic only and alters no world facts. War remains the means by which, as between nations or races, the universal law that the higher shall supersede the lower continues to work. From Great Britain and from the United States, whence the military spirit is passing away, this bleat of feebleness is now proceeding. But it is not heard among the two most energetic and efficient peoples now upon earth. It is not heard in Germany, and it is not heard in Japan. The wolf who has lost his teeth does not wish to fight, but the wolves whose jaws are still strong do not share his pious desire."

"The real Court, the only Court, in which this case can and will be tried is the Court of God, which is war."²⁰

Prior to the war, Mr. Wyatt in this way glorified warlike preparations and insisted upon the survival value of war. Immediately after the war, in an addendum to his republished articles, he made modifications of his preaching, and, detaching survival value from excessive militarism associated it with democracy. He said:

"Yet, as of all virtues there is a possible excess, so in this instance it may be that the Germans have carried warlike preparations to a point at which it has inflicted injury on the national character. . . . Evidently there is no survival value in a spirit of violent aggression."

"Democracy is coming to its own in modern war. For in such war intelligence in the soldier is the secret of success, and the despotic system of Prussia crushes intelligence in the individual private. The German infantry, we are told, fight bravely only when in masses under command. Hence those close formations which lead to defeat. Here there is direct connection between a political system and a military weakness. Here is survival value attaching to the spirit of democracy and withdrawn from the spirit of despotism."²¹

All of which illustrates, in curious and instructive fashion, the danger of elevating a spirit of local patriotism into a principle of universal application. Militarism in the United Kingdom is of God, and in Germany of the Devil. Very clearly, if British statesmen were determined to "crush militarism," there was plenty of work for them in the British isles.

British and German Militarism. To Professor Murray, assertion that English militarists did not — "thank Heaven and our own common sense" — control the government, whereas German militarists did, there are three replies: First, the militarists, as defined above, never controlled either the German or the British government. Secondly, assum-

²⁰ Pp. 491, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 500, 1.

²¹ P. 509.

ing (probably correctly) that the Professor intended to refer to military officers rather than to militarists, while it is true that these men have not in recent years controlled the British government, it is also true that upon occasion imperialists (still more dangerous) have had their way in the conduct of foreign affairs. Professor Seeley, for example, tells us: "that the main struggle of England from the time of Louis XIV to the time of Napoleon was for the possession of the New World, and that it is for want of perceiving this that most of us find that century of English history uninteresting."²²

"I said that the expansion of England in the New World and in Asia is the formula which sums up for England the history of the eighteenth century. I point out now that the great triple war of the middle of that century is neither more nor less than the great decisive duel between England and France for the possession of the New World."²³

"This fact then that, both in America and in Asia, France and England stood in direct competition for a prize of absolutely incalculable value, explains the fact that France and England fought a second Hundred Years' War."²⁴

The Boer war of 1899-1902 (now defended by nobody) was the work of three great British imperialists — Chamberlain, Rhodes, and Milner. Thirdly, the assertion that in recent years military officers controlled the German government has no foundation in fact. Were it true, Germany would have been at war with France in 1886-7, during the Boulanger régime — particularly in connection with the Schnaebeli incident; and again, in 1905-6 and 1911, at the time of the Morocco incidents; and on various other occasions during the Balkan wars of 1912-13. If Professor Murray intended to make special reference to the war of 1914-18, his apology must be that he wrote under war-influence, and prior to the publication of material which has made concurrence in his view impossible.

It may well be assumed that, at various periods between 1871 and 1914, German military officers urged war. That they failed was because they did not "control the government." During the two Morocco incidents, for example although they were backed by many strident voices, the Kaiser and his government were able to withstand both the influence and the clamor. And during the Balkan wars, although the circumstances were, for Germany, much more propitious than in 1914, and military men and jingoes of all shades were active, the political authorities not only maintained peace but labored diligently to that end. Mr. Oliver has truly said:

"Looking back at the Balkan struggle in the light of subsequent events,

²² *The Expansion of England*, pp. 13-14.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

it appears to us now a great deal less remarkable for what it actually produced than for what it failed to produce. It failed to set Europe in a blaze, and yet it afforded far better opportunities for doing this than the Serajevo murders in June 1914.”²⁵

The good offices of the German government during this extremely exciting and dangerous period were frankly acknowledged by the man who had the best reason to appreciate them — Sir Edward Grey. He said in his momentous speech of 3 August 1914:

“Throughout the Balkan wars by general admission, we worked for peace. This co-operation of the Great Powers of Europe was successful in working for peace in the Balkan crisis.”²⁶

Lord Haldane had said a few months previously (15 January) at Hoxton:

“It was with pleasure that he thought of the great power for good of the two statesmen in Europe, Dr. Bethmann-Hollweg and Sir Edward Grey. These two had worked for all they were worth, and we had seen the fruits of it during a period of great anxiety and crisis, when probably without that group system we might have had a conflagration in Europe.”²⁷

It was the King of Roumania, at whose capital the treaty of Bucarest (1913) was arranged, who telegraphed to the Kaiser: “Thanks to you, the peace will remain definitive.”²⁸

In view of all this, Professor Murray would have difficulty in maintaining that, normally, German militarists “controlled the government.” He might profitably peruse the first five documents in the French Yellow Book issued shortly after the commencement of war; the Kautsky documents; *My Memoirs*, by von Tirpitz, &c., &c. In a well-analyzed, if not perfectly accurate, report upon conditions in Germany in July 1913, prepared by the French Foreign Office, it is said that:

“German public opinion is divided into two currents on the question of the possibility and proximity of war. . . . People sometimes speak of a military party in Germany. The expression is inaccurate, even if it is intended to convey the idea that Germany is the country whose military power is supreme, as it is said of France that it is the country where the civil power is supreme. There exists a state of mind which is more worthy of attention than this historical fact, because it constitutes a danger more evident and more recent. There is a war party, with leaders, and followers, a press either convinced or subsidised for the purpose of creating public opinion; it has means both varied and formidable for the

²⁵ *Ordeal by Battle*, p. 274.

²⁶ See also Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 101. The same admission is to be found in the strongly anti-German booklet, *Why We are at War*, by six “Members of the Oxford Faculty of Modern History,” p. 40. Cf. Goschen to Grey, 23 July 1914: Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 71.

²⁷ Quoted by Neilson: *How Diplomats Make War*, p. 224.

²⁸ Baron Beyens: *L'Allemagne avant la Guerre*, p. 261.

intimidation of the Government. It goes to work in the country with clear ideas, burning aspirations, and a determination that is at once thrilling and fixed. Those in favor of war are divided into several categories." Specification of the categories follows. On the other hand:

"There are in the country forces making for peace, but they are unorganized and have no popular leaders. They consider that war should be a social misfortune for Germany, and that caste pride, Prussian domination, and the manufactures of guns and armour plate would get the greatest benefit, but above all that war would profit Great Britain."²⁹

Against the suggestion that the actions of the German government immediately prior to the outbreak of the war of 1914 were dictated by Germany's military chiefs, it is sufficient to quote the following from von Tirpitz:

"As, however, the Chief of the General Staff, the Minister for War, the Chief of the Naval Staff, and myself were kept away from Berlin during the succeeding days, the whole business was monopolized by the Chancellor, who, having no experience himself of the great European world, was unable to estimate correctly the value of his colleagues in the Foreign Office. The Chancellor at any rate did not write to me for advice."³⁰

Geographical Considerations. That there were more militarists in Germany than in the United Kingdom is probably true, but that was not because Germans are Germans, but because of their geographical situation. If the British people had lived in Central Europe instead of upon two islands, they would not have become dominant upon the seas. They would, I believe, have achieved corresponding position on land; and that would not have been accomplished without the development of militaristic spirit. Prussia was essentially a military state in the days of Frederick the Great. Frederick dead, his spirit and system relapsed. That they revived, may justly be attributed to the French victories under Napoleon. That they recurred under Bismarck, was due, to a large extent, to a natural desire for release from the predominance of Austria. And it is not probable that under similar circumstances the British people would have exhibited the submissive docility of the Chinese. That British security lies in command of the water, and that German security lies in strength upon the land, sufficiently explains the difference in their attitude. It explains also why one rails at the militarism of the other, and is replied to by counter-objection to ocean-domination.

If militarists were somewhat plentiful in Germany while rare in the United States, the explanation again is geography and environment. Suppose that to the north of the United States there were one hundred

²⁹ Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 5. Longer extracts may be seen in cap. XVII, pp. 565-9.

³⁰ *Op. cit.*, I, p. 243; and see p. 246.

and seventy million partially educated Slavs, governed by ever-changing autocrats, and with a history of imperialistic expansion comparable to that of the United Kingdom. Suppose that to the south were forty million French — rich, cultured, brave — nursing resentment for the forcible annexation of Texas and California. Suppose that Cuba was the richest nation in the world; that she possessed one fifth of the earth's surface; that she dominated the seas, including the Atlantic and Mexican Gulf coasts.³¹ And suppose that, instead of being bounded on east and west by vast oceans, there were on one side some Scandinavian nations, including an angry Denmark, and, on the other, Italian and Balkan states awaiting a favorable moment to disintegrate the only American ally. If that were the environment of the United States, is it probable that among her people there would have been fewer men of militaristic type than in Germany?

Russian and Japanese Militarism. It is a curious fact that in our war to "crush militarism," we have had as allies the two pre-eminently militaristic (using the word now in the less rigid sense) Powers — Russia and Japan. No other European country (except France of the past) has a militaristic record equal to that of Russia. Sometimes, as in the case of Peter, her autocrats were themselves militarists, and sometimes, as in the case of the last Czar, they were weaklings under militaristic influence. The Russian mobilization which induced the German ultimatum of 31 July 1914 was ordered by the Minister for War and the Chief of the Military Staff, in the face, probably, of specific orders to the contrary from the Czar. The story is told in a subsequent chapter.³²

Militarism in Japan may be said to be almost a religion. The feudal system has indeed been superseded, and the Samurai have ceased to be a separate class; but the militaristic spirit persists in its full intensity, and the *bushido* of the Samurai has become a national ethic. Imperialism, backed by militarism, has given Japan a dominating influence upon the eastern sections of the neighboring continent at the expense of Koreans, Manchus, and Chinese.

HAS MILITARISM BEEN CRUSHED?

If we are to gauge war-success in the crushing of militarism by computation of the number of militarists (using the word in the defined sense) then and now, it is difficult to ascertain what the effect of the war has been. In Germany, a number of them have been killed, but the punitive provisions of the peace treaty have probably not only produced a new and larger supply, but have converted many previous pacifists to an opinion which they formerly despised. In France, the

³¹ Above sentences are adapted from George W. Crile: *A Mechanistic View of War and Peace*, p. 69; and *The New Republic* of 4 August 1917.

³² Cap. XXVII.

victory has almost certainly revived the national penchant for *la gloire*. One cannot doubt that the recent outburst in France of enthusiastic apotheosis of Joan of Arc and Napoleon was largely a product of the Foch success in the recent war.³³

The futility of an endeavor to crush the militaristic spirit is known to every reader of history. Is it not certain, for instance, that to the victories of France under Napoleon (to go no farther back) may rightly be attributed the revival of militarism in Prussia? Is it not certain that the Prussian victory of 1871 added enormously to the fighting temper of the French? And is it not certain that the effect upon the Germans of their recent overthrow will be a repetition of the reaction after Jena in 1807?

During the war, we were told that the only way to "crush German militarism" was to prove to the German people that it did not pay. "Turn out the militaristic Kaiser and his militaristic entourage, and Europe will disarm and her peoples dwell in peace" — so we were told. We have succeeded in the turning out. Germany is a republic. But the situation is worse than before. After the Franco-Prussian war of 1871, Bismarck found security against French revenge by means of his alliances. France, unable satisfactorily to follow his example,³⁴ is finding that the only way to ensure herself against German revenge is the eternal maintenance of overwhelming military force ready for instant action. Repression of German national spirit and of German resentment against the peace terms is as impossible as were unsuccessful Bismarck's efforts to induce France to forget Alsace and Lorraine. Hatred is, at the moment of writing (November 1923), being fanned into fury by the French occupation of the valley of the Ruhr. To Germans, as to other virile peoples, defeat is inspiration and incitement. The war has not changed human nature. Militarism will never be crushed by war. And our four years' effort, if devoted to that purpose, was a gigantic mistake.

³³ Cf. *Current History*, XIV, pp. 574, 685.

³⁴ She has done what she could. She has entered into military alliance with Belgium, and is cultivating relations with Poland, Czecho-Slovakia and other states.

CHAPTER XVII

GERMANY AND PREPARATION

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PRELIMINARY

Prevalent Opinion. As evidence of the purpose of Germany to dominate the world, it is frequently asserted: (1) that she made diligent and elaborate preparation for the execution of her purpose; (2) that she did so secretly; (3) that, at "the chosen moment," she precipitated war; and (4) that the other great Powers pursued merely peace-ensuing policies. From among the many hundreds of such assertions, the following may be selected:

Mr. Robert Lansing, United States Secretary of State, has said:

“In the light of events, we could read the past and see that for a quarter of a century the absorbing ambition of the military oligarchy which was the master of the German Empire, was for world dominion. Every agency in the fields of commerce, industry, science, and diplomacy had been directed by the German Government to this supreme end.”¹

In a speech at Sacket Harbor (9 July 1917), Mr. Lansing said:

“It was the policy of those who plotted and made ready for the time to accomplish the desire of the German rulers, to lull into false security the great nations which they intended to subdue, so that when the storm broke they would be unprepared. How well they succeeded, you know.”²

In the same vein, Mr. Frederick Scott Oliver has said that the war: “is waged against an enemy who by the treacherous thoroughness of his peace-time preparations, appears to our eyes to have violated good faith as between nations, as in the conduct of the campaign he has disregarded the obligations of our common humanity.”³

Sir Edward Grey, on 22 March 1915, said:

“We now know that the German Government had prepared for war as only people who plan can prepare.”⁴

And Mr. Lloyd George, speaking at the Queen’s Hall, London, on 4 August 1917, said:

“What are we fighting for? To defeat the most dangerous conspiracy ever plotted against the liberty of nations; carefully, skilfully, insidiously, clandestinely plotted in every detail with ruthless, cynical determination.”⁵

Methods of Investigation. There are two methods which may be pursued in the investigation of the truth of these charges: First, there is the purely mathematical — each Power, in each year, spent so much money, trained so many men, constructed so many ships; comparison of the figures; and general deductions. The second method makes the mathematical subordinate to the varying complexities of political considerations: the figures are essential; but, without knowledge of the circumstances which produced them, unsatisfactory and possibly misleading.

The Main Points. The main factors in the situation, from this second point of view, are not in dispute:

1. France had not ceased to regret the loss in 1870–1 of Alsace and Lorraine, and to look forward to the day of their restoration.

¹ “War Information Series, No. 6. Published by the Committee of Public Information.”

² Reported in *N. Y. Times*. And see pp. 12 and 452.

³ *Ordeal by Battle*, p. 420. The sentence conflicts with the language on p. 140.

⁴ Quoted by Morel: *Truth and the War*, p. 92.

⁵ Quoted by Mr. Woodsworth in Canadian House of Commons, 15 February 1923.

2. Various attempts at creation of an alliance between the United Kingdom and Germany (1875-80; 1895; 1898; 1899; and 1901) failed.

3. The United Kingdom, urged thereto by British apprehension with reference to German rivalry in various respects — more particularly (1) the construction of warships; (2) the military menace in western Europe; and (3) the military and economic menace in the Near and Middle East — turned toward France and Russia. Preservation, development, and consolidation of *entente* relations with France from 1904, and with both from 1907, formed the pivot of British foreign policy.

4. Without asserting the existence of *entente* policy of "encircling" Germany with enemies — without, that is, making use of a word often repudiated — there can be no doubt that, from a period shortly after the accession of Edward VII, advantageous war-alignment of as many European Powers as possible became the principal purpose for which *entente* relations were being cultivated. That was perfectly legitimate. Denial of it would be foolish.

5. Germany dreaded the union of the United Kingdom with France and Russia, and, for that reason, made repeated efforts toward the establishment of friendship with the United Kingdom. The German rivalries above referred to — especially in the construction of war-ships — and the assumed necessity for maintenance of the Entente, rendered all attempts at *rapprochement* futile. German protestations could not remove the German menace.

6. Although Italy and Roumania were associated with Germany and Austria-Hungary in war-alliance, they were untrustworthy, and, when war came, played the part anticipated.

7. Finally, the Balkan wars of 1912-13 prejudiced Germany's position (1) by the reduction of the fighting power of Turkey, (2) by the enhancement of the power of Serbia, and (3) by the increased danger to the stability of Germany's only dependable ally — Austria-Hungary.

All but one of these points are developed in other chapters: the first in chapter XVIII; the second and fifth in chapter V; the third in chapters V, XIX, XX, and XXI; the sixth in chapters VII and IX; and the seventh in chapter III. A few words here on the fourth:

Encirclement. Germany's fear of isolation commenced with the Anglo-Russian treaty of 1907. In that and other incidents, she saw the development of what she termed the "encircling" policy — the policy attributed to King Edward VII, but quite as much the policy of France also.⁶ That it existed has often been denied, but any dispute turns upon the meaning of the word.⁷ There is no doubt that the

⁶ Indeed, in Berlin the initiation of the policy was by some persons attributed to Delcassé: Report of Russian Ambassador at Berlin, 27 Feb. 1913: *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 36.

⁷ The Russian Ambassador at London, in his report of 8 Feb. 1912, said:

United Kingdom and France entered upon *entente* relations in 1904; that the United Kingdom and Russia did the like in 1907; that Italy — always an uncertain German ally — made war-treaty arrangements with France in 1902, and was carefully courted by both the United Kingdom and France; that efforts were made — at least, Germany believed that efforts were being made to detach her only substantial ally — Austria-Hungary; and that anti-Germany and anti-Austria leagues were formed under the ægis of Russia. Indeed, the *entente* Powers themselves recognized that Germany's policy was to some extent based upon her dread of isolation. For example, on 2 April 1909; shortly after settlement of the Balkan crisis of that year, the Russian Chargé at Berlin reported:

“The fear of isolation begins to wane. Germany is beginning to emerge from the difficult position in which she considered herself placed after the Conference of Algeciras.”⁸

On one occasion, when referring to the association of the United Kingdom with France and Russia, the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg (as Isvolsky declared, 2 July 1909):

“sought to explain the attitude of Germany by saying that she faced a new grouping of the Powers in Europe, and must therefore knit her ties with Austria-Hungary still closer.”⁹

In his recent book, von Bethmann-Hollweg has said:

“That King Edward, or, to express it more correctly, the official British policy behind him, had planned any military enterprise against us, is in my opinion not the case. But to deny that King Edward aspired to and attained our encirclement is mere playing with words. The fact of the matter was that the communications between the two Cabinets were confined essentially to the despatch of such formal business as was required by the mutual relations of two States not at war with one another. Further, that Germany found herself opposed by a combine of England, Russia and France in all controversial questions of World policy.¹⁰ Finally, that this combine not only raised every obstacle to

“The ‘Iron Ring,’ which has become proverbial, is based upon a fallacy. So far as I am aware, the Russian Government has not attempted to interfere with the legitimate interests of Germany, when she has not attempted to oppose ours. On the other hand, Sir Edward Grey, publicly as well as to me personally, has constantly denied that he wished to isolate Germany. He has repeated to me that every attempt to destroy the Triple Alliance would be a mistake. In his opinion the isolation of Germany would signify an actual danger to the cause of peace” (Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 618). As comment upon this let it be noted that for ten years prior to the date of the report, France had been in secret war-alliance with a member of the Triple Alliance — Italy. Sir Edward Grey had, almost certainly, been confidentially informed of that fact.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 492. And see p. 493.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 496. And see p. 499.

¹⁰ In connection with Morocco, Persia, and the Bagdad Railway, for example, Germany repeatedly felt that she had to deal not with one Power, but with two, and sometimes three.

the realization of German ambitions, but also labored systematically and successfully to seduce Italy from the Triple Alliance. You may call that 'encirclement,' 'balance of power,' or what you will; but the object aimed at and eventually attained was no other than the welding together of a serried and supreme combination of States for obstructing Germany, by diplomatic means at least, in the free development of its growing powers."¹¹

On 18 March 1910, the Russian Chargé at Berlin made report upon the subject as follows:

"The reason for this¹² is to be sought in that feeding of suspicion which Germany of late has been harboring concerning our foreign policy; for the Germans seem ever and again to fear the efforts of the enemies of Germany to isolate her. The ratifications of a long series of international conventions to which Germany was not a party, as well as the fear of a conflict with England, which has increased since the Russian *rapprochement* with England, have called forth this distrust on the part of Germany. This became specially manifest after the meeting of Raccogni,¹³ as they seem to be of the opinion in Germany that we wish to separate her from one of her allies [Italy].

"There is no doubt that our negotiations with Austria awaken the same feeling of suspicion. Our efforts to draw the other Powers into these negotiations, in order thus to keep Austria in some wise from engaging in any more of Aehrenthal's adventures, are regarded in Germany as an attempt, inspired by England, to involve Austria into a formal convention, and to loosen her ties with Germany so as to deprive Germany of her second ally. This thought has found clear expression in articles of the 'Vossische Zeitung' and of the 'Germania,' in which the British Ambassador at Vienna is charged with leaving no stone unturned to break asunder the German-Austrian alliance.

"The visits of the Balkan sovereigns to St. Petersburg and Constantinople likewise cause disquiet. In the marked reserve of the Bulgarian and Serbian Ministers, they discern hostility towards Austria, and they fear the formation of a Balkan block with Turkish connivance."¹⁴

Very remarkable is the despairing wail which the Kaiser penned (30 July 1914) upon a despatch from the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg, as he felt himself facing the fate which he believed had been prepared for him:

"England, Russia, and France have agreed — taking as a basis our *casus foederis* with Austria — using the Austro-Serbian conflict as a pretext, to wage a war of destruction against us. Hence Grey's cynical

¹¹ *Reflections on the World War*, pp. 11-12.

¹² German exhibition of dislike of Russian negotiations with Austria.

¹³ The meeting of the Czar and the King of Italy in October 1909. It is referred to in cap. VII.

¹⁴ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 500.

observation to Lichnowsky, that 'so long as the war remained confined to Austria and Russia, England would stand aside, but only if we and France became involved he would be forced to become active against us,' *i.e.*, either we are basely to betray our ally and abandon her to Russia and thus break up the Triple Alliance, or, remaining faithful to our ally, are to be set upon by the Triple Entente together and chastised, by which their envy will finally have the satisfaction of completely ruining all of us. This, in a nutshell, is the true, naked situation, which, slowly and surely set in motion and continued by Edward VII, has been systematically developed by disclaimed conversations of England with Paris and St. Petersburg, and finally brought to its culmination and set in motion by George V. At the same time the stupidity and clumsiness of our ally is made a trap for us. The celebrated 'encircling' of Germany thus finally became an accomplished fact, in spite of all the endeavors of our politicians and diplomats to prevent it. The net is suddenly drawn over our heads, and, with a mocking laugh, England reaps the most brilliant success of her assiduously conducted, purely anti-German world-policy. Against this we have proved powerless, while, as a result of our fidelity to our ally, Austria, she has us isolated, wriggling in the net, and draws the noose for our political and economic destruction. A splendid achievement, which compels admiration even from one who is ruined by it! Edward VII, after his death, is stronger than I who am alive."¹⁵

On the same day, the Kaiser wrote upon a copy of an article in *The Morning Post* the following annotation:

"The whole affair is plainly arranged between England, France, and Russia for the annihilation of Germany, lastly through the conversations with Poincaré in Paris and Petersburg, and the Austro-Serbian strife is only an excuse to fall upon us! God help us in this fight for our existence, brought about by falsehood, lies, and poisonous envy."¹⁶

For her attitude toward Germany, the United Kingdom cannot be blamed. National security, as she thought, made it necessary. Even if, by possibility, her interests (1) in Belgium and Holland, (2) in Constantinople, and (3) in India could have been safeguarded otherwise than by military association with France and Russia, the "challenge" to her naval supremacy rendered measures for national safety indispensable.

Italy, Roumania, and Austria-Hungary. Germany, moreover, was far from well assured of the fidelity of her allies. That Italy and Roumania, although in war-alliance with the Central Powers for more than thirty years, were not regarded as certain supporters in case of hostilities, has been made clear in previous chapters.¹⁷ When war came, they, after periods of prudential bargaining, joined the *entente* Powers.

¹⁵ Kautsky, *The Guilt &c.*, pp. 176-7; Kautsky Docs., No. 401.

¹⁶ Kautsky Docs., No. 402.

¹⁷ Caps. VII and IX.

For the fidelity of Austria-Hungary, there was the sanction that her existence, as against her predatory neighbors, depended upon the strength of her northern ally. But Germany could not be perfectly assured of her co-operation in case of a war unconnected with the Balkans. Germany believed (as well she might) that efforts had been made by the British King to induce Francis Joseph to withdraw from the Dual Alliance,¹⁸ and she was aware that that Emperor was not altogether pleased with the nature of German response to his various appeals.¹⁹ Germany, moreover, found that Austria-Hungary was an ever-increasing source of annoyance, and, for that reason, of apprehension. She was, as von Bethmann-Hollweg (the German Chancellor) said, "very difficult to manage."²⁰

"Austrians," von Tschirschky (German Ambassador at Vienna) said, "will always be Austrians. A compound of vanity and frivolity is neither easily nor quickly overcome. I know them well."²¹

Germany recognized that the interests of the two countries were by no means identical, and she had reason to feel that her recognized need of an ally exposed her to exploitations by that ally. For example, the German Chancellor, von Bülow, strongly disapproved of Austro-Hungarian methods in connection with the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 — methods which nearly provoked war. Conversing upon the subject with Sir Charles Hardinge, British Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs (as Sir Charles reported):

"he did not spare Achrenthal; condemned his methods; and complained of the difficult situation of Germany, called upon to support an ally whose policy Germany was not always able to approve."²²

Again, on the eve of the breaking out of the Balkan war of 1912, Sazonoff (Russian Foreign Minister), when reporting to the Czar the result of his journeys abroad, said:

"At Berlin, I was enabled to establish the fact that, on the whole, Germany is but little concerned at the war of the Balkan States, but, following the example of France, Germany dreads being implicated in a European war as a consequence of her treaty obligations, and in case war in the Balkans should be inevitable, she is ready to do anything to localize such a war. From this viewpoint, Poincaré's proposal to depute Russia and Austria to announce the will of Europe at Sofia, Belgrade, Cetinje, and Athens was sympathetically received at Berlin, all the more

¹⁸ At the meeting at Ischl on 12 Aug. 1908, during the early stage of the Balkan crisis of 1908-9. See *ante*, cap. V, p. 166; *Contemporary Rev.*, Jan. 1922, p. 64; and *Quarterly Rev.*, Jan. 1923, pp. 3-4.

¹⁹ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 671.

²⁰ In Prussian Council of 30 July 1914: Kautsky Docs., No. 456. Cf. Fr. Yell. Bk., *Balkan Affairs*, I, Nos. 54, 124; II, No. 438; III, No. 128.

²¹ 26 July 1914: Kautsky Docs., No. 326.

²² As reported by the Russian Chargé at London, 16 Feb. 1909: Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 490.

so because there evidently exists at the present moment some doubt as to the inclination of the Vienna Cabinet to listen to the advice given by its northern Ally, and the Germans, therefore, prefer not to put their influence at Vienna to the test, being afraid they will no longer meet with the former obedient attention there. It seems to me that this state of affairs is, to a certain degree, explained by the fact that Austria is not averse to accentuating her independence of Germany, profiting, as she does, by Germany being obliged to adhere to the alliance with Austria and being afraid of standing isolated among all the Great Powers.”²³ A report of the Russian Ambassador at Berlin of 14 March 1913 contained the following:

“An additional reason why the German Government must feel anxiety about strengthening its military power, must, in my opinion, also be sought for in the ever-increasing suspicion here of Austria-Hungary, who can hardly feel quite satisfied with the support given her by Berlin in her selfish policy. This view is shared by my French colleague, who likewise inclines to the belief that the relations between Berlin and Vienna are each day growing cooler, one might even say, more strained.”²⁴

Austria-Hungary, moreover, was failing in relative strength, and was described by the German Assistant Foreign Secretary as having become: “as formerly was Turkey, the sick man of Europe, that the Russians, the Italians, the Roumanians, the Serbians, and the Montenegrins expected to partition.”²⁵

Von Jagow, the German Foreign Minister, writing just before the war, said:

“If localization of the conflict cannot be secured, and if Russia attacks Austria, the *casus fœderis* arises, and we cannot sacrifice Austria. We would then find ourselves in an isolation which could not be regarded with pride. I do not wish a preventive war, but if combat is offered to us, we cannot draw back.”²⁶

The difficulties of German association with Austria-Hungary were well illustrated, as we shall see²⁷ during the negotiations which immediately preceded the outbreak of the war. Had Austria-Hungary adopted the attitude pressed upon her by Germany with reference to the Serbian reply (25 July 1914) to the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum, war (for the time at least) might have been avoided. Even after Germany had declared war on Russia, repeated telegrams were necessary before Austria-Hungary could be induced to take the same step;²⁸ and she disregarded

²³ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 369.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 671.

²⁵ Kautsky Docs., vol. IV, p. 139. Mr. Lloyd George, on one occasion, referred to Austria-Hungary as the “ramshackle Empire.”

²⁶ Kautsky Docs., No. 72.

²⁷ Cap. XXVII.

²⁸ Kautsky Docs., Nos. 870-879.

altogether Berlin's urgings that she should declare war against France and the United Kingdom.²⁹

Effect on Germany. Under these circumstances — France purposing revenge; existence of the Triple Entente, and its consolidation as the pivot of British foreign policy; attempted expansion of it; persistent German efforts to establish relations of friendship with the United Kingdom; foredoomed failure of them, save on condition of permanent naval inferiority;³⁰ uncertain allies; rapidly recurring international crises; almost annual escapes from war — under these circumstances, there can be no reason for astonishment that Germany made extensive preparations for the day upon which settlement of some episode, by diplomatic endeavor, would prove to be impossible. But while it is true that Germany prepared, the following propositions are equally true.

1. Germany's geographical and political situation made adequate preparation necessary.

2. There was no secrecy as to the amount of money which Germany was spending upon preparation. All the world was aware of it. Every nation knew what every other was doing.

3. Between 1900 and 1914, all the great European Powers lived in constant dread of the outbreak of war.

4. France, Russia, and the United Kingdom were as diligent as was Germany in their preparation for the anticipated war.

GERMANY'S PERIL

The observations in the preceding chapter as to the relation of Germany's geographical situation to the militarism with which she has been charged³¹ are equally applicable to the subject of Germany's preparation for war. It may now be added that, prior to the war, the reason for that preparation was well understood, and by many persons frankly admitted. Bismarck had put the matter clearly and quite fairly when he said:

"Germany is a new empire, and it must be protected from possible assault by one, or two, or both Powers, one to the east, the other to the west of us. You must remember that the next war between France and Germany will mean extinction for one. We lie between two lines of fire: France is our bitter enemy, and Russia I do not trust. Peace may be far more dishonorable than war, and for war we must be prepared."³²

Mr. Lloyd George, on at least two occasions, recognized the reasonableness of this view. On 28 July 1908, he said:

²⁹ France declared against her on the 10th Aug., and the United Kingdom followed on the 12th.

³⁰ See *ante*, cap. V, pp. 167, 168, 169, 170, 171-4.

³¹ *Ante*, pp. 489-90.

³² Article "Conversations with Prince Bismarck," by Sir William Blake: *North American Rev.*, Sep. 1914, p. 395.

"Look at the position of Germany. Her army is to her what our navy is to us — her sole defence as against invasion. She has not got a two-Power standard. She may have a stronger army than France, than Russia, than Italy, than Austria, but she is between two great Powers who, in combination, could pour in a vastly greater number of troops than she has. Don't forget that, when you wonder why Germany is frightened at alliances and understandings, and some sort of mysterious workings which appear in the Press, and hints in the *Times* and *Daily Mail*. . . . Here is Germany in the middle of Europe, with France and Russia on either side, and with a combination of their armies greater than hers. Suppose we had here a possible combination which would lay us open to invasion — suppose Germany and France, or Germany and Russia, or Germany and Austria, had fleets which, in combination, would be stronger than ours, would not we be frightened? Would we not arm? Of course we should."³³

Upon another occasion, only seven months prior to the outbreak of the recent war, Mr. Lloyd George said:

"The Germany Army is vital, not merely in the existence of the German Empire, but to the very life and independence of the nation itself, surrounded as Germany is by other nations, each of which possesses armies about as powerful as her own. We forget that, while we insist upon a 60 per cent. superiority (so far as our naval strength is concerned) over Germany being essential to guarantee the integrity of our own shores, Germany herself has nothing like that superiority over France alone, and she has, of course, in addition, to reckon with Russia on her eastern frontier. Germany has nothing which approximates to a two-Power standard. She has, therefore, become alarmed by recent events, and is spending huge sums of money on the expansion of her military resources."³⁴

Historians take the same view. For example, *The Cambridge Modern History* has the following:

"Even so, the new position of Germany is not without its difficulties. At every step forward, she is confronted by the political and economic opposition of alliances and *ententes*, and fully realizes that, despite the Triple Alliance, it is upon her own strength that she must rely first of all in any emergency. This state of things requires that she should strain every nerve. . . . In view of her geographical and military position, set in the centre of the international constellation of Powers, and impelled by the inward necessity for further development, this country is subjected to a stronger tension of conflicting forces than any other Power, and therefore needs to put forth her strength the more effectively

³³ Quoted by Morel: *Truth and the War*, pp. 95-6. And see G. H. Perris: *Our Foreign Policy*, cap. vii; *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, 389.

³⁴ *Daily Chronicle*, 1 Jan. 1914. Quoted by Morel: *Truth and the War*, p. 91.

if she is to hold her own. It is only the fullest exercise of her strength which has sufficed since the days of the Saxon and Hohenstauffen Emperors to vindicate the existence of the Germans as a nation. Long centuries of weakness and dismemberment have taught them that, without this determined display of force, the heart of Europe will become an object of attack and spoliation for their neighbors. In the new empire, Emperor, princes, and people, all parties, and all ranks, are agreed that these lessons of the centuries, taught by the heights and depths of the nation's history, shall not have been in vain."³⁵

To somewhat similar effect, Dr. J. Holland Rose, in a book published after the war had commenced, said:

"We who live behind the rampart of the sea know but little (save in times of panic) of the fear which besets a state which has no natural frontiers. . . . Germany accomplished a wonderful work in unifying her people (or, rather, Bismarck and his compeers did it for her); but, even so, she has not escaped from the disadvantages of her situation; by land she is easily assailable on three sides."³⁶

In *The Times*, in 1911, its Military Correspondent wrote:

"The possibility of a war on two fronts is the nightmare of German strategists, and, considering the pace at which Russia has been building up her field armies since 1905, the nightmare is not likely to be soon conjured away."³⁷

French writers, prior to the war, acknowledged Germany's reasons for apprehension. M. Marcel Sembat, for example, has made vivid representation of the Slav peril:

"The German obsession of Russia does not correspond at all with the hostility, born of their defeat, which many Frenchmen entertain for Germany. It originates from bitterness of yesterday, and anxiety for to-morrow. . . . The German has grown up under the overshadowing threat of a formidable avalanche suspended over his head; an avalanche always ready to become detached, to roll down upon him; an avalanche of immense savagery, of barbarous and brutal multitudes threatening to cover his soil, to swallow up his civilisation and his society."

"If I fail to understand the Russia which haunts Germany I shall be incapable of understanding the effect which the Russo-French alliance produces upon the mind of the Germans."

"And, after all, does not the Tsar possess within his dominions all the barbarians of Turkestan and Central Asia? Conquered? What nonsense! The day when *European* Russians, too Liberal-minded or too Socialistic, cause the Tsar inconvenience, will he hesitate to lead against them his *sotnias* of Cossacks and Turkomans? That day it will be Asia,

³⁵ XII, pp. 172-3.

³⁶ J. Holland Rose, *The Political History of Germany*. Quoted by Morel: *Truth and the War*, p. 97.

³⁷ Quoted by Morel: *Truth and the War*, p. 141.

the barbarous Orient, which will be at the doors of Europe and on the threshold of Germany. The Franco-Russian Alliance, and the Triple *Entente*, appear, therefore, to the German, as a compact between two civilised peoples and barbarism."³⁸

Colonel Arthur Boucher, whose books, *France Victorious in the War of Tomorrow*, *The Offensive against Germany*, and *Germany in Peril*, have enjoyed considerable vogue, wrote in the last of them, immediately prior to the war:

"Germany is threatened to-day on all her frontiers, and finds herself in such a position that she can only ensure her future and face all her foes by seeking first of all to eliminate us from their number by concentrating, from the beginning, all her forces against us."

"To be in a position to resist attacks which menace her on all sides Germany is compelled to develop her military powers to the supreme degree. . . . It was to guard against the Russian danger that Germany made her (Military) law of 1913."

"Thus, we see, when the time comes, and it may come soon, when Slavism desires to make an end of Germanism, the friendship of Russia can serve us if we are fully decided to fulfill all our duties towards her. Germany does not doubt that France, remaining immutably attached to her treaties, would support her ally with all her strength, choosing, however, the most favorable moment for her intervention."

"If Russia attacks Germany, France becomes mistress of the situation. It will be sufficient for France to draw her sword at the opportune moment to make it impossible for Germany to defend the provinces she took from us."

"From whatever aspect Germany's position is studied it will be realised that her future is of the darkest, and that she has placed herself in the most perilous situation. Now of all the factors which contribute towards compromising the destinies of this great Power, the chief factor is certainly the hostility of France. To what might Germany not aspire if she were assured merely of our neutrality."³⁹

Sir Thomas Barclay, who was an active and effective promoter of *entente* relations between the United Kingdom and France, writing in the spring of 1914, said:

"Wedged in between France and Russia, with England dominating all her issues to the outer world, her frontiers open to all the political winds that blow, Germany has a geographical position which forces her statesmen to listen with an anxious ear to any movements, projects, or combinations of her neighbors."⁴⁰

³⁸ Sembat: "*Faites un roi, sinon faites la paix.*" Quoted by Morel: *Truth and the War*, pp. 102-3.

³⁹ *Germany in Peril* (1915). Quoted by Morel: *Truth and the War*, pp. 99-100.

⁴⁰ *Thirty Years Anglo-French Reminiscences* (1876-1906), p. 256.

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Wester-Wemyss, writing after the war, has said:

"To Germany, without natural frontiers, and therefore always open to invasion from east and west, a strong army is a primary condition of national existence, and her so-called militarism is not due, as is so often advanced, to the Hohenzollerns, but rather are the Hohenzollerns the product of her military needs."⁴¹

The point was apparent even to the six "Members of the Oxford Faculty of Modern History," who, under the influence of the outbreak of hostilities, framed an unscholarly indictment of Germany. They admitted that:

"Geographical pressure on all sides has made Prussia feel herself in a state of chronic strangulation; and a man who feels strangled will struggle ruthlessly for breath."⁴²

When introducing the army estimates in 1913, von Bethmann-Holweg, the German Chancellor, said:

"Germany was like no other country . . . wedged in between the Slav world and the French. Germany could never compete with Russia, whose Emperor could always call out more men than Germany. In any war, Germany would stake her confidence upon the courage and the spirit of the people, but it was necessary to give figures to show what extraordinary military efforts Germany's neighbors were making. In Russia there was a most marvellous economic development of the giant Empire, with its inexhaustible natural resources, and an Army reorganization such as Russia had never known, as regarded the excellence of the material, the organization, and the speed of conversion from peace to war strength."⁴³

Germany's situation, we may then confidently say, was amply sufficient to account for her war-preparation.⁴⁴ Attribution to her of a purpose to dominate the world, when the prospect of maintaining her own integrity as against her surrounding enemies was regarded as problematical, is fantastic and foolish.⁴⁵ French and Russian expenditure upon preparation greatly exceeded (as we shall see) German and Austro-Hungarian.

GERMAN SECRECY

Equally absurd is the statement of Mr. Lansing that the German rulers sought:

"to lull into false security the great nations which they intended to subdue;"⁴⁶

⁴¹ *Nineteenth Century*, March 1922, p. 412.

⁴² *Why We are at War*, p. 114.

⁴³ Quoted by Morel: *Truth and the War*, p. 143. The increased provision for the army had been rendered necessary, the Chancellor said, because "the Slavist movement . . . has received a powerful stimulus from the victories of the Slav States in the Balkans . . . and we are compelled to take this into account when we think about the future": *Ann. Reg.*, 1913, p. [309. ⁴⁵ See cap. XV.

⁴⁴ The subject was alluded to in the next preceding chapter. ⁴⁶ *Ante*, p. 493.

and the reference by Mr. Oliver to "the treacherous thoroughness of his [Germany's] peace-time preparations."⁴⁷ Mr. Lansing had in the departments of his government accurate statements of the amounts expended every year by every important government in the world. He knew that private persons could get the figures in the Year Books. And he knew that every increase in Germany's expenditure was voted by the Reichstag after explanation of the reasons for it by the Imperial Chancellor, whose speeches were fully reported. Summaries of them appeared in English and American newspapers.

GENERAL APPREHENSION OF WAR

To what has been said, must now be added that between 1898 and 1904 statesmen of all countries were rightly apprehensive of war. As Lord Haldane apologetically pleaded, he had to make peace-speeches (All diplomats had to do that), but, as Sir J. A. R. Marriott, the very competent historian, said in 1917:

"For years past Europe has been, admittedly, in a state of unstable equilibrium. Great armies have been crouching, ready, at the given signal, to spring at each other's throats."⁴⁸

Look at a mere list of the more significant of the events of these few years:

1. In 1898, the Fashoda dispute between the United Kingdom and France.

2. In 1899-1902, the war between the United Kingdom and the South African Republics, and, with it, the danger of continental intervention.

3. In 1900, the German government introduced a navy bill which had as its preamble:

"Germany requires a fleet of such strength that a war with the mightiest naval Power would involve risks jeopardising the supremacy of that Power."⁴⁹

4. In 1898, 1899, and 1901, the United Kingdom, having determined, in view of various complications, to abandon her policy of "splendid isolation," engaged in negotiations for an alliance with Germany.

5. In 1902, the war-treaty between France and Italy.

6. In 1902, the United Kingdom agreed, by treaty, to protect Japan against the intervention of a third Power, in case of war between Japan and any other Power — Russia being the Power aimed at.

7. In 1904, because of war-apprehension, the United Kingdom and France settled all outstanding disputes, and entered upon *entente* relations aimed at Germany. Siam had caused disquiet in 1903.

8. In 1904-5, the Russo-Japanese war, into which the United Kingdom was nearly precipitated.

⁴⁷ *Ante*, p. 493.

⁴⁸ *Nineteenth Century*, April 1917, p. 717.

⁴⁹ J. Ellis Barker: *The Foundations of Germany*, p. 177.

9. In 1905-6, France and Germany were on the verge of war in connection with the first of the Morocco disputes — the United Kingdom siding with France.

10. During that period, the military and naval staffs of the United Kingdom and France engaged in "conversations," with a view to agreement upon co-operation in case of war with Germany.

11. In 1906, Lord Haldane's visit to Berlin in a fruitless endeavor to establish better relations.

12. In 1907, the United Kingdom settled all international questions with Russia; and thus was inaugurated the Triple Entente. All the Great Powers were now in two vast opposing camps. Italy was in both of them.

13. In 1908, the Young Turk revolution, and the Casablanca incident.

14. In 1908-9, Europe on the verge of war in connection with the annexation by Austria-Hungary of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

15. In 1909, the United Kingdom became almost hysterical over "the German naval scare" — an incident which evidenced in the most convincing manner the panicky apprehension of war.

16. In 1911, the second Morocco incident, with the Lloyd George warning to Germany, and the narrow escape from general war.

17. In 1911, and continuously till the outbreak of the 1914-18 war, "conversations" between the Chiefs of the Military Staffs of the United Kingdom and France, by way of preparation for war with Germany.

18. In 1911-12, the Turco-Italian war, with protests from Austria-Hungary, and, at one period, probable intervention.

19. In 1912 (February), Lord Haldane's second fruitless visit to Berlin.

20. In 1912 (July), the naval convention between France and Russia.

21. In 1912 (November), the war-agreement between the United Kingdom and France.

22. In 1912-13, the first Balkan war — Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Italy antagonistically watching its progress, and eventually quarrelling over the Slav occupation of points on the Adriatic.⁵⁰

23. In 1913, the second Balkan war — among the confederates over the distribution of the Turkish assets.

24. In 1913, by the treaty of Bucarest, a new map of the Balkans — a map of which a well-informed diplomatist (writing prior to the recent war) said that it had been "no help to the peace of Europe";⁵¹ a map against which Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary were certain to protest.

25. Between 1904 and 1914, annual consultations between the Chiefs of the Military Staffs of Russia and France in preparation for war with Germany.

⁵⁰ Important documents may be seen in Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 403-435. Cf. *Un Livre Noir*, I, pp. 362, 369, 370.

⁵¹ *Nationalism and War in the Near East*, by a Diplomatist, p. 369.

26. Between 1905 and 1914, the Bagdad-railway and Persia questions.

27. In 1913-14, the Liman von Sanders quarrel between Russia and Germany.

28. In 1914, the Russo-German press campaigns⁵² had hardly subsided before the cannon of July announced the opening of European hostilities.

Not half the story, of course, is told in a mere catalogue,⁵³ but expansion of it must be deferred until the appropriate pages are reached. Baron Beyens (Belgian Ambassador at Berlin prior to the outbreak of war) has well said:

“After the settlement of the South Africa question, events unexpectedly occurred almost without interruption from year to year, which, in large measure, contributed toward the actual conflagration. One might say with certainty that they hastened and precipitated the explosion. One with another they connected themselves by a thread sometimes barely visible, but always continuous, and they developed in two very different theatres, Morocco and the European Orient.”⁵⁴

Referring to the period in British history immediately prior to 1910, Mr. Arthur D. Innes, in his *England and the British Empire*, said:

“Jingoism had turned its eyes to Germany where the corresponding disease of Junkerism was rampant. A section of the press in each country was persistently doing its best to foster feelings of suspicion and animosity toward the other. The German was encouraged to believe that British statesmen were engaged in Machiavellian designs for the isolation of Germany; the British public was encouraged to believe that Germany was on the point of wiping the British fleet off the seas and invading England with irresistible armies; and in each country there was a very common belief that war soon or later was inevitable.”⁵⁵

Lord Haldane, who was Secretary of State for War, has told us that between the beginning of 1906 and:

“the middle of 1913 the indications were that it was far from unlikely that war might in the result be averted. That was the view of some, both here and on the Continent, who were most competent to judge, men who had real opportunities for close observation from day to day. It is a view which is not in material conflict with anything we have since learned.”⁵⁶

⁵² A short account may be seen in cap. II.

⁵³ Innumerable passages in the Foreign Office documents of all the Powers attest the existence of general and persistent apprehension of war. The following pages of the latest of the publications — *Un Livre Noir*, vol. II — may be referred to: 20, 21, 24, 29, 51, 65-66, 74, 137, 356-7, 547, 548, 552 (dates prior to the Balkan wars of 1912-13); 170, 197, 363-4, 391, 394 (dates subsequent to the treaty of Bucarest). These timidities produced constantly recurring unfounded suspicions of treachery, instances of which may be seen in the same volume at pp. 99, 178, 359, 501, 520, 522, 566.

⁵⁴ *L'Allemagne avant la Guerre*, pp. 211-12.

⁵⁵ IV, p. 550.

⁵⁶ *Before the War*, p. 11.

And Lord Bryce has recently said:

"It was nervousness and tremulousness which led the greater European States to increase from year to year their naval and military armaments till, in 1914, there were some who seemed to wish for war in the hope that the decision it was to bring would put an end to costly preparations for it. The price has been paid and the result desired has not been attained."⁵⁷

Mr. G. B. Gooch, the English historian, relates his impressions after reading the Russian Foreign Office Documents (1907-14) published by Siebert and Schreiner⁵⁸ as follows:

"We live in an atmosphere of suspicions and flirtations, pressure and counter-pressure, incidents and explanations, and the thought of war is never far away. Every statesman in Europe, it is clear, regarded a conflagration as highly probable, if not as inevitable, and the main task of diplomacy was manœuvring for position in the expected conflict."⁵⁹

To these excerpts, many of similar import might easily be added. For the present, it is sufficient to observe that no statesman could have been content to remain tranquil and inactive under the pressure of such circumstances — such a series of closely connected war-provoking occurrences.

COMPARATIVE PREPARATION

That Germany was not more diligent in her war-preparation than were the other Powers is not difficult of proof.

Army Expenditure. Omitting, for the present, the United Kingdom and Italy, the army budgets of the other four opposed states, during the decade which preceded the war,⁶⁰ were as follows:⁶¹

France		£347,348,259
Russia		495,144,622
		<hr/>
		£842,492,881
Germany	£448,025,543	
Austria-Hungary	234,668,407	£682,693,950
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Excess by France and Russia for 10 years		£159,798,931
		<hr/> <hr/>
Average excess per year.....		£15,979,893
		<hr/> <hr/>

⁵⁷ Address at Williams College: *N. Y. Times*, 10 Aug. 1921.

⁵⁸ *Entente Diplomacy and the World*.

⁵⁹ *Foreign Affairs*, Oct. 1921, p. 62.

⁶⁰ The figures for the previous year are interesting. They may be seen in F. W. Hirst: *The Political Economy of War*, cap. IV.

⁶¹ The figures do not include capital expenditures of France and Germany in 1913, as referred to upon later pages.

This disproportion had been increasing as the years advanced. For the last five years of the decade it was as follows:

France	£196,817,797	
Russia	279,659,470	
		<hr/>
		£476,477,267
		<hr/>
Germany	£252,378,319	
Austria-Hungary	128,705,624	
		<hr/>
Excess by France and Russia for 5 years.....		£95,393,324
		<hr/>
Average excess per year		£19,078,665
		<hr/> <hr/>

The excess of the last of the years was still greater:

France and Russia	£114,270,338
Germany and Austria-Hungary	92,865,354
	<hr/>
Excess by France and Russia	£21,404,984 ⁶²

These figures form some answer to the assertion that Germany set the pace. For the excess-expenditure of France and Russia over Germany and Austria was in ever-increasing ratio. During the ten years prior to the war, it averaged, in round figures, sixteen million pounds per annum. During the five years prior to the war, nineteen millions. And in the last of the years, twenty-one and a half millions. If to these figures are added the expenditure of the United Kingdom on the side of France and Russia, and that of Italy on the side of the Central Powers, the excess would be largely increased. And the Italian expenditure might very well be omitted, for in that extremely useful book, Pribram: *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary, 1879-1914*, it is said:

“The crucial test of the Triple Alliance began with the moment in which the first serious differences between Germany and England made their appearance. As far back as 1896, Italy, as the present investigation shows, had notified the Central Powers that she could not participate in a war in which England and France should figure as the joint adversaries of the states included in the Triple Alliance. The fact

⁶² The figures are taken from the budgets of the respective Powers as they appear in the *Almanach de Gotha* carried into the *International Peace Year Book*, 1918, a sum of £8,000,000 being added to the Austro-Hungarian figures in respect of the separate expenditures of Austria and Hungary. The figures agree with those quoted by Mr. E. D. Morel in *Truth and the War*, pp. 92-4; and by Frederick Bausman: *Let France Explain*, p. 165.

that Germany, and likewise Austria-Hungary under the influence of Germany, refused to take cognizance of this declaration, which was incompatible with the contents of the treaty, did not alter the fact that Italy from that time on moved away from her allies and entered upon a course which gradually led her into the camp of their enemies."⁶³

Moreover, as we now know, Italy, on 1 November 1902, entered into a secret war-agreement with France by which it was provided that if either of the Powers "should be the object of a direct or indirect aggression," the other Power would observe strict neutrality. The subject is more fully discussed in a previous chapter.⁶⁴

Soldiery. Colonel Seely, in the British House of Commons on 4 June 1913, when replying to a request for information as to the "additions" made "during the last two years to the peace strength" of various Powers, said (in part):

"On the assumption that the proposed increases are all approved, the information is approximately as follows:

Russia

Additions made	75,000
Present peace establishment	1,284,000
(Future not yet ascertained)	

Austria-Hungary

Additions made	58,505
Present peace establishment	473,643
(Future not yet ascertained)	

France

Additions proposed	183,715
Future peace establishment	741,572

Germany

Additions made	38,372
Additions proposed	136,000
Future peace establishment	821,964 "

Added together, the peace strength of Russia and France therefore was

	2,025,572
--	-----------

And the peace strength of Germany and Austria-Hungary was

	1,295,607
--	-----------

The excess of Russia and France was

	729,945
--	---------

⁶³ I, pp. 10-11. And see *ante*, cap. VII.

⁶⁴ *Ante*, pp. 231-2.

Count Montgelas⁶⁵ gave the peace strengths in 1914 as follows:

	<i>Winter</i>	<i>Summer</i>
Russia	1,845,000	1,445,000
France	794,000	794,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2,639,000	2,239,000
Germany	761,000	
Austria-Hungary	478,000	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Excess of Russia and France	1,400,000	1,000,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>

That the Russian strength is not here exaggerated is shown¹ by an article in the St. Petersburg *Birshewija Viedomosti* of 13 June 1914 — an article inspired by General Sukhomlinoff, the Russian Minister for War:

“The reforms of the Russian Military Department, with a view to the formation of strong Russian armies, surpass everything that has been known. The contingent of recruits for this year, according to the last ukase, has been raised from 450,000 to 580,000 men, and the term of service has been prolonged by six months. Thanks to this measure, there are each winter in Russia four contingents of recruits under arms, that is to say, an army of 2,300,000 men. Great and powerful Russia alone can indulge herself in this luxury. Germany has about 880,000, Austria about 500,000, and Italy about 400,000 men. It is natural, therefore, that Russia expects of France 770,000 men, which is possible only with the introduction of the three years’ service.”⁶⁶

Referring to war-strength, Mr. Winston Churchill (when First Lord of the Admiralty), in a memorandum of 13 August 1911, estimated as follows:

“The decisive military operations will be those between France and Germany. The German army is at least equal in quality to the French, and mobilizes 2,000,000 against 1,700,000.”⁶⁷

In his recent book, *The World Crisis*, Mr. Churchill has said:

“Although, according to the best information, the French pre-war Army when fully mobilized was only three-fourths as strong as the German pre-war Army, the French mobilization from the ninth to the thirteenth day yielded a superior strength on the fighting front.”⁶⁸

The French General Buat has said:

“One can say, then, that without taking any account of the Belgian

⁶⁵ Published in *Foreign Affairs*, July 1921, p. 6. The Count was one of the persons appointed by the German Government (after the exit of the Kaiser) to publish the documents compiled by Karl Kautsky (author of *The Guilt of William Hohenzollern*) for the German Foreign Office.

⁶⁶ *Ante*, p. 72.

⁶⁷ *The World Crisis*, I, p. 58.

⁶⁸ Vol. I, p. 57.

Army or the four British divisions, France alone was at the beginning at least equal if not superior to her formidable adversary in the number of the principal units."⁶⁹

In the *Remarques de la Délégation Allemande au Sujet de la Commission des Gouvernements Alliés et Associés sur les Responsabilités des Auteurs de la Guerre*, presented at the peace conference, was the following:

"Figures which cannot be doubted prove that, apart from the Land-sturm and formations of like quality, Germany and Austria-Hungary were able to put in line somewhat less than 6,000,000 of combatants out of 116,000,000 inhabitants; Russia and France, on the other hand, easily 9,000,000 out of a population of 210,000,000 inhabitants. There was indeed crushing superiority, but it was not on the side of Germany."⁷⁰

Those persons who still believe that Germany was looking forward to world-domination through perfect confidence in her military superiority ought to read Ludendorff: *Problems of the General Staff*; von Eggling: *The Russian Mobilization and the Outbreak of the War*; von Kuhlmann: *The German General Staff in Preparation and Conduct of the War*. If it be objected that these books were issued after the war, von Moltke's *Memorandum* on the military situation in December 1912 antedates hostilities. It may be seen in Ludendorff's book.⁷¹

Naval Expenditure. The naval expenditure of France and Russia, during the decade prior to the war, was larger than that of Germany and Austria-Hungary. The figures are as follows:

France	£161,721,387	
Russia	144,246,513	
		<hr/>
		305,967,900
Germany	£185,205,164	
Austria-Hungary	50,692,814	
		<hr/>
		235,897,978
		<hr/>
Excess of France and Russia for 10 years		70,069,922 ⁷²

During the same period the British naval expenditure was £351,916,576⁷³

⁶⁹ Bausman, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁷⁰ P. 2.

⁷¹ I, p. 57. The principal portions of it are quoted in Bausman, *op. cit.*, pp. 243-5.

⁷² The above figures are from *British Parliamentary Paper* No. 274. They agree with those referred to by Mr. Morel in *Truth and the War*, p. 157.

⁷³ After making deduction of £40,000,000 "under Pensions, Coastguard, Reserves, and Steamship subsidies, for which no corresponding provision exists in the votes of Foreign Powers, except France and Italy" (House of Commons return, August 1914). Quoted from Morel, *op. cit.*, p. 160, note.

Russian Expenditure. The increase in Russian military and naval expenditure, especially during the ten years immediately preceding the war, was (in the language of a German but an anti-German writer) "truly startling." He represented the figures for 1904-13 as follows:

	<i>Army</i>	<i>Navy</i>
1904	£40,200,000	£12,200,000
1907	42,800,000	9,500,000
1910	52,500,000	9,800,000
1913	62,700,000	24,900,000 ⁷⁴

Continental Expenditure in 1913. Truly startling is this, also, that (as Mr. Asquith has said):

"It is estimated that in the single year 1913 the Continental states added £50,000,000 to their military expenditure."⁷⁵ Everybody was making peace certain by preparing for war — so each of them said, and cursed the others for doing the like.

BRITISH PREPARATION

To the British public, nothing appears to be more incontrovertible than that their government was unprepared for the war of 1914, and that the lack of preparation was due to an indisposition on the part of the government to face the well-known facts relating to German preparation and motive. Did not the war itself demonstrate the inadequacy of the provision made for it? Did not Lord Roberts proclaim unceasingly what was about to happen, and urge the government to greater activity? It is a strong *prima facie* case, but very easily displaced.

When Mr. (now Viscount) Haldane went to the War-office in 1905, he found that little had been done since the days of the Boer war (in 1902) to remedy the defects in army organization which in that year had produced such disastrous results. As he has told us, when he and his colleagues in the new government entered upon their duties: "not only was there no divisional organization, but hardly a brigade could have been sent to the Continent without being recast. For there used to be a peace organization that was different from the organization that was required for war, and to convert the former into the latter meant a delay that would have been deadly. Swift mobilization, like that of the Germans even in 1870, was in these older days impracticable."⁷⁶

Haldane and Roberts. Haldane had not been in office more than a week before he became aware that war, in connection with the first

⁷⁴ Article by Mr. J. Ellis Barker in *Fortnightly Review*, April 1914, p. 619.

⁷⁵ *The Genesis of the War*, cap. XVIII. Mr. Winston Churchill in his recent book *The World Crisis* agrees with this estimate: I, p. 184.

⁷⁶ *Before the War*, p. 157.

Morocco incident, might break out at any moment, and that Sir Edward Grey, the new Foreign Minister, deemed it necessary to enter into war-relations, by means of military "conversations," with both France and Belgium. From that time until the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, the skies were, as we have seen,⁷⁷ only at intervals fairly clear. Apprehension of war was the normal condition.

Haldane and Roberts were both apprehensive, but they differed fundamentally as to the rôle which the United Kingdom would play if war ensued, and, therefore, as to what ought, meanwhile, to be done. Haldane was aware that in case of war between France and Germany, the United Kingdom had determined to support France, not only by retaining command of the sea, but by sending a military contingent to the continent. Roberts knew nothing of that. Fearing an invasion of the British Isles, he urged preparation for home defense — universal military service, everybody ready to repel a German attack.⁷⁸ Haldane, on the other hand, wanted an Expeditionary Force, as he called it — a relatively small but highly trained army which could be placed on the fighting line in Flanders within a fortnight.⁷⁹ The two men were proposing different schemes for different purposes. Haldane was handicapped by inability to divulge the real reason for his proposal. Roberts, unrestrained, pictured the power of Germany and received popular acclaim.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 505-8.

⁷⁸ After commencement of the war, Lord Milner, Chairman of the National Service League, issued a statement upon which *The Times* commented as follows (20 August 1915): "In changed circumstances, the League has changed its policy. It now advocates not merely National Service for home defence, but universal and compulsory military service for the duration of the war."

⁷⁹ Not the only mistake of the six "Members of the Oxford Faculty of Modern History," in their booklet "Why We are at War," is the assertion that the British "Expeditionary Force . . . had been planned for the defence of India and the Colonies" (p. 48).

⁸⁰ Lord Roberts' speeches, and the supporting articles in the newspapers and magazines, undoubtedly had an inflammatory effect in both the United Kingdom and Germany. But in reply to charges of that import, Lord Roberts replied: "My Lords and gentlemen, in mentioning Germany in this connection, I want to make it perfectly clear that I do so in no spirit of hostility, with no wish to stir up any feeling of resentment or enmity against a great people bent upon working out their own salvation. I have not the slightest sympathy with the Press controversies carried on in both countries, which have done so much to embitter the feeling between what are really two branches of the same race. . . . At the same time, there is Germany, a great homogeneous State, with a people of 66,000,000, which is consciously aiming at becoming a World-Power with 'a place in the sun,' where its vigorous progeny may develop a German life, actuated by German thoughts and ideals" (*Message to the Nation*, p. 35). Lord Roberts saw "danger of collision with Germany," and his purpose in these speeches was to arouse his countrymen to an appreciation of the danger. The newspaper men might have offered similar plea. And so far as they were acting honestly, it is difficult to condemn them. The inflammatory effect is not, unfortunately, counteracted by honesty of motive.

After the inception of hostilities, members of the government could speak more freely, and Lord Haldane, in a letter to *The Times* (16 December 1918), in reply to some attacks, explained at length the reasons for the adoption of the policy which he had pursued. Lord Roberts' proposal of universal service ("directed merely to home defence") was, he said, under existing circumstances, impracticable; the "conversations" with the French General Staff had made the necessities of the anticipated situation clear; conscription was impossible; there was no time for experimentation; a highly trained force might be needed at any time, and it must be organized as rapidly as possible. Haldane added:

"At all events, it was, on purely military grounds, out of the question to run the risks attending such an attempt between 1906 and 1914. The General Staff had advised to this effect, reluctantly, I think, but very firmly. They thought of a pounce on us by Germany when we were changing horses while crossing the stream."

It was in 1906, he said that (*Italics now added*):

"the plans were first made for organizing the Expeditionary Force. It was, indeed, hoped earnestly that the existing peace would remain unbroken. But it was held as of high importance to insure against a conceivable conflagration. The fleet was enlarged and the Navy Estimates were raised from 36 millions, at which figure they then stood, to 51, the figure to which they were brought by Mr. McKenna and Mr. Churchill. If there were to be a war with Germany in which we stood alone, our security against invasion was decided by the Committee of Imperial Defence to be ample. This conclusion was come to after much consideration, and after investigating specific points brought before it in much detail by Lord Roberts and his advisers personally. But the paradox remained that if France also were attacked along with us, instead of France being left alone, we might be in a less favourable situation. For if a successful invasion of that country should give Germany the Channel ports of France as naval bases, she might, by the use of submarines and long-range guns, seriously imperil the control of the Channel by our Navy, and, as a consequence, our position as an island. Against this danger there was only one way of providing. If we had a large Navy, France had a large Army. That Army was not quite sufficient to guard against attack along the eastern frontier of France by the still larger Army of Germany. *But careful calculation made by the French General Staff and our own showed that the addition of a comparatively small, but very highly trained and organized, Expeditionary Army from Great Britain to co-operate by defending the northern portion of the French frontier in conjunction with the French Armies would be sufficient*, having regard to the co-operation, which was certain, of the Armies of Russia in engaging the German Armies in the East. To the margin which Great Britain might possibly be thus asked to provide, *an addition of about 60 per cent. was made for greater security in the*

plan as carried out later. We were thus to put in as our contribution, in the event of a war which we intended to avert by every step in our power, the greatest navy to command the seas that the world had ever seen, and six divisions in addition to a cavalry force, being the Army required to make up the requisite margin of military strength. The Expeditionary Force fashioned for this purpose was of a kind different from anything which this country had ever possessed before, as it was organized for extremely rapid mobilization and concentration, to be at least as swift as that of the army of Germany; and, as a means to this end, its formations in time of peace were revolutionized by being given a divisional organization, and by being made in time of peace exactly what they would have to be in time of war. Its commanders were also designated at once, so that they might in peace time train the units they would command should war unhappily break out. Besides this, all the accessories of these divisions were brought up to scientifically calculated war strength."

At one of the election meetings in September 1918, Mr. Asquith was asked:

"Why did you refuse support for Lord Roberts' scheme?"

The reply was:

"Lord Roberts' scheme would have had no effect whatever in increasing our efficiency for war. It was intended for invasion, and we were never in danger of that."⁸¹

Further particulars as to the military "conversations," and references to the various collaborating preparations of the Entente Allies, may be seen upon subsequent pages of the present chapter.

The War Book. For several years before the war, a

"Sub-Committee for the Co-ordination of Departmental Action at the Outbreak of War,"

composed of the principal permanent officials of the various British Departments of State, had been at work, and had produced "The War Book":

"definitely assigning to each department, and not merely the War Office and the Admiralty, but the Home Office, the Board of Trade, with its local association with the railways and shipping, the Local Government Board and other Departments of the State, its responsibility for action under every head of policy."⁸²

The Fleet. That the British fleet was ready for its work, is well known. Lord Sydenham has said:

"On August 4th, the navy was in a position of relative strength never realized at the beginning of any of the great wars of the past, and stood ready for immediate action as it did not even after the rupture of 1803 of the brief peace of Amiens. And the reason was that the intelligence

⁸¹ *The Daily Telegraph* report.

⁸² Archibald Hurd in *The Fortnightly Rev.*, Dec. 1918, p. 858.

of our people at home and overseas had been awakened to a sense of their primary imperial need, by an educative process in which the Navy League played a notable part. Thus we possessed a marked initial advantage to which another was added. A great mobilization of the Fleet had taken place in July, and the crews had not been dispersed. . . . Never in all history had there been a manifestation of sea-power on so gigantic a scale.”⁸³

A good account of the British naval preparation between 1904 and 1914 may be seen in an article by Archibald Hurd in *The Fortnightly Review* of August 1919, pp. 201-14. Mr. Winston S. Churchill, who became First Lord of the Admiralty in October 1911, tells us in his recent book that:

“Although my education had been mainly military, I had followed closely every detail of the naval controversies of the previous five years in the Cabinet, in Parliament, and latterly in the Committee of Imperial Defence; and I had certain main ideas of what I was going to do and what, indeed, I was sent to the Admiralty to do. I intended to prepare for an attack by Germany as if it might come next day. I intended to raise the Fleet to the highest possible strength and secure that all that strength was immediately ready.”⁸⁴

Mr. Churchill may fairly claim that, in very large measure, he accomplished his task.

The Result. The successful result of the British preparations became dramatically apparent when put to the war-test. Twelve days after the declaration of war, it was announced that the entire Expeditionary Force of:

“160,000 men had been safely landed in France, without a single casualty. Five days later its concentration had been completed, and it had occupied the position assigned to it on the line from Condé to Mons.”

“Events showed that Viscount French, the Commander-in-Chief of this Army, had spoken with full knowledge and accuracy when he had declared that Lord Haldane, during his term of office, had ‘inaugurated and made a military fighting machine and a system of national defence such as this country never had before.’ If ever an army took the field ‘complete to the last button,’ with splendid arrangements for the commissariat, the medical services, and supplies generally, that army was the Expeditionary Force thrown across the Channel like a thunderbolt, to the complete derangement of Germany’s plans.”⁸⁵

What that means may be understood by recalling the fact that, as the Hon. John Fortescue, the historian of the British Army has reminded us, prior to 1914, the United Kingdom:

“never in the whole course of her existence put 50,000 of her own

⁸³ *The Navy*, April 1915, pp. 101-2.

⁸⁴ *The World Crisis*, I, pp. 75-6.

⁸⁵ *Fortnightly Rev.*, April 1916, pp. 654, 655.

children in the line of any battlefield, and very rarely as many even as 30,000." ⁸⁶

Replying to the charge that the British government was unprepared for war, Mr. Asquith made proper distinction:

"We are told, sometimes by way of reproach and sometimes by way of commendation, that we were unprepared for the war. Unprepared to take the offensive in a war of aggression we certainly were. Unprepared we were also to take a leading part in a European land campaign in competition with the gigantic armies of the Continental Powers. But we were not unprepared either for our defence, or for rendering help to any ally." ⁸⁷

The best military talent of the United Kingdom and of France had agreed as to the scope of the preparations necessary for an encounter with Germany; a certain part of the work had been assigned to the United Kingdom; and that work was thoroughly well done. Mr. Archibald Hurd, the most prolific of the war-publicists, might well ask:

"In the knowledge of these measures, naval, military, and administrative, and in the light of the victory which we have achieved, can it be declared that we were unprepared for war and have muddled through?" To the possible answer that the British force sustained an early reverse, Mr. Hurd replied:

"All that may be admitted. Does it not point, however, rather to an under-appreciation of the enemy's military power by the military authorities of England and France than to a want of adequate preparation by this country? At least this is certain, that the help which we gave to France was larger and of greater efficiency than our Ally had expected to receive. The Expeditionary Force was mobilized at once — five times as great a force as we had ever before mobilized in a similar period — and it was transported across the Channel with a swiftness and a competency unparalleled in amphibious warfare." ⁸⁸

Mr. Hurd might have added that if temporary check in the fighting proves lack of preparation, much more convincing must be permanent defeat; and, upon that line of reasoning, it was Germany which was unprepared; Paris did not fall in six weeks, nor in four years. British and French officers, on the other hand, did not foresee, and could not have foreseen, the political collapse of Russia. But for that misfortune, the arrangements were amply adequate. If any reader should still harbor doubt as to the amplitude and effectiveness of British preparation for war, a perusal of Mr. Hurd's article, and of chapters XIV–XVII of Mr. Asquith's *The Genesis of the War*, will dissipate it.

⁸⁶ Quoted by Archibald Hurd: *Fortnightly Rev.*, Dec. 1918, p. 853.

⁸⁷ *The Times* (London), 28 Sep. 1918.

⁸⁸ *The Fortnightly Rev.*, Dec. 1918, pp. 858–9.

FRENCH PREPARATION

Reference has already been made to the French expenditure upon military preparation during the ten years prior to the war,⁸⁹ and to the "conversations" (1906-14) between the General Staffs of France and the United Kingdom.⁹⁰ A few other points must be noted.

Poincaré. Poincaré is a man of courageous character. Isvolsky, the very capable Russian Ambassador at Paris, described him as "a very powerful personality";⁹¹ "an extraordinarily strong character";⁹² "a passionate character," who "goes in a straight line";⁹³ a man of "brutally direct temperament,"⁹⁴ who, "while often displaying useless rudeness, and irrationally breaking windows, has never given me reason to doubt his veracity";⁹⁵ a man whose "sensitive *amour propre*" must be "taken into account";⁹⁶ "an ardent and convinced partisan of a close union between France and Russia";⁹⁷ a man who would never fail Russia in case of war with Germany.⁹⁸ In January 1912, Poincaré succeeded Caillaux as Prime Minister and de Selves as Foreign Minister, neither of whom had any liking for war-adventures. In view of the situation in the Balkans, he (Poincaré) visited St. Petersburg (July 1912), where he signed a naval convention with Russia.⁹⁹ Afterwards he moved the place for concentration of French warships in the Mediterranean to Bizerta; ordered the third squadron from Brest to Toulon; gave Russia renewed assurance that if she were attacked by Germany, France would go to her aid; and sent Delcassé (strongly antipathetic to Germany) as Ambassador to St. Petersburg.¹⁰⁰ Between the date of the assassination of Franz Ferdinand (28 June 1914) and of the delivery to Serbia of the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum (23 July), Poincaré, now President of the French Republic (accompanied by Viviani, the Foreign Minister), was again in St. Petersburg. He was not the sort of man who would neglect preparations for war.

Three Years' Service. Probably as the result of an understanding arrived at during his first visit to St. Petersburg, Poincaré proceeded in 1912, to increase the military strength of his country. In parliament,

⁸⁹ *Ante*, pp. 508-12.

⁹⁰ *Ante*, pp. 115-6.

⁹¹ *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 203.

⁹² *Ibid.*, II, p. 248.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, I, p. 281.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, II, pp. 360, 393.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, I, pp. 326, 349; II, pp. 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 125, 209, 248, 345, 360, 396-7, 570.

⁹⁹ *Ante*, cap. IV, pp. 98-9.

¹⁰⁰ These points are dealt with on subsequent pages of this chapter, pp. 548-53.

a bill was introduced for the purpose of adding to the *cadres* of the infantry in such a way as to provide the reserves with officers and non-commissioned officers from the regular army, in the event of mobilization.¹⁰¹ On 4 December 1912, Poincaré (as recorded in the *British Annual Register*):

“had an interview with the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber, presided over by M. L. Barthou; and the explanations he then gave had been cordially welcomed. He had declared himself determined to secure respect for the economic and political interests of France, not only in the Balkan Peninsula but in the remainder of the Turkish Empire, in Syria, for example.”¹⁰²

In January of the next year, Poincaré became president of France, and was succeeded in the premiership by M. Briand, who announced (24 January), as part of his policy:

“the maintenance of the alliances of France and of her friendships, strengthening these by the sacrifices necessitated by the increase of the army and navy.”¹⁰³

On 4 March, the Supreme Council met:

“M. Poincaré presided, and M. Briand, the War Minister (M. Etienne), and the chief commanders of the army were present. The Council decided that, in the interest of the national defence, it was absolutely necessary to increase the effectives, and, after having examined the various methods of meeting the need — voluntary enlistment, utilization of civilian workmen, so as to place in the combatant ranks all the employees in military establishments, service of twenty-seven or of thirty months — it declared unanimously in favor of a three years' term, strictly and rigorously equal for all with no exemptions. The question could not be put more clearly or more impressively. The whole nation took sides passionately for or against the change.”¹⁰⁴

Late in March, Briand resigned and was succeeded by M. Barthou, who, besides pressing a bill providing for three-year service to its passage in July, retained with the colors (by simple decree) recruits who were approaching the end of their period of service.¹⁰⁵ The amount estimated by the Budget Commission as necessary for the inauguration of the new system (that is, for additional barracks, armament, equipment, horses, &c.) was the sum of \$88,000,000 — an amount which was spread over the budgets of 1913 and 1914.¹⁰⁶

Leaving his parliament during the fierce struggles over the three years' service bill, Poincaré visited the fleet at Toulon, and then went to

¹⁰¹ *Ann. Reg.*, 1912, p. [305.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. [307.

¹⁰³ *Ann. Reg.*, 1913, p. [279.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. [281. Cf. *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 33-6, 42-5.

¹⁰⁵ *Ann. Reg.*, 1913, p. [285.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. [286.

London (24-27 June), where he met with a "magnificent reception" — as he himself described it.¹⁰⁷ In October, a visit to Spain resulted in the publication of a Note which was regarded (according to the *British Annual Register*):

"as proving that Spain proposed to place herself in international relations on the side of the Triple Entente."¹⁰⁸

No definite arrangement was made.

Naval Preparation. The quarrel with Germany with reference to Morocco in 1905 was probably the principal cause of the commencement in France of the construction of a navy which, in time, it was hoped, could compete with that of the probable enemy. Between 1899 and 1906, France had done little in the way of construction.

"The estimates of 1906 provided for the construction of six battleships, which were commenced, four in 1907, and two in 1908. Thus M. Thomson completely reversed the economic policy of M. Pelletan, the Radical, and prepared the way for a general naval revival in France. . . . The same week that Mr. McKenna announced that the four contingent battleships would be laid down, Admiral Boué de Lapeyrère became Minister of Marine in France, and began to frame his new proposals. The new programme for 1910 was to be increased by 38,000,000 francs, and there were to be Supplementary Estimates for three new battleships, and in the same autumn the dockyards, private shipyards and armament firms began their preparations. In February, the Cabinet approved the draft Bill for twenty-eight battleships and armored cruisers to compose the fighting fleet, and ten cruisers for distant service, to be ready by 1922."¹⁰⁹

Chauvinism. One of the reasons assigned by the German Chancellor, in his speech of 7 April 1913, for his proposed addition to the strength of the German army was the existence of "a chauvinistic literature" in France. "By illusion," he said, "France had already won a future war with Germany."¹¹⁰ That the assertion was not without foundation is satisfactorily established by the reports of Russian and Belgian Ambassadors — reports which are of special value because, Russia being the open ally of France and Belgium having secret military arrangements with France, their representatives had special opportunities for gauging the trend of French opinion. On 14 March 1912, Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador, reported as follows:

"In the course of these last days, I have, on more than one occasion, had to note in the despatches and letters which I addressed to your Excellency the expression of national sentiment, and, in particular, the strong interest manifested in the military affairs of the country, which

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. [151.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. [291.

¹⁰⁹ Newbold: *How Europe Armed for War*, p. 79.

¹¹⁰ A summary of the speech may be seen in *Ann. Reg.*, 1913, pp. [308-10.

may be observed in the lower strata of the French people under the influence of the recent external crisis.¹¹¹ This movement is clearly confirmed, among other ways, by the brilliant success secured by the national subscription recently announced, on the initiative of the newspaper *Le Matin*, for the acquisition of aeroplanes for the necessities of the French army, which has produced in less than two weeks more than a million and a half of francs. The purpose of the subscription is to conserve to France, at all cost, its priority over Germany relating to military aviation, and that independently of the material resources which could be supplied toward this end by the treasury. There is without doubt reason to attribute to the new Minister for War, M. Millerand, a large share in the arousing of public interest touching the army."¹¹²

Six weeks prior to the date of the Chancellor's speech, the Russian Ambassador at London reported (25 February 1913) as follows:

"The situation, as I regard it, seems to be that all the Powers are sincerely working to maintain peace. But of all of them, it is France who would accept war the most philosophically.¹¹³ As has been said, 'France stands erect once more.' Rightly or wrongly, she has complete confidence in her army; the old ferment of animosity has again shown itself, and France could very well consider that the circumstances to-day are more favorable than they will ever be later."¹¹⁴

Almost simultaneously (27 February), the Russian Ambassador at Paris reported as follows:

"Speaking of the relations between France and Germany, M. Poincaré has, among other things, told me that, considering the present exaltation of French national sentiment, neither he nor his ministers would

¹¹¹ The Morocco affair of 1911.

¹¹² *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 212.

¹¹³ The diplomatic correspondence makes indisputable that Poincaré was "sincerely working to maintain peace." See the Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, I and II. The Ambassador was probably right in saying that France "would accept war the most philosophically." See *ante*, pp. 109-10. As an example of the literature of the period, an article which appeared in the *Nouvelle Revue*, one of the most prominent of the Paris publications, may be cited: "We intend to have war. After forty years of a heavily armed peace, we can at last utter this opinion without the serious readers of a French review shaking in their shoes. . . . France is ready to strike out and to conquer as she was not ready forty years ago, and she will not be in four or five years to come, owing to the annual divergent numbers of the birthrate in each country. . . . We, the attacking party, will have arranged with England that their fleet . . . will have followed . . . the remains of the whole German navy into German waters." Quoted by Mr. Buxton in the British House of Commons, July 1912; Neilson, *How Diplomats Make War*, p. 206.

¹¹⁴ *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 306. Cf., however, the report to the Czar by Sazonoff after his visit to Paris in Sept. 1912, prior to the outbreak of the Balkan wars (*ibid.*, p. 356); and the report of Kokovtsef (President of the Russian Council) of 19 Nov. 1913, after the termination of the wars (*ibid.*, pp. 393-4). Von Bethmann-Hollweg's estimate of the chauvinistic influence of Poincaré may be seen in his *Reflections on the World War*, pp. 39-43.

tolerate repetition of the Agadir incident, nor consent to such a compromise as had then taken place. He expressed this idea in absolutely clear fashion to the Ambassador of Germany in a straightforward conversation, and received from Baron Schoen this reply, that Germany understands perfectly."¹¹⁵

The reports of Baron Guillaume (the Belgian representative at Paris) are very illuminating. On 3 March 1913, he reported:

"The German Ambassador said to me on Saturday: 'The political situation is much improved in the last forty-eight hours; the tension is generally relaxed; one may hope for a return to peace in the near future. But what does not improve is the state of public opinion in France and Germany with regard to the relations between the two countries. We are persuaded in Germany that a spirit of chauvinism being revived, we have to fear an attack by the Republic. In France, they express the same fear with regard to us. The consequence of these misunderstandings is to ruin us both. I do not know where we are going on this perilous route. Will not a man appear of sufficient goodwill and prestige to recall every one to reason? All this is the more ridiculous because, during the crisis we are traversing, the two Governments have given proof of the most pacific sentiments, and have continually relied upon one another to prevent conflicts.'"

"Baron Schoen," Guillaume added, "is perfectly right. I am not in a position to examine German opinion, but I note every day how public opinion in France becomes more suspicious and chauvinistic. One meets people who assure one that a war with Germany in the near future is certain and inevitable. People regret it, but make up their minds to it. . . . They demand, almost by acclamation, an immediate vote for every means of increasing the defensive power of France. The most reasonable men assert that it is necessary to arm to the teeth to frighten the enemy and prevent war."¹¹⁶

On 16 April, Guillaume reported that M. Pichon (French Foreign Minister) had said to him:

"Among us, too, there is a spirit of chauvinism which is increasing, which I deplore, and against which we ought to react. Half the theatres in Paris now play chauvinistic and nationalistic pieces."¹¹⁷

On 17 April Guillaume reported the "increasingly bellicose and imprudent tone prevalent in Paris."¹¹⁸ On 12 June, he said:

¹¹⁵ *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 32.

¹¹⁶ Dickinson: *The European Anarchy*, pp. 28-9. The reports of the Belgian Ambassadors at Paris, London, and Berlin, from which the above and later quotations have been taken, were published by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, and were reprinted under the title "*Belgische Aktenstücke*" (Ernst Siegfried Mittler & Sons, Berlin). The translations are those of Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson and Mr. E. D. Morel.

¹¹⁷ Dickinson, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

¹¹⁸ Morel: "*Pre-War Diplomacy*," p. 30.

"It is, therefore, practically certain that French legislation will adopt a measure that the country is unlikely to be able to bear for long. The obligations of the new law will be so heavy for the population, the expenses it will involve will be so exorbitant that the country will soon protest, and France will be confronted with this dilemma: either an abdication which she could not bear, or speedy war. The responsibility of those who have dragged the nation into this situation will be heavy. . . . The propaganda in favor of the *Three Years' Law*, which was bound to lead to a revival of Chauvinism, has been admirably prepared and staged. It paved the way for M. Poincaré's election to the Presidency. It is being pursued to-day without caring for the dangers to which it gives rise. Uneasiness is general in the country."¹¹⁹

On 16 January 1914, Guillaume reported:

"I have already had the honor of informing you that it is Messrs. Poincaré, Delcassé, Millerand and their friends who have invented and pursued the nationalist, boastful and jingoistic policy, whose revival we have witnessed. It is a danger for Europe — and for Belgium. I see in it the greatest peril which threatens the peace of Europe to-day. Not that I am entitled to suppose that the Government of the Republic is disposed to trouble the peace of Europe deliberately — I think rather the contrary — but because the attitude which the Barthou party has taken up is, in my judgment, the determining cause of the increase of military tendencies in Germany. The bellicose follies of the Turks and the *Three Years' Law* appear to me to constitute the only dangers to be feared from the point of view of European peace. I feel able to indicate the perils which the present military legislation of France has created. France, weakened by the decrease in her nativity, cannot long support the three years' system of military service. The effect is too considerable, financially, and as regards personal burdens. France cannot sustain such an effort, and what will she do to escape from the position in which she will have placed herself?"¹²⁰

On 8 May 1914 (within three months of the outbreak of war) Guillaume reported:

"It is incontestable that during the past few months the French nation has become more Chauvinistic and more confident in itself. The same men, instructed and competent, who, two years ago, showed lively anxiety at the mere mention of possible difficulties between France and Germany, have changed their tone. They now say they are certain of victory. They dwell largely on the progress, which is truly very real, accomplished in the army of the Republic, and contend that they could at least hold the German army in check sufficiently long to enable Russia to mobilize, to concentrate her troops, and to fling

¹¹⁹ Quoted by Morel: *Truth and the War*, pp. 153-4.

¹²⁰ Morel: *Truth and the War*, p. 154; Dickinson: *The European Anarchy*, pp. 29-30.

herself upon her Western neighbor. One of the most dangerous elements in the situation is the re-enactment in France of the Three Years' Law. It was imposed light-heartedly by the militarist party, and the country cannot sustain it. Two years from now it will either have to be abrogated or war must ensue."¹²¹

And on 9 June 1914 (within two months of the war), he reported:

"The Press campaign of the last few days in favor of the *Three Years' Law* has been one of extreme violence. Every possible means has been adopted to influence public opinion, and it has even been sought to involve the personality of General Joffre. We have witnessed, too, the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg taking, contrary to all usage, a somewhat dangerous initiative for the future of France. Is it true that the St. Petersburg Cabinet imposed the adoption of the *Three Years' Law* upon this country and is pressing to-day with all its weight to secure the maintenance of that law? I have not succeeded in obtaining light upon this delicate point, but it would be the graver, seeing that those who direct the destinies of the Empire of the Tsars cannot be ignorant of the fact that the effort which is thus demanded of the French nation is excessive and cannot long be sustained. Is the attitude of the Cabinet of St. Petersburg based, then, upon the conviction that events are so near that the tool it proposes to place in the hands of its ally can be used?"¹²²

These reports, coming from the representatives of countries friendly to France, make clear, as Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson has said:

"that France, supported by the other members of the Triple Entente, could appear, and did appear, as much a menace to Germany as Germany appeared a menace to France; that in France, as in other countries, there was jingoism as well as pacifism; and that the inability of French public opinion to acquiesce in the loss of Alsace-Lorraine was an active factor in the unrest of Europe."¹²³

Indeed, reference (for the purpose in hand) to ambassadorial reports is hardly necessary, for Poincaré, while endeavoring to minimize the importance of the reports of Baron Guillaume, himself says:

"The announcement of the increase in the German army, the apprehension caused by the Balkan crisis, the difficulties that had been raised in connection with the application of the Moroccan treaty, the recollection of the alarms caused by the Tangier, Casablanca, and Agadir incidents — all this naturally gave new life to the patriotic sentiment in France."¹²⁴

¹²¹ Morel: *Truth and the War*, pp. 154-5.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 155. And see Dickinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-5.

¹²³ *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

¹²⁴ Poincaré, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

BELGIAN PREPARATION

Upon subsequent pages will be noted the military conversations between the British Military Attaché at Brussels and the Belgian Generals, Ducarne and Jungbluth, at which arrangements for co-operation in case of war with Germany were discussed. At this place we note merely that, early in December 1912, an army bill was introduced into parliament; was approved by the Central Commission of the Belgian Chamber of Deputies on 10 January 1913; and was passed by the Chamber on 30 May by vote of 104 to 62. It passed the Senate on 20 June.

"It entails general service, in place of recruiting only one son per family; the men called up will be no less than 49 per cent. of the annual contingent, the exemptions including seamen, eldest sons of families of six, etc. For the infantry the period of service with the colors is fifteen months, and special provisions relate to the recruiting reserve and reserve *calves*. It involves the creation of eight new regiments and a new divisional staff.

"The Government estimates the effective forces available in time of peace at 54,641 men for 1913-14, 56,080 for 1914-15, 57,034 for 1915-16, instead of 35,000 as at present. In 1926 the total armed strength will be 340,000 men; 180,000 for the field army and 160,000 for the defence of Antwerp, Liège and Namur. . . .

"These figures are important, for although the treaties of 1839 retain their validity and the guarantee of Belgian neutrality remains unchanged, all the Powers concerned may successively be drawn into a conflict, and none might then be in a position to adopt the course taken by Great Britain in 1870 (A. R., 1870, pp. 106-7). The Belgian Government has therefore laid down and developed its military policy on such lines that it can defend its territory effectively, and no belligerent can use it as a base or as a line of communication.

"The Act necessitates a supplementary annual expense of 20,000,000 to 21,000,000 francs (800,000*l.*). To meet this the Government proposed new taxes on trading companies, Stock Exchange transactions, motor-cars and cinematographs. The existing taxes on companies' profits and mines disappear, and are replaced by a tax of 4 per cent. on dividends from shares and debenture interest. Foreign securities are subject to stamp duty of 1 per cent. on the nominal capital. These taxes are expected to produce 1,800,000*l.* a year."¹²⁵

RUSSIAN PREPARATION

The military expenditure of Russia during the decade preceding the war has already been referred to.¹²⁶ Upon subsequent pages¹²⁷ will be noted the conversations in September 1912 between M. Sazonoff

¹²⁵ *Ann. Reg.*, 1913, pp. [359-360. ¹²⁶ *Ann.*, pp. 508-13. ¹²⁷ Pp. 531-2.

and Sir Edward Grey in London,¹²⁸ and between Sir Edward Grey and Poincaré (involving Russian arrangements) in April 1914 in Paris.¹²⁹ A few additional points will now be dealt with.

1. In Russia, as in France, the contingent of recruits which in the usual course would have been released for service, were (July 1913) retained with the colors.¹³⁰ This was because of the Balkan complications.

2. By change in the army law (1913), men who had been born in 1892 were required to report for service in 1913 instead of 1914.¹³¹ The military budget, providing for the increased expenditure, was passed by the Duma, in secret session, in July.¹³²

3. In February 1913, M. Delcassé, who as French Foreign Minister had wanted war with Germany in 1905, was sent as French Ambassador to St. Petersburg.

4. Russia's preparation for war was political as well as military. She succeeded in separating — not nominally but actually — Roumania from the Quadruple Alliance.¹³³ On 3 April 1914, the Russian Ambassador at Vienna reported:

“Now, however, under existing political conditions, Austria is entirely isolated in the Balkans, and every attempt on her part to alter the *status quo* would meet with decided resistance on the part of the League — Roumania, Serbia, and Greece.”¹³⁴

5. During the early part of 1914, Russia was endeavoring to link Montenegro with Serbia, and, meanwhile, she (Russia) agreed to send military officers to assist in the development of the Montenegrin army.¹³⁵ The negotiations created alarm in Austria-Hungary, and on 5 March 1914, her Ambassador at St. Petersburg said to the Russian Foreign Minister:

“If such a union should take place, Austria would not remain a passive spectator. The interests of the monarchy in the Adriatic do not allow of any displacement of the balance of power. The Adriatic has the same significance to Austria-Hungary as the Black Sea to Russia.”¹³⁶

6. The proceedings of the Russian Council of 21 February 1914, and the character of the associated memoirs which Sazonoff and Basili presented to the Czar (referred to in a previous chapter¹³⁷) remove any doubt as to Russian preparation for European war, and the purpose which, in Russian interest, such a war was intended to subserve.

¹²⁸ *Post*, pp. 531-2.

¹²⁹ *Post*, pp. 532-6.

¹³⁰ Morel, *Pre-War Diplomacy*, p. 27; *Ann. Reg.*, 1913, p. [337].

¹³¹ Morel, *Pre-War Diplomacy*, p. 27.

¹³² *Ann. Reg.*, 1913, p. [337].

¹³³ See cap. IX.

¹³⁴ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 443.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 440-50.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 446. And see pp. 447-8.

¹³⁷ Cap. II, pp. 55-8.

ANGLO-FRENCH WAR-ARRANGEMENTS

For the expected war with the Central Powers, the *entente* Allies prepared not only by accumulating men and armaments but by consultations and agreements. These must now be sketched. Material for full relation is not yet available.

Morocco Episodes, 1905-6 and 1911. Quarrel between France and Germany over Morocco was brought to climax by the landing of the Kaiser at Tangier in April 1905. Germany required that the dispute should be submitted to an international conference. France at first refused. Mr. Roosevelt, the President of the United States, intervened at the request of the Kaiser, and succeeded in inducing France to change her attitude. A conference was agreed to. It sat from January to April 1906 and arranged terms of settlement. In both of the periods, namely, prior to the agreement for the conference and during its sittings, the United Kingdom warmly supported France; gave her assurances of armed support; and, had the necessity arisen, would have taken arms in her defence. During the second of the Morocco incidents (1911), the British government made perfectly clear that in case of war the United Kingdom would support France as against Germany.¹³⁸

Military Conversations, 1906-14. Not only did Sir Edward Grey give assurances of support to France in connection with the two Morocco incidents, but, almost immediately after assuming office, he authorized the institution of "conversations" between the British and French military Staffs — "conversations" which meant arrangements of the most detailed character for co-operation in case of war with Germany; "conversations" which continued, with little interruption, from January 1906 down to the outbreak of the 1914 war. Sir Edward Grey, in his memorable speech of 3 August 1914, made partial revelation of what had been going on, but it was not until after the war had commenced that the public had any idea of the detailed completeness of the arrangements. At a dinner in London, April 1919, to Sir Henry Wilson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, a letter from Marshal Foch, containing the following, was read:

"Long before the war, General Wilson and I worked together to prepare for the struggle against the German peril, which we both foresaw. It is due to the success of his mobilization arrangements, and his careful and detailed plans for transporting troops, that the British army was able to arrive quickly on the field of battle, as soon as the government had come to a decision."¹³⁹

Captain Peter E. Wright (late Assistant Secretary, Supreme War Council) tells us that:

"Sir Henry had predicted and prepared for this war all his life.

¹³⁸ See *post*, cap. XX.

¹³⁹ *N. Y. Times*, 9 April 1919.

He had been over this ground on which it was to be fought time after time on his bicycle, and, for example, had chosen the billets our headquarters were to occupy in one place during the Mons retreat long before the war."¹⁴⁰

Viscount French, in a contribution to the *Daily Telegraph* (24 May 1919) said:

"The British and French General Staffs had for some years been in close secret consultation with one another on the subject (*i.e.*, the point of concentration for the British forces on their arrival in France). The German menace necessitated some preliminary understanding in the event of a sudden attack. The area of concentration for the British forces had been fixed on the left flank of the French, and the actual detraining stations of the various units were all laid down in terrain lying between Maubeuge and Le Cateau. The headquarters of the Army were fixed at the latter place. It is now within the knowledge of all that the General Staffs of Great Britain and France had for a long time held conferences, and that a complete mutual understanding as to combined action in certain eventualities existed." The Viscount added that:

"it was somewhere about 1908 that the certainty of a war was forced upon my mind."

The British-French conversations resulted in the signing of military and naval conventions,¹⁴¹ and an understanding that, at the outbreak of war with Germany, (1) France would be protected from the German navy by a predominant British fleet; (2) a British military force, sufficient for the protection of the left flank of the French army, was to be ready for immediate action; and (3) the force necessary for that purpose was estimated at 100,000 men. Speaking in the House of Lords (13 July 1917), Viscount Haldane said:

"The French General Staff advised the Government that if we could put 100,000 men within ten days on the eastern frontier of France we should have made such contribution to the military forces of France as would probably enable her to withstand any attack that could be made upon her while our enormous fleet was operating at sea. At the outbreak of war, we sent 160,000 men to France in 12 days."¹⁴² In a letter to *The Times*, the Viscount said:

"I could make some comment on other figures offered by Lord Midleton. But it is perhaps sufficient to remind him of what is now hardly doubtful — that the Expeditionary Force was at least by 100 per cent. more powerful than any force which would have been sent abroad in the same time under the old system."¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ *At the Supreme War Council*, pp. 37-8.

¹⁴¹ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 719-22.

¹⁴² *The Times* (London), 14 July 1917.

¹⁴³ 16 July 1917.

Arrangements of 1912 — Letters of 22 November. Hardly had the probability of war over the second of the Morocco incidents passed (1911) than preparations by Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Montenegro, for war against Turkey commenced,¹⁴⁴ with the consequent danger of a European conflagration. Rapid diplomatic interchanges between members of the *entente* Powers ensued, and these were supplemented by important visits and interviews. The French Prime Minister, Poincaré, went to St. Petersburg (August 1912), where he consummated the Franco-Russian naval convention; the Russian Foreign Minister, Sazonoff, went to London (September); Prince Liven, the Chief of the Russian Naval Staff, went to Paris; Sir Edward Grey and the French Ambassador, Paul Cambon, exchanged letters in London; the United Kingdom concentrated her big ships in the North Sea, while the French transferred some of hers from Brest to Toulon, and others from Toulon to Bizerta.

The *Annual Register* of the same year (1912) contained the following:

“Misgivings, however, as to national defence were raised by the announcement (Sept. 10) that practically the whole of the French Navy would henceforth be concentrated in the Mediterranean, a step which, though quite explicable strategically, was explained by the *Paris Temps* as part of an arrangement whereby France, in the event of a great war, could hold the Mediterranean against the fleets of Italy and Austria-Hungary; Russia the Baltic (though her new fleet was as yet unbuilt), while Great Britain took charge of the Channel and the North Sea. The naval alarmists apprehended that the Mediterranean would again be abandoned; and Liberal critics interpreted the step as foreshadowing the conversion of the Triple *Entente* into a naval alliance, and so precluding an improvement in Anglo-German relations. This, it was said, was the doing of the Foreign Office without the knowledge of Parliament.”¹⁴⁵

Arrangements of 1914 — Sir Edward Grey in Paris. On 21 April 1914, King George V and Sir Edward Grey visited Paris, and committed themselves deeply to both France and Russia. What took place is related on subsequent pages.

¹⁴⁴ Treaty between Serbia and Bulgaria, 13 March 1912; and treaty between Greece and Bulgaria, 29 May 1912. War began 12 Oct.

¹⁴⁵ *Ann. Reg.*, 1912, p. [209]. Bethmann-Hollweg says that the changes in the disposition of the fleets were agreed to in September 1912: *op. cit.*, p. 61. Poincaré fixes the same date: *The Origins of the War*, p. 72. Mr. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt noted on 31 May the meeting at Malta of Asquith, Churchill, Kitchener, and added: “It was on this occasion that our people came to the decision of getting the French Navy to police the Mediterranean, while the English Navy should keep the North Sea and English Channel for the French in the event of a war with Germany, thus enabling them to make a definite promise to the French Government of help by land in a war with Germany”: *My Diaries*, II, pp. 405-6.

ANGLO-RUSSIAN ARRANGEMENTS

Arrangements in 1912 — Sazonoff in London. Shortly prior to the outbreak of the first of the Balkan wars (12 October 1912), Sazonoff, the Russian Foreign Minister, anxious as to the British attitude, visited London. He was well pleased with his reception. Reporting to the Czar after his return to St. Petersburg, he said that he had been invited to Balmoral (the King's residence in Scotland), and there (23-28 September) had a series of conversations with Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Bonar Law (leader of the Opposition), who were also guests.

"Taking advantage," he said, "of these favorable circumstances, I deemed it useful to inform myself, among other things, during one of my conversations with Ed. Grey, as to what we might expect of England in case of a conflict with Germany, and I consider as being very significant the words which I was able to hear on this subject from the responsible chief directing the foreign policy in England, as well as, later, from the mouth of King George himself. Your Imperial Majesty is aware that M. Poincaré, during his visit to St. Petersburg, last summer, expressed to me his desire to ascertain clearly to what extent we could depend upon the co-operation of the English fleet in case of such a war. After having communicated confidentially to Grey the tenor of our naval convention with France, and after having remarked to him that, by reason of the treaty concluded, the French fleet will be employed in safeguarding our interests in the southern theatre of the war by preventing the Austrian fleet from breaking through into the Black Sea, I asked the Secretary of State whether England could, on her part, render us the same service in the North Sea by diverting the German squadrons from our Baltic coasts. Without hesitation, Grey declared that if the circumstances foreseen arose, England would put forth every effort to deal a most telling blow to the naval power of Germany. The question of military operations has already been discussed before the respective authorities, but from these deliberations has developed that, admitting that the English fleet might be able to enter the Baltic with ease, its stay there would be in considerable danger, because, in view of the possibility of Germany laying hands on Denmark and of closing the exit of the Baltic, the English fleet might find itself caught as in a trap. That is why England will probably confine her operations to the North Sea. *Apropos* of this, Grey voluntarily confirmed to me what I already knew from Poincaré: the existence of an arrangement between France and England, by virtue of which, in case of a war with Germany, England has incurred the obligation of lending to France her assistance not only on sea but also on land by means of landing troops on the continent.

"Touching the same question, the King in one of the conversations which he had with me, expressed himself in a manner even more

decisive than his Minister, and having, with manifest irritation, mentioned the fact that Germany was endeavoring to place herself in equality with Great Britain as regards naval forces, His Majesty exclaimed that in case of conflict this would have fatal consequences, not only for the German fleet, but also for the maritime commerce of Germany. 'We shall sink every single German ship we shall get hold of.' These last words seemed to express not only the personal sentiments of His Majesty, but also the popular feeling in England with regard to Germany."¹⁴⁶

While thus freely indicating his own views, Sir Edward hesitated to pledge his government. Shortly afterwards, during the progress of the Balkan hostilities, when differences between Serbia and Russia on the one hand and Austria-Hungary on the other had become acute, the Russian Ambassador at London reported (14 November 1912) that Sir Edward had promised:

"diplomatic support . . . but [said] that, for the moment, a direct question as to the opening of hostilities would place him in a different position."

"Nicolson" (the British Under Secretary of State for War) "told Cambon" (the French Ambassador), "with every reservation, that, if the Triple Alliance were fighting against the Entente, England would, he thought, take part in the war."¹⁴⁷

A few days afterwards (20 November), the Russian Ambassador, reporting another conversation with Sir Edward Grey, said:

"He had told me enough to prove to us that, under certain special conditions, England would enter the war. For this, in my opinion, two conditions are necessary: in the first place, the active intervention of France must make this war a general one; secondly, it is absolutely necessary that the responsibility for the aggression fall upon our opponents."¹⁴⁸

It was immaterial that the United Kingdom might have no direct interest in the subject matter of the quarrel.

Arrangements in 1914 — Sir Edward Grey in Paris. The Balkan wars (1912-13) closed without breeding wider war, but the tension remained. The treaty of Bucarest had effected a postponement only. At the end of 1913 and commencement of 1914, occurred the Liman von Sanders affair.¹⁴⁹ Then came the probability of the renewal of war between Greece and Turkey; and, having good reason for apprehension as to the future, Sazonoff (the Russian Foreign Minister) proposed (12 February 1914) a meeting of representatives of the three *entente* Powers

¹⁴⁶ *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 346-8. Cf. *Ann. Reg.*, 1912, p. [213].

¹⁴⁷ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 399-400.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 405.

¹⁴⁹ *Ante*, pp. 60-9.

in order to "establish the community of their views."¹⁵⁰ The suggestion having been accepted by Sir Edward Grey, and a visit to Paris by King George V and Sir Edward having been arranged, Sazonoff telegraphed to the Russian Ambassador there (2 April) proposing: "a further reinforcement and development of the so-called Triple-Entente, and, if possible, its transformation into a new Triple-Alliance."¹⁵¹

Reporting, in reply, on 9 April, the Russian Ambassador at Paris said that the Foreign Minister would speak to Grey at the approaching conference:

"He believes that it will prove very easy to bring forth convincing arguments in favor of this thought, for it is obvious that, France having military and naval conventions with Russia and England, the system ought to be co-ordinated and completed by a corresponding accord between Russia and England."¹⁵²

About the same time, the Czar had a conversation with Buchanan (the British Ambassador); the Ambassador recounted it to Paléologue (the French Ambassador); and Paléologue telegraphed (18 April) to Paris as follows:

"I have learned from a private and reliable source¹⁵³ that the last conversation of the Emperor with the Minister of Foreign Affairs before his departure for the Crimea revolved entirely upon the question of the Anglo-Russian alliance. Dealing with the more or less imminent risks of a conflict between Russia and Germany, His Majesty referred to the eventuality of a renewal of hostilities between Greece and Turkey. In such case, the Ottoman government will close the Straits. Russia could not tolerate a measure so prejudicial to her commerce and her prestige. 'To re-open the Straits,' declared His Majesty, 'I should employ force.' But would not, then, Germany range herself on the side of Turkey? It is in a possible intervention by Germany that the Emperor Nicholas perceives the principal danger of new complications menacing the East. And it is for the purpose of preventing Turkey obtaining the assistance of Germany, and above all in order to assure (a word here not decipherable) that he hopes so strongly for the prompt conclusion of an accord with England. I venture to recall to Your Excellency that the Emperor Nicholas declared to me that he would be grateful if M. the President would explain, in his conversations with King George, the reasons which, according to him, require a

¹⁵⁰ Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 712-3. Cf. *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 249-50, 255-9, 312-13.

¹⁵¹ Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 714.

¹⁵² *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 256-7.

¹⁵³ The document now bears a note in the handwriting of the Czar as follows: "This must be Sir Buchanan, who has communicated to Paléologue my conversation with him." The telegram was intercepted by the Russian government, and thus came before the Czar (*Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 258, note).

tightening of the Anglo-Russian relations. Will not M. the President deem it useful to inform the Emperor personally of the result of his conversations? I know that M. Sazonoff would be equally regardful of everything which you would be good enough to convey to him of your conversations with Sir Edward Grey." ¹⁵⁴

An interesting account of the ensuing visit to Paris of King George and Sir Edward Grey (21-24 April 1914) appears in the report of Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador there (29 April) as follows:

"The exchange of ideas between the French and English statesmen was devoted principally to the relations between France and England; in approaching this subject, the two parties were unanimous in recognizing that the accord existing between the two Powers required modification only with reference to the matter of form that it might be complete, and that, in continuing to apply regularly and loyally the principles of 'the *entente cordiale*' to all present political questions, England and France would every day strengthen and develop the bonds already existing between them; it was recognized also that France and England associated Russia in their policy. Also, as you have no doubt remarked, this thought is very clearly expressed in the communiqué which was sent to the press after the conference and which was published here and in London. M. Doumergue told me that this communiqué, edited by Cambon, had been examined and approved in all its details, not only by himself, but also by Sir Edward Grey; the latter entirely approved the mention in it of Russia and that it indicated that the three Powers had for object not only the maintenance of 'peace,' but also the stability of 'the equilibrium.'

"After having deliberated on the different political questions of the moment, M. Doumergue passed to the question of the relations between Russia and England and communicated to Sir Edward Grey our wishes in the form in which they had been conveyed to him; he presented, above all, the two following arguments in favor of a more intimate accord between Russia and England; 1st, the efforts which Germany was making to induce us to abandon the 'Triple Entente,' under the pretext that it is only a weak and uncertain political combination, and, 2d, a naval convention concluded between us and England would liberate a part of the English fleet, which would then be able to act with greater energy, not only in the North Sea and the Baltic, but also in the Mediterranean. M. Doumergue remarked, among other things, to Sir Edward Grey, that, in two years we would have in the Baltic Sea an important fleet composed of dreadnoughts. Sir Edward Grey replied to M. Doumergue that he personally approved of all that had just been said by his interlocutor, and that he would be ready to conclude with Russia an accord analogous to those which existed between

¹⁵⁴ *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 258.

England and France; at the same time he did not conceal from M. Doumergue that there were in England, not only among the members of the Government party, but also among the members of the Cabinet itself, some elements predisposed against Russia and little inclined to closer rapprochement with her. He expressed, however, the hope of being able to induce Mr. Asquith and the other members of the Government to share his point of view, and he proposed the following *modus procedendi*: the two Cabinets, that of London and that of Paris, would, by common agreement, commence by communicating to the Cabinet of Petersburg all the conventions existing between England and France, namely; 1st, the military and naval conventions between the two Staffs, which, as you know, have, so to speak, a facultative character, and 2d, the political convention, which has assumed the form of letters exchanged between Sir Edward Grey and the French Ambassador at London; it is said in one of these letters that when, by reason of events, England and France should decide upon active operations, they 'would take account of' the said conventions. The two Cabinets would, at the same time, ask us as to our manner of viewing the subject, which would afford us the opportunity of broaching, in our turn, the question of an analogous Russo-English convention. In Sir Edward Grey's view, we could conclude with England only a naval convention, for all the English land forces have already been assigned to their destination and evidently could not co-operate with the Russian army. Sir Edward Grey added that, immediately on his return to England, he would submit this plan to Mr. Asquith and his other colleagues. M. Doumergue asked him if it would not be preferable to combine all these conventions between Russia, France, and England, in a single triple accord. Sir Edward Grey replied that personally he did not think this suggestion impracticable, but that it could be taken up only at a later period in connection with the detailed examination of the proposed accord between Russia and England. MM. Doumergue, Cambon, and de Margerie, who had been present at this conference, declared that they had been struck by the firmness and precision of Sir Edward Grey's words, saying that he was ready for a more intimate union with Russia. They are persuaded that if he spoke with reserve of the probable attitude of Mr. Asquith and the other members of the Cabinet with regard to the accord, that was only a matter of form, and that if he had not been sure in advance of their agreement, he would have abstained from making such concrete suggestions."¹⁵⁵

The notable points in this document are: (1) It was recognized that the accord between the United Kingdom and France "required modification only with reference to the matter of form." (2) "That the three Powers had for object, not only the maintenance of 'peace,' but

¹⁵⁵ *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 259-61. Another translation of this document appears in Morel, *Pre-War Diplomacy*, pp. 35-7.

also the stability of 'the equilibrium.'" (3) Sir Edward Grey "would be ready to conclude with Russia an accord analogous to those which existed between England and France." (4) The United Kingdom could make "only a naval convention" with Russia—"for all the English land forces have already been assigned to their destination and evidently could not co-operate with the Russian army." (5) The French gentlemen "declared that they had been struck by the firmness and precision of Sir Edward Grey's words, saying that he was ready for a more intimate union with Russia." (6) Some clever management of Sir Edward's colleagues might be necessary.

Profoundly impressed, as he said, with the reception of the King and himself in Paris, Grey, on his return to London, asked the Russian Ambassador there to call upon him (12 May):

"On this occasion" (the Ambassador reported), "Grey spoke with a warmth which is not usual with him, and which proved that he had made his deductions from firmly-grounded judgment. The intention by which he was governed in asking me to come and see him, in order to make such a communication to me, is entirely clear. He wished to announce to me the beginning of a phase of a still closer rapprochement to France. This intention became still more obvious to me upon his remarking to me, without any preliminaries, that I was doubtless informed about the conversation which he had had with Doumergue on the subject of Russia."

To the suggestion of an alliance, Grey replied that he did not consider an alliance possible:

"As you see, we have no alliance to-day even with France."¹⁵⁶ Four days afterwards (16th), the Ambassador again reported:

"According to Sir Edward's views, the course of the proceedings might be as follows: After authorization by his Government, Cambon would inform me of the exchange of notes, whilst, at the same time, Sir Edward on his part would communicate the same to me in order that I may inform the Russian Government. Just as the agreements entered into with France by Great Britain provide in the event of a *casus belli* first of all for the co-operation of the armies, so, according to Sir Edward Grey, the nature of things demands that the eventual agreements with Russia should relate to the navy. The negotiations would have to be carried on between the Russian and English staffs of Admiralty. The negotiations with France took place at the time in London, and the French military and naval attachés in London travelled to Paris in order to obtain the instructions which occasion rendered necessary. Finally, Prince Louis of Battenberg went to Paris quite unofficially in order to co-ordinate the agreements. Cambon was of the opinion that after the correspondence had been communicated it would

¹⁵⁶ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 716-7; *Un Livre Noir*, II (under date of 9 May), pp. 318-20.

be necessary to determine the further proceedings. He told me that, according to the opinion of Sir Edward Grey, the negotiations might be conducted precisely as in the case of France, i.e., that our naval attaché in London would be empowered to enter into negotiations with the British Admiralty staff, after he had been given instructions in St. Petersburg, for even repeated journeys on the part of the naval attaché would in no wise arouse public attention, whereas the arrival of prominent Russian naval officers in London would surely become known and might lead to undesirable comments."¹⁵⁷

Two days afterwards (18th), the same Ambassador reported that Grey had informed Asquith of the interchanges at Paris, and added:

"Without binding the Cabinet to the present, Asquith had answered that he saw no insurmountable difficulties against carrying out the plan proposed at Paris. Since then Asquith has repeated this to Cambon himself. The latter has been able to establish the fact that the Prime Minister is very favorably disposed to plans of that kind. These refer, consequently, to eventual military conventions between Russia and England analogous to those which exist between France and England. The latter would be communicated to us in confidence, whereupon the Russian Government would have to make analogous proposals to the British Government, which, according to the nature of things would refer more to the navy than to the army."

After referring to the "extraordinarily hearty" reception accorded to the British King and Queen in Paris, the Ambassador added:

"I doubt whether a more powerful guarantee for common military operations could be found in the event of war than this spirit of the Entente, as it reveals itself at present, reinforced by the existent military conventions. If we review the various phases of the Entente, it cannot be denied that England has never hesitated, in threatening moments, to place herself on the side of France; the same holds good for Russia on every occasion on which English and Russian interests were simultaneously affected, and this, despite the difficulty of reconciling the policies of both countries in questions which arise day after day, and despite those reasons, which it would lead too far to discuss here, but which explain clearly why the *entente* between Russia and England has not taken root so deeply as that between France and England."¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 718; *Un Livre Noir*, II (under date of 15 May), pp. 320-1.

¹⁵⁸ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 719-20. Two years previously, Poincaré had held the same view as to supersession of the *entente* by an alliance. On 6 June 1912, the Russian Ambassador at Paris reported that: "According to his conviction, there was no need for France or England to desire any alteration in the present relations. Recent events had proved that, according to the present European situation, the community of interests of France and England, and the understanding based thereon, was so great and indisputable, that, in case of any serious complications, the common policy of both nations could thereby be safeguarded" (*Ibid.*, p. 643). That the German government was of the same opinion

The next day, Sazonoff reported to the Czar that:

"The Government of Great Britain has decided to charge the Chief of Staff of the English Navy with entering into *pourparlers* with the military agents of the Russian and French navies, with the object of elaborating the technical conditions of eventual co-operation of the naval forces of England, Russia, and France."¹⁵⁰

Four days later (23 May), the Russian Ambassador again wrote:

"Sir Edward yesterday requested that Cambon and I call upon him. As my French colleague had already informed me, the Secretary of State confirmed to me the fact that the English Minister's Council had approved of the answer which he gave to Doumergue in Paris in his own name,¹⁶⁰ after the French Minister had spoken of the relations between Russia and England, and had indicated how useful, under certain contingencies, previous military conventions between the governments would prove. The first step to be considered was to communicate to the Russian Government on the part of France and England the two confidential and secret documents which had been exchanged between the French and British Governments in the year 1912.¹⁶¹ Sir Edward laid special stress upon the point that the text of these documents showed that no alliance was concluded between the two Powers. They fulfilled the purpose rather of putting the substance of military agreements in the proper light — agreements which had been entered into between the army and navy authorities for the eventuality that it should become necessary for the British and French naval and land forces to co-operate actively. Sir Edward emphasized the fact that without some such previous agreement, an immediate co-operation, even with the best of wills and in spite of the close political *entente* between both governments, would encounter serious technical difficulties. . . . Hereupon Sir Edward Grey gave me a copy of the document which he had handed to the French Ambassador on November

appears from a report of the next day (7 June 1912) from the Russian Ambassador at Berlin: "The question of transforming the friendly agreement between England and France into an alliance arouses great interest in Germany, and great anxiety in political circles here. Although the press loudly asserts that this question has no significance for Germany, since events during late years have proved that in case of a conflict between Germany and France, England would place herself on the side of the latter anyway, no matter whether she was bound to France by an alliance or by an agreement, the contrary is, nevertheless, established by the passion with which this question is discussed and by the space which it occupies in all newspapers. Not the fact of the conclusion of an alliance between England and France makes itself felt, but rather the circumstance that the Germans have been finally convinced that England is now turning away from the possibility of a rapprochement with Germany — a rapprochement which Germany in truth passionately desired" (*Ibid.*, p. 644).

¹⁵⁰ *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 266-7. And see pp. 324-5.

¹⁶⁰ *Cf. ibid.*, p. 323.

¹⁶¹ *Ante*, p. 118.

22, 1912, and Cambon, on his part, gave me, upon the authority of his Government, a copy of the reply which he had directed to Sir Edward Grey on the following day. In response to my question, Sir Edward Grey declared that the most expedient thing to do would be to authorize our naval attaché in London to place himself in communication with the British Staff of Admiralty. The First Lord of the Admiralty, as well as the British Ministers, were instructed as to our plan. The British Staff of Admiralty is in possession of the conventions regarding the navy which were worked out in common by France and England. As to the remaining agreements, France, who was allied with us, might use them as she deemed necessary.”¹⁶²

Five days afterwards (28 May — just a month prior to the assassination of Franz Ferdinand), Sazonoff wrote to the Ambassador at London as follows:

“The readiness of the British Government to begin, without delay, negotiations regarding the conclusion of an agreement between Russia and England, which would concern joint operations of our naval forces in the event of a common military action, has been received on our part with a feeling of the greatest satisfaction. Quite apart from the fact that such an agreement is desirable from a special military standpoint, we attach great importance to it in a general political sense. In the conclusion of such an agreement, we see an important step towards bringing England into closer union with the Franco-Russian alliance, and an effective means of reinforcing the recognition of the common interests of England and Russia, which we are convinced, will favorably influence all the questions which affect British and Russian interests. I have called the attention of our Ministry of the Navy, in particular of our Naval Agent in London, most specially to the great political significance of the impending negotiations which the latter will have to carry on with the English Staff of Admiralty. The proposal made by the British Government, respecting the form in which the convention is to be concluded, is recognized by us as in every way suited to the purpose, and Captain Volkoff has been instructed to enter into negotiations with the British Government.”¹⁶³

Sazonoff enclosed with this despatch a copy of a resolution adopted at a meeting in the office of the Chief of the Staff of Admiralty (26 May) indicating the principles to be observed in the framing of a convention with the United Kingdom.¹⁶⁴ Thereupon the Russian Naval Attaché in London — Volkoff — went to St. Petersburg, and, after his return to London, the Russian Ambassador reported as follows (11 June):

¹⁶² Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 721. The date of the document is given in *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 321, as 19 May. Probably the telegram given on pp 323-4 as of 20 May preceded the one above quoted.

¹⁶³ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 724-5. ¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 725-7.

"I notified Grey yesterday that Captain Volkoff had returned from St. Petersburg, and had been instructed to enter into negotiations with the Admiralty. Grey replied that he would at once acquaint the First Lord of the Admiralty of this."¹⁶⁵

Disclosures through the newspapers (the result of official indiscretion) now caused Grey a good deal of embarrassment.

"He regretted this the more," he said to the Russian Ambassador (11 June), "since he will be obliged to reply to a question relative to this which will be put to him in the House of Commons."

The Ambassador supplied comfort by the assurance (as he reported) that:

"the *Nouvelles* had published a *démenti*. Grey was not aware of this, and was very well satisfied. He asked me to send him the text. He then told me in general outlines the answer which he thought of returning in parliament, and which would cover our negotiations, as well as those which had taken place with France."¹⁶⁶

Grey's *démenti* in the House, the same day, narrowly escaped falsehood,¹⁶⁷ and was not credited in Berlin,¹⁶⁸ although diplomatically acknowledged.¹⁶⁹ In order, if possible, to ascertain the truth, Herr Albert Ballin was sent to London, von Jagow (German Foreign Minister) describing in a letter to him (15 July), the situation as follows:

"There are actually negotiations taking place between London and Petersburg for a naval agreement in which — this in the greatest secrecy — Russia is striving for a wide-reaching military and naval co-operation. These negotiations have not yet come to a result in spite of Russian pressure, partly because Grey has become somewhat hesitant on account of the *Tageblatt's* indiscretion and on account of the open opposition in a part of the Liberal Party in England. But the Russians appear to be pressing hard, and who knows what they may offer as an equivalent in return? In the end, Grey will certainly not oppose its conclusion, unless he meets with opposition within his own party or in the Cabinet. . . . The importance which the matter has for us, I need not go into further. We could scarcely consider any longer any further drawing closer to England. It seems to me, therefore, very important to make once more an effort to wreck the affair. Perhaps if the Liberal Party became alarmed, or if a member of the Cabinet made decided objections, Grey would hesitate before definitive conclusion. My idea was whether you, through your numerous relations with influential Englishmen — have you not such relations with Lord Haldane? — could sound a warning beyond the Channel."¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 728. Cf. pp. 732-3.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 728-9. Cf. p. 733.

¹⁶⁷ *Un Livre Noir*, II, No. 327; *Remarques &c.*, p. 110.

¹⁶⁸ Kautsky Docs., No. 6; Bethmann-Hollweg, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

¹⁶⁹ Kautsky Docs., Nos. 5, 20, 30.

¹⁷⁰ Kautsky Docs., No. 56.

Shortly afterwards (23 July), Ballin dined with Grey and Haldane, but elicited nothing. He was told:

“that such a naval accord did not exist, and that it was not in the intentions of England to conclude such a convention.”¹⁷¹

Here the revelations end, but enough has appeared to enable us to see why, when purporting to read in the House of Commons, on 3 August 1914, the letter which, on 22 November 1912, he gave to the French Ambassador,¹⁷² Sir Edward Grey omitted its last sentence.¹⁷³ He did not desire to provoke inquiries which might lead to the discovery that there existed a “military and naval convention” between the United Kingdom and France which had been “worked out by the General and Naval Staffs”;¹⁷⁴ and that this convention was in several parts. The convention has never been published.

ANGLO-BELGIAN ARRANGEMENTS

Arrangements of 1906. Having arrived (January 1906) at a general understanding with France (as above stated), the British government opened military “conversations” with Belgium. War between France and Germany was, at the moment, in the balance, and depended upon the success or failure of the Algeciras conference (then sitting) in connection with the first of the Morocco incidents.¹⁷⁵ From a report of General Ducarne, Chief of the Belgian General Staff, to the Belgian Minister of War, dated 10 April 1906 (discovered by the Germans when in Brussels), and containing an account of a series of interviews with Lieutenant-Colonel Barnardiston (British Military Attaché at Brussels), we learn that upon the first occasion (middle of January):

“Lieutenant-Colonel Barnardiston told me of the preoccupation of the British General Staff concerning the general political situation and the existing possibilities of war. Should Belgium be attacked, it was proposed to send about 100,000 men.”¹⁷⁶

That was, as we have seen, the number required by France. He continued as follows:

“The disembarkation of the British troops would take place on the French coast, in the neighborhood of Dunkirk and Calais, in such a manner that the operation might be carried out in the quickest possible

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, No. 254.

¹⁷² *Ante*, pp. 117-8.

¹⁷³ *Ante*, p. 118.

¹⁷⁴ Bogitshevich speaks of an Anglo-Russian Marine Convention of May 1911: *Causes of the War*, p. 23.

¹⁷⁵ The Algeciras settlement was signed on 6 April 1906.

¹⁷⁶ Oakes and Mowat: *The Great European Treaties of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 152. The report may also be seen in the *Belgian Grey Book*, 1914, App. No. 4. A fac-simile reproduction of the manuscript of the Ducarne report may be seen in Fuehr: *The Neutrality of Belgium*, between pages 220 and 221.

way. Landing at Antwerp would take much longer, as larger transports would be required, and, moreover, the risk would be greater."

Barnardiston (the report continues):

"emphasized the following points: (1) our conversation was absolutely confidential; (2) it was in no way binding on his Government; (3) his Minister, the British General Staff, he, and myself were the only persons then aware of the matter; (4) he did not know whether his Sovereign had been consulted."

At a subsequent meeting, Barnardiston:

"gave me a detailed statement of the strength of the British forces; we might rely on it that, in twelve or thirteen days, two army corps, four cavalry brigades, and two brigades of mounted infantry would be landed."

Referring to a third interview, the report continues:

"As the plans of the British General Staff advanced, the details of the problem were worked out with greater precision. The Colonel assures me that half the British Army could be landed in eight days, and the remainder at the end of the twelfth or thirteenth day, except the mounted infantry, on which we could not count till later."

"At another interview Lieutenant-Colonel Barnardiston and I examined the question of combined operations in the event of a German attack directed against Antwerp, and on the hypothesis of our country being crossed in order to reach the French Ardennes. Later on, the colonel signified his concurrence in the scheme I had laid before him, and assured me of the assent of General Grierson, Chief of the British General Staff.

"Other questions of secondary importance were likewise disposed of, particularly those respecting intermediary officers, interpreters, gendarmes, maps, illustrations of uniforms, English translations of extracts from certain Belgian regulations, the regulation of customs dues chargeable on the British supplies, hospital accommodations for the wounded of the allied army, &c. . . . In the course of the last meetings which I had with the British attaché he communicated to me the daily embarkation table of the troops to be landed at Boulogne, Calais and Cherbourg."

In the course of the conversations:

"Lieutenant-Colonel Barnardiston, on his side, informed me that he had at present little confidence in the support or intervention of Holland. He likewise confided to me that his Government intended to move the British base of supplies from the French coast to Antwerp as soon as the North Sea had been cleared of all German warships."¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁷ *Belg. Grey Book*, 1914, App. No. 4; Oakes and Mowat, *op. cit.*, pp. 155-6. The reference to Antwerp receives additional significance from the fact that upon the day after the British declaration of war, Sir Edward Grey gave to Belgium assurance that "the British fleet will ensure the free passage of the Scheldt for the

Upon the margin of the report, in Ducarne's writing, were the words:

"The entry of the English into Belgium would only take place after the violation of our neutrality by Germany."

In an added note, under date "End of September 1906," was the following:

"When I met General Grierson at Compiègne at the manœuvres of 1906, he assured me that the reorganization of the British army would result not only in ensuring the landing of 150,000 men, but in enabling them to take the field in a shorter period than had been previously estimated."

Although no definite agreement was entered into by the two officers, the arrangements were so far advanced that Barnardiston expressed a desire for an understanding upon "the question of the chief command" of what he referred to as "the allied forces." Upon that point nothing was settled — as far as we know.

Arrangements of 1912. A further Anglo-Belgian conversation (23 April 1912), this time between Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges, the new British military attaché at Brussels, and General Jungbluth, is recorded in another document discovered by the German army at Brussels:

"Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges told the General that Great Britain had available for dispatch to the Continent an army composed of six divisions of infantry and eight brigades of cavalry, in all 160,000 men. She had also all that she needed for home defence. Everything was ready. The British Government, at the time of the recent events,¹⁷⁸ would have immediately landed troops on our territory, even if we had not asked for help. The general protested that our consent would be necessary for this. The military attaché answered that he knew that, but that as we were not in a position to prevent the Germans passing through our territory, Great Britain would have landed her troops in any event. As to the place of landing, the military attaché was not explicit. He said that the coast was rather long, but the general knows that Mr. Bridges made daily visits to Zeebrugge from Ostend during the Easter holidays. The general added that, after all, we were, besides, perfectly able to prevent the Germans from going through."¹⁷⁹

British, French, and Belgian Comments. The German newspapers having published (October 1914) General Ducarne's report of his interview with Barnardiston in 1906,¹⁸⁰ Sir Edward Grey immediately (14 October) issued a circular despatch in which he said:

provisioning of Antwerp" (*Belg. Grey Book*, 1914, No. 49). The Scheldt at its mouth flows through Dutch territory. By treaty it was open to commerce. But Holland claimed a right to prevent its use for war purposes. Belgium was not inclined to dispute the claim, and the British fleet was never called into operation for the purpose suggested.

¹⁷⁸ The Franco-German dispute over Morocco. See cap. XXII.

¹⁷⁹ *Belg. Grey Book*, 1914, App. No. 4 (2); Oakes & Mowat, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-7.

¹⁸⁰ *Belg. Grey Book*, 1914, App. No. 4.

“In view of the solemn guarantee given by Great Britain to protect the neutrality of Belgium against violation from any side, some academic discussions may, through the instrumentality of Colonel Barnardiston, have taken place between General Grierson and the Belgian military authorities as to what assistance the British army might be able to afford to Belgium should one of her neighbors violate that neutrality. Some notes with reference to the subject may exist in the Archives of Belgium. It should be noted that the date mentioned, namely 1906, was the year following that in which Germany had, as in 1911, adopted a threatening attitude towards France with regard to Morocco, and, in view of the apprehensions existing of an attack on France through Belgium, it was natural that possible eventualities should be discussed.”¹⁸¹

The later Belgian document, containing the conversation between Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges and General Jungbluth, in which the former said that during the 1911 crisis:

“as we [Belgians] were not in a position to prevent the Germans passing through our territory, Great Britain would have landed troops in any event”

— even without Belgian consent — was not published until 25 November 1914. To it the Belgian Foreign Minister replied by a circular despatch (4 December 1914) deprecating the attachment of great importance to the opinion of a Military Attaché which was not concurred in by the Foreign Office.¹⁸² In the following January, Sir Edward Grey published a note¹⁸³ declaring that a statement recently made by the German Chancellor, that:

“England had determined to debark troops in Belgium without the assent of the Belgian Government”

was false; and as to what the British government would have done, he referred to his former statement (7 April 1913¹⁸⁴). M. Poincaré's view, as reported by the Belgian Ambassador at Paris (22 February 1913), was as follows:

“M. Poincaré has assured me that France would never take the initiative in violating our neutrality, but that if the German armies should enter Belgium and we should not be strong enough to drive them back, the Government of the Republic would consider themselves justified in taking whatever steps they thought expedient to defend French territory; either upon their own frontier or, if the General Staff thought it more expedient to advance to meet the Imperial armies.”¹⁸⁵ Under war-stress, every country would do the like.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, App. No. 3. The Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs also issued circular despatches: *Belg. Grey Book*, 1915, Nos. 98, 99, 102, 103, 106.

¹⁸² *Belg. Grey Book*, 1915, No. 99.

¹⁸³ *Belg. Grey Book*, 1915, No. 102; *The Times* (London), 27 Jan. 1915. The reply of the Belgian government is in *Belg. Grey Book*, 1915, No. 103.

¹⁸⁴ *Belg. Grey Book*, 1914, App. No. 1; *Belg. Grey Book*, 1915, No. 100, Enc.

¹⁸⁵ *Belg. Grey Book*, 1915, No. 1.

Arrangements 1912-14. From 1912 on, special care seems to have been applied by the British War Office to the development of plans for a campaign in Belgium. The following is taken from *The North German Gazette* of 2 December 1914:¹⁸⁶

“Further proofs have been found that England, in co-operation with Belgium, had prepared the war against Germany already during peace time to the utmost, not only in a diplomatic but also in a military way. Recently, our troops seized some secret military guide-books about Belgium, edited by the British General Army Staff, entitled: ‘Belgium Road and River Reports, prepared by the General Staff, War Office.’

“We are in possession of four volumes of this handbook, of which volume 1 was printed in 1912, volume 2 in 1913, volume 3 (in two parts) and volume 4 in 1914.

“They show the following imprint: ‘*Confidential. This book is the property of the British Government and is to be used for the personal information of . . . , who himself is responsible for the safe keeping of the book. The contents are to be revealed to authorized persons only.*’

“The handbook contains evidence of military investigations in the minutest and most exact descriptions of the territory. The introduction reads as follows: ‘These reports can give only the condition of the roads at the time in which they were investigated. It will always be advisable to investigate them again before they are used, in order to make sure that they are not closed on account of repairs, pipe laying,’ etc.

“Thus, for instance, in volume 1, page 130 and following, the great highroad, Nieuport-Dixmude-Ypres-Menin-Tourcoing-Tournai, is described and accompanied by maps, with special regard to quality of the roads, the surrounding country, tactic considerations, observation posts and water conditions. In this discussion, all the villages along the highroad are enumerated and described. Thus we find their exact distance from one another, detailed descriptions of the road net, with reference to elevators, bridges, crossings, telephone and telegraph stations, railway stations, including length of platforms and landing places, branch lines, oil tanks, etc. It is always mentioned whether the population speaks partly or altogether French.

“As an illustration we may cite the tactical remarks about Dixmude on page 151:

“It will be difficult to take Dixmude from the north or from the south. The best position for defence against attacks from the south would be the railway embankment in the west as far as the street, to the east a number of small fields. As far as 1,500 yards west of the street the field is favorable for firing; farther to the east the view is obstructed by trees. Two battalions would be sufficient for occupation. The hostile artillery probably would be situated near Hoogmolen and

¹⁸⁶ As translated in Fuehr: *The Neutrality of Belgium*, pp. 221-4.

Vertkant; otherwise there is nothing of tactical importance, nor is there anything which might retard marching. Point of observation, the mill of Reencheek permitting of a free panoramic view; also the Koelberg, seven and one-half miles distant from Ypres, with outlook toward the east and south.'

"It may be mentioned that the church towers are usually mentioned as good observation points.

"In a similar detailed manner the entire course of the Scheldt, with all tributaries, villages, landings, opportunities for crossing, widths and depths, bridges, supply of boats, etc., is described.

"Thus the handbook forms an excellent guide for the army leader, the officer of the general staff, and for officers second in command. To the book are added:

"First — A schedule containing information about communities and villages for purposes of billeting; furthermore, instructions regarding transportation and all other items which may be needed by the local commander.

"Second — A number of important hints to aviators for that part of Belgium which is situated south of the line Charleroi-Namur-Liège as well as for the surroundings of Brussels.

"This very carefully and comprehensively drawn memorandum is supplemented by a map showing the landing places. It bears the inscription 'Secret' and is dated July 1914.

"These military geographical handbooks cannot be supposed to have been written shortly before or during the war. That would, aside from putting them in print, have been impossible. The material for the work has, on the contrary, as may be seen from remarks in the different parts, been collected since 1909. The first volume was printed in 1912.

"The manuals therefore prove a minute preparation carried on during the last five years for an English campaign in neutral Belgium. They are nothing else but secret regulations of military service for an English army fighting in Belgium. The English general staff, therefore, since long time, prepared themselves for this event and foresaw the same so surely that they undertook the painstaking work of compiling these military handbooks.

"Without ready and far-reaching assistance on the part of the Belgian government and military authorities such a work would not have been possible. These strategical and tactical reports, going into the minutest details, as mentioned above, or such exact data concerning railroads and transportation service, rolling stock, locks and bridges, could not have been obtained in any other way. The schedules about the billeting capacity, which deal with Belgium as if it were English territory, could only be derived from the Belgian government. Without doubt official Belgian material has been used. It has been made suit-

able for English purposes, or, at many places simply translated into English!

“Very extensively, indeed, England and Belgium had prepared themselves together during times of peace for military co-operation. Belgium in political as well as in military matters was nothing but a vassal state of England. The indignation which England today is putting up before the world because of Germany’s so-called breach of neutrality is made altogether meaningless and unjust by those documents.

“When on account of our operations at the coast, the English and French press remarked sneeringly that we were not sufficiently instructed about the dangers of the inundation district in the so-called ‘Polderland’ they were right in so far as before the beginning of the war we did not know Belgian territorial conditions any better than may be learned from sources obtainable in the book market.

“The English reconnoitering reports and the excellent maps, therefore, were very valuable booty for us. We were able to make immediate use of this remarkable material and thus could fight England with her own weapons. This should be the best indication of the importance of our enemies’ painstaking labor.”

The following is taken from *The North German Gazette* of 15 December 1914:¹⁸⁷

“New and convincing evidence with reference to the Anglo-Belgian complicity has been found. Some time ago there was detained in Brussels the British Secretary of Legation, Grant-Watson, who had remained in the British Legation after the office had been transferred to Antwerp and later on to Havre. This Grant-Watson has been caught in the act of disposing of a number of documents which he at the time of his detention had taken with him from the Legation.

“An investigation of these documents showed that they were of the most intimate kind, containing exact information of the years 1913 and 1914, about the Belgian mobilization plans and about the defense of Antwerp. Among them were also found circular decrees directed to the higher Belgian commands, with fac-simile signatures of the Belgian Minister of War and the Belgian General Staff. Furthermore, a report of a session of the ‘commission for the provisions base at Antwerp’ of May 27, 1913, was found.

“The fact that these documents had been at the British Legation sufficiently proves that the Belgian Government in military matters had no secrets from the British Government and that these two governments had a continuous and most intimate understanding in military matters.”

German preparation for an advance through Belgium and Luxemburg was well known. The nature of recent railway construction left little room for doubt upon that point.¹⁸⁸ Indeed, the impracticability

¹⁸⁷ As translated in Fuehr: *The Neutrality of Belgium*, p. 225.

¹⁸⁸ Per Sir Edward Grey, 14 Oct. 1914 (*Belg. Grey Book*, 1914, App. No. 3;

of successful invasion through the narrow opening between Luxemburg and Switzerland, past the French forts which guarded the entrance, was, in itself, for military experts, sufficient evidence of Germany's intention. It was for that reason, and not, as far as we know, with a view to a French invasion of Germany through Belgium, that the British government made arrangements with Belgium.

FRANCO-RUSSIAN ARRANGEMENTS

Arrangements of 1912. Prior to January 1912, while M. Caillaux was Prime Minister and M. de Selves was Minister for Foreign Affairs, Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador at Paris, had found it useless to talk to France about international matters,¹⁸⁹ but with the substitution, in that month, of M. Poincaré for both these men, the situation underwent notable alterations.¹⁹⁰ The new minister wanted, for example, to understand the Balkan situation, and, for that purpose, to be informed as to the nature of the conversations between Russia and Austria-Hungary. He questioned Isvolsky, who wrote to Sazonoff (29 January):

"I write to you all this quite frankly, for it appears to me that it is for us a matter of extreme importance that we should take into account the principles expressed by M. Poincaré when assuming power, and act accordingly. The present President of the Council and Minister for Foreign Affairs is a very considerable personality, and his cabinet seems to be the strongest combination which has been formed during quite a series of years."¹⁹¹

In another despatch of the same month (15 February), Isvolsky said:

"New international complications in the spring are here expected in military circles, and the War Department continues to prepare actively for military operations in the near future."¹⁹²

Naval Convention, 1912. Ensuing communications led to the arrival in Paris of Prince Liven, Chief of the Russian Naval Staff, and to the negotiation of a formal naval convention between the two countries."¹⁹³

On 18 July, Isvolsky reported as follows:

"Prince Liven said to me that, in his opinion, the exchange of views which had just taken place has produced for us very advantageous results; notably the Chief of the General Staff of the French Marine had thoroughly understood the necessity, in the joint interest of the two allied countries, for facilitating our task of naval hegemony in the

and see *ibid.*, 1915, No. 1021; per Lord Haldane, 14 Nov. 1914 (*Belg. Grey Book*, 1914, App. No. 61); and see *Nineteenth Century*, June 1918, p. 1126; Nov. 1918, p. 819.

¹⁸⁹ Isvolsky to Sazonoff, 23 Nov. 1911: *Un Livre Noir*, I, pp. 164-8.

¹⁹⁰ *Ante*, p. 519.

¹⁹¹ *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 203.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 194.

¹⁹³ See *ante*, cap. IV, pp. 98-9.

Black Sea by the exercise of appropriate pressure on the fleets of our eventual enemies; that is to say, principally of Austria-Hungary, and perhaps of Germany and Italy. For this purpose, France declared herself ready during the time of peace to transfer the concentration of her Mediterranean naval forces farther to the east, namely to Bizerta. This decision, which is clearly expressed in the *procès-verbale*, is considered by Prince Liven as a great success for us, all the more that it does not carry with it any obligation on our part.”¹⁹⁴

Poincaré in Russia, 1912. In projecting a visit to St. Petersburg in August 1912, Poincaré was motived principally by three considerations: (1) desire for more complete information as to the Balkan situation; (2) desire for interchanges more intimate than usual through Ambassadors; and (3) desire to complete the proposed naval convention between the two countries.¹⁹⁵ When shown, in St. Petersburg, the text of the Serbo-Bulgarian alliance as against Turkey, Poincaré at once said:

“that it was, as a matter of fact, a war-agreement;”¹⁹⁶ and: “when I returned to France,” he records, “I was unable to conceal from the Cabinet the serious anxiety it has caused me.”¹⁹⁷

He was right. War-preparations in the Balkans were being hurried. On the last day of the next month, mobilization by the Balkan allies was decreed. It is said (and not without some foundation) that Sazonoff, during Poincaré’s visit, had urged the necessity for additions to the strength of the French army.¹⁹⁸ Sazonoff had, at the least, excited apprehensions which prompted the extension of the period of French military service from two years to three.¹⁹⁹ Shortly afterwards, Grand Duke Nicholas, uncle of the Czar, attended the army manœuvres in France, announcing that he had come to bear to the army of France the greetings of the Russian army²⁰⁰ — had come, more probably, to make easier the proposed addition to the strength of the French army.

French Assurance to Russia, 1912. That Poincaré had been impressed with the necessity for pre-war preparations is clearly indicated in a despatch from Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador at Paris, of 12 September 1912:

“M. Poincaré declared to me that the French Government was examining in the most serious fashion the question of international eventualities which were likely to occur; he recognizes fully that such or such events, for example the destruction of Bulgaria by Turkey, or

¹⁹⁴ *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 297.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, II, pp. 338, 534.

¹⁹⁶ Poincaré, *op. cit.*, pp. 115, 117. The Russian Ambassador at Sofia was of the same opinion: *ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

¹⁹⁸ The subject is discussed by Morel: *Truth and the War*, pp. 150–6.

¹⁹⁹ *Ante*, pp. 519–20.

²⁰⁰ *Ann. Reg.*, 1912, p. [303.

the attack on Serbia by Austria-Hungary, might oblige Russia to emerge from her passive rôle and to have recourse to diplomatic action and afterwards to military intervention against Turkey or Austria. Conformably with the declarations which we have received from the French Government, the most sincere and energetic *diplomatic* support under such circumstances is assured us by France. But under such circumstances, the Government of the Republic would not be in a position to obtain from parliament or public opinion the necessary sanction for military measures of any kind. But if the conflict with Austria produced armed intervention by Germany, the French Government recognized in advance that that would be a *casus foederis*, and it would not hesitate for a minute to fulfill the duties toward Russia which rested upon it. 'France,' added M. Poincaré, 'is undoubtedly disposed toward peace and neither seeks nor desires war, but intervention by Germany against Russia would immediately modify that disposition,' and he is convinced that in such case parliament and public opinion would readily approve the decision of the Government to render armed support to Russia."²⁰¹

Movements of French Fleets. Before going to St. Petersburg, Poincaré, with a view to aiding Russia in an effort to command the Black Sea, had (as above noted) agreed to transfer the concentration point of the Mediterranean fleet from Toulon to Bizerta. That was done; and Poincaré, after return from his visit, transferred the third squadron from Brest to Toulon:

"This decision," Poincaré said to Isvolsky, "has been taken in common agreement with England and constitutes a later development and a complement of the conventions concluded sometime ago between the General Staffs of the French and English fleets."²⁰²

On 20 November 1912, Isvolsky reported to Sazonoff that, in a conversation with Signor Tittoni (the Italian Ambassador at Paris), Poincaré had said that if:

"Russia should find herself at war with Austria and Germany, she could count fully on the armed support of France."²⁰³

Military and Naval Conversations 1905-1913. During the ten years prior to the great war, the Chiefs of the Military Staffs of France and Russia met annually for the purpose of consultation as to preparations for war with Germany. The minutes of the seventh, eighth, and ninth conferences (1911, 1912, and 1913) have been published.²⁰⁴ They are interesting, especially for those who believe that Germany sprang hostilities upon an unprepared France. Quotation of a few items from

²⁰¹ *Un Livre Noir*, I, pp. 325-6; *Remarques &c.*, p. 70.

²⁰² Isvolsky to Sazonoff, 12 Sep. 1912: *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 326.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 349; Morel: *Pre-War Diplomacy*, p. 20.

²⁰⁴ *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 419-437.

the minutes of 1911 will suffice for present purposes. The French Chief of Staff said:

“From what is known of the German mobilization and concentration, one may conclude that the first great encounters will probably take place in Lorraine, Luxemburg, and Belgium from the fifteenth to the eighteenth day.”

Continuing his exposition:

“He shows that the French army concentrates as rapidly as the German army, and that, on the twelfth day, it is in a position to take the offensive against Germany, with the help of the British army on its left flank. . . . In a word, it is essential that Germany shall be attacked at the same time on the west and on the east. . . . In 1900, the Russian General Staff, in conformity with this point of view, undertook to attack on the eighteenth day with the first *échelon* sufficient to engage victoriously five or six German army corps supported by a certain number of reserve divisions. . . . It seems that the new disposition of Russian troops in peace time involves certain difficulties from the point of view of prompt intervention at the commencement of the campaign. Indeed, in 1910, the passage of the frontier was indicated as taking place only towards the twentieth day.”

“The Russian Chief of Staff — General Gilinsky — said that the reorganization of the Russian army:

“followed the campaign in Manchuria, but this transformation only really began in 1908, that is to say, four years ago. A great number of improvements are in the way of being carried out; but, using the greatest diligence, the Russian army will be complete in heavy artillery only in 1913, in mitrailleurs only in 1914, and in new infantry munitions only in 1916.”

After a reference to recent improvements in Austrian preparations, the Chief added:

“In these circumstances, Russia will not be in a position before two years at least to sustain a war against Germany with a certainty of success. She would certainly be in a position to ward off blows, but perhaps less able to give decisive blows.”

“General Gilinsky specially declares that the mobilized troops of the active army will have completed their concentration on the frontier on the fifteenth day, with the exception of the last trains and convoys, and that efforts will be made to take the offensive on that day, without awaiting the final elements referred to, which will be complete only on the twentieth day.”²⁰⁵

In 1912 and thenceforward, the conferences between the military chiefs were supplemented by similar conferences between the naval chiefs.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 420-3.

²⁰⁶ Isvolsky to Sazonoff, 18 Jan. 1912: *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 296.

Delcassé at St. Petersburg, 1913. It was no doubt because of the international tension caused by the second of the Morocco incidents (1911), so quickly followed by the outbreak of the first Italo-Turkish war and the first of the Balkan wars (8 October 1912), and the consequent necessity for developing the spirit of war-preparation, that Poincaré sent as Ambassador to St. Petersburg, M. Delcassé the man who in 1905 had resigned his office as Foreign Minister rather than forego war with Germany. The significance of the appointment was obvious. Reporting the fact to his Foreign Office, Baron Guillaume, the Belgian representative at Paris, said (21 February 1913) that it had burst upon the city "like a bombshell."²⁰⁷ Baron Beyens (Belgian Ambassador at Berlin) noted that:

"The skillful hand of M. Delcassé, sent as Ambassador to St. Petersburg during the events of 1912, had drawn tighter the bond of the alliance."²⁰⁸

The report of the Russian Ambassador at Berlin (27 February 1913) contained the following:

"The nomination of M. Delcassé to the post of Ambassador at Saint Petersburg has produced here an extremely unfavorable impression. This energetic statesman, who was so long Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic, has acquired the reputation of being a determined enemy of Germany, and it is to him that is attributed the initiation of the so-called 'Einkreisungspolitik,' that is to say the formation around Germany of a circle that would be hostile to him."²⁰⁹

The report of the Russian Ambassador at Paris (13 March 1913) contained the following:

"According to the advice of our military attaché, he [Delcassé] has been especially entrusted with the mission of convincing our War Department of the necessity for multiplying the number of strategic railways with the object of accelerating the concentration of our army on the western frontier. In this field, M. Delcassé is so competent and so acquainted with the views of the French Chief of the General Staff that he is able to discuss the said question with our military authorities in a perfectly free fashion; he is, moreover, armed with the powers necessary for proposing to Russia all the financial means which might be acquired for this object under the form of corresponding railway loans."²¹⁰

Arrangements of 1914 — Poincaré in Russia. The important conversations at Paris in April 1914, during the visit of King George and Sir Edward Grey, have been noted on previous pages.²¹¹ Three months afterwards — that is, immediately prior to the recent war — Poincaré (President of the Republic) was again in St. Petersburg (23-25 July),

²⁰⁷ Morel: *Truth and the War*, p. 153.

²⁰⁸ *L'Allemagne avant la Guerre*, p. 20.

²⁰⁹ *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 36.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

²¹¹ Pp. 532-6.

this time accompanied by M. Viviani (French Premier and Foreign Minister). The assassination of the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary (28 June) had made further consultation advisable. Some reference to the ensuing conversations may be seen in a subsequent chapter.²¹²

GERMAN PREPARATION

The Oxford Faculty. Explaining, from a British point of view, "Why we are at war," and stating, as they understood it, "Great Britain's Case," six "Members of the Oxford Faculty of Modern History" commenced their treatment of the European rivalry in armaments with a reference to Germany's:

"unenviable prominence in the 'race of armaments' which all thinking men have condemned as an insupportable tax upon Western civilization, and which has aggravated all the evils that it was intended to avert."²¹³

Very curiously, the writers then proceeded to lay a large part of the blame upon France, and to offer extenuation for the actions of Germany:

"The beginning of the evil was perhaps due to France; but, if so, it was to a France which viewed with just alarm the enormous strides in population and wealth made by Germany since 1871. The 'Boulangier Law' of 1886 raised the peace footing of the French army above 500,000 men, at a time when that of Germany was 427,000, and that of Russia 550,000. Bismarck replied by the comparatively moderate measure of adding 41,000 to the German peace establishment for seven years; and it is significant of the difference between then and now that he only carried his Bill after a dissolution of one Reichstag and a forcible appeal to its successor.

"France must have soon repented of the indiscretion to which she had been tempted by a military adventurer. With a population comparatively small and rapidly approaching the stationary phase, it was impossible that she could long maintain such a race. In 1893, Count Caprivi's law, carried like that of Bismarck after a stiff struggle with the Reichstag, raised the peace establishment to 479,000 men. Count Caprivi, at the same time, reduced the period of compulsory service from three years to two; but while this reform lightened the burden on the individual conscript, it meant a great increase in the number of those who passed through military training, and an enormous increase of the war strength.²¹⁴ The Franco-Russian Entente of 1896²¹⁵ was a

²¹² Cap. XXVII.

²¹³ *Why We are at War*, p. 41.

²¹⁴ That is rather curious. The professors themselves note (p. 45) that when France wanted to increase her military strength in 1913, she *lengthened* the period of service from two years to three.

²¹⁵ The Franco-Russian alliance was arranged in 1891-4.

sign that France began to feel herself beaten in the race for supremacy and reduced to the defensive. In 1899 the German peace strength was raised to 495,000 for the next six years; in 1905 to 505,000. On the second of these occasions the German Government justified its policy by pointing out that the French war strength was still superior to that of Germany; and would become still stronger if France should change the period of service from three years to two. The German law was announced in 1904; it had the natural effect. The French Senate not only passed the new law early in 1905, but also swept away the changes which the Lower House had introduced to lighten the burden of annual training upon territorial reserves. France found her justification in the Moroccan episode of the previous year.

"This was not unreasonable; but since that date France has been heavily punished for a step which might be taken to indicate that *Revanche* was still a feature of her foreign policy. Since 1886 her utmost efforts have only succeeded in raising her peace establishment to 545,000 (including a body of 28,000 colonial troops stationed in France), and her total war strength to 4,000,000. In the same period the peace establishment of Germany was raised to over 800,000, and her total war strength of fully trained men to something like 5,400,000. It is obvious from these figures that a policy of isolation has long ceased to be possible to France; and that an alliance with Russia has been her only possible method of counterbalancing the numerical superiority of the German army, which is certainly not less well equipped or organized than that of France."²¹⁶

The writers then refer to the German Army Acts of 1905 and 1911, passed because of the Franco-Russian alliance, and add:

"National defence was of course alleged as the prime consideration; and if these preparations were really required by growing danger on the two main frontiers of Germany, no German could do otherwise than approve the policy, no foreign Power could feel itself legitimately aggrieved."²¹⁷

In view of these admissions, it is unnecessary to comment upon any of the German Army Bills down to and inclusive of the Bill of 1911, when, at the end of the usual quinquennial period, an addition of 10,000 men to the peace footing was made. Admittedly, until 1912 or two years prior to the great war, Germany was not responsible for the "race of armaments." What then happened?

German Army Bill, 1912. In the British *Annual Register* for 1912 is the following:

"The new Army and Navy Bills were introduced in the Reichstag on April 15. The Army Bill provided for the addition of two new

²¹⁶ Pp. 41-3.

²¹⁷ P. 43.

Army Corps, one on the western and one on the eastern frontier, and an increase of the total peace strength from 515,321 to 544,211, corresponding in percentage with the increase of the population of the German Empire as shown by the census of 1910. The cost of this increase was estimated at 22,025,000*l.*, up to the year 1917."²¹⁸ Following closely, as it did, upon the increase of 1911, this bill is not inaptly referred to by the Oxford writers as "sensational,"²¹⁹ but the necessity for it, from a German point of view, is easily understood. During seven months of the previous year (April to November), relations with France in connection with the second of the Morocco incidents had been severely strained, and the United Kingdom, through Mr. Lloyd George, had indicated a hostile attitude.²²⁰ Italy and Turkey, two of Germany's potential supporters, were at war with each other. Complications were arising between Italy and Austria-Hungary — two of Germany's allies:²²¹ and Russia was forming her Balkan League — Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and Montenegro — aimed at Turkey and Austria-Hungary.²²² The Prussian War Minister, in a speech supporting the bill (April), frankly stated that it had been rendered necessary by the experiences of 1911. The experiences fully justified the action. And it is noteworthy that, at the time, the German proposals were regarded in France as not unreasonable. On 27 February 1913, the Russian Ambassador at Paris reported as follows:

"From all that has occurred at this moment, one cannot help concluding that the German Government, now as in the Agadir period, has given the strongest impulse to national and military sentiment in France. It is fitting to remark also that the French press, while unanimous in requiring insistently an immediate response from France to the military measures of Germany, maintains the calmest of tones with regard to this country, recognized its right of augmenting its effectiveness, and does not accuse it of aggressive intentions toward France. Among persons in authority, the idea is expressed that Germany will be forced to reckon with the military and political weakness of the Triple-Alliance, since a considerable part of the Austrian army has been diverted from our frontiers for removal toward the Balkan States."²²³

German Army Bill, 1913. Events subsequent to the passage of the 1912 army bill deepened European anxiety as to the probability of general war, and very materially decreased Germany's security. Prior to the date of the publication of the army bill of 1913 (28 March²²⁴)

²¹⁸ P. [322.

²¹⁹ P. 44.

²²⁰ See cap. XXII.

²²¹ See cap. VII.

²²² See cap. VIII.

²²³ *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 35.

²²⁴ *Ann. Reg.*, 1913, p. [307.

Turkey had been beaten, but had not finally acknowledged the fact (peace treaty 30 May); relations between Russia and Austria-Hungary in connection with Serbian and Montenegrin frontages on the Adriatic had become severely strained; and war between the members of the Balkan League had appeared to be probable (It soon commenced). Under these circumstances, the German Chancellor introduced, on 7 April, the new bill, and supported it in a speech which was summarized in the *British Annual Register* as follows:

“In introducing the new Army and Taxation Bills on April 7, the Imperial Chancellor, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, stated that the increase of the Army proposed was, ‘according to the unanimous judgment of the military authorities, necessary in order to secure the future of Germany.’ The Army took about 280,000 recruits a year, but the reserve of able-bodied young men was so large that they could take some 60,000 a year more. They could no longer afford the luxury of going without tens of thousands of trained men whom they could have, but at present did not take. There would in all probability be no European war in which Germany would not be involved, and then they would have to fight for their existence. No great Power desired war, but no man could know whether war might not at any moment break out, and a state of tension had for months existed between Austria-Hungary and Russia, which was only prevented from developing into war by the moderation and the sense of responsibility of the Powers. ‘Europe will feel grateful to the English Minister of Foreign Affairs for the extraordinary ability and spirit of conciliation with which he conducted the discussions of the Ambassadors in London and which constantly enabled him to bridge over differences. Germany shares all the more sincerely in this gratitude, because she knows herself to be at one with the aims of English policy, and, standing loyally by her allies, has labored in the same sense.’ Referring to the ‘extraordinary vitality’ of the Christian States of the Balkans as displayed in the war, the Chancellor proceeded to point out that ‘if it should ever come to a European conflagration in which the Slavs would be ranged on one side and the Germans on the other, this newly developed vitality of the Slavs on the Balkan would be a disadvantage to Germany, as they would hold the balance of forces in that quarter which had hitherto been occupied by Turkey, and it is therefore the duty of Germany to provide against such a contingency, though it could not be said that a collision between Slavs and Germans is inevitable.’ With Russia, her great Slav neighbor, Germany enjoyed ‘the most friendly relations,’ and racial antagonisms ‘will not by themselves lead to a war between us and Russia; we, at any rate, shall never stir up such a war, and I do not believe that those who at present hold power in Russia will ever do it: but the Panslavist movement . . . has received a powerful stimulus from the victories of the Slav States in the Balkans . . . and we are compelled to take this into

account when we think about the future.' As compared with twenty-five years earlier, he considered that the chances of the Governments of great Powers forming a centre of warlike aspirations had decreased rather than increased. 'Nobody could conceive the dimensions of a world-conflagration and the misery and trouble it would bring upon the nations. All previous wars would probably be as child's play, and no responsible statesman would be disposed lightly to set the match to the powder.' On the other hand, the power of public opinion had increased, and the driving-force of the noisiest elements of it tended in excited times to consist not of majorities but of minorities. Thus in France, though he did not believe that the French people as a whole were pressing to war, many of the quieter and thinking people believed that the French Army was at least equal, if not superior, to the German, and based hopes on the alliance with Russia and perhaps also on the *entente* with England; a Chauvinist literature had arisen, which boasted of the superiority of the French Army and saw visions of Germany overrun by masses of Russian infantry and cavalry. 'By illusion, France had already won in a future war with Germany.' France had for a long time called up every man to her Army, and now she was reverting to three years' service. In Russia, too, there was a most marvellous economic development of the giant Empire, with its inexhaustible natural resources and an Army reorganization such as she never had before. Both Powers desired to be as strong as possible, and Germany would be challenging Providence if she said that, although she ought to be stronger, it would cost too much, and she would remain as she was. So it had been in France in 1870, and in Turkey in 1912. 'The German Army Bill was presented not because Germany wanted war, but because she wanted peace, and because if war came she wanted to win.'²²⁵

The effect of this law was to add 63,000 new recruits per annum,²²⁶ at an initial expenditure of £52,000,000 to £53,000,000²²⁷ and an increased annual expenditure of £9,000,000 to £9,500,000. That was a very material addition to German strength, but, once more, the Russian Ambassador at Paris, on the eve of the publication of the bill, reported that it was not there regarded as unreasonable. He said (13 March 1913):

"The most influential organs of the French press have adopted the point of view that Germany was absolutely in the right in deciding that it was necessary for her to augment her military forces, and that a decision of this kind by no means indicates the intention of attacking France."

The Ambassador noted the German allegation:

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. [308-10.

²²⁶ Russia was, at the same time, adding 130,000: *ante*, p. 511.

²²⁷ This was provided for by a levy on property.

“that the new armaments come as result of the general political situation of Europe and, indirectly, through the changes which have been effected in the Balkan Peninsula.”²²⁸

The British press condemned the new bill, but the Foreign Office took a more reasonable view. On 24 February 1913, Count de Lalaing, Belgian Minister in London, reported as follows:

“The English Press naturally wants to throw upon Germany the responsibility for the new tension which results from its proposals, and which may bring to Europe fresh occasions of unrest. Many journals consider that the French Government, in declaring itself ready to impose three years’ service, and in nominating M. Delcassé to St. Petersburg, has adopted the only attitude worthy of the great Republic in presence of a German provocation. At the Foreign Office, I found a more just and calm appreciation of the position. They see in the reinforcement of the German armies less a provocation than the admission of a military situation weakened by events which it is necessary to strengthen. The Government of Berlin sees itself obliged to recognize that it cannot count, as before, on the support of all the forces of its Austrian ally, since the appearance in south-east Europe of a new Power, that of the Balkan allies, established on the very flank of the Dual Empire. Far from being able to count, in case of need, on the full support of the Government of Vienna, it is probable that Germany will have to support Vienna herself. In the case of a European war, she would have to make head against her enemies on two frontiers, the Russian and the French, and diminish perhaps her own forces to aid the Austrian army. In these conditions, they do not find it surprising that the German Empire should have felt it necessary to increase the number of its Army Corps. They add at the Foreign Office that the Government at Berlin had frankly explained to the Cabinet of Paris the precise motives of its action.”²²⁹

Much the same view was held by the Russian and French Ambassadors at Berlin. The former, reporting on 14 March 1913, said:

“The spectre, or rather the emergency, of a possible Austro-Russian conflict has produced a strong movement for increasing Russia’s military preparedness. Even if the Austro-Hungarian army still deserves the same confidence as before, yet the strength and power of her possible enemies have been materially augmented. In view of all this, the German Government has become convinced that it would be an unpardonable omission on its part not to bring into play all the military

²²⁸ *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 44.

²²⁹ G. Lewis Dickinson: *The European Anarchy*, pp. 92-3; Morel: *Diplomacy Revealed*, p. 246. Quite appreciating the significance of “new political conditions,” Sazonoff, the Russian Foreign Minister, made lengthy report to the Czar with reference to “the problem of our own attitude” toward them: *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 363. See *ante*, cap. II, pp. 54-5.

strength available. Since Germany, in this matter, follows the example of France, it is felt here that the German Government's proposed military reforms are devoid of every aggressive character. . . . The necessity of filling up the vacancies in the army was explained by the Secretary of State by the fact that the present numerical strength of the French army is but a trifle less than that of the German army, and by the fact that the unfavorable geographical position of Germany compels her to defend both western and eastern frontiers.

"An additional reason why the German Government must feel anxiety about strengthening its military power must, in my opinion, also be sought for in the ever-increasing suspicion here of Austria-Hungary, who can hardly feel quite satisfied with the support given her by Berlin in her selfish policy. This view is shared by my French colleague, who likewise inclines to the belief that the relations between Berlin and Vienna are each day growing cooler, one might even say, more strained."²³⁰

The comment of the "Six Members of the Oxford Faculty of Modern History" upon the Army Bill of 1913 is unintentionally favorable to Germany. After stating that in his supporting speech, the Chancellor made:

"reference to the new law for a return to three years' service which France was introducing to improve the efficiency of her peace establishment," the writers add: "But it was obvious that Russia was the main preoccupation."²³¹

And, admitting the Russian preponderance in resources and preparation, they said:

"The revenue in Russia in 1913 was over £324,000,000; she has budgeted for £78,000,000 of military expenditure in 1914, of which some £15,000,000 is emergency expenditure. The total revenue of the German Empire in 1913 was £184,000,000; she has budgeted for a military expenditure in 1914 of £60,000,000. To adopt the usual German tests of comparison, Russia has a population of 173 millions to be defended on three land-frontiers, while Germany has a population of 65 millions to be defended on only two. The military efforts of Russia, therefore, have been on a scale relatively smaller than those of Germany."²³²

Whether Germany ought to have been satisfied with a position of military inferiority, merely because one (only) of her opponents was spending in preparation less per head of population, but in aggregate very much more, is not a difficult question to answer. Predominance in man-power, the Professors appear to think, gives title to predominance

²³⁰ Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 670-1. German relations with Austria-Hungary have been referred to *ante*, pp. 80-6.

²³¹ P. 45.

²³² P. 47.

in military efficiency. The smaller nation may be excused for having declined to admit the validity of the deduction.

Germany's apprehension of the rapidly increasing power of Russia was referred to in several of the reports of the Russian Ambassador in Berlin. On 12 March 1914, for example, he said:

"No wonder that in view of such considerations, the Germans are straining every nerve to be ready for war with us, and no wonder that they try to intimidate us, so as to avert the suspicion that Germany is afraid of Russia. Nevertheless, it is my conviction that between all the lines printed about Russo-German relations in the German newspapers of late one may always read fear of Russia."²³³

Simultaneous Preparation. It will be observed that the increases of 1913 in the French, Belgian, German and Russian armies were approximately simultaneous. In France, the Briand ministry, on 24 January 1913, announced, as part of its policy, an increase in both army and navy; and on 4 March, the Supreme War Council declared the necessity for extending the period of universal service from two years to three — with no exemptions. Change of ministry and delay by the War Department postponed the passage of the necessary bill until early in August.²³⁴ In Belgium, the new Army Bill was introduced early in December 1912; was approved by the Central Commission of the Chamber on 10 January 1913; and passed both Houses by 20 June. In Germany, the new Army Bill was published on 28 March 1913, and was introduced in the Reichstag on 7 April.²³⁵ In Russia, the budget was passed on 8 July. And the reasons for the respective actions of the Powers were identical — apprehension of war. Everybody was preparing.

German War-Navy — The Chancellor's Statement. Provision for a German war-navy, upon a serious scale, commenced under Admiral von Tirpitz in 1897, with an increased expenditure of only about a million dollars, but with a promised enhancement by 1904 of about seven and a half millions. The arrangement was soon superseded. In the session of 1899, announcement was made of an intention:

"to double the number of battleships and of the great ships employed on foreign service, while at the same time doing away with the squadron for coast defence."²³⁶

Explaining the reason for the proposal, von Bülow said:

"The proposed increase of the Navy has become necessary owing to the change in the international situation, and in the position of Ger-

²³³ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 711.

²³⁴ *Ann. Reg.*, 1913, pp. [279, [281, [289.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. [308. Cf. Poincaré, *op. cit.*, p. 137, where the dates of the German submission to the Reichstag and the French submission to the Chamber are reversed.

²³⁶ Stated by the Chancellor: *Ann. Reg.*, 1899, p. [279.

many with regard to transoceanic questions. The German Government had always pursued a tranquil middle course, equally removed from neglect of German interests and from extravagance. Events had begun to jostle each other in a manner which could not have been foreseen two years ago. . . . Scarcely a year and a half ago the Spanish-American war gave a new impetus to the movement of events, and has led to great results and far-reaching changes — ancient empires have been shaken; new countries are made to ferment by new kinds of leaven; and no one can say, no one can predict, what the consequences will be of the war which has set South Africa in flames during the last few weeks.²³⁷ The forecast of Lord Salisbury — ‘the strong States must become stronger and the weak States weaker’ — had been confirmed by everything that had occurred since the remark had been made. Do we again stand before a fresh partition such as occurred 100 years ago? I would fain hope not, but in any case we cannot permit that any Power should say to us on occasion, ‘What is to be done? The world is already divided.’ We do not wish to interfere with any other country, but we do not wish that any other Power should interfere with us, should violate our rights, or push us aside either in political or commercial questions. It is time that, in view of the great change in the international situation, and in consideration of the great change which has taken place in the prospects of the future, we should make up our minds as to the attitude which we ought to adopt with regard to the changes which are in preparation all around us, and which perhaps may determine the distribution of power on our planet for an indefinite period. Germany cannot stand aside while other nations divide the world among them. The rapid increase of our population, the growth of our industry, the capacity of our merchants, — in brief, the keen vitality of the German people — have drawn us into the international market and bound our interests up with those of the whole world. If Englishmen speak of a *Greater Britain* and Frenchmen of a *Nouvelle France*, if Russia opens up Asia for herself, then we, too, have a right to a *Greater Germany*. . . . In the hitherto isolated cases, in which we have had to come to an agreement upon colonial questions with France, we have always been able to arrive at a friendly settlement without any difficulty. From Russia we have met with friendly treatment in these matters, and we gladly reciprocate. The good relations existing between us and the United States have recently been emphasized by President McKinley with a warmth of expression which gives us the sincerest satisfaction, and which we do not doubt that country will be prepared to confirm by deeds. As regards England, we

²³⁷ The reference is to the war between the United Kingdom and the Boer States. Detention at sea, by the British navy, of the German vessels *Bundesrath* and *Herzog* tended to impress the German people with the necessity for addition to their naval strength.

are entirely prepared to live in peace and friendship with that Power on the basis of complete reciprocity and mutual consideration. But it is exactly because our international position is a favorable one that we must utilize it to make ourselves secure for the future. In the old diplomacy, one sphere of friction lasted a generation; nowadays new questions are constantly cropping up. We must be strong enough to be secure against surprises, not only on land but also at sea. We must build ourselves a fleet strong enough to exclude all possibility of an *attack* being made upon us. I underline the word 'attack' because there can be no question of an attack proceeding from us in view of the absolutely peaceful character of our policy. . . . German foreign policy — and this is not addressed to the Reichstag alone — is neither covetous, nor restless, nor fantastic. But to secure Kiao-Chau, Samoa, and the Carolines was no such simple matter. . . . The German people may be quite at its ease. Confiding in the rising star of the German nation, German policy will not let itself be beaten by any one. But what we must do is always to reckon with the conditions of the case. The older states with maritime interests require to have naval bases because of the necessities of coaling. We, too, must look about for coaling stations, though not to the extent attributed to our intentions by unfriendly foreign critics. Like other people, we have to cut our coat according to our cloth. But we are bound to recognize that the sphere of our maritime interests has developed far more rapidly than the naval resources which are required for their maintenance.

"History has been made with singular rapidity in the period immediately following our last Navy Act. In quick succession we have had the War between America and Spain, the troubles in Samoa, and, last of all, the war in South Africa, which has seriously affected our interests. . . . What has happened in these last two years has demonstrated how patriotic of the Reichstag it was to pass the last Navy Bill, and at the same time how indispensable the further development of that measure has become. A policy which diverged from the lines I have sketched would cease to be a business-like policy, and that is the only policy for us.

"Yet with all our transoceanic interest, we must not forget that our centre of gravity is in Europe, we must not forget that our position rests upon the unshaken Triple Alliance, and upon our friendly relations with Russia. The best pledge that our transoceanic policy will always be moderate lies in the necessity of keeping our strength in Europe always collected and ready.

"This must not, however, prevent us from carefully and conscientiously doing all we can for our maritime interests. Why do all other States strengthen their Navies? Italy devotes her energies to this task. The French Government cannot do enough to meet the desires of the representatives of the people for fresh demands for the Navy. Russia

has doubled the estimates for her fleets. America and Japan are making enormous exertions in the same direction. England endeavors without ceasing to make her gigantic fleet still greater. Without a great Navy, we cannot maintain our position in the world alongside of these States.

“In the coming century the German nation will be either the hammer or the anvil. Our general policy is peaceful and honest. It is exclusively a German policy. The question whether and when we might be compelled, in defence of our interests throughout the world, to abandon our reserve, depends upon the general course of events. It depends upon circumstances which no one can foresee or determine”²³⁸

In 1900 was introduced the promised bill, accompanied with an *exposé des motifs* in which was the following:

“To protect the Empire’s sea trade and colonies, in view of present circumstances only one method can avail — Germany must have a battle fleet so strong that even the adversary possessed of the greatest sea power will attack it only with grave risk to himself. For our purpose it is not absolutely necessary that the German battle fleet should be as strong as that of the greatest Naval Power: for as a rule a great Naval Power will not be able to direct his whole striking force upon us. But even if it should succeed in meeting us with considerable superiority of strength, the defeat of a strong German fleet would so substantially weaken the enemy that in spite of a victory he might have obtained, his own position in the world would no longer be secured by an adequate fleet.”²³⁹

By way of arousing German sentiment to the support of the burdens imposed by the bill, the Kaiser, in his speeches made use of language which was both resented and ridiculed in the British press — for example:

“As my grandfather worked for the reconstitution of this army, so I will work without allowing myself to be checked to reconstitute this navy.”²⁴⁰

“The German people, with its princes and its Emperor, was preparing to forge itself an arm with which the black, white and red flag would to all eternity at home and abroad maintain the dignity of the Empire.”²⁴¹

“Our future lies upon the water.”²⁴²

“The trident belongs to our hands.”

“Sea power is world power.”

²³⁸ *Ann. Reg.*, 1899, pp. [279-282.

²³⁹ Asquith, *op. cit.*, cap. X. Cf. J. Ellis Barker in *The Foundations of Germany*, p. 177.

²⁴⁰ Speech, 1 Jan. 1900. See Seymour, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

²⁴¹ Speech on the return of Prince Henry (brother of the Kaiser) from China. See *Ann. Reg.*, 1900, p. [284.

²⁴² Speech, June 1901. See Dawson, *op. cit.*, II, p. 299.

"The Admiral of the Atlantic salutes the Admiral of the Pacific."²⁴³

"I will never rest until I have raised my Navy to a position similar to that occupied by my Army."²⁴⁴

From a German standpoint, Chancellor von Bülow recognized that the Kaiser's influence was very properly applied to the support of the bill. In his book, he has said:

"Ever since the end of the 'eighties in the nineteenth century the building of a fleet sufficient to defend our oversea interests had been a vital question for the German nation. It is greatly to the credit of the Emperor William II that he recognized this, and devoted all the power of the throne and all the strength of his own personality to the attainment of this end. . . . Parliamentary opposition, which at that time was considerable, could only be overcome if steady pressure were brought to bear on Parliament by public opinion. In view of the anxious and discouraged state of feeling that obtained in Germany during the ten years following Prince Bismarck's retirement, it was only possible to rouse public opinion by harping on the string of nationalism, and waking the people to consciousness."²⁴⁵

Contemplated enlargement of the German fleet was delayed by the launching of the British *Dreadnought* (10 February 1906), a new type suggested by the Russo-Japanese war. During two years—summer 1905 to summer of 1907—not a single keel was laid down in Germany.²⁴⁶ Further additions to the fleet were provided for by the laws of 1908 and 1912, with the effect that (if both the British and the German programmes were carried out) the battleships would be²⁴⁷ as follows:

	<i>Ready for Service</i>	<i>Total on Mobili- zation</i>
Germany	25	38
Great Britain	49	57 (rising to 65)

To British people, Germany's emergence upon the sea was an impudent challenge: Britain it was who "ruled the waves." But, curiously enough, the French army chiefs did not altogether relish a diminution in German expenditure on warships. As Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador at Paris, reported (29 February 1912), they:

"fear that if an agreement be reached between England and Germany, regarding the cessation, or at least a diminishing of the rivalry in naval armaments, the German Government would then be able to dispose of redoubled means of increasing its army—which would necessarily call forth counter-measures on the part of France and Russia."²⁴⁸

²⁴³ Dawson, *op. cit.*, II, p. 364.

²⁴⁴ *The War Lord*, p. 48; Dawson, *op. cit.*, II, p. 364.

²⁴⁵ *Imperial Germany*, pp. 19-20.

²⁴⁶ Asquith, *op. cit.*, cap. X.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁸ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 634; *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 201.

Navy-rivalry was the most important of the Anglo-Saxon rivalries, and constituted one of the roots of the war between the two countries.²⁴⁹

GERMANY IN 1913

Nowhere can one get a better analysis, if not a perfectly correct view of the state of public opinion in Germany in 1913 than in the reports of Jules Cambon (the very able French Ambassador at Berlin) and his assistants of 17 March, 6 May, and 22 November 1913, and the covering report to M. Pichon (French Minister of Foreign Affairs) of 30 July, 1913. They may be summarized as follows:

1. The Conference of Algeciras of 1906 has:

“removed the last doubt with regard to the existence of an Entente between France, Great Britain, and Russia.”

2. Evidently, the agreement between France and Great Britain by which, in case of war, 100,000 British soldiers were to be landed in France, had become known to the German Military staff.

3. Germany had been disappointed and humiliated by the surrender of her interests in Morocco under the treaty with France of 4 November 1911. The French ambassadorial report of 1912 had stated:

“We are discovering every day how deep and lasting are the feelings of injured pride and revenge provoked against us by the events of last year. The treaty of the 4th November 1911 has proved a complete disillusion. The feeling is the same in all parties. All Germans, even the Socialists, bear us a grudge for having taken away their share in Morocco. . . . People are determined that such a thing shall never happen again.”²⁵⁰

4. Germany resented the heavy addition to the military strength of France (early in 1913) by the extension of the period of service from two to three years:

“For some time now it has been quite a common thing to meet people who declare that the military plans of France are extraordinary and unjustified. In a drawing room, a member of the Reichstag who is not a fanatic, speaking of the three years' service in France, went so far as to say, ‘It is a provocation; we will not allow it.’ More moderate persons, military and civil, glibly voice the opinion that France with her forty million inhabitants has no right to compete in this way with Germany.”²⁵¹

5. “France — a new France — undreamed of prior to the summer of 1911 is considered to be a warlike country, and to want war.”²⁵²

6. The attitude of the German Emperor had changed:
“the Emperor has ceased to be the friend of peace. The person²⁵³

²⁴⁹ See *post*, cap. XIX.

²⁵⁰ Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 1, Enc. 1.

²⁵¹ Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 1, Enc. 1.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, No. 5.

²⁵³ The King of the Belgians.

addressed by the Emperor had thought up till then, as did all the world, that William II, whose personal influence had been exerted on many critical occasions in support of peace, was still in the same state of mind. He found him this time completely changed. The German Emperor is no longer, in his eyes, the champion of peace against the warlike tendencies of certain parties in Germany. William II has come to think that war with France is inevitable, and that it must come sooner or later."

"If I [Jules Cambon] may be allowed to draw a conclusion, I would submit that it would be well to take account of this new factor, namely, that the Emperor is becoming used to an order of ideas which were formerly repugnant to him, and that, to borrow from him a phrase which he likes to use, 'we must keep our powder dry.'" ²⁵⁴

7. The change in attitude was due to several causes:

(1) The imminence of war in 1912-13:

"The crisis which we have just gone through has been very serious. Here the danger of war has been considered imminent. I have proof of the anxiety of the German Government by a number of facts which it is important that your Excellency should know." ²⁵⁵

(2) The strengthening of the Franco-Russian Entente by the adhesion of the United Kingdom in connection with the Morocco incidents.

(3) "German public opinion" considered France as longing for war.

8. In the words of Prince Henckel von Donnersmarck:

"French people are quite wrong in thinking that we harbor evil designs and want war. But we cannot forget that, in 1870, popular opinion forced the French Government to make a foolish attack on us before they were ready. Who can assure us that public opinion, which in France is so easily inflamed, will not force the Government to declare war? It is against this danger that we wish to protect ourselves." ²⁵⁶

9. "It must be emphasized again that the Government is doing everything to increase patriotic sentiment by celebrating with *éclat* all the various anniversaries of 1813." ²⁵⁷

10. It is a mistake to "speak of a military party in Germany." There is "a war party," and there are the unorganized "forces making for peace."

"Those in favor of war are divided into several categories; each of these derives from its social caste, its class, its intellectual and moral education, its interests, its hates, special arguments which create a general

²⁵⁴ Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 6.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 3.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 1, Enc. 2.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 1, Enc. 1

attitude of mind and increase the strength and rapidity of the stream of warlike desire."²⁵⁸

The "war party" is composed of:

- (1) Those who consider war "inevitable."
- (2) Those who consider war necessary for "economic reasons" or for "social reasons."
- (3) Those who are:
"uneasy for the safety of the Empire, and believing that time is on the side of France, think that events should be brought to an immediate head."

(4) Those who are:
"bellicose from 'Bismarckism' as it may be termed. They feel themselves humiliated at having to enter into discussion with France, at being obliged to talk in terms of law and right in negotiations and conferences where they have not always found it easy to get right on their side, even when they have a preponderating force. From their still recent past, they derive a sense of pride ever fed by personal memories of former exploits, by oral traditions, and by books, and irritated by the events of recent years."

(5) "Others again want war from a mystic hatred of revolutionary France; others finally from a feeling of rancour. These are the people who heap up pretexts for war."

(6) "The country squires represented in the Reichstag by the Conservative party want at all costs to escape the death duties, which are bound to come if peace continues. . . . Finally, this social class which forms a hierarchy with the King of Prussia as its supreme head, realized with dread the democratization of Germany and the increasing power of the Socialist party, and considers its own days numbered. Not only does a formidable movement hostile to agrarian protection threaten its material interests, but in addition, the number of its political representatives decreases with each legislative period. In the Reichstag of 1878, out of 397 members, 162 belonged to the aristocracy; in 1898, 83; in 1912, 57. Out of this number 27 alone belong to the Right; 14 to the Centre; 7 to the Left; and one sits among the Socialists."

(7) "The higher bourgeoisie is no less troubled than the aristocracy at the democratization of Germany. In 1871 they had 125 members in the Reichstag; in 1874, 155; in 1887, 99; in 1912, 45."

(8) "Lastly, there are the manufacturers of guns and armor plate, big merchants who demand bigger markets, bankers who are speculating on the coming of the golden age and the next war indemnity — all these regard war as good business."

(9) "Amongst the 'Bismarckians' must be reckoned officials of all kinds, represented fairly closely in the Reichstag by the Free Conservatives or Imperial Party."

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 5.

(10) "The universities, if we except a few distinguished spirits, develop a warlike philosophy. Economists demonstrate by statistics Germany's need for a colonial and commercial empire commensurate with the industrial output of the Empire. There are sociological fanatics who go even further. The armed peace, so they say, is a crushing burden on the nations, it checks improvement in the lot of the masses, and assists the growth of socialism. France by clinging obstinately to her desire for revenge opposes disarmament. Once for all, she must be reduced, for a century, to a state of impotence; that is the best and speediest way of solving the social problem.

"Historians, philosophers, political pamphleteers, and other apologists for German *Kultur* wish to impose upon the world a way of thinking and feeling specifically German. They wished to wrest from France that intellectual supremacy which according to the clearest thinkers is still her possession."

(11) "We have come finally to those whose support of the war policy is inspired by rancour and resentment. These are the most dangerous. They are recruited chiefly among diplomatists. German diplomatists are now in very bad odor in public opinion."

(12) "Must war then be considered as inevitable? It is hardly likely that Germany will take the risk, if France can make it clear to the world that the *Entente Cordiale* and the Russian alliance are not mere diplomatic fictions but realities which exist, and will make themselves felt. The British fleet imposes a wholesome terror."

On the other hand, peace sentiment was represented by

(1) "The bulk of the workmen, artisans and peasants, who are peace-loving by instinct."

(2) "Those members of the nobility detached from military interests and engaged in business, such as the *grands seigneurs* of Silesia and a few other personages very influential at Court, who are sufficiently enlightened to realize the disastrous political and social consequences of war, even if successful."

(3) "Numerous manufacturers, merchants and financiers in a moderate way of business, to whom war, even if successful, would mean bankruptcy, because their enterprises depend on credit, and are chiefly supported by foreign capital."

(4) "Poles, inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine, and Schleswig-Holstein — conquered, but not assimilated and sullenly hostile to Prussian policy. There about 7,000,000 of these annexed Germans."

(5) "Finally, the Governments and the governing classes in the large southern states — Saxony, Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and the Grand Duchy of Baden — are divided by these two opinions: — an unsuccessful war would compromise the Federation from which they have derived great economic advantages, a successful war would only profit

Prussia and Prussianisation, against which they have difficulty in defending their political independence and administrative autonomy.”

(6) “These classes of people either consciously or instinctively prefer peace to war; but they are only a sort of makeweight in political matters, with limited influence on public opinion, or they are silent social forces, passive and defenceless against the infection of a wave of warlike feeling.”

(7) “Finally, it must be observed that these supporters of peace believe in war in the mass because they do not see any other solution for the present situation. In certain contracts, especially in publishers’ contracts, a clause has been introduced cancelling the contract in the case of war. They hope, however, that the will of the Emperor on the one side, France’s difficulties in Morocco on the other, will be for some time a guarantee of peace. Be that as it may, their pessimism gives free play to those who favor war.”²⁵⁹

“THE CHOSEN MOMENT”

There still remains for treatment the frequently repeated statement that Germany, having made diligent preparation for war, launched it at the moment which best suited her purpose — at “the selected moment,” or, as Sir Edward Grey phrased it in his speech before the Foreign Press Association on 23 October 1916, at “the chosen moment.”²⁶⁰ The charge is easily answered.

1. Publication of the Foreign Office records of Germany and Austria-Hungary makes perfectly clear not only that Germany did not select 1914 for a European war, but that she was strongly opposed to its outbreak. Unquestionably, she agreed to the Austro-Hungarian pressure upon Serbia, and urged expedition in its prosecution; for, in her view, punishment of Serbia was necessary for the maintenance, unimpaired, of the integrity of the Dual Monarchy, and, consequently, for Germany’s own military security. But it is equally unquestionable that when Serbia, in her reply to the Austro-Hungarian demands, made extensive submission, and when it became apparent that a local war would immediately take on European proportions, Germany endeavored to effect accommodation of the difficulty. The subject is fully dealt with in a subsequent chapter.²⁶¹

2. Grand Admiral von Tirpitz, the creator of the German navy, has been particularly pointed at as a chief of the militarist class who dominated the German government and precipitated the war. Had not he been waiting for the completion of the Kiel canal, and, now that it could pass his big warships, was not he eager for hostilities? He

²⁵⁹ Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 5.

²⁶⁰ *Current History*, V, p. 455.

²⁶¹ Cap. XXVII.

was not. He was building a formidable navy, but it was still far from competent for war with the United Kingdom, and few people were more disappointed by its outbreak than Tirpitz. How do we know that? Note the following:

(1) Tirpitz has devoted a good many pages of his book, *My Memoirs*, to a defence of his policy, and to complaints of the diplomatic proceedings which precipitated the war. He wanted further years for preparation.²⁶² In the events which immediately preceded the outbreak, Tirpitz had no share. He says:

“As, however, the Chief of the General Staff, the Minister for War, the Chief of the Naval Staff, and myself were kept away from Berlin during the succeeding days, the whole business was monopolized by the Chancellor, who, having no experience himself of the great European world, was unable to estimate correctly the value of his colleagues in the Foreign Office. The Chancellor at any rate did not write to me for advice.”²⁶³

(2) Baron Beyens, at the outbreak of the war Belgian Ambassador at Berlin, wrote in his book, *L'Allemagne avant la Guerre*, as follows:

“Hostilities broke out sooner than he (von Tirpitz) had foreseen or desired, and when he was not yet ready for the attack. A few years more, and Tirpitz would doubtless have surprised his adversary with a war different from what he expected — a war in the air, a treacherous and submarine war, which would have compensated for numerical inferiority.”²⁶⁴

(3) That was well understood in the United Kingdom, where the failure of the Tirpitz policy of delay was regarded as a matter for congratulation. In *The Navy* for April 1915, for example, was the following:

“We know from the terms of the Navy Law of 1912 that there was a scheme on hand to bring into being a self-contained fleet for foreign service which would have surpassed in numbers and strength any corresponding force maintained in distant waters by other nations, not excluding the British Empire. Happily for us, this grandiose plan had not matured when the war broke out. Had it done so, the task of sweeping the seas and keeping open the trade routes would have been a stupendous one, and, to do it thoroughly, we should have had to reduce our strength in home waters to a dangerous minimum. A few years hence, Germany would have had 30,000-ton battle cruisers on the China Station; in the Mediterranean; and at other strategical points; together with a great army of fast, lightly-armed vessels, each of which would have been a potential *Emden*.”²⁶⁵

²⁶² I, pp. 165, 190, 236, 238, 241-287.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 243. And see p. 246.

²⁶⁴ P. 129.

²⁶⁵ P. 104.

RESPONSIBILITY

We have now passed in review the general character of the military preparations for war which were being made by the four greatest European Powers. Readers who desire more detailed information will find it in Mr. Newbold's book, *How Europe Armed for War*. Everywhere the existence of danger was realized; everywhere the dread of defeat was leading to excessive expenditure and to intimate exchanges of strategic plans between the military staffs.

Who was to blame? Reply is not easy. Germany feared Russia and France, and had no confidence in Italy and Roumania. On the other hand, France, Russia, and the United Kingdom feared Germany. France still harbored designs upon Alsace-Lorraine. Russia and Germany were engaged in natural rivalry for predominance at Constantinople. The interests of Russia and Austria-Hungary sharply conflicted in the Balkans. The United Kingdom, for reasons elsewhere explained, had attached herself to France and Russia. War had been but narrowly escaped in 1899-1902, 1904, 1905-6, 1908-9, 1911, 1912-13. Each nation declined to play the part of the foolish virgins.

It was probably because of a feeling of unpreparedness on the part of France that the Morocco crisis of 1911 was successfully passed. In that year, Paul Cambon was the very able French representative in England, and, on 21 September 1911, the Serbian Chargé d'Affaires at London reported that Cambon had said:

"France is convinced that the war will be forced upon her. But both France and her allies are of the opinion that the war—even at the expense of greater sacrifices—must be postponed to a later time, that is to say until the year 1914-15. The necessity of this postponement is required less by France's material preparedness for war, which is complete, than by the organization of the upper command, which is not yet finished. The delay is wanted also by Russia. England alone will derive no advantage from this arrangement, because the superiority of her fleet over that of Germany decreases each year. Out of consideration for the preparedness of her allies, France urges that an understanding be reached with Germany for the present."²⁶⁶

Much can be urged in support of the view of von Bethmann-Hollweg:

"The controversy as to which party gave the first impulse to a programme of general armament, and to a perversion of the policy of alliances will probably never be fought to a finish. Immeasurable distrust, imperialistic ideals, and a patriotism restricted to material national instincts, respectively worked each other up without its ever being possible to say that any particular nation had contributed most to the general tendency of the world."²⁶⁷

²⁶⁶ Bogitshevich, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

²⁶⁷ *Reflections on the World War*, p. 160.

Could existing differences in 1914 have been amicably arranged? No. Occasions for outbreak of war might, by possibility, from time to time have been adjusted. But war alone could settle or make an appearance of settling disputes involving territorial re-arrangements — could reconcile France, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, or Roumania to the *status quo*. War at some period being inevitable, war-preparation was unavoidable.

And yet to what cataclysmic end must such preparations always lead! The very burden of them makes release by war acceptable. Diplomats had agreed that the French three-year service law created financial obligations that could not long be borne; and Sir Edward Grey, one of the clearest-headed of international experts, foretold disaster. He said:

“If this tremendous expenditure on armaments goes on, it must, in the long run, break down civilization. You are having this great burden of force piled up in times of peace, and if it goes on increasing by leaps and bounds as it has done in the last generation, in time it will become intolerable. There are those who think it will lead to war, precisely because it is becoming intolerable. I think it is much more likely the burden will be dissipated by internal revolution — not by nations fighting against each other, but by revolt of masses of men against taxation. . . . The great nations of the world are in bondage to their armies and navies at the present moment — increasing bondage.”²⁶⁸

Sir Edward was too sanguine. Preparation did lead to war. The internal revolutions have followed. But the burden has not yet been “dissipated,” or even put in the way of dissipation. On the contrary, it is more grievous than before.

²⁶⁸ Morel: *Truth and the War*, p. 164.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ALSACE-LORRAINE ROOT

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ALSACE-LORRAINE AND THE WAR

M. GABRIEL HANOTAUX, one time French Foreign Minister, has well said that:

“The war of 1914 is closely connected with the war of 1870. In consecrating, by the treaty of Frankfort, the dismemberment of France, Bismarck (who often protested that he did not do it altogether willingly) left, in the bleeding wound in the side of that noble country the germ of future ills.”¹

Mr. Sydney Brooks has expressed his view as to the effect of the forced cession of Alsace-Lorraine upon European politics, and particularly upon the recent war, in the following language:

“The question of Alsace-Lorraine is usually and justly spoken of in terms of politics and sentiment. And these undoubtedly are the aspects that have made it for forty years the true pivot of all European affairs. The incurable antagonisms which resulted from Germany's determination to hold Alsace-Lorraine and from the silent but passionate longing of France to regain her lost provinces have been the root cause of all the alliances, all the diplomatic adventures, all the groupings and re-groupings of the Powers, and especially of the monstrous growth of armaments, that have made up the sorry tale of Europe during the past four decades. So far as the measureless cataclysm in which the whole world is now engulfed can be traced back to any single source, that source is Alsace-Lorraine. Europe had no chance of a sane and stable peace so long as the greatest nation in Europe could neither forget nor forgive the brutal injury of which she had been the victim. France is not fighting to-day for conquest but for justice and restitution. What the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine may mean to her commercially and materially, she neither knows nor cares. The impulse that fires and sustains her people is the resolve to right the wrong of 1870, and to reunite to *la patrie* the cherished and essential parts that were wrenched from it. And that resolve will either be realized to the full, or France is crushed and the Allies lose the war.”²

¹ *Histoire Illustrée de la Guerre de 1914*, p. 7.

² *North American Rev.*, Nov. 1917, p. 695. Cf. André Tardieu: *The Truth about the Treaty*, pp. 10, 234-7. Mr. G. B. Gooch has said: “From that disastrous error in judgment dates the division of Europe into two armed camps, the

Mr. Asquith, in October 1917, after saying that Germany "filched from France less than fifty years ago" Alsace-Lorraine, "the symbol of French humiliation," continued as follows:

"It is, as I pointed out the other day, this act of crude and short-sighted spoliation which was the root and source of the unrest, of the unstable equilibrium, of the competition in armaments, which have afflicted Europe during the lifetime of two generations, and have culminated in the most terrible war in history."³

Mr. Lloyd George, in a public address at Westminster (5 January 1918), said:

"We must stand by the French democracy to the death in the demand they make for a reconsideration of the great wrong of 1871, when, without any regard for the wishes of the population, two French provinces were torn from the side of France and incorporated in the German Empire. This sore has poisoned the peace of Europe for half a century. There can be no better illustration of the folly and wickedness of using a transient military success to violate national right."⁴

The eighth of President Wilson's celebrated Fourteen Points was as follows:

"All French territory should be freed, and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all."

M. Ribot, the French Prime Minister, speaking in the Chamber of Deputies regarding a government motion, said (5 June 1917):

"What does this resolution say? It states that we do not follow a policy of conquest or of enslavement. We have groaned for 45 years under this policy, which is not ours, and the revenge of to-day is not the revenge of oppression, but the revenge of the ideas of justice, of liberty, and of equilibrium, of which the whole of France have been the defenders."⁵

M. Poincaré (President of the French Republic 1913-1920, and afterwards Prime Minister) in his recent book said:

"There had undoubtedly been for forty-five years a persistent mis-

victors seeking allies to guarantee their new possessions, the vanquished seeking associates to reverse the verdict of Sedan" (*Contemporary Rev.*, March 1921, p. 187). Just in time for reference in this foot-note comes to hand the excellent booklet *Franco-German Relations 1871-1914* by Mr. Gooch.

³ London *Times*, 12 Oct. 1917. Mr. Asquith had said at Leeds on 26 September (*Times*, 27 Sept. 1917): "That act of highhanded and shortsighted violence, which Europe ought to have protested, is the primary, though not of course the only cause of the race in armaments which went on at an ever-accelerated pace between the Great Powers for forty years before this war broke out."

⁴ *The Times*, 7 Jan. 1918.

⁵ *The Times*, 6 June 1917.

understanding between Germany and France. The one did not understand that the other had decided not to become her 'brilliant second.' Austria had forgotten Sadowa. Why did not France — conquered, offended, despoiled of two provinces — also joyously agree to accept the hegemony of the conqueror? For her to be pacific, tranquil, resigned, was not enough; Germany wanted something more than loyalty, courtesy, and consideration; she wanted to wrest from France, with tender embracements, the definite acceptance of the Treaty of Frankfort, and then bind us, complacent and passive, to her own destinies." 6

"The one thing which all our Governments in succession, ever since 1871, refused to do was to renounce their own private sentiments, to repudiate the two lost French provinces, to be guilty of a cowardly betrayal. France was too proud and too fair to disguise her regrets in any kind of deceptive formulæ, or to qualify with mental reservations a political *entente* with Germany." 7

"She was conscious that she had always kept to herself the feelings of sadness and regret left behind by her defeat of 1870 and the loss of her provinces." 8

After referring to the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1908), Poincaré added:

"There were thus existing, both in the west and east of Europe, two great injustices, two visible attacks on human conscience, two continuous scandals, which vitiated continental organization and weakened the supports of European peace." 9

During his years of diplomatic intercourse with von Bethmann-Hollweg (the German Chancellor) M. Jules Cambon (the French Ambassador at Berlin) found that the maintenance of silence as to French feeling was not always possible. On the contrary, the Chancellor tells us that Cambon was:

"also bound in honor to recognize that neither 1870 nor Alsace-Lorraine were forgotten, and that longing for reparation of the injuries then suffered constituted an element in French policy dominating all more ephemeral events and calculated to cause the most momentous developments whenever the situation became in any way difficult." 10 To the Russian Ambassador at Berlin, Cambon declared (10 February 1909) that the recent Franco-German agreement with reference to the Morocco dispute was a "façade" agreement, and that:

"Paris was of like opinion, because the Morocco question, important as it might have become, was still, at bottom, only of secondary — of colonial — importance, whereas the true reasons for the impossibility

6 *The Origins of the War*, p. 16.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 26.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 255.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 96.

10 *Reflections*, p. 11.

of establishing a real understanding between France and Germany lay far too deep to be removed by means of diplomatic documents.”¹¹

On more than one occasion, von Bethmann-Hollweg expressed his regret that such amicable exchanges of view as from time to time occurred between Germany and Russia, and Germany and the United Kingdom, were not possible as between Germany and France.¹² Poincaré resented approaches of that sort. On 28 October 1912, Isvolsky, the Russian Ambassador at Paris, reported as follows:

“Poincaré said to me that his public declarations with reference to the fidelity of France to her alliance had, among other objects, that of persuading the Berlin Cabinet of the inutility of its attempts to draw the French Government into a new groupment of the Powers.”¹³

More than three years prior to the recent war, Nekludoff, in reporting from the Russian embassy in Paris (14 December 1910) said:

“The France of the present day really wishes peace; her governments principally fear war; but the wound dealt in 1870 to French ambition will not heal for a long time, and if finally France should enter on hostilities, the immense majority of the nation would be carried away by an explosion of the most ardent patriotism.”¹⁴

He was right. After referring to the earlier effects of the Franco-Russian alliance as having induced colonial rivalry with the United Kingdom, Nekludoff added:

“But the idea of ‘revanche’ became stronger and more determined than during the time of Gambetta and Jules Ferry, whose prudent opportunism seemed to be already an out-of-date system, not corresponding with the reconstituted French forces.”¹⁵

When announcing the outbreak of the war of 1914 to the French Senators and Deputies, President Poincaré said:

“For more than forty years the French, in sincere love of peace, have buried at the bottom of their heart the desire for legitimate reparation.”¹⁶

In the same vein, M. Viviani, the Prime Minister, said:

“Germany can reproach us with nothing. Bearing in silence in our bosom for half a century the wound which Germany dealt us, we have offered to peace an unprecedented sacrifice.”¹⁷

The diplomatic world was well aware in 1870 that the attitude of France would be one of awaiting an opportunity. In the *Quarterly Review* of October of that year, Lord Salisbury declared that:

“Europe will look on while France is watching Prussia with affected

¹¹ Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 488-9.

¹² *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 362.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 564.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, I, p. 5.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, I, p. 7.

¹⁶ *Fr. Yell. Bk.*, 1914, No. 158.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

amity but with unsleeping hatred, waiting till her enemy makes some false step or falls into trouble from war, or revolution, or misgovernment; sacrificing all other objects of policy to the one hope of retaliating in some moment of weakness upon the conqueror who has despoiled her." ¹⁸

British statesmen remained of that opinion during the forty-three years of interval between the wars. As von Bethmann-Hollweg has said:

"England was well aware that the eyes of France were steadfastly fixed upon Alsace-Lorraine, and could hear the deep notes of the *revanche motif* sounding even through the harmonies of Russo-French fraternization." ¹⁹

It was, therefore, quite in accordance with Anglo-French understanding that on 15 November 1917, in answer to a question in the House of Commons as to:

"when the British Government agreed to support the French Government in making the restitution of Alsace and Lorraine an essential item in our war aims?"

Lord Robert Cecil replied that the restitution "was a well-understood war aim from the moment we entered the war." ²⁰

FRENCH AND PRUSSIAN ATTITUDES, 1870

If it be true, as it undoubtedly is, that the possession of Alsace-Lorraine has been:

"the root of all the alliances, all the diplomatic adventures, all the groupings and re-groupings of the Powers, and especially of the monstrous growth of armaments." ²¹

it follows that responsibility for the recent war, in its European expansion, depends, to a very large extent, upon responsibility for the war

¹⁸ Reproduced in the *Life of Robert Marquis of Salisbury*, by Lady Gwendolen Cecil, II, p. 36.

¹⁹ *Reflections*, p. 13.

²⁰ This and other statements did not pass without adverse comment in England. One gentleman, for example, who had (as he said) "addressed many and successful recruiting meetings," complained as follows: "We were told that we drew the sword to vindicate the faith of a treaty, flagrantly violated in the invasion of Belgium, and to prevent in our own interests the annexation by Germany of the Channel littoral of France, and the French Colonies. The war was stated to be one of defence against wanton and wicked military aggression, and it was on that ground that thousands of the youth of the country were urged to join the colors, and nobly responded to that appeal. It now appears that we are out for conquest, not for ourselves but for other people. Alsace-Lorraine is to be annexed to France; Trieste and the Southern Tyrol to Italy; and to-day I see that the latter Power demands also Dalmatia 'for strategic reasons' while Roumania is to get a large slice of Austrian territory in the shape of Transylvania. We are also invited to concern ourselves with that hotbed of troubles, the Balkan Peninsula" (*Common Sense*, 19 Jan. 1918).

²¹ *Ante*, p. 574.

of 1870-1. Understanding of that episode, therefore, is of essential importance. As aids to its study, the following observations and quotations are submitted:²²

Sadowa. By the Prussian victory over Austria at Sadowa (1866), "all the calculations of Napoleon III were upset."²³ He had looked forward to a protracted war, and to French intervention with a view to French profit. The astonishing rapidity of the Prussian success had left him only the self-assumed rôle of mediator, and even in that part he was left little to do. Indeed, his principal occupation was unequal negotiation with Bismarck for some territorial "compensation" for France because of the aggrandizement of Prussia. He wanted expansion to the left bank of the Rhine, or over Belgium, or Luxemburg, or both. He got nothing, and France saw herself in danger of descent from the hegemony of Europe. As Sorel has said:

"In France, the *amour-propre* was wounded by the military successes of Prussia, the national sentiment disturbed by the expansions of that State. People felt that political prestige and the preponderance in Europe had escaped from them with the monopoly of brilliant victories. For the country, this was a grave enfeeblement and a danger for the future; for the Empire, it was a disaster and a question of dynasty. . . . Sadowa became for the supporters of the Empire the most cruel of irritations."²⁴ For a time, Napoleon persisted in his fruitless diplomatic endeavors, while:

"by turns careless and passionate, the nation slumbered, dreaming of the '*revanche* of Sadowa.'"²⁵

"The victory of Prussia came to be regarded by the Imperialist party as a humiliation which it was essential to avenge."²⁶

Referring to the incident out of which the war of 1870 arose — the succession to the Spanish throne — Lord Lyons, the very capable British Ambassador at Paris, said in July of that year:

"The wound inflicted by Sadowa on French pride had never been completely healed — nevertheless, time had begun to produce the effect of reconciling men's minds to what was done and could not be helped, and irritation was subsiding. Now this unhappy affair has revived all the old animosity; the Government and the people have alike made it a point

²² Exhaustive discussion of the subject could not be attempted in a single chapter. A French commission has for several years been engaged in publishing the documents bearing upon *Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870-1*.

The series commences with a report of 24 Dec. 1863. Vol. XIII has been published, bringing the documents down to 31 Dec. 1866. Further volumes are yet to appear.

²³ Sorel: *Histoire Diplomatique de la Guerre Franco-Allemande*, I, p. 19.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

²⁶ *Cambridge Modern History*, XI, p. 576. See also Monroe Smith: *Bismarck*, pp. 43-9.

of honor to prevent the accession of the Prince, and they have gone too far to recede."²⁷

Prague. During the peace-mediation between Prussia and Austria (1866), Napoleon procured Bismarck's assent to the principle of self-determination by the people of the Duchy of Schleswig—a popular vote was to settle whether it should become part of Prussia, or part of Denmark; and a clause to that effect was inserted in the peace treaty of Prague. The referendum was not held;²⁸ Prussia remained in possession; the omission gave to her an unmerited expansion; and France (although not a party to the treaty) felt that she had been duped. "Reparations" for Sadowa and Prague became, for her, a patriotic obsession, even as, after 1871, became the return of Alsace-Lorraine.

Emperor, Ministers, and People. If the Emperor Napoleon was not consistently in favor of war with Prussia in 1870, it was only because he was anxiously apprehensive as to its outcome.²⁹ Keenly aware of the fact that his European diplomacies had miscarried;³⁰ that withdrawal from Mexico at the demand of the United States had damaged his prestige; and that, on the other hand, Bismarck's imperialisms had been astonishingly successful,³¹ he felt that security for himself and his dynasty would be much helped by a successful appeal to arms,³² but he knew also that failure meant abdication. The Empress:

"fanatically anxious for the overthrow of a great Protestant Power, passionately eager for the military glory which alone could insure the crown to her son,"³³ pressed for war. Of the members of the Cabinet, Gra-

²⁷ Br. Blue Bk., C-167, No. 10.

²⁸ The clause of the treaty was abrogated by arrangement with Austria, but not until Oct. 1878: Oakes & Mowat: *The Great European Treaties of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 252, note; *Ann. Reg.*, 1879, p. 22. After a lapse of fifty years, the people of North Schleswig have now voted for incorporation with Denmark.

²⁹ Austria-Hungary, with whom the Emperor was in negotiation, had declared that she would not be ready until the spring of 1871: J. Holland Rose, *The Development of the European Nations*, pp. 35-7.

³⁰ The celebrated draft Benedetti treaty is in Br. Blue Bk., C-189.

³¹ Morley: *Life of Gladstone*, II, p. 319; *Fortnightly Rev.*, Oct. 1917, pp. 512-13.

³² Malleson: *The Refounding of the German Empire*, p. 214; J. Holland Rose: *The Development of the European Nations*, p. 29.

³³ C. A. Fyffe: *History of Modern Europe*, III, p. 420. And see Fitzmaurice, *Lord Granville*, II, p. 52. In the opinion of Pierre de la Gorce, "It was she [the Empress] who, on the French side, was the principal artisan of the war" (*Histoire du Second Empire*, VI, p. 294. Sorel said of her: "The Empress Eugenie, at the time frivolous, heroic, and passionate, like most of the women of her race, conceived the Empire as a beautiful historical romance; deceived by her imagination and the flatteries of her courtiers, trembling for the future of her son, she thought to renew by victory his title to the throne of Napoleon. . . . She had influence, and that influence was bad" (*op. cit.*, I, pp. 75-6). Comte Fleury, in his *Memoirs of the Empress Eugenie*, contends (II, cap. 7) that neither the Emperor nor the Empress was in favor of war, but points to no very earnest effort to avert it. Readers of the present chapter will be able to form their own opinions.

mont, the Foreign Minister,³⁴ and Leboeuf, the Minister for War,³⁵ were anxious for war. The Prime Minister, Ollivier, weakly favored peace, but was without authority. After it appeared that Gramont's action had made war inevitable, he (Ollivier) determined (he has told us) that, rather than resign, he would endeavor "to attenuate the effect of the *démarche*,"³⁶ considering that his resignation would be followed by the accession to power of a reactionary ministry — to the greater prejudice of his country.³⁷ He did little, and the stronger men had their way. The French people and press — so far at least as these were represented in Paris — were, from the initiation of the crisis (the Spanish-throne episode) clamorous for war. In parliament, the Right, the Legitimists, and the Orleanists insisted upon it. And eventually, the Emperor could, with some truth, say:

"that it is the whole nation which has, by its irresistible impulse, dictated our decision."³⁸

Prussian Attitude. Of King William and Queen Augusta, Bismarck has left the following sketch:

"He was seventy-three years old, a lover of peace, and disinclined to risk the laurels of 1866 in a fresh struggle; but when he was free from the feminine influence, the sense of honor of the heir of Frederick the Great, and of a Prussian officer, always remained paramount. Against the opposition of his consort, due to her natural feminine timidity and lack of national feeling, the King's power of resistance was weakened by his knightly regard for the lady and his kingly consideration for a Queen, and especially for his own Queen. I have been told that Queen Augusta implored her husband with tears, before his departure from Ems to Berlin, to bear in mind Jena and Tilsit and avert war. I consider the statement authentic, even to the tears."³⁹

The Chancellor, Bismarck; the Minister of War, von Roon; and the Chief of Staff, von Moltke, were as anxious for war as were Gramont and Lebœuf. Bismarck (as he tells us) regarded:

³⁴ In the opinion of Messrs. Ward and Wilkinson, Gramont was "a vehement adversary of the advance of Prussia in Germany," and "regarded a Prussian war as inevitable" (Germany, II, p. 415). Fyffe says (*op. cit.*, III, p. 414) that "there is no doubt that, from the beginning to the end, the Duke of Gramont, with short intermissions, pressed with insane ardor for war." He had desired that France should intervene in the war between Prussia and Austria in 1866. In his book, he speaks of "the fatal day when that memorable abstention of 1866 prevailed in the councils of the crown which was the foundation of great Prussia and the source of all her power" (*La France et la Prusse avant la Guerre*, p. 142. Cf. de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 216-7, 224, 241).

³⁵ Ward and Wilkinson referred to him as "the bellicose Lebœuf" (*op. cit.*, II, p. 416).

³⁶ Ollivier: *L'Empire Liberal*, XIV, p. 270.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 274; Fyffe, *op. cit.*, III, p. 421; Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, p. 139.

³⁸ Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 12, Enc. An analysis of the British Blue Book may be seen in *Ann. Reg.*, 1871, pp. 248-54.

³⁹ *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, p. 95.

"the outbreak of the war between France and Germany" as something "which was evidently coming sooner or later."⁴⁰

"That a war with France," he said, "would succeed that with Austria, lay in the logic of history, even had we been able to allow the Emperor Napoleon the petty expenses which he looked for from us as a reward for his neutrality."⁴¹

Bismarck held his French diplomatic opponents in contempt. He described the Emperor as *une grande incapacité méconnue*, and he declared that Gramont was the greatest blockhead (*dummkopf*) in Europe.⁴² The story of 1870 confirms the estimates. The Prussian official press maintained an attitude of indifference until two days before the French declaration of war. The unofficial newspapers interchanged railings with the French.⁴³

THE SPANISH THRONE

Prince Leopold. The Spanish people, dissatisfied with their sovereign, Isabella II, deposed her (30 September 1868), and the military leaders, under General Prim, initiated search for a successor. After various failures, Prince Leopold, a member of the Roman Catholic Sigmaringen branch of the House of Hohenzollern, was thought of (spring 1869), but it was not until June 1870 that a tentative offer of the throne was made to him⁴⁴ and conditionally accepted. That the scheme originated with Bismarck has often been alleged, but never proved. Sorel did not believe it.⁴⁵ Ollivier did, but had no proof — "since the truth," he said, "would have been too ugly to reveal."⁴⁶ In a telegram of 3 July 1870, Mercier, the French Ambassador at Madrid, relates that he said to Prim:

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 41. And see pp. 56, 57. Bismarck was by no means alone in his forecast. Edgar Sanderson, in a passage recently quoted by Archibald Hurd (*Fortnightly Rev.*, Feb. 1917, p. 244), said: "The attitude and conduct of Louis Napoleon and his Government towards Prussia became restless, irritating, and intrusive; and though war was for a time averted in a dispute about Luxemburg, it was certain that a struggle for continental supremacy was not far distant": *Outlines of the World's History*.

⁴² Professor Munroe Smith: *Bismarck*, p. 53.

⁴³ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 335.

⁴⁴ Cf. Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 52-6.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 54. Gramont has it that the suggestion of Leopold's accession to the throne had been abandoned in 1869; that General Prim, unknown to his colleagues, revived the idea and wrote to Bismarck; that the letter remained unanswered for three months; that Bismarck then replied "that the candidature of the Prince of Hohenzollern was in itself an excellent thing, which ought not to be abandoned and which, at a given moment, might be opportune;" and that thereupon Prim proceeded to its accomplishment: *Op. cit.*, pp. 19-21. Cf. de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 209.

⁴⁶ *Op. cit.*, XIV, p. 521.

“Oh! I have seen very well for a long time that Bismarck was seeking to intermeddle in your affairs, and you will admit that if he did not believe that he had much to gain there, he would not have risked playing so big a game.”

Prim replied:

“You deceive yourself. The overtures came from here. I have never talked politics either with M. Bernhardt, or with M. de Canitz.”⁴⁷ Benedetti, the French Ambassador at Berlin, relating an interview with the King of Prussia, reported (9 July 1870) that the King had said that the negotiations had taken place between the Spanish government and Leopold, and that the Prussian government not only remained outside them, but was ignorant of them, although he (the King) had communicated to Bismarck his relation to them. Benedetti added:

“As Sovereign and King of Prussia, His Majesty had taken no part in this affair, and the cabinet of Berlin was not responsible for an arrangement of which it was entirely ignorant.”⁴⁸

Lord Fitzmaurice, in his *Life of Lord Granville*, indicates that the idea of Leopold's candidature originated in Spain.⁴⁹ The Prince at first declined the proposal. His father, Prince Antoine, writing to his other son, King Charles of Roumania (20 March 1870), said as follows:

“I have been in Berlin for a fortnight on most important family matters. No less is in question than the acceptance or refusal of the Spanish Crown for Leopold, which has officially been offered to him by the Spanish Government under the seal of secrecy, it being a European secret of State.

“The question occupies people here very much. Bismarck desires acceptance for dynastic and political reasons, but the King only if Leopold accepts willingly. On March 15th, there was here a very interesting and important Council (Beratung), presided over by the King. There were present the Crown Prince, Leopold and I, Bismarck, Roon, Moltke, Schleinitz, Thile and Delbrück. The unanimous resolution was in favour of acceptance because this was a Prussian patriotic duty. Leopold has declined for many reasons after a great struggle. However, as Spain desires before all a Roman Catholic Hohenzollern prince, I have proposed your brother Fritz instead of Leopold.”⁵⁰

Bismarck has denied the truth of this statement:

“The Memoirs of his Majesty the King of Roumania are not accurately informed as regards details of the ministerial co-operation in the question. The ministerial council in the palace which he mentions did not take place. Prince Anthony was living as the King's guest in

⁴⁷ Gramont, *op. cit.*, p. 365; Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 14-15.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 371, 5, 6.

⁴⁹ Vol. II, pp. 30-1. Cf. de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 193-209.

⁵⁰ *Fortnightly Rev.*, Oct. 1917, p. 517. The negotiations are detailed by Ward and Wilkinson: *Germany*, II, pp. 420-9. And see Fyffe, *op. cit.*, III, p. 413.

the palace, and had invited him and some of the ministers to dinner. I scarcely think that the Spanish question was discussed at table."⁵¹

Whether the matter came before a Council or not, there is little doubt that Bismarck very strongly urged acceptance of the offer. King Charles entered in his diary on 2 March:

"Count Bismarck pleads with great warmth that Prince Leopold should accept the Spanish Crown. He demonstrates, in a memoir of his to King William of Prussia, the great importance for Germany of having a Hohenzollern Prince on the Spanish Throne; that it would be politically invaluable to have in France's rear a country friendly to Germany."⁵²

The assent of the King of Prussia — not as King, but as head of the House of Hohenzollern — was necessary, and, as Sorel relates:

"The King limited himself, 28 June 1870, to declaring to him (Leopold) that he did not believe it his duty to put any obstacle in his way. He intervened only in the quality of chief of the family: he did not call his council together, and he consulted nobody."⁵³

Leopold finally consented to submission of his name as a candidate for the throne, and on the second of July the Spanish government decided to recommend the selection to the Cortes which was to be summoned for the 20th of the same month.⁵⁴ The next day the French Government became aware of these facts.

French Objection. French objection to the establishment of a Hohenzollern on the throne was, as the present writer thinks, not unreasonable. It was the sort of objection which had led to the war of the Spanish Succession. German influence had (1866) been strengthened by the accession of Leopold's brother to the Roumanian throne. The same result, probably, would have followed the elevation of Leopold in Spain. Dynastic arrangements have always been regarded as extremely important factors in European politics. At the same time, it may be observed that:

"although Prince Leopold bore the name of Hohenzollern, the connection with the ruler of Prussia dated very far back, whilst he was more recently related through the Beauharnais family with Napoleon III. On the other hand, it must be admitted, the friendship of the Sigmaringen branch with the ruling family of Prussia was intimate; the prince's father had been the first prime minister to King William; and it was he, it is believed, who first suggested to the King the appointment of Bismarck to the post of prime minister."⁵⁵

⁵¹ *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, p. 89.

⁵² *Fortnightly Rev.*, Oct. 1917, p. 516.

⁵³ Benedetti's report of 9 July 1870, referred to by Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, p. 76. Cf. Gramont, *op. cit.*, pp. 371, 5, 6; de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 210.

⁵⁴ *Br. Blue Bk.*, C.-167, Nos. 1, 24.

⁵⁵ Malleon, *op. cit.*, p. 211. See upon this point Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, p. 89; *Fortnightly Rev.*, Oct. 1917, p. 510; Fyffe, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 412-3; de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 191, 201.

France and Spain. French objection should, one would think, have been addressed to Spain, but to that government not a word of protest was offered between the 3d of July (when Leopold's acceptance became known) and the outbreak of war. General Prim has testified as follows:

"During the days which followed the announcement of this candidature, up to the time when the attitude of France was known, no one endeavored to make the least observation to me, neither was any made in France to the Spanish Ambassador, nor in Madrid to the French Ambassador."⁵⁶

Ollivier declares that Prim was wrong, but offers very little in support of his assertion. He appears, moreover, to excuse the absence of remonstrance by saying that Prim's activities indicated that:

"our representations would not be accepted, that they would not consent to a discussion with us, and that we were in the presence of an irrevocable decision."⁵⁷

And he read in the Corps Législatif, on the 15th July, as part of the government's declaration announcing the breach with Prussia:

"In these negotiations, we have asked nothing of Spain, of whom we wished neither to awaken the susceptibilities nor to wound the independence."⁵⁸

Gramont, in his book, indicated as the reason for not delivering a protest to Spain, that:

"It would not be advisable for the French government to place itself in opposition to a national manifestation of the Spanish people."⁵⁹

Conclusive evidence upon the point is furnished by the report of Mr. A. H. Layard, the British Ambassador at Madrid (25 July 1870):

"As the Duc de Gramont, in his circular to the Diplomatic Agents of the Empire, dated the 21st of this month, states that, so far back as the month of March of last year (1869), the French Ambassador at Berlin was requested to inform Count Bismarck of the views which the Emperor's Government would take of the election of a Hohenzollern Prince to the Spanish Throne — an idea which the Duc de Gramont declares was not a new one; that Count Benedetti, in several interviews which he had on this topic with the Chancellor of the North German Confederation, and the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, did not leave them in ignorance that France would never admit that a Prussian Prince should reign beyond the Pyrenees; and that M. de Thile had given his word of honor that the Prince of Hohenzollern was not and could not seriously become a candidate for the Spanish Crown — I have endeavored to ascertain whether any communication to this effect,

⁵⁶ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 30.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 397. Cf. the curious suggestion of de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 199. And see p. 218.

⁵⁹ *Op. cit.*, 27-8; Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, p. 62.

or which might have warned the Spanish Government of the serious consequences of proposing a Prince of the House of Hohenzollern as a candidate for the Throne, had at any time been made by the French Ambassador at Madrid, or through the Spanish Ambassador at Paris, or indirectly through any other channel to the Government of the Regent. I have received the most distinct and positive assurances from the three Ministers who have been at the head of the Foreign Office since the Revolution, — Señor Silvela, Señor Martos, and Señor Sagasta, — that no such communication was ever made to them directly or indirectly, and that they had no reason to believe that the election of Prince Leopold would have caused so violent an outbreak of feeling against Prussia and Spain in France. The only hint which Señor Sagasta appears to have received was the one given to him by Señor Olozaga, that the Emperor would not, in that diplomatist's opinion, view with favor the election of a German Prince to the Throne of Spain on account of his probable leaning to Prussia, as I reported to Lord Clarendon in my despatch of the 11th May last."⁶⁰

Gramont was, of course, well aware that it was to Spain that remonstrance should be directed, and it was upon Spain that he asked the United Kingdom to exercise her influence. The British Ambassador reported that Gramont said to him (7 July):

"It was, however, in Spain that the assistance of Her Majesty's Government might be most effectually given to France. The Regent might surely be convinced that it was his duty to separate himself from a policy which would plunge Spain into civil war, and put an end to peace in Europe. Could he wish that Spain's re-appearance on the political scene of Europe should be the signal for ruin and bloodshed? Would he wish his name to go down to posterity as the author of all these evils? Let him be strongly urged to prevent the early assembling of the Cortes. In this way the election would be prevented, and all might be well again."⁶¹

Lord Granville quite agreed with this view,⁶² and acted accordingly. Italy was of the same opinion, and instructed her Ambassador at Madrid: "to urge upon the Spanish Ministers, to the utmost of his power, to avoid bringing on a rupture with France, and to come to some arrangement by which the candidature of the Prince of Hohenzollern may be withdrawn."⁶³

⁶⁰ Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 45.

⁶¹ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 11.

⁶² See his despatch to Lord Loftus, 6 July 1870 (*ibid.*, No. 5); and his two despatches to Mr. Layard, 7 July (*ibid.*, Nos. 7, 8). Cf. de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 254.

⁶³ Layard to Lord Granville, 11 July 1870: Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 58; and see No. 47. "The knot of the question was at Madrid." Cf. de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 235.

Austria-Hungary, assuming that France had made representations at Madrid, expressed the hope:

“that the Spanish nation and Government would give due weight to the appeal of the French Government to their wisdom and friendship.”⁶⁴

But no representations were made. To Spain no remonstrance was addressed. If, from Gramont's actions, one were to surmise why he refrained from presenting his objection to Spain, the thought would be that, looking forward to a desired war with Prussia, he wished to avoid cause for anxiety from across the Pyrenees.

France and Prussia. Gramont's tenderness with regard to Spain was balanced by the roughness of his advance upon Prussia. In a telegram to the French Ambassador at Berlin, he said:

“We will not consider this candidature as serious, and believe that the Spanish nation will reject it. But we cannot without some surprise see a Prussian prince seeking to seat himself on the Spanish throne. We should like to believe that the Berlin government is a stranger to this intrigue; in the contrary case, its conduct would suggest to us some reflections of an order too delicate for me to indicate in a telegram. I do not hesitate, however, to say to you that the impression is bad, and I invite you to explain yourself in this sense.”⁶⁵

The reply from Berlin (4 July) was:

“that the Prussian government knew absolutely nothing of this affair, and that for it, it does not exist.”⁶⁶

That attitude was maintained until the end.

The French Chamber. As on many other occasions, the Press in Paris immediately commenced to inflame public opinion;⁶⁷ and Cochery, a member of the Corps Législatif, gavé notice of an interpellation:

“on the eventual candidature of a prince of the royal family of Prussia to the throne of Spain.”⁶⁸

Upon the effect of this action, Sorel comments as follows:

“This interpellation responded to the preoccupations of public opinion, but it was a grave fault; it had disastrous consequences. In carrying the affair to the tribune for harangues, M. Cochery and his friends cut short all diplomatic intervention in Europe. . . . Unfortunately the French ministry partook of the passions bursting around it; it had not the courage to combat them.”⁶⁹

Complaining of the action of the Cabinet, Sorel said:

⁶⁴ Lord Granville to Lord Bloomfield, 19 July 1870: Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 101. Cf. de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 236.

⁶⁵ De la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 218; Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 62-3; Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 31-2.

⁶⁶ Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, p. 63. Cf. Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 32.

⁶⁷ Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 64, 67, 69.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

⁶⁹ In his book, Gramont said that “the interpellation responded . . . to the preoccupation of public opinion”: *op. cit.*, p. 36.

"The duty of true diplomats, of intelligent Frenchmen, was to calm minds; that was an indispensable precaution, if they did not seek war, and if they wished to negotiate. But, far from restraining these sentiments, the Cabinet associated itself with them."

"Now it soon became clear, at least for the government, that peace was compromised even before a negotiation had commenced."⁷⁰ London and Vienna were counselling moderation:

"But at the moment when these despatches were written in London and Vienna, the French government summoned Prussia to surrender, and precipitated the rupture which Austria and England were endeavoring to prevent."⁷¹

Gramont's Declaration. The summons was in the form of a declaration by Gramont in the Chamber on 6 July, as follows:

"We have not ceased to show our sympathy for the Spanish nation, and to avoid all that might have had the appearance of intermeddling in any way in the internal affairs of a noble and great nation in the full exercise of her sovereignty. We have not departed from regarding the various candidates for the throne with the strictest neutrality, and have never manifested for any one of them either preference or aversion. We persist in that course. But we do not think that respect for the rights of a neighboring people compels us to suffer that a Foreign Power, in placing one of its Princes on the throne of Charles V, should disturb to our disadvantage the present balance of power in Europe, and should endanger the interests and honor of France. This eventuality, we firmly hope, will not be realized. To prevent it, we count at once on the wisdom of the German people, and the friendship of the Spanish people. If it should be otherwise, strong in your support, gentlemen, and in that of the nation, we should know how to discharge our duty without hesitation and without weakness."⁷²

Ollivier, the Prime Minister, followed the reading of the declaration by a speech in which he said:

"The Government desires peace, and desires it with passion. It desires it with passion, but with honor."⁷³

The declaration had been formulated at a council of the ministers presided over by the Emperor.⁷⁴ In Ollivier's view, it was, in reality, "an ultimatum."⁷⁵ He, nevertheless, had agreed to it. Sorel's comment on it was as follows:

⁷⁰ Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 68, 70.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁷² Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 6; Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 109-10. And see Lord Granville's speech in the House of Lords, 11 July 1870.

⁷³ Gramont, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

⁷⁴ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 10; Ward and Wilkinson: *Germany*, II, p. 430; de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 226-7; Henri Welschinger: *La Guerre de 1870*, I, pp. 52-3.

⁷⁵ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 110. After the session of the Chamber, Ollivier

“Crushing in form, absolute in conclusions, the declaration of the 6th July put King William in the position of either submitting to a diplomatic affront, or of declaring war. It was an ultimatum. . . .”⁷⁶
In the view of de la Gorce:

“The manifesto, by the sharpness of its terms, seemed first act of war rather than invitation to negotiate.”⁷⁷

The Emperor afterwards stated his opinion of it as follows:

“I felt then, and my mind has never changed on this point, that the ministry made a grave mistake in pronouncing in the tribune a sort of challenge. . . .”⁷⁸

Gramont himself acknowledged that the declaration was couched in “language firmer than usual,” and was “a categorical exposition” of the duties of Prussia. He placed his justification upon the fact that the Prussian government had denied association with, or responsibility for, the situation,⁷⁹ and upon “the impossibility of contending with public opinion.”⁸⁰ That he intended his language to be provocative, is made clear by what he said on the previous day (5th) to Lord Lyons, the British Ambassador, who reported it as follows:

“To this, continued M. de Gramont, France will not resign herself, and when I say that we shall not resign ourselves to it, I mean that we shall not permit it, and that we shall use our whole strength to prevent it. M. de Gramont then informed me that he had declared categorically to Baron de Werther, the Prussian Ambassador, that France would not tolerate the establishment of the Prince de Hohenzollern, or any other Prussian Prince, on the Throne of Spain.”⁸¹

Appreciating the purport of such language, Lord Granville, the British Foreign Secretary, in his reply to Lord Lyons, said (6 July) that he had declared to the French Ambassador in London:

“that it was a matter of regret to me that such strong language as that reported by your Excellency to have been addressed to Baron Werther had been used; but I added that it was not so much a moment for the general discussion, but rather to see what could be done that could tend to a favorable issue of the affair.”⁸²

telegraphed to the Emperor: “The declaration was received in the Chamber with emotion and immense applause. The Left itself, with the exception of a few, declared that it would support the Government. The movement, at the first moment, has surpassed the object. It was said that it was a declaration of war”: Welschinger, *op. cit.*, I, p. 150.

⁷⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 78. Jules Favre declared in the Chamber that Gramont's “declaration was an offence to Prussia,” and the newspapers repeated the assertion. It was the keynote of the comments of several of the more prominent sheets: Count Fleury, *Memoirs of the Empress Eugénie*, II, p. 226. See also pp. 234, 236, 251.

⁷⁷ *Op. cit.*, VI, p. 228.

⁷⁸ Fleury, *op. cit.*, II, p. 252.

⁷⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 39. Cf. Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 41, Enc.

⁸⁰ Lyons to Granville, 7 July 1870: Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 11.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, No. 2.

⁸² *Ibid.*, No. 4.

The effect upon Bismarck of Gramont's declaration in the Corps Législatif may be judged from his comment upon it.

" . . . this utterance was itself an official international threat, with the hand on the sword hilt. The phrase *La Prusse cane* (Prussia climbs down) served in the press to illustrate the range of the parliamentary proceedings of July 6 and 7; which, in my feeling, rendered all compliance incompatible with our sense of national honor."⁸³

The declaration had created an extremely difficult situation.

Military Preparation. Making no demand upon Spain; having no expectation of Prussian submission; and anxious for war, Gramont, two days after his declaration in the Chamber, said (as the British Ambassador reported):

" that he was still without any answer from Prussia, and that this silence rendered it impossible for the French Government to abstain any longer from making military preparations. Some steps in this direction had been already taken, and to-morrow the military authorities must begin in earnest. The movements of troops would be settled at the Council to be held at St. Cloud in the morning. On my manifesting some surprise and regret at the rapid pace at which the French Government seemed to be proceeding, M. de Gramont insisted that it was impossible for them to delay any longer."⁸⁴

Replying to the Ambassador's report of this conversation, Lord Granville said (9 July):

" Her Majesty's Government have continued to regret the tenor of the observations successively made in the French Chambers and in the French press, which tend to excite rather than to allay the angry feelings which have been aroused in France, and may only too probably call forth similar feelings in Germany and in Spain; and their regret has been increased by the intimation now given to you by the Duc de Gramont that military preparations would forthwith be made in France."⁸⁵

When the British Ambassador presented these considerations to Gramont, the reply was, as the Ambassador reported (10 July):

" that in this matter the French Ministers were following, not leading the nation. Public opinion would not admit of their doing less than they had done. As regarded military preparations, common prudence required that they should not be behindhand. In the midst of a profound calm, when the French Cabinet and Chamber were employed in reducing their military budget, Prussia exploded upon them this mine which she had prepared in secret. It was necessary that France should be at least as forward as Prussia in military preparations. . . . The French Government would, M. de Gramont went on to say, defer for a

⁸³ *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, p. 92.

⁸⁴ Lyons to Granville, 8 July 1870: Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 15.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 17.

short time longer (for twenty-four hours, for instance) those great ostensible preparations for war (such as calling out the reserves) which would inflame public feeling in France. All essential preparations must, however, be carried out unremittingly. The French Ministers would be unwise if they run any risk of allowing Prussia to gain time by dilatory pretexts.”⁸⁶

BENEDETTI AT EMS

Benedetti's Instructions. Receiving no satisfaction from Berlin, Gramont sent Benedetti to Ems, where the King of Prussia was taking the waters, and instructed him (Friday, 7 July) as follows:

“If the head of the Hohenzollern family has been up to the present indifferent about this affair, we ask him not to be so for the future, and we pray him to intervene, if not by his orders, at least by his counsels, to Prince Leopold.”⁸⁷

Such were the official instructions. The private were as follows:

“I am sending to you young Bourqueney with a cipher, in order that you may be able to inform me as quickly as possible as to the result of your *démarche* with the King. We know, by the avowal of the prince himself, that he has arranged the entire affair with the Prussian government, and we are unable to accept the evasive reply with which M. de Thile seeks to escape from the dilemma in which he has been placed. It is absolutely necessary that you obtain a categorical reply, followed by its natural consequences. The following is the only thing which could satisfy us and avert war: ‘The government of the King does not approve the acceptance of the Prince of Hohenzollern, and gives him the order to withdraw from this determination, taken without his permission.’ It will then remain to let me know whether the Prince, obedient to this injunction, renounces officially and publicly his candidature. We are much pressed for time, because, in the case of an unsatisfactory response, it would be necessary to forestall them, and on Saturday to commence the movement of troops in order to enter upon the campaign in fifteen days. . . . I insist above all upon the necessity of not permitting the gaining of time by evasive replies; it is necessary to know if we are to have peace, or if a finality of non-compliance will oblige us to undertake war. If you obtain from the King [assurance] that he revokes the acceptance of the Prince of Hohenzollern, that will be an immense success, and a great service. The King, on his part, will have assured the peace of Europe. Otherwise, it is war. As for the Prince, his reign in Spain will not last a month; but the war provoked by this intrigue of M. de Bismarck, how long will it last, and what will be the consequences? So then, no evasions and no delays: that you may be able to succeed is my most ardent wish.”

In a postscript, Gramont added:

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 25.

⁸⁷ Benedetti: *Ma Mission en Prusse*, p. 317.

"Be on your guard against an answer which would consist in saying that the King leaves the Prince of Hohenzollern to his fate, and disinterests himself from all that may happen; that he will remain neutral in presence of all the eventualities which might be the consequence of his individual resolutions. We cannot accept this response as satisfactory, for the government of the King could not dissociate itself by mere words from a situation which he has helped to create. If we are to accept the assurance of his disinterestedness, it is necessary that he modify it, that he amend it."⁸⁸

In other words, withdrawal of Leopold's candidature would not be sufficient to avert war. The King was required (1) to say that he did not approve Leopold's acceptance; (2) to declare that the acceptance had taken place without his permission; and (3) to order Leopold to withdraw. There can be little doubt that Benedetti's compliance with these instructions would have produced immediate rupture. Their truculent form sufficiently indicates their purpose. Disobeying his orders, Benedetti proceeded with moderation, and, in reporting, said:

"You will approve, I hope, of my not having been more exigent with the King, and of my not having acted with excessive brusqueness. Doubtless you will be of the opinion that it is necessary to show a due measure of moderation on our side."⁸⁹

The "moderation" provoked Gramont's censure, and made much more difficult the accomplishment of his purpose — as we shall see.

9, 10, 11 JULY

Benedetti and the King. Presenting his message to the King (9 July, 3 P.M.) with such circumspection as he thought advisable, Benedetti received the reply that no order or counsel to Prince Leopold could be given. The King said, however, that communication had been entered into with Leopold and his father, and that reply was expected shortly.⁹⁰ ". . . he has added," Benedetti reported, "that if they were disposed to withdraw their acceptance he would approve that resolution."⁹¹ From that position the King never receded. He would approve. He would neither order nor counsel.

Gramont to Benedetti. Benedetti's reply to Gramont was, as we have seen, of placatory character, but Gramont was little disposed to moderate his tone, and the next day (10 July, 1.20 P.M.), telegraphed as follows:

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 319-21; Gramont, *op. cit.*, 61-5.

⁸⁹ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

⁹⁰ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, pp. 325-8. See also Benedetti's letters of same date: *Ibid.*, pp. 328-40. Ward and Wilkinson's references to the Ems incident are in their *Germany*, II, pp. 433-41.

⁹¹ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 325.

“It is necessary that you employ all your efforts in order to obtain a decisive reply; we cannot wait, under penalty of being forestalled by Prussia in our preparations. The day cannot pass without our commencing.”⁹²

In a letter to Benedetti of the same date, Gramont said:

“I tell you plainly public opinion is ablaze and will leave us behind. We must begin; we wait only for your despatch to call up 300,000 men who are awaiting the summons. Write, telegraph something definite. If the King will not counsel the Prince of Hohenzollern to resign, well, it is immediate war, and in a few days we are on the Rhine. The King is henceforth responsible. After the admission that he has authorized the acceptance, it is necessary that he forbid it, or at least that he counsel and obtain the renunciation.”⁹³

The comment of Henri Welschinger (of the French Institute) upon this message is as follows:

“When one re-reads this despatch after the events which followed it, events which happened forty years ago and seem as of yesterday, one is literally stupefied by the blindness of this minister and his colleagues, ‘In a few days we are on the Rhine!’ Alas! in a few days, in spite of the heroism of our troops, we were going to retreat on the Moselle.”⁹⁴

Benedetti and the King. In the evening of the same day, the King met Benedetti, and stopped to tell him that as yet no reply had been received from Prince Leopold.⁹⁵

Ollivier. Ollivier’s impressions on receipt of Benedetti’s report were, as he himself has recorded, as follows:

“Our impression was that the King was trifling with us. Feeling ourselves among liars, fearing each instant to be surprised by a new perfidy, haunted by that date of the 20th July always before our eyes as a spectre, we were unable to believe a word of any of the contrivers of the pitfall which we were trying to avoid.”⁹⁶

Gramont to Benedetti. Early in the morning of the next day (the 11th, 1 A.M.), Gramont telegraphed Benedetti:

“You cannot imagine to what height public opinion has risen. It flows over us from all sides, and we are counting the hours. It is absolutely necessary to insist that a reply from the King, negative or affirmative, be obtained. It must be got for us for to-morrow, the day after will be too late.”⁹⁷

Later in the day (6.50 P.M.) Gramont again telegraphed Benedetti:

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 342.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 347.

⁹⁴ *La Guerre de 1870*, I, p. 66.

⁹⁵ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, pp. 344-5.

⁹⁶ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 189.

⁹⁷ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 348.

"I have received your first report of the 9th, and your private letter. At the point at which we have arrived, we must not leave you in ignorance that your language no longer corresponds, in point of firmness, with the position taken by the Government of the Emperor. It is necessary to-day to accentuate it more strongly. . . . We require that the King forbid the Prince of Hohenzollern to persist in his candidature, and if we do not receive a decisive reply to-morrow, we shall consider silence or ambiguity as a refusal to do that which we demand."⁹⁸

Comte Fleury, the author of *Memoirs of the Empress Eugénie*, affirms that the Emperor was not shown this telegram, "the tone" of which he afterwards described as "exceedingly haughty."⁹⁹

Benedetti and the King. Urged by Gramont's telegram, Benedetti requested another audience with the King, and, during an hour (morning of the 11th) pressed him, "by all the arguments imaginable"¹⁰⁰ to make concession without waiting to hear from Prince Antoine or Prince Leopold, declaring that it was "absolutely urgent" that time should not be lost. In telegraphing the conversation, Benedetti said:

"Not concealing the impression which my words produced upon his mind, the King replied to me that, when he was asking nothing more than a short delay in order to assure himself of the intentions of the two princes of Hohenzollern, our insistence was calculated to make him think that we had the design of provoking a conflict."¹⁰¹ Peace, said the King, "will not be disturbed if in Paris they wish to wait until I am in a position to contribute usefully toward it, by leaving me the time that is necessary for me."

"In remarking to the King that all these details were certainly not of a nature to subdue the public effervescence in France if they were known there, and that I could see in them only another motive for putting an end to this unfortunate incident by his personal intervention, I made a last effort to obtain the assent of His Majesty to my proposition."¹⁰²

In a simultaneous despatch to Gramont, Benedetti said:

"His Majesty has allowed me to infer, and through his entourage has given me to understand, as M. de Werther will tell you, that the Prince ought to renounce spontaneously the crown which has been offered to him, and that the King will not hesitate to approve his resolution."¹⁰³

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 361; Gramont, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-9. And see Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 202.

⁹⁹ II, pp. 218-9.

¹⁰⁰ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 349.

¹⁰¹ Gramont repudiated this suggestion, and authorized Benedetti to accord the desired delay, hoping that it would not extend beyond a day: Telegram of 12th, 2 P.M.: Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 355-6.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 358. See Benedetti's telegrams, *Ma Mission en Prusse*, pp. 349, 360; and his despatch, *ibid.*, p. 362.

It will be observed that this is the second time that the King had expressed his willingness to "approve" a withdrawal. In a telegram of the 12th (8.30 A.M.), Benedetti said that in his conversation with the King he (Benedetti) had held firmer language and shown himself more pressing than previously.¹⁰⁴

The Chamber. At Paris, as Ollivier relates, the government was "fighting with the intractable opposition of the Chamber."¹⁰⁵ Having stated that the government had nothing to announce further than (quite untruly) that:

"all the Cabinets we have addressed appear to admit the legitimacy of our grievances;"¹⁰⁶

and questions having been raised as to the nature of the demands made upon Prussia, Gramont rose to reply; but:

"a veritable tempest from the Right would not permit him to offer a word."¹⁰⁷

"The Right declared loudly that the Hohenzollern affair ought to be considered as merely an incident, that even if the solution were favorable, it would be necessary not to allow the matter to drop; to raise the question of the treaty of Prague; and resolutely to place Prussia between the acceptance of a Congress and war. This language was held similarly by Gambetta, Montpayroux on the Left, Jérôme David and Pinard on the side of the Right; and all announced openly the intention to attack the Cabinet if it stopped after the termination of the Hohenzollern affair."¹⁰⁸

Referring to the state of opinion in Paris on the 10th, Gramont has said:

"While we were pursuing this result in every possible way, public opinion became every day more inflamed and threatened to overwhelm us . . . and it became evident that the Chambers and the country would reject as insufficient any solution which did not carry with it, in a certain measure, the participation of the King in the withdrawal of the Prince."¹⁰⁹

Referring to the 11th, Gramont has said:

"However, public opinion became more inflamed, as anyone might see; the Chamber, whose unquiet and agitated spirit reflected faithfully the impatience of the public, imperiously exacted a communication from the government."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 361-2.

¹⁰⁵ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 198.

¹⁰⁶ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 29, Enc. The British government promptly denied the statement: *ibid.*, No. 34; and No. 61, Enc. 3.

¹⁰⁷ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 199. See Fleury, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 239, 251.

¹⁰⁸ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 201.

¹⁰⁹ Gramont, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-1.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

12 JULY — LEOPOLD'S WITHDRAWAL

The Withdrawal. As might have been, and probably was, expected, Prim, in view of the attitude assumed by France (which he had not anticipated), was quite willing to drop his proposal with reference to Prince Leopold. Gramont so advised Benedetti on the 10th at 1.20 P.M.¹¹¹ Indeed, Prim sent General Dominguez to Sigmaringen in order to persuade Leopold to withdraw. Thither, on similar mission, went also Colonel Strantz on behalf of the Prussian King¹¹² and Strat on behalf of Olozaga, the Spanish Ambassador at Paris.¹¹³ As a result of their representations, Antoine telegraphed to Marshal Prim (12th, A.M.) withdrawing the candidature of Leopold,¹¹⁴ and sent a duplicate of the message to Olozaga at Paris.¹¹⁵ Olozaga carried his copy to Gramont, and, at the same time, announced that Spain disengaged herself from the incident.¹¹⁶ That was bad news for Gramont. Having commenced with a foolish defiance to Prussia, he found, on the one hand, that, without any action on the part of Prussia, all ground of quarrel had been removed, and, on the other, that he was quite unable, even if he had so wished, to appease the Chamber and the public, whose anger he had aroused. Quite frankly, he communicated his difficulty to the British Ambassador, who reported the conversation to Lord Granville as follows:

"On the one hand, public opinion was so much excited in France, that it was doubtful whether the Ministry would not be overthrown if it went down to the Chamber to-morrow, and announced that it regarded the affair as finished without having obtained some more complete satisfaction from Prussia. On the other hand, the renunciation of the Crown by Prince Leopold put an end to the original cause of the dispute."¹¹⁷

After the trouble was all over, Gramont wrote in his book:

"Every guarantee, all satisfaction escaped us. It was evidently necessary to find some new expedient."¹¹⁸

¹¹¹ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 342. And see p. 348.

¹¹² De la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 254.

¹¹³ Strat was Roumanian Charge at Paris, and had reason to apprehend that French antipathy to Leopold might be extended to his (Leopold's) brother, the King of Roumania (*ibid.*, pp. 253-4). Ollivier says that the Emperor informed him that Olozaga acted without the knowledge of Marshal Prim, but authorized by the Emperor (*op. cit.* XIV, p. 239). In some respects Strat appears to have been commissioned by King William himself: Welschinger, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 68, 72.

¹¹⁴ De la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 255.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 256-7.

¹¹⁶ Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 130. The form of the withdrawal, signed by Leopold himself, and the ensuing action by the Spanish government, may be seen in Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 93.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 30; *Ann. Reg.*, 1870, p. 201.

¹¹⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 114. Quoted by Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, p. 130.

The expedient which he adopted will appear in a few minutes. Meanwhile, let us note the effect of the withdrawal upon other persons.

Ollivier. Ollivier's view was as follows:

"If then no new incident came up matters would be arranged in this way: The King, during the day of the 13th, would have communicated to Benedetti the renunciation which he was expecting. He would add that he approved it, and authorized our Ambassador to transmit to our government this double assurance. In that way would have been obtained the two conditions presented by Gramont: abandonment of the candidature, and the manifest participation of the King in the abandonment. Our victory of the 12th would have been complete on the 13th, and Bismarck would have been definitely beaten."¹¹⁹

"The affair was surely ended if we did not commit some imprudence, and I was so happy that, for a moment, I could not believe it to be true."¹²⁰

Referring to Gramont, Ollivier says:

"He did not receive the news with the same joy as I. I had seen only the disappearance of the candidature, thinking little of the manner in which it had disappeared; he confined himself above all to the form, and, in the direct notification made by Prince Antoine to Prim, he saw the juggling of indirect participation by the King. From that moment, the complete accord between us was at an end; he continued to attach a major importance to the participation of the King, which had become secondary in my eyes."¹²¹

Without consulting anybody, and without sufficient consideration as to what the effect might be, Ollivier carried a copy of the Antoine telegram to the Chamber and passed it among the members, indicating that by it the government had obtained all that it wanted.¹²²

Bismarck's Attitude. Bismarck was as displeased as was Gramont. He saw that the withdrawal would be regarded as a humiliating submission to a French demand. His attitude has been described by Ollivier as follows:

"In a flash, he saw all the lamentable (for him) consequences of the event. He was deceived, beaten, humiliated, abandoned by his King, by his candidate; he was about to become the laughing-stock of Germany and of Europe; his edifice of trickery was crumbling over his head."¹²³

But Bismarck was determined that there should be no appearance of diplomatic defeat. He still believed in peace (he said), but he declined to be responsible for:

¹¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, XIV, p. 225.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 243-4.

¹²² Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 126-8; de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 257.

¹²³ *Op. cit.*, vol. XIV, pp. 218-19.

“the attitude by which the peace had been purchased.” “I saw by that time that war was a necessity which we could no longer avoid with honor . . . we had got our slap in the face from France, and had been reduced by our complaisance to look like seekers of a quarrel if we entered upon war, the only way by which we could wipe away the stain. My position was now untenable, solely because, during his course at the baths, the King, under pressure of threats, had given audience to the French Ambassador for four consecutive days, and had exposed his royal person to insolent treatment from this foreign agent, without ministerial assistance.”¹²⁴

12 JULY — VARIOUS PLANS

Napoleon and Gramont believed that a withdrawal, unaccompanied by any action on the part of the King beyond mere approval, would be unacceptable alike to the Chamber and the public. Some “new expedient” had to be found. As Sorel has said:

“The King of Prussia sought to disengage himself, the Duke thought only of means to replace him in the case.”¹²⁵

Four schemes were suggested.

The Emperor’s Plan. The Emperor proposed, in a note to Ollivier, a rather mendacious way out of the difficulty:

“If the news is announced to the Chamber, one ought at least to make the best of it and give the impression that it is upon the injunction of the King of Prussia that the candidature has been withdrawn. I have not yet seen Gramont. The country will be disappointed. But what can be done?”¹²⁶

Ollivier went to the Emperor; asked if the withdrawal had been really the work of the King; was told that it had not; and said:

“In that case, it would be very risky to boast, even indirectly, of the intervention of the King of Prussia. The satisfaction which we might give public opinion, by that erroneous assurance, would not be of long duration; Bismarck would counter it by a brutal denial, and the affair, which seemed to be ended, would recommence.”¹²⁷

That proposal was abandoned.

Gramont’s First Plan. Telegram to Benedetti, 1.40 P.M. Immediately after hearing of the telegram announcing the withdrawal, Gramont telegraphed to Benedetti (12th, 1.40 P.M.) as follows:

“Employ your skill . . . to procure that the renunciation of the Prince is announced, communicated, or transmitted by the King of Prussia or his Government. That is, for us, of the greatest importance.

¹²⁴ *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, p. 94.

¹²⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 130.

¹²⁶ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 236.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

The participation of the King must, at all costs, be consented to by him or result from the facts in a manifest manner.”¹²⁸

It will be observed that the requirement of this telegram (It may be referred to as the *modifying telegram*) falls far short of that of Gramont's next preceding message—that of the 11th at 6.50 P.M. A demand “that the King forbid the Prince of Hohenzollern to persist in his candidature” is reduced to a demand that the King's participation in the withdrawal must “result from the facts in a manifest manner.” Benedetti did what he could, but failed. In the evening of the same day, but not in reply to Gramont's message, he telegraphed:

“The King has just said to me that he had received a telegraphic despatch which advised him that the reply of the Prince of Hohenzollern would certainly reach him to-morrow morning. He added that he will send for me as soon as it is placed in his hands.”¹²⁹

Gramont's Second Plan. Gramont's second plan was to extract from Werther (the Prussian Ambassador), during conversation with him, some useful, if only verbal, admission of the King's participation. Ollivier relates that:

“He tried to obtain from him the admission that the King had not been a stranger to the withdrawal. The situation would in that way be righted; he would be able, without contradiction, to make the announcement of which the Emperor felt the necessity. But Werther did not fall into the trap; he argued, in a tone which admitted of no doubt, ‘that the renunciation certainly emanated from the sole initiative of Prince Leopold.’”¹³⁰

Gramont's Third Plan. Foiled in this attempt, Gramont endeavored, with the help of Ollivier (who had arrived during the conversation) in another way to involve the King: Gramont said to Werther (as the latter related):

“that, in our conduct toward France, we had not employed friendly procedure, as, to his knowledge, had been recognized by all the great Powers.”¹³¹

And Gramont suggested that the King of Prussia should sign a letter in the following form:

“In authorizing Prince Leopold to accept the crown of Spain, the King did not intend to harm either the interests or the dignity of the French nation. His Majesty associates himself with the renunciation of the Prince, and expresses his desire that all causes of misunderstanding between his government and that of the Emperor may henceforth disappear.”¹³²

¹²⁸ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 365; Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 242-3. Benedetti gives the hour as 2.15 P.M.

¹²⁹ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 365.

¹³⁰ *Op. cit.*, XIV, p. 244.

¹³¹ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 442.

¹³² Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 245-6.

Opinions may differ as to whether such a document would have been considered, as it has been variously described, a "letter of excuse," an "apology,"¹³³ or a mere *lettre d'amitié*; but as the express purpose for which it was wanted was that French anger might be appeased by a diplomatic victory, there can be little doubt that it would have been useless unless it could have been construed as a Prussian retreat. During the conversation, Gramont said to Werther that:

"King William would render to our two countries, and to the whole world, an incomparable service if, by the spontaneity of an amicable advance, he would re-establish the cordiality of the relations which he himself had upset. In strengthening our ministerial position, he would give us the means of continuing our pacific work."¹³⁴

The "ministerial position" could not, of course, be strengthened without the display of some striking success. And if Ollivier and Gramont regarded the proposed letter as *une lettre d'amitié*, there need be no surprise that the Prussian King saw in it something of an apology, and that the Berlin newspapers so characterized it. In his report of the conversation to the King, Werther said:

"Such were the words, intended to be given publicity for the appeasement of the country, which the letter was to contain."¹³⁵

Replying, during the conversation, to Werther's expression of distaste for being the medium of presentation to the King of such a request, Ollivier and Gramont (as Werther related):

"Both said to me that if I did not believe myself able to undertake it, they would be obliged to charge Count Benedetti with the raising of the question." "The two ministers, in making it appear that, in regard to their ministerial situation, they had need of an arrangement of this kind to calm the excitement, added that such a letter would authorize them to act as defenders against attacks which could not fail to rise against his Majesty the King."¹³⁶

In a circular despatch, Gramont afterwards (24 July) denied that he had asked for:

"a letter of excuse, as the Berlin journals have pretended in their semi-official commentaries."¹³⁷

But Gramont did not deny that he had threatened to put the matter into the hands of Benedetti for diplomatic action, and that the "strengthening our ministerial position" was the purpose for which he wanted the letter. The only effect of the request was, as might have

¹³³ Bismarck spoke of it as "an apologetic letter to the Emperor Napoleon, the publication of which might pacify the excited feelings in France": Bismarck to Bernstorff; communicated to the British government 18 July 1870: Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 8, Enc. No. 1. Cf. No. 31, Enc.

¹³⁴ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 249-50.

¹³⁵ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 443.

¹³⁶ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 444.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 445; Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 41, Enc.

been expected, to arouse the King's resentment. Writing to his Queen, he said:

"Did one ever see such insolence? It is necessary, then, that I appear before the world as a repentant sinner in an affair that I never set in motion, conducted, and led, by Prim, and they have left him out of the game. Unfortunately, Werther did not at once leave the room after such a pretension, and send his interlocutors to Minister Bismarck. They even went so far as to say that they would charge Benedetti with this affair. Unfortunately, it is necessary to conclude regarding these inexplicable proceedings, that they are resolved, cost what it may, to provoke us; and that the Emperor, in spite of himself, will allow himself to be led by these inexperienced practitioners."¹³⁸

Gramont's Fourth Plan. Foiled in these various attempts to escape from the difficult position in which he had placed himself, Gramont adopted a fourth plan — a plan by which (when supplemented by misrepresentation) he succeeded in satisfying the Chamber, at the expense of producing war. It will be dealt with in a later paragraph.

12 JULY — DEMAND OF FUTURE GUARANTEE

Duvernois Interpellation. The war-party in the French Chamber were by no means discomfited by the telegram announcing the withdrawal. They ridiculed it as "the despatch of Father Antoine," and, through Clement Duvernois, they presented the following interpellation:

"We demand to interpellate the Cabinet as to the guarantees for which it has stipulated, or intends to stipulate, in order to avoid the return of successive complications with Prussia."¹³⁹

That was the origin of the absolutely new demand, shortly afterwards made by Gramont. Of the temper of the Chamber, the *Gazette de France* said:

"The war current seemed to overwhelm it. In the conference room of the Corps Législatif, a Vendean deputy said loudly that if the ministry contents itself with the renunciation by Prince Antoine in the name of his son, the Extreme-Right will not. Altogether, the majority seems bent on war; it might be that the ministry would be overturned if it stopped now."¹⁴⁰

Referring to the same subject, Ollivier says that the Right considered that the candidature was a secondary consideration, and that quarrel with Prussia was necessary:

"The Right, not hoping to terminate my resistance, tore me to pieces furiously. I was accused of lack of courage, of patriotism, and of foresight."¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 303.

¹³⁹ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 235-6. See Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, p. 128.

¹⁴⁰ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 236.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

He then quotes from various newspapers to the same effect, and comments:

"This outburst of anger did not move me."¹⁴²

Gramont's Fourth Plan — Future Guarantee. Immediately after his conversation with Werther (above referred to), Gramont went to the Emperor and reported his lack of success. Thereupon, in the absence of any other member of the Council, they agreed that the matter should not be allowed to terminate — withdrawal of Leopold's candidature, with mere "approval" of the King, would not satisfy the public or the Chamber.¹⁴³ And they determined to make the demand which had been suggested in the Duvernois interpellation, namely, a demand upon the King for what may be called a future guarantee¹⁴⁴ — "an assurance that he will not authorize anew this candidature." But their resolution was evidently based upon their view of the necessity of pandering to the clamor which they had raised — upon their view that "some new expedient" must be found — rather than upon their conception of the unrelated propriety of the step. Gramont admitted as much when, in his book, he said:

"It is not possible to accept the withdrawal of Prince Antoine without stipulating guarantees. It was necessary, I repeat, to associate oneself, in a certain measure, with the national sentiment, if one still wished to retain a chance of being able to hold it back from a recourse to arms."¹⁴⁵

Gramont to Benedetti—7 P.M. Accordingly (at 7 P.M.), Gramont sent the following telegraphic instruction to Benedetti:

"We have received, from the hands of the Spanish Ambassador, Prince Antoine's renunciation, in the name of his son Leopold, of his candidature to the throne of Spain. In order that this renunciation of Prince Antoine may produce all its effect, it appears necessary that the King of Prussia associate himself with it, and give us the assurance that he will not authorize anew this candidature. Be good enough to wait immediately upon the King in order to demand from him this declaration, which he cannot refuse if he is not really animated by some *arrière-pensée*. Notwithstanding the renunciation, which is now known, the excitement is such that we do not know whether we shall be able to dominate it."¹⁴⁶

Ollivier's Disapproval. Informed of this telegram in an interview with Gramont during the evening, Ollivier expressed strong disapproval

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 258.

¹⁴³ "This was not sufficient for Napoleon who, in the state of French opinion, dared not close the incident without inflicting a public diplomatic defeat upon Prussia" (*The Cambridge Modern History*, XI, p. 578) — a defeat in what Ollivier termed *la bataille diplomatique* (*op. cit.*, vol. 14, p. 81).

¹⁴⁴ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 254-5.

¹⁴⁵ Gramont, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

¹⁴⁶ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 254-5; Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 369.

of it. He recognized that the King could not be expected to give the guarantee demanded. In his book he wrote:

“The acquiescence of the King in the new demand would have produced deplorable consequences for him. If, to the renunciation which, in spite of denials, was attributed to him, he had added an engagement of any kind, a German clamor would have arisen against his humiliation. It was precisely the perfidy of the Right to have raised an exigency which it was impossible that our opponent could remove; the demand for the guarantee could be interpreted only as a desire to bring about war.”¹⁴⁷

On another page, Ollivier wrote:

“This inconsiderate despatch annulled the wise despatch of 1h. 40.¹⁴⁸ It no longer contented itself with the participation of the King in the present case; it demanded an engagement with reference to problematic occurrences of the future, and threw us back into the hazards from which, without it, we were sure to have escaped happily. What necessity was there to precipitate himself in that way? . . . This demand of a guarantee was, as we have seen by the interpellation of Duvernois which had preceded it, his conception.”¹⁴⁹

In the debate in the Corps Législatif three days subsequently, Thiers attacked the demand for future guarantee as a mistake, and Ollivier defended it (as we shall see) as reasonable. In his book, he made a distinction. The demand was:

“defensible in pure logic, but unjustifiable in the circumstances in which it occurred. All the argumentation of Thiers on this subject is irrefutable; he was right in calling the demand for a guarantee a mistake. Although this mistake may not have been that of the Cabinet, I could not disclaim responsibility for it, since, not having resigned, we were all bound by it. I had even been obliged to cover by an official word that which I was blaming in my own mind; I had done this through sliding over it without insisting upon it, and such is entirely the reason that to-day the very sensible reproaches of Thiers cling to me.”¹⁵⁰

Ollivier Blames the Emperor. As between the Emperor and Gramont, Ollivier places the responsibility of the telegram on the former, who, he says, succumbed to the prevailing excitement, while Gramont acted under orders. Ollivier says:

“Meanwhile the Emperor is impressed by the unusually loud cheering attending his passage, which is evidently a war incitement. At Saint-Cloud he falls into surroundings even more excited.”¹⁵¹

“But at that point, Napoleon III himself, to whom was owing this

¹⁴⁷ P. 261.

¹⁴⁸ *Ante*, p. 598.

¹⁴⁹ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 255.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 444.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

peace victory, sustained an effacement of will, and, under the pressure of the Court and the Right, without taking time to reflect, without consulting his Ministers, reopened the affair and ordered Gramont to address to the King a demand for guarantees for the future."¹⁵²

Referring to Gramont, Ollivier says:

"On his part, it was only obedience, and not bellicose premeditation; on the part of the Emperor, I feel sure, it was only a yielding to weakness, not determination for war."¹⁵³

Ollivier, probably, misplaced the blame. Gramont was the strong man, if a *Diammick ff.* Napoleon was the timid *incapacité mécon-*
nuë,¹⁵⁴ who, in the absence of cabinet approval and in the presence of an objecting member of it (objection must be implied if Gramont is to be acquitted), would not have assumed to order a proceeding which would almost certainly produce war. It was Gramont, as we have seen, who deemed it "necessary to find some new expedient."¹⁵⁵ Perhaps some share in responsibility must be assigned to the Empress.¹⁵⁶

The Emperor's Note. During the interview (above referred to) between Ollivier and Gramont, a note arrived from the Emperor (10 P.M.) as follows:

"It is necessary then that Benedetti insist, as he has been ordered, on having a categorical reply by which the King engages for the future not to permit Prince Leopold, who is not engaged, to follow the example of his brother¹⁵⁷ and set out some fine day for Spain."¹⁵⁸

The note was a nervous suggestion to Gramont of a historical analogy by which the action agreed upon might be supported. Probably it may be explained by the fact that David and Cassagnac had, meanwhile, frightened the Emperor with arguments as to the ridiculous position in which he would be left by accepting a "derisive satisfaction"; had shown him the discontent of the army, the disaffection of the people, the hostility of the opposition; and had threatened him with a furious speech from Gambetta. Ollivier has said:

"Internal pressure of Saint-Cloud had led to the telegram of seven o'clock; external pressure of the visitors of the evening dictated the letter to Gramont."¹⁵⁹

Gramont to Benedetti — 11.45 P.M. Before retiring for the night, Gramont passed on the Emperor's suggestion to Benedetti (11.45 P.M.):

"In order that we may be sure that the son will not disavow his father, or that he will not arrive in Spain, as his brother did in Rou-

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 545.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 262-3.

¹⁵⁴ *Ante*, p. 582.

¹⁵⁵ See also de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 265.

¹⁵⁶ *Cf. ibid.*, p. 266.

¹⁵⁷ Prince Charles had become King of Roumania.

¹⁵⁸ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 267-8. *Cf.* Gramont, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-7.

¹⁵⁹ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 268.

mania, it is indispensable that the King be good enough to say to us that he will not permit the Prince to recall the renunciation communicated by Prince Antoine.”¹⁶⁰

The Three Gramont Telegrams of 12 July. There were therefore three telegrams to Benedetti on the 12th July: (1) The modifying telegram of 1.40 P.M., indicating that the King’s participation in the withdrawal might be indirect and implicit. (2) The telegram of 7 P.M., with the new demand for a future guarantee. (3) The telegram of 11.45 P.M., repeating the demand and adding the Emperor’s suggestion. Benedetti’s action will be dealt with on subsequent pages.

Public Opinion. Of the state of public opinion on the 12th, Gramont has said:

“It would be superfluous to picture here the state of mind at the moment when the despatch from Prince Antoine circulated among the public. The events are still too close to us to make it necessary to describe the fever of indignation which inflamed, one after the other, all the organs of the press, and which expressed itself in the mass of the people by an agitation almost disquieting.”¹⁶¹

“There was but one cry, but one sentiment in the chambers and in the country: ‘Guarantees are necessary for the future. We cannot rest exposed to new surprises; guarantees are indispensable for the security and the repose of the future.’”¹⁶²

“There was no longer a single journal, whatever its party and its opinions, which considered the isolated act of Prince Leopold sufficient, and newspapers the most reserved, the most pacific, counselled the government, as extreme limit, to content itself with an official disavowal from the Berlin cabinet, or with a declaration confirming the definitive character of the renunciation.”¹⁶³

13TH JULY — MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Council Meeting — 9 A.M. The situation caused by the demand for a future guarantee gave rise to prolonged discussion at the Council meeting of 9 A.M. on the next day.¹⁶⁴ At first, the Emperor concurred in the proposal of Labœuf, the Minister for War, for the calling out of the reserves, but afterwards he agreed to postpone that action. According to Ollivier (but, probably, as we shall see, not according to the fact), the view of the majority of the Council was that the following question should be answered in the affirmative:

¹⁶⁰ Gramont, *op. cit.*, p. 138; Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 270; Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 138-9. Benedetti gives the hour of the telegram as 1.45 A.M.: *op. cit.*, p. 373.

¹⁶¹ Gramont, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-9.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 143.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 148-9.

¹⁶⁴ It was to this meeting that Lord Lyons sent the substance of Lord Granville’s telegram of earlier in the same morning.

"If, as was probable, Prince Leopold did not disavow [the action of] his father; if the King approved it, as he had promised to do; if Spain resigned itself to abandon its candidate; should we declare ourselves satisfied, even if the King should refuse to give us the guarantee for the future?"¹⁶⁵

The discussion resulted in the preparation of the following declaration for presentment to the Chamber:

"The Ambassador of Spain officially announced yesterday the renunciation by the Prince of Hohenzollern of his candidature to the throne of Spain. The negotiations which we are pursuing, and which have never had any other object than the question of Spain,¹⁶⁶ are not yet concluded. It is impossible, then, for us to speak of them, and to submit today to the Chamber and to the country a general recital of the affair."¹⁶⁷

These few lines contained two mis-statements: (1) That the Spanish Ambassador had made an official announcement, was not true. Ollivier admits the charge. He has written:

"That is the only untruth which we permitted ourselves in that crisis; it was inspired in us by the desire to increase the chances for peace in giving consistency to the disputed act of Prince Antoine."¹⁶⁸

(2) Nor was the statement that Leopold had renounced his candidature quite true. His father had assumed to do it, but, as afterwards appeared, Leopold dissented and was, with difficulty, persuaded into submission.¹⁶⁹ The statement that the negotiations had "never had any other object," moreover, was misleading.

But although these statements were inaccurate, the effect of publicly declaring them to be true fulfilled two of the three conditions upon which (as above quoted from Ollivier) a refusal of the future guarantee would be deemed to be immaterial.¹⁷⁰ And for the third — that the King would approve Leopold's withdrawal — the government had already, on two occasions, received the King's assurance.¹⁷¹ As soon, therefore, as the King should intimate his refusal to give the future guarantee, the affair would be at an end — that is, according to Ollivier.

Ministerial Declaration in the Corps Législatif. Having read the declaration (as agreed to in Council) in the Chamber, Gramont was asked from whom the renunciation had emanated — from Leopold himself, or from Antoine, the father? He answered:

¹⁶⁵ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 287. And see *ibid.*, pp. 289, 545, 546. Cf. Ollivier: *Thiers devant l'histoire*, p. 7.

¹⁶⁶ The words "than the question of Spain" do not appear in Ollivier's version of the document.

¹⁶⁷ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 289; de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 276.

¹⁶⁸ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 289. And see p. 300.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 209-12, 300.

¹⁷⁰ Ollivier indicates that satisfaction of these two conditions was regarded as certain.

¹⁷¹ *Ante*, pp. 592, 594.

“I have been informed by the Spanish Ambassador that Prince Leopold has renounced his candidature to the Crown.”¹⁷²

That was not true; and to the further statement that rumor had it that the renunciation came from Antoine, Gramont retorted:

“I have not concerned myself with the rumors that circulate in the corridors.”¹⁷³

Then Duvernois asked when he would have an opportunity of developing his interpellation. The 15th was agreed to.¹⁷⁴

Gramont and Lyons. Shortly afterwards (still the 13th), Lord Lyons (the British Ambassador) called upon Gramont to intimate regret that the statement to the Chamber had not been an announcement that the difficulty had been settled. Ollivier in his book laments that Gramont refrained from informing Lyons of the resolution which he (Ollivier) says had been arrived at by the Council, namely, its readiness, upon conditions, to abandon the demand for a future guarantee.¹⁷⁵ Not having heard of such a resolution, or else assuming sole responsibility for disregarding it, Gramont endeavored to convince Lyons that the demand was reasonable, and compliance with it indispensable. To avoid misunderstanding, he wrote and handed to the Ambassador the following:

“We ask the King of Prussia to prevent the Prince of Hohenzollern receding from his resolution. If he does that, the whole incident is terminated.”¹⁷⁶

Lyons urged that nobody would believe that France seriously could apprehend a renewal of the candidature, but Gramont declared:

“If the King refuses to formulate that prohibition, France can only assume hostile designs on his part, and would take measures accordingly.”¹⁷⁷

Ollivier in his book says:

“That resembled an ultimatum, and the Council had decided that it would not have an ultimatum.”¹⁷⁸

But Ollivier’s testimony upon that point cannot be accepted — as we shall see.¹⁷⁹ Replying to Lyons’ report of the conversation, Lord Granville said (14 July):

“I have already informed your Excellency, and I now repeat, that, in the view of Her Majesty’s Government, a demand on Prussia for an engagement covering the future cannot be justly made by France.”¹⁸⁰

¹⁷² Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 294.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 299, 300.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 301.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ *Post*, p. 615-7.

¹⁸⁰ *Br. Blue Bk.*, C.-167, No. 44.

Effect of Declaration. The effect of the ill-advised pronouncement in the Chamber was as might have been expected. Ollivier says:

“From the sitting of the Chamber until late in the night, the 13th, in the absence of definite news from Ems and Berlin, the mental excitement became momentarily more violent in Paris. Our response to the interpellation raised an almost general reprobation.”¹⁸¹

13 JULY — “THE HAUGHTY RUPTURE”

One of the grounds upon which the French have placed their justification for entering upon the war is that indicated by Ollivier in one of his speeches in the Chamber:

“We have continued to negotiate. How have they responded to our moderation? By the haughty rupture of the negotiations, which, on our part were pursued with perfect straightforwardness.”¹⁸²

In his circular despatch of 21 July 1870, Gramont gave international circulation to the charge, by referring to the language of the King at Ems as “at first hesitating, then decided and haughty.”¹⁸³ Was there a *rupture hautaine*? For answer, we must look at the messages in which Benedetti reported the facts to Gramont. There were four telegrams and one despatch.

Benedetti’s First Telegram. Early in the morning of the 13th, after having received Gramont’s telegram of 7 P.M. of the previous day,¹⁸⁴ but before receiving that of 11.45 P.M.,¹⁸⁵ Benedetti met the King on the promenade, and, as he reported, “approached” him “to execute your orders”¹⁸⁶ — namely, to obtain a general guarantee for the future. Remembering that he had been censured for lack of “firmness,”¹⁸⁷ Benedetti appears to have been unduly persistent in the presentation to the King of what he himself conceived to be an unreasonable demand. Reporting to Gramont (13 July at 10.30 A.M.), he said:

“I remarked to him that the withdrawal of the Prince of Hohenzollern approved by the King, was our guarantee for the present, but that we thought that it was indispensable, in order to assure the future and definitely to give confidence to all interests, that the King, to this end, should be so good as to permit me to announce to you, in his name, that if the Prince of Hohenzollern should again think of his project, His Majesty should interpose his authority and prevent it. The King has absolutely refused to authorize me to send you such a declaration. I vigorously persisted, but without succeeding in modifying the deter-

¹⁸¹ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 337.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 427.

¹⁸³ *Op. cit.*, p. 409.

¹⁸⁴ *Ante*, p. 602.

¹⁸⁵ *Ante*, pp. 604-5.

¹⁸⁶ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 377.

¹⁸⁷ *Ante*, p. 594.

mination of His Majesty. The King terminated our interview by saying that he could not, nor did he wish to undertake such an engagement, and that he would in this eventuality, as in all others, reserve to himself the faculty of consulting the circumstances."¹⁸⁸

It will be observed that Benedetti understood that the King had already approved of Leopold's withdrawal. That "guarantee for the present" was satisfactory. Guarantee for the future was the new demand.

Benedetti's Second Telegram. During the interview with Benedetti, the King had indicated to him that he would be sent for as soon as communication from Leopold was received. When, therefore, Benedetti received (10.30 A.M.) Gramont's third telegram of the previous day, he replied (11 A.M.), by his second telegram, that he would give it attention when summoned by the King.¹⁸⁹

Benedetti's Third Telegram. The King, instead of summoning Benedetti, sent Prince Radziwill (the Adjutant in attendance) with a message, which Benedetti reported in his third telegram — 3.45 P.M. It reached Gramont at 11 P.M.:

"The King has received reply from the Prince of Hohenzollern; it is from Prince Antoine, and he announces to His Majesty that Prince Leopold, his son, has withdrawn from his candidature for the crown of Spain. The King has authorized me to inform the Government of the Emperor that he approves this resolution. The King charged one of his Aides de Camp with the communication of this to me, and I reproduce the exact terms of it. His Majesty not having made any announcement to me on the subject of the assurance which we desire for the future, I have solicited a last audience in order to submit again, and develop, the observations which I presented to him this morning. I have strong reason to suppose that I shall not obtain any concession in that respect."¹⁹⁰

It will be observed that Prince Leopold has now, for himself, withdrawn his candidature; that the King has approved the withdrawal; and therefore, that all three of the conditions which, according to Ollivier, the Council had stipulated as being sufficient to satisfy them,¹⁹¹ existed. It may be noted also (for future reference) that the famous "Ems telegram" to Bismarck was despatched at 5.50 P.M., or about two hours after Benedetti had sent off the last above quoted telegram.

Benedetti's Fourth Telegram. In his fourth telegram (7 P.M.), Benedetti reported as follows:

"To my request for a new audience, the King has made reply that he would not consent to renew with me the discussion relative to the

¹⁸⁸ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 372.

¹⁸⁹ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 374.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 375.

¹⁹¹ *Ante*, pp. 605-6.

assurance which, according to our opinion, should be given to us for the future. His Majesty declared that, as to that subject, he would refer me to the considerations which he had explained to me this morning, of which I gave you the substance in my first telegram of this day, and which I have developed in a report that you will receive tomorrow morning. His Majesty consented, as his envoy has again told me, in the name of His Majesty, to give his approbation, full and unreserved, to the withdrawal of the Prince of Hohenzollern; he cannot do more. I will attend to your orders before leaving Ems."¹⁹²

Benedetti's Despatch. In a lengthy despatch, Benedetti, besides reiterating the contents of his telegrams, said that the conversation with the King had taken place on the public promenade; that he had "approached" the King¹⁹³ for that purpose; that the King had not ceased to accord an "apparently gracious reception . . . to my requests";¹⁹⁴ but that he was firmly determined not to give the guarantee.

Why the Adjutant. At the interview between the King and Benedetti, a second meeting had been contemplated. Why did the King substitute a message by his Adjutant? The answer is threefold: (1) Because there was no necessity for a further interview. The fact of Leopold's own withdrawal (Antoine had previously withdrawn in Leopold's name) could be communicated as well by the Adjutant as personally. (2) Because the King did not wish to give Benedetti an opportunity to renew a demand which already had been somewhat too strongly urged and which had been definitely refused. (3) And because, principally, after the morning interview, the King had read the Werther report telling of the request for a letter from him in which he was to appear as "a repentant sinner."¹⁹⁵

Gramont to Benedetti—8.30 or 9.45 P.M.¹⁹⁶ Benedetti's first telegram, announcing the unqualified refusal of the King to give the future guarantee, necessitated determination in Paris as to future action. Gramont settled the point by instructing Benedetti as follows:

"As I have informed you, public sentiment is excited to such an extent that it was with great difficulty we were able to obtain until Friday for the giving of our explanations.

"Make a last effort with the King. Tell him that we confine our-

¹⁹² Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 376.

¹⁹³ Ollivier untruly says: "The Ambassador had too much politeness to approach the King; it was the King who advanced toward him": *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 280.

¹⁹⁵ *Ante*, p. 601. Cf. de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 277-8; Welschinger, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 77-81, 83, 87.

¹⁹⁶ Ollivier puts the hour of the telegram at 8.30, Benedetti at 9.45. Gramont (*op. cit.*, p. 182) states it to be 8.00, and records 9.45 as the time stamped by the Paris telegraphic bureau.

selves to asking him to forbid the Prince of Hohenzollern to retract his renunciation — that he say to you, 'I will forbid it to him,' and that he authorize you to write to me, or that he charge his minister or his ambassador so to inform me; that will satisfy us. If, in short, the King has no mental reservations, it is for him only a secondary question; but for us it is very important. The simple word of the King would constitute a sufficient guarantee for the future. . . . In any case, leave Ems and come to Paris with the reply, affirmative or negative. It is necessary that I should see you before noon on Friday. If necessary, take a special train. Still continue to telegraph to me all that you have to make known to me. Perhaps you might, in receiving from the King the news of the renunciation of the Prince of Hohenzollern, say to him: 'Sire, Your Majesty is the guarantor of the Prince of Hohenzollern, because you do not forget that, as a Power, we have no relations with the Prince, and that, consequently, before the country, our official guarantee is the word of the King.'¹⁹⁷

Gramont probably sent this telegram on his own responsibility. He was insisting, it will be observed, upon his demand for the future guarantee.

Not feeling that he could again address the King, Benedetti communicated, the next day, with one of the Prussian Ministers (just arrived at Ems) who, after consulting the King, replied "that he had nothing to communicate to me."¹⁹⁸ That was the end of the interview, with the exception of Benedetti's short *au revoir* conversation with the King at the railway station on the same evening.

The King on the Refusal. As above mentioned, one reason for the King's disinclination for a second interview was that Benedetti had, in the first, been somewhat too insistent. The King's account of the conversation was as follows:

"Count Benedetti stopped me on the promenade to ask me finally, in a very pressing manner, to authorize him to telegraph immediately that I engaged not to give my consent in the future if the Hohenzollerns again set up their candidature. I refused in a sufficiently serious manner, as one ought not, and cannot, assume such perpetual engagements."¹⁹⁹

In a letter to the Queen, the King characterized Benedetti's conduct as "almost impertinent."²⁰⁰

In his official report of the occasion, the Adjutant in attendance upon the King declared that Benedetti, after the King had refused to give the future guarantee, said to him (the Adjutant) that:

¹⁹⁷ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, pp. 384-5; Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 344-5; Gramont, *op. cit.*, pp. 182, 189, 190.

¹⁹⁸ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, pp. 385-6.

¹⁹⁹ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 306-7.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 283, note.

“he must persist in his request for another conversation with His Majesty, as he was expressly instructed to do so in the last despatch from M. de Gramont, and even if it were only to hear the same words from His Majesty again; the more so as there were fresh arguments in this last despatch which he wished to submit to His Majesty. Hereupon His Majesty caused answer to be given to the Count through me, for the third time, after dinner, about half-past 5 o'clock, that His Majesty must positively decline to enter into further discussions in regard to this last point (a binding assurance for the future). What he had said in the morning was His Majesty's last word on this matter, and he could do no more than refer to it.”²⁰¹

Benedetti on the Refusal. Benedetti (as he said) saw no reason to complain of the King's refusal:

“again to renew with me the discussion relative to the assurance . . . for the future.”²⁰²

On the contrary, in his report to Gramont he said:

“I even foresee that, dating from this moment, it will be less easy for me to approach him, and I doubt not that, in confiding to one of his officers the duty of acquainting me with the resolution of the Prince of Hohenzollern, he had wished to avoid giving me occasion for it.”²⁰³

Referring to the Werther report and its effect upon the King, he said:

“Not less was the King impressed with it in the most deplorable way; and, instead of sending for me, to make to me the communication, as he had indicated his intention, he charged Prince Radziwill with the duty of making it. I had not, moreover, been informed of the conversation which the Duc de Gramont and M. Emile Ollivier had had with the Prussian Ambassador, and since then have not been able to combat the unfortunate influence which the report of that diplomat has exercised over the mind of the King. It is, indeed, from that moment that all has been compromised.”²⁰⁴

That Benedetti did not feel aggrieved, is shown, too, by the fact that, hearing on the next day (the 14th) that the King was about to leave Ems, he, “in order not to fail in any point of etiquette,”²⁰⁵ expressed to the King the desire “to take leave.”²⁰⁶ The King received him in the reserved room at the station; and there, in allusion to previous conversations (as Benedetti reported), he:

“confined himself to telling me that he had nothing further to communicate, and that negotiations which might yet have to be pursued would be continued by his Government.”²⁰⁷

²⁰¹ Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 8, Enc. 4. Cf. Benedetti, *op. cit.*, pp. 439-40.

²⁰² *Ante*, pp. 609-10.

²⁰³ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 381.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 383.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 386; Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 388.

²⁰⁶ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 386; Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 388.

²⁰⁷ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 387.

Ollivier on the Refusal. In Ollivier's opinion, Benedetti had been too persistent and the King had acted properly.

"Persuaded, as he was, that he would not obtain any concession, Benedetti should have understood that one does not disturb a King in order to hear him repeat what he has already said in peremptory terms, and that any insistence would lack tact and might bring upon him disagreeable rebuffs. Without doubt, Gramont had sent him the instruction to insist, but the Minister could not know the exact state of the King's mind, and certainly he would not have reiterated that order if he had been on the spot. The consequences of the unwise importunity on the part of our Ambassador were immediate."²⁰⁸

Referring to the conversation between the King and Benedetti, Ollivier says:

"One understands what must have been passing in the King's mind. Having decided to terminate the affair peaceably, to risk even a rupture with his confidential Minister, and to expose himself to the criticism of German national opinion, he received, as response to this honest effort, a futile exigence, to which, in spite of all his goodwill, it was impossible to yield without humiliation. He showed a self-possession truly royal. Very firmly, but without failing in any of the forms of his habitual courtesy, he made the Ambassador understand his surprise at this unexpected exigence, and explained to him why he repelled it."²⁰⁹

After the King's refusal (Ollivier continues):

"Benedetti insists, presses the King to reason by hypothesis and to admit the renunciation as having been made. Entering into a distinction for which he had no authority, he adjured him to consent to it as head of the family, if not as sovereign."²¹⁰

After another reasoned refusal by the King (Ollivier continues):

"Benedetti returned to the charge a third time. . . . This time the King becomes impatient and finds the insistence out of place. Without ceasing to be polite, he says in a more severe tone: 'Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, I have just given you my reply, and since I have nothing to add to it, permit me to withdraw.'²¹¹

Ollivier acquits the Adjutant, too, of any lack of courtesy. In one of his speeches in the Chamber, he said that the circumstance:

"appeared to us the more significant in that the Aide de Camp, who announced to M. Benedetti the refusal of audience, failed in none of the points of courtesy."²¹²

Gramont on the Refusal. Gramont was of much the same opinion. In his book he said:

"The refusal to receive the Ambassador contrasted, it is true, with

²⁰⁸ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 306.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 281.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 282.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 425.

the habitual courtesy of the King, but inasmuch as, after all, it was not accompanied by any offensive act, and appeared to be inspired solely by the desire not to renew a discussion thenceforth without object, we were far from finding in it the character of a premeditated offence." ²¹³

"However, it is useful to point out here the very marked difference which constantly manifested itself between the conduct of the King and that of his Prime Minister. Throughout the whole of the negotiations, and even to the final period, that is to say at his departure from Ems, the King, by his language, by his attitude, rather sought to safeguard peace than to kindle the flames of war." ²¹⁴

Conclusion. If there be added to all these views the opinion of the ministerial council itself, namely, that the conduct of the King had been "irreproachable," ²¹⁵ there can be no escape from the conclusion that in describing the King's treatment of Benedetti as "the haughty rupture," Ollivier was purposely misleading the Chamber, and, through it, the public and the world.

13 JULY — EVENING — PARIS

The King's "Approval." The sentence in Benedetti's third telegram (arrived 11 P.M.):

"The King has authorized me to inform the Government of the Emperor that he approves this resolution." ²¹⁶

— that is the withdrawal of Leopold — gave cause for new discussion in Paris. Referring to it, Gramont sent the following note to Ollivier:

"I am going to St. Cloud." ²¹⁷ Again some news. He (the King) has communicated and approved the Hohenzollern letter, that is little." ²¹⁸

Ollivier replied immediately:

"I do not find that the *approved* is little, especially in connection with the despatch which Olozaga has communicated to you." ²¹⁹

On returning from St. Cloud, Gramont sent another note to Ollivier:

"My dear friend, I have returned from Saint-Cloud. The indecision is great. Then the doubt because of the *approbation* by the King. The Spanish despatch might perhaps incline toward peace. The Emperor has charged me to beg of you to inform all our colleagues that he expects them to dine with him to-morrow at seven o'clock, in order to hold a Council in the evening." ²²⁰

²¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 195.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 290. See also pp. 292-3.

²¹⁵ *Post*, p. 623.

²¹⁶ *Ante*, p. 609; Gramont, *op. cit.*, pp. 182, 191.

²¹⁷ The Emperor resided there.

²¹⁸ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 350.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.* The reference is to the telegram from Strat on the previous day.

²²⁰ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 351.

Ollivier's comment in his book is as follows:

"King William had replied with a clearness which left nothing to be desired; he had communicated to us by Benedetti the renunciation, declaring that he approved it; Olozaga notified us of unreserved adherence; unless it be bad faith, one is obliged to agree that this double acceptance by Prussia and Spain implied a more than sufficient guarantee for the future. We had attained the end that we set for ourselves. There was only one way now of bringing on war: it was to pass from the affair already settled according to our wish, and to raise the question of our general grievances against Prussia: I was resolved not to consent to it."²²¹

According to Ollivier, therefore, all cause for war had disappeared. If there was to be war, it would be, he thought, necessarily based upon previously existing grievances; and he would not be a party to the substitution. What happened, we shall see.

INSISTENCE UPON THE DEMAND FOR GUARANTEE

The foregoing facts and others still to be referred to prove conclusively the invalidity of Ollivier's assertion that the Council in the morning of the 13th determined to dispense with the demand for a future guarantee provided (1) that Leopold did not disavow the action of his father in withdrawing the candidature; (2) that the King "approved" of the withdrawal; and (3) that Spain accepted the withdrawal. Observe the following:

1. The conditions had all been fulfilled, and yet the demand was pressed.

2. If the Council had decided as alleged, Benedetti would have been advised of it. And although it was too late to prevent presentation to the King of the demand as at first formulated,²²² it was not too late to interrupt his persistence throughout the day. If Benedetti had been notified of the Council's decision, and if, upon receiving the notification, he had made intimation of it to the King, the negotiations would have reached a satisfactory conclusion.

3. It is inconceivable that Gramont would have flouted the decision of the Council by telling Lord Lyons that if the King refused to give the future guarantee:

"France can only assume hostile designs on his part, and would take measures accordingly."²²³

4. And it is also inconceivable that after Gramont had been advised from Ems of the King's refusal, he should have instructed Benedetti (8.30 or 9.45 P.M.) to press the matter still further.²²⁴

²²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 351-2.

²²² By Gramont's telegram of 7 p.m.: *ante*, p. 602.

²²³ *Ante*, p. 607.

²²⁴ *Ante*, pp. 610-11.

5. The extract from Ollivier's book, last above quoted,²²⁵ is based not upon the cancellation of the demand, but upon its continued existence. He urges, not that compliance has been dispensed with, but that there had been sufficient fulfillment.

6. If Gramont's action was inconsistent with the decision of the Council, he has escaped with very little criticism. Ollivier, while objecting to Gramont's statement to Lord Lyons, offers no comment upon either the absence of proper notification to Benedetti, or the instructions to him to persist.

7. The Council, at its afternoon meeting on the 14th (the day after it is alleged to have agreed to waive the demand, upon conditions), determined to announce its satisfaction with everything, except the absence of the future guarantee; and proposed to procure that at the hands of an international conference.²²⁶

8. In the ministerial declaration, read in both the Chamber and the Senate on the 15th, the facts of the demand for a future guarantee and of the King's refusal to give it, were stated; and not only was there no indication that the Council had waived the demand, but the assertion was made that "our request was moderate,"²²⁷ and that "this refusal appeared to us unjustifiable."²²⁸

9. During the debate in the Chamber on the 15th, Ollivier, himself, insisted upon the reasonableness of the demand:

"Is it the excess of our demands that is attacked? Could any one conceive of more moderate? If others had sought to preserve good relations as much we have, would it have been very difficult, after the days of anxious waiting, to have given us the assurance that we should not have to fear any change of mind."²²⁹

10. The Committee of the Senate, after hearing Gramont's statement, reported that:

"All the grievances described by the declaration of the government appeared to it at once well founded and legitimate."²³⁰

11. In the address of the Senate to the Emperor, the refusal to give the future guarantee was posited as the sufficient ground for declaring war:

"Had not we the right to demand of that Power guarantees against the possible return of such attempts? These guarantees are refused; the dignity of France is disregarded. Your Majesty draws the sword; the country is with you, trembling with indignation and pride."²³¹

²²⁵ P. 615.

²²⁶ *Post*, p. 625.

²²⁷ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 399.

²²⁸ *Post*, p. 634. Ollivier modified "unjustifiable" into "regrettable": *ibid.*,

p. 400.

²²⁹ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 431.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 479.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 481.

12. In the government's announcement to the Senate and Chamber of the declaration of war, the only reason specified was contained in the words:

"I have invited the Chargé d'Affaires of France to notify to the Cabinet of Berlin our resolution to seek by arms the guarantees we have failed in obtaining by discussion."²³²

13. The formal declaration of war proceeded upon the refusal to give the guarantee:

"aggravated by the notification made to the Cabinets of the refusal to receive the Emperor's Ambassador and to enter into any new explanation with him."²³³

14. On the 15th, after all Ollivier's conditions had been fulfilled, the French Ambassador at London insisted that:

"It was necessary to have some guarantee for the future that the Prince would not again renew his candidature, and their representations to the King of Prussia still remained unanswered."²³⁴

Lord Granville's reply was that the demand, as a ground for war, could not be justified.²³⁵

15. The reason assigned for the French refusal to accept British mediation under the protocol of 1856 was that:

"The refusal of the King of Prussia to give the guarantee which France was obliged to ask, in order to prevent dynastic combinations dangerous to her safety and the care of her dignity, prevented her from taking any other course than that which she had adopted."²³⁶

16. To all this must be added that according to certain unpublished papers of M. Plichon and M. Louvet, members of the Council, four only voted to be content with the withdrawal of the candidature and the approbation of the King, while all the others voted ratification of Gramont's demand for future guarantee.²³⁷

These considerations make clear that, by asserting that the Council determined to waive the demand, Ollivier was endeavoring to mislead the world.

13 JULY — BERLIN

Proposed Demands. Bismarck's determination that the incident should not close peacefully was quite as strong as Gramont's. In a despatch of 13 July 1870, Lord Loftus, the British Ambassador to Berlin, reporting a conversation with him of that day, said:

"Count Bismarck further stated that unless some assurance, some declaration, were given by France to the European Powers, or in some

²³² Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 121.

²³³ Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 9, Enc.

²³⁴ Granville to Lyons: Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 56.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ Granville to Lyons, 19 July: *Ibid.*, No. 99.

²³⁷ De la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 272-3.

official form, that the present solution of the Spanish question was a final and satisfactory settlement of the French demands, and that no further claims were to be raised; and if, further, a withdrawal or a satisfactory explanation of the menacing language held by the Duc de Gramont were not made, the Prussian Government would be obliged to seek explanations from France. It was impossible, added his Excellency, that Prussia could tamely and quietly sit under the affront offered to the King and to the nation by the menacing language of the French Government. I could not, said his Excellency, hold communication with the French Ambassador after the language held to Prussia by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs in the face of Europe."

The reference was to Gramont's declaration of the 6th in the Chamber. In the same conversation, referring to French preparations, Bismarck said that:

"If these continued, we shall be obliged to ask the French Government for explanations as to their object and meaning."

Instead of Prussia giving France the demanded guarantee, Bismarck's view was that:

"After what has occurred we must require some assurances, some guarantee, that we may not be subjected to a sudden attack; we must know that this Spanish difficulty once removed, there are no other lurking designs which may burst upon us like a thunderstorm."²³⁸

In some circuitous way, Gramont (as he has related) received, the next day, "an exact account of the language held by M. de Bismarck."²³⁹ The probable effect upon Gramont will appear upon a subsequent page.²⁴⁰

The "Ems Telegram." Before hearing of the demand for a future guarantee, Bismarck, in his disappointment at the apparently peaceful termination of the Spanish throne incident, had decided to resign his office, and was actually discussing that subject at his dinner table with von Roon and von Moltke when the famous "Ems telegram" was handed to him.²⁴¹ The message completely changed the situation. It showed that war was almost certain—an inadmissible demand for a future guarantee had been pressed upon the King and categorically refused. Bismarck proceeded to make the consequence inevitable. But what he did is very generally misunderstood, and as many foolish statements have been made with regard to it—for example, charging him with "tampering with a telegram received from the King"²⁴²—it

²³⁸ *Ann. Reg.*, 1870, pp. 203-4. Cf. Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 156-7.

²³⁹ Sorel, *op. cit.*, I, p. 223.

²⁴⁰ *Post*, p. 627.

²⁴¹ It had been despatched at 5.50 p.m.

²⁴² Egerton: *British Foreign Policy in Europe*, p. 294. Some writers charge Bismarck with forgery. André Tardieu, for example, in *The Truth about the Treaty* (p. 25), said: "Bismarck, on a like occasion, had forged the telegram from Ems." See also *ibid.*, p. 561. J. A. R. Marriott refutes this statement, but

will be advisable to place the message in juxtaposition with the document prepared and circulated by Bismarck. Perusal will show that the telegram was not from the King, but from Herr Abeken of the Prussian Foreign Office, who was in attendance upon him at Ems; that there was no tampering with it; that there was no alteration of it; that nothing was done to it; and that, in preparing another document for publication, Bismarck was acting in pursuance of a suggestion contained in it. Abeken's message was as follows:

"His Majesty writes to me: 'Count Benedetti spoke to me on the promenade, in order to demand from me, finally in a very importunate manner, that I should authorize him* to telegraph at once that I bound myself for all future time never again to give my consent if the Hohenzollerns should renew their candidature. I refused at last somewhat sternly, as it is neither right nor possible to undertake engagements of this kind *à tout jamais*. Naturally I told him that I had as yet received no news, and as he was earlier informed about Paris and Madrid than myself, he could clearly see that my government once more had no hand in the matter.' His Majesty has since received a letter from the Prince. His Majesty having told Count Benedetti that he was awaiting news from the Prince, has decided, with reference to

refers to the telegram as having been sent by the King, and, to Bismarck's document, as a converted telegram (*England since Waterloo*, p. 423). Ward and Wilkinson state correctly that the telegram was from Abeken (not from the King), but speak of Bismarck's "altering the form of the telegram" by making "certain omissions—but not of essential facts—and contractions" (*Germany*, II, p. 441). The *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed., tit. *Bismarck*) has the following: "Bismarck published the telegram in which this information and the refusal of the King were conveyed, but, by omitting part of the telegram, made it appear that the request and refusal had both been conveyed in a more abrupt form than had really been the case." In such an authoritative work as Fitzmaurice's *Life of Lord Granville* (II, p. 35) is the following: "By the omission of some words and the altered position given to some others, a far graver effect was given." Ollivier speaks of "*la dépêche falsifiée*" (*op. cit.*, XIV, p. 565). Dr. J. Holland Rose says that Bismarck "cut down" the Abeken telegram (*The Development of the European Nations*, pp. 43-4). The *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.* (III, p. 34) declares that Bismarck "took advantage of the discretionary power allowed him by the King and published the Ems telegram." The writer failed to observe (1) that the only "discretionary power" was in the telegram itself, and (2) that the discretion did not extend to the publication of the telegram, but only to the facts specified in it. Perhaps farthest removed from the truth is the statement of Theodore S. Woolsey, who said that Bismarck "used the emasculated telegram of Ems as the pretext for waging a war of conquest upon France" (*Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XIII, p. 159). Bismarck is himself largely responsible for all this misapprehension, for, in his *Reflections and Reminiscences* (II, p. 99), he speaks of "the difference in the effect of the abbreviated text of the Ems telegram as compared with that produced by the original." But he makes very clear that the document which he prepared was not to be represented as being the telegram which he received from Abeken. He was not "tampering" with the telegram. He was making use—improper use—of its contents in the preparation of a document which, by the telegram, the King had authorized him to publish.

the above demand, upon the representation of Count Eulenburg and myself, not to receive Count Benedetti again, but only to let him be informed, through an aide-de-camp, that His Majesty had now received from the Prince confirmation of the news which Benedetti had already received from Paris, and had nothing further to say to the Ambassador. His Majesty leaves it to your Excellency whether Benedetti's fresh demand and its rejection should not be at once communicated both to our ambassadors and to the press."²⁴³

The Alleged Tampering. It will be observed that the King authorized Bismarck to communicate to the Ambassadors and the press two facts — "Benedetti's fresh demand and its rejection." He had no permission to publish the whole telegram. That would obviously have been inappropriate as well as unauthorized. Construction of another document, limited to a correct statement of the two facts, was the proper action. Bismarck wrote as follows:

"After the news of the renunciation of the hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern had been officially communicated to the Imperial Government of France by the Royal government of Spain, the French Ambassador at Ems further demanded of his Majesty the King that he would authorize him to telegraph to Paris that his Majesty the King bound himself for all future time never again to give his consent if the Hohenzollerns should renew their candidature. His Majesty the King thereupon decided not to receive the French Ambassador again, and sent to tell him through the aide-de-camp on duty that his Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the ambassador."²⁴⁴

The last sentence of this document was not only not authorized by the King, but was untruthful. For it gave the impression that the King (1) had refused to make any reply to the demand, and (2) had decided not again to receive Benedetti for any purpose; whereas the facts were that the King had received Benedetti; had given him a reply; and had decided not to receive him again only "with reference to the above demand." At the same time, it will be observed that the King's decision "not to receive the French Ambassador again" was not alleged to have been part of the communication to the Ambassador. In other words, the document stated (1) truthfully, the demand; falsely, the reply "that his Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the ambassador"; and (3) falsely, the King's decision "not to receive the French ambassador again."²⁴⁵

²⁴³ Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, p. 96, note. The Prussian official "Memorandum of what occurred at Ems" is in Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, o. 8, Enc. 3. The report of the King's Adjutant or Aide-de-Camp is in *ibid.*, Enc. 4.

²⁴⁴ Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, p. 99. Cf. Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 8, Enc. 2.

²⁴⁵ Disregarding these obvious facts, Dr. J. Holland Rose holds that Bismarck's "version of the original Ems despatch did not contain a single offensive word, neither did it alter any statement": *The Development of the European Nations*, p. 45.

Bismarck and his Guests. Bismarck relates that his guests — both anxiously desirous of war — were delighted with his document, Moltke saying:

“Now it has a different ring; it sounded before like a parley; now it is like a flourish in answer to a challenge.”²⁴⁶

Bismarck said to his friends:

“If in execution of his Majesty’s order, I at once communicate this text, which contains no alteration in or addition to the telegram, not only to the newspapers, but also by telegraph to all our embassies, it will be known in Paris before midnight, and not only on account of the contents, but also on account of the manner of its distribution, will have the effect of a red rag upon the Gallic bull. Fight we must if we do not want to act the part of the vanquished without a battle. Success, however, essentially depends upon the impression which the origination of the war makes upon us and others; it is important that we should be the party attacked, and this Gallic overweening and touchiness will make us if we announce in the face of Europe, so far as we can without the speaking-trumpet of the Reichstag, that we fearlessly meet the public threats of France.”²⁴⁷

Von Roon, in cheerful vein, declared that:

“Our God of old lives still, and will not let us perish with disgrace.”²⁴⁸

And Moltke added:

“If I may but live to lead our armies in such a war, then the devil may come directly afterwards and fetch away the old carcass.”²⁴⁹

Publication of the Document. The same evening, at ten o’clock, Bismarck’s document appeared as a supplement of the *North German Gazette*. Whence it had emanated, was not indicated. Bismarck, shortly afterwards, deceitfully referred to it as a “newspaper telegram.” It was, he said:

“communicated to the German Governments, and to some of our Representatives with non-German Governments, according to the wording of the newspapers, in order to inform them of the nature of the French demands, and the impossibility of complying with them, and which, moreover, contains nothing injurious to France.”²⁵⁰

²⁴⁶ Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, p. 100.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁰ Br. Blue Bk., C.-210: Bismarck to Count Bernstorff (No. 8, Enc. 1), 18 July 1870. In a later official document (*ibid.*, No. 30, Enc. 1), Bismarck, referring to communications made by his government, said as follows: “These communications contain the well-known telegram, the only remaining ground upon which the French Ministry could base a declaration of war, and could only be used in that way by its being designated as a note sent from the Prussian to the other Governments. He would not go into the designation of what a ‘note’ really was; but the French Government had publicly designated a newspaper communication,

Attribution of the origin of Bismarck's document to newspaper enterprise might have passed into history as authentic but for his own book (*Reflections and Reminiscences*), from which the above quotations with reference to the real authorship are taken.

14 JULY — PARIS

Public Excitement. "Public opinion is ablaze," said Gramont on the 10th.²⁵¹ On the 12th by the temporizing declaration of the 11th, it had become (as we have seen) more and more violent²⁵² — and with the Emperor "the indecision is great."²⁵³ Speaking of the morning of the 14th — that is, prior to knowledge in Paris of the publication in Berlin of the Bismarck document — Gramont said:

"It is useless to recall here what was the condition of mind and of public opinion during the morning of the 14th July. Irritation, pushed to its climax, recognized no further obstacles; and even under the walls of the palace, at the approaches to the ministerial offices, significant murmurs were heard from the people."²⁵⁴

Council Meeting, 1 P.M., at the Tuileries. The Council met at the Tuileries at 1 P.M. Gramont had been apprised of the publication of the Bismarck document,²⁵⁵ but the Parisian public were not yet aware of it. Of the Emperor's approach to the Tuileries, Ollivier relates that:

"Like ourselves, he had passed through an impatient and angry crowd, from which rose strident cries, violent gestures, protestations against diplomatic delays."²⁵⁶

Gramont had difficulty in reaching the building, for, as he says:

"already the agitation of the Chamber had communicated itself to the masses, and the entrances to the ministerial offices, as well as to the

intended merely to inform our Representatives at German and other Courts exactly the actual state of the case, and of our feeling upon it, a note. The Ministry took care not to produce this document to the Chamber, as was demanded by a few members of the Opposition, for as soon as the representatives of the people had read and appreciated this so-called document, the whole fabric upon which the declaration of war was based must have fallen to the ground, for the official document was nothing but a newspaper telegram." In the *Fortnightly Rev.* of Oct. 1917 (p. 524) is the following: "In all the official German documents this celebrated telegram is called a 'Zerungstelegram,' as if it had been written by any ordinary journalist, and in the German 'Staatsarchiv' it is called 'a newspaper telegram from Ems.'" Bismarck was not very truthful when either exculpating or incriminating himself.

²⁵¹ *Ante*, p. 593.

²⁵² *Ante*, p. 608.

²⁵³ *Ante*, p. 614.

²⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 206-7.

²⁵⁵ *Ante*, p. 618.

²⁵⁶ XIV, p. 357.

Corps Législatif were blocked by an impatient and angry crowd. Strident cries, violent and disorderly excitations, protestations against all idea of negotiation were sent forth and acclaimed by the crowd.”²⁵⁷

At the commencement of the proceedings of the Council, Gramont threw his portfolio on the table, and, referring to the publication in Berlin of the Bismarck document, said:

“After what has just happened, a minister of Foreign Affairs who failed to decide in favor of war would not be worthy of retaining his portfolio.”²⁵⁸

Gramont having been quieted, the Council proceeded to discuss the conduct of the Prussian King at Ems. Ollivier, in his book, after referring to the general relations between a sovereign and a foreign ambassador, states the conclusion arrived at by the Council as follows:

“At the same time a sovereign was not absolutely forced to receive an Ambassador who persisted in demanding that which already had been denied in peremptory terms, and he neither violates any diplomatic convention nor neglects anything which could be legitimately insisted upon when he declines, politely, through the intermediacy of one of his officers, to prolong a verbal discussion which he regards useless, since he considers it as exhausted. In consequence, we judged the conduct of the King at Ems irreproachable; he refused, in courteous terms, the conversation with Benedetti; there was neither insulter nor insulted; there was, in excess, the persistence of Benedetti in twice demanding an audience after the King had so formally notified him that he had nothing further to say.”²⁵⁹

To this extremely important admission, Ollivier adds:

“But at Berlin the nature and aspect of things had totally changed. A natural refusal had become an offensive refusal. The public had been made aware of a matter that should have remained private between the Ambassador and the King, and it was divulged to them in an unusual form, sharpened as an arrow . . . Bismarck’s act appeared to us a voluntary, premeditated, intolerable offence. . . . At last we were forced to admit to ourselves that resignation would be disgraceful; that what had taken place at Berlin constituted a declaration of war; that now the only question was whether we should bow our head under an outrage, or stand erect as men of honor. There could not be a doubt, and we decreed the calling out of the reserves.”²⁶⁰

The obvious comments upon the above are: (1) “Irreproachable” conduct can hardly become offensive conduct by the subsequent act of

²⁵⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 211. Referring to the same period, Sorel says: “The situation had become aggravated, the impressions had changed. The agitation at Paris was great, in the vicinity of the Bourbon palace as around the Tuilleries”: *Op. cit.*, p. 168.

²⁵⁸ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 358.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 360.

²⁶⁰ *Op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 360-2.

a third party. (2) The conduct of the King was not a private matter between the Ambassador and the King. It was a matter of international concern. It would certainly be made known to the respective governments. And neither government could complain if the other published a full account of what had taken place. Certainly the French government felt themselves at liberty to communicate the facts (although in distorted form) to their parliament, for that is what they did. (3) The Council was right in describing Bismarck's act as a premeditated offence. But they were wrong in holding that it "constituted a declaration of war." When they came to draft their own declaration, Bismarck's act was treated as an aggravating circumstance, only.²⁶¹ It was offensive, and an occasion for diplomatic protest, but it was not in itself a sufficient ground upon which to base an abrupt declaration of war. The Council was, however, unanimously of other opinion. Ollivier relates that Leboeuf said to his fellow councillors:

"Gentlemen, what we have just decided is very grave, but we have not voted. Before signing the summons for the reserves, I demand an individual vote." He interrogated us himself, one after the other, commencing with me and finishing with the Emperor. Our reply was unanimous. 'Now,' said the Maréchal, 'what has just happened interests me no longer.' And he went off to his Department where he caused the orders for the summoning of the reserves to be prepared (4 h. 40)."²⁶²

The Council then (4 P.M.) proceeded to prepare the form of a declaration of war-policy to be made to the Chamber, and, meanwhile, as Ollivier relates:

"The Chamber being in session, effervescent, anxious, in order to calm it and to obtain information for ourselves, we sent Maurice Richard to the Palais-Bourbon."²⁶³

Upon his return to the Council, Richard made a report in terms similar to those in which *Le Soir* of the same day referred to his mission:

"The enthusiasm is great. If there is a Declaration to-day, the *Corps Législatif* will crumble under the applause. . . . If the Declaration is not made, it will be more than a disappointment, more than a deception, there will be an immense burst of laughter, and the Cabinet will remain overwhelmed in its silence."

Referring to M. Richard himself, the journal continued:

"Enter M. Maurice Richard; they question him. He interrogates them. Evidently, he wishes to ascertain the facts with his own eyes. If he reports exactly what he has seen, it will be to say to the Emperor that the Chamber is an immense Leyden jar."²⁶⁴

²⁶¹ *Post*, p. 649.

²⁶² *Op. cit.*, XIV, p. 362. Cf. de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 290-1.

²⁶³ *Op. cit.*, vol. 14, p. 363.

²⁶⁴ Quoted by Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 363-4.

During the sitting of the Council, a telegram arrived from Benedetti — probably his fourth of the previous day.²⁶⁵ It was, Ollivier says: “merely a paraphrase of the last telegrams. Only the language which it attributed to the King while quite as negative, appeared to be less stiff. In it there was not that which would cause us to retrace our steps.”²⁶⁶

“Seized with fright at our resolution,”²⁶⁷ however, (as Ollivier says) the Council unanimously shifted from war to peace. Gramont relates as follows:

“It was not easy, one will admit, to deliberate in this atmosphere, and yet the Council, presided over by the Emperor, deliberated during nearly six hours,” with the result of having reached “a peaceful solution,” and to announce to the Chamber as follows: “We believe that the principle tacitly adopted by Europe has been to prevent, without a previous arrangement, any Prince belonging to the reigning families of the great Powers from ascending a foreign throne, and we ask that the great European Powers, assembled in Congress, confirm the international jurisprudence.”²⁶⁸

In other words, the ministry was to declare in parliament that:

“it considered the question as sufficiently settled for the present; and that, in order to assure the future, it believed it to be its duty to address itself to the whole of Europe, and to seek there the guarantee, in a doctrine of international right, for which it asked the collective sanction of the Powers.”²⁶⁹

This resolution makes clear three important points: (1) the Council deemed that, for the present, the question was sufficiently settled; (2) a guarantee for the future, however, must be insisted upon; and (3) that guarantee should be obtained, not from Prussia but by a declaration of the Powers as to international right. The resolution being inconsistent with calling out the reserves, the Emperor sent an indefinite note to Lebœuf suggesting lack of urgency.²⁷⁰ The wild absurdity of the proposal became apparent to Ollivier immediately after he had emerged from the Council Chamber.

“I experienced,” he tells us, “what a man feels who, from a stifling atmosphere, has reached the open air: the cerebral phantoms disappeared, and the mind regained its consciousness of realities. The project which we had resolved upon appeared to me that which it really was, a fantastic failure of courage.”²⁷¹

²⁶⁵ *Ante*, pp. 609-10.

²⁶⁶ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 364.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 212.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 214. Cf. Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 171; de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, pp.

292-3.

²⁷⁰ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 366; Gramont, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

²⁷¹ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 369.

The Ladies. The Empress was indignant at the result; told the Emperor that she doubted:

"that that responds to the sentiment of the Chamber and of the country";²⁷²

and attacked Lebœuf with the words:

"How is this! You also approve this cowardice? If you wish to dishonor yourself, do not dishonor the Emperor."²⁷³

Ollivier was not more fortunate:

"On my return to the Chancellery, I assembled my family and my secretaries and read to them the declaration agreed upon. My brothers, my wife, my secretary, General Philis, all until then partisans of peace, broke out into indignant exclamations. It was one outburst of astonishment and blame."²⁷⁴

The parts played in these few exciting days by the wives of the principal actors — the French Emperor, the Prussian King, Prince Antoine, and Prince Leopold — well illustrates what Bismarck meant when he denounced the "petticoat plots" of "the royal women."²⁷⁵ Sir Charles Dilke, who afterwards visited Friedrichsruhe, relates that:

"As Bismarck mellowed with his pipes, he told me that, though he was a high Tory, he had come to see the ills of absolutism, which, to work well, required the King to be an angel. 'Now,' he said, 'Kings, even when good, have women round them, who, even if queens, govern them to their personal ends.'"

Another "confession" he made to Dilke on the same point was that:

"People look on me as a monarchist. Were it all to come over again, I would be republican and democrat; the rule of kings is the rule of women; the bad women are bad, and the good are worse."²⁷⁶

Council Meeting in Evening at St. Cloud. Instead of acting upon the note sent to him, Lebœuf persuaded the Emperor to summon the Council for further consideration in the evening. Three members, conspicuously in favor of peace — Segris, Louvet, and Plichon — had not received sufficient notification and were not there.²⁷⁷ The Empress was present. To Ollivier, the first arrival at St. Cloud, the Emperor said:

"After reflection, I find little satisfaction in the declaration that we made a short time ago."

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 370.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 371.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 369-70.

²⁷⁵ G. Grant Robertson: *Bismarck*, p. 308.

²⁷⁶ Quoted *ibid.*, p. 486.

²⁷⁷ De la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 297. The presence of the Empress at the Council meeting of the evening was due solely to the afternoon understanding that the outbreak of war was to be followed by the Emperor's absence from Paris on the battlefield, and by the installation of the Empress as regent: Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 609.

Ollivier replied:

"I think the same, Sire; if we were to take it to the Chamber, mud would be thrown at our carriages, and we should be hooted."

And the Emperor added:

"You see in what a situation a government may sometimes find itself; should we be unable to assign any motive for war, we should yet be obliged to discover one in order to obey the will of the country."²⁷⁸

The women had had their way, and anxiety to discover some motive for desired action met with the usual success. Note five circumstances:

First. The public demand for war had become irresistible — at least the Emperor so considered, and the British Ambassador agreed. Telegraphing to London in the afternoon, the latter said:

"although the news of the appearance of the article in the 'North German Gazette' had not become generally known, the public excitement was so great, and so much irritation existed in the army, that it became doubtful whether the Government could withstand the cry for war, even if it were able to announce a decided diplomatic success. It was felt that when the Prussian article appeared in the Paris evening papers, it would be very difficult to restrain the anger of the people, and it was generally thought that the Government would feel bound to appease the public impatience by formally declaring its intention to resent the conduct of Prussia."²⁷⁹

Second. Gramont read to the Council a telegram from the French Ambassador at Berlin relating the effect of Bismarck's conversation (above referred to²⁸⁰), with Loftus, the British Ambassador, and stating that the calm which Berlin had theretofore maintained had given place to irritation.²⁸¹ Demands, such as Bismarck contemplated making, would have been extremely embarrassing. Attention would have been centered upon the action of the French Council, rather than upon the conduct of the Prussian King. Why had it sanctioned Gramont's challenging language of the 6th? And what reason could it offer for the extravagant demand upon the Prussian King, after the Leopold withdrawal with the approval of both the King and Spain? The answers would, obviously, have been unsatisfactory. And so the Council, Gramont tells us:

"found itself henceforth in the presence of an adversary determined to lead it, and, if necessary, to drag it, to the battlefield."²⁸²

The Council foolishly forestalled the "adversary."

Third. The Council was becoming increasingly aware of the dis-

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 373. Dr. J. Holland Rose has it that Ollivier was not present: *The Development of the European Nations*, p. 46.

²⁷⁹ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 60. Cf. Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 382-3.

²⁸⁰ *Ante*, pp. 617-8.

²⁸¹ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 373-4. Cf. de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 294-5.

²⁸² *Op. cit.*, p. 221. Quoted by Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

approbation of the British government — disapprobation of Gramont's declaration of 6th July; ²⁸³ of the demand for a future guarantee; ²⁸⁴ and of the hasty precipitation of the crisis. ²⁸⁵ Ollivier testifies that Lord Lyons made clear expression of British opinion, ²⁸⁶ and shortly after the meeting of Council, Gramont received from him a memorandum which Sorel summarizes somewhat too strongly as:

"England officially blamed France, and abandoned her forthwith to her fate." ²⁸⁷

Fourth. Gramont also read to the Council a telegram (received 4.30 P.M.) from M. Guitaud, the French Minister at Berne, as follows:

"General Roeder has this day communicated to the President a telegram from Count Bismarck announcing the refusal of King William to undertake, as King of Prussia, never at any future time to give his consent to the candidature of the Hohenzollern Prince, if the question should again arise, and, following this demand, the equal refusal of the King to receive our Ambassador." ²⁸⁸

Two of the objections to the Bismarck document are: (1) that it made no reference to "the refusal of King William to undertake" &c., and (2) that it indicated that the only reply to the demand for a future guarantee was a message "that his Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the Ambassador." ²⁸⁹ Guitaud's telegram removes the first of these objections, and changes the second into a "refusal of the King to receive our Ambassador," leaving for imagination the circumstances attending the refusal. Very evidently, the Guitaud telegram was one which would arouse enquiry rather than precipitate resentful action. It was not one which might usefully be communicated to the Chambers. As Gramont finished the reading of that telegram, he received another from M. Cadore, the French Minister at Munich (the capital of Bavaria), as follows:

"I think it my duty to transmit to you the almost textual copy of the despatch telegraphed by Count Bismarck: 'After the renunciation of the Hohenzollern Prince had been communicated officially to the French Government by the Spanish Government, the French Ambassador asked His Majesty the King, at Ems, to authorize him to telegraph to Paris that His Majesty engaged himself for all future time to refuse his consent if the Hohenzollern princes changed their determination. His Majesty refused to receive the Ambassador again, and sent to him, by an aide-de-camp, a message that he had no further communication

²⁸³ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 11.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Nos. 30, 33, 35, 36, 56, 63.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, Nos. 17, 60.

²⁸⁶ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 367.

²⁸⁷ Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 180. Cf. Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 60.

²⁸⁸ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 374.

²⁸⁹ *Ante*, p. 620.

to make to him.' The despatch added that 'the King of Bavaria would without doubt be impressed by the fact that M. Benedetti had, in a provoking manner, accosted the King of Prussia on the promenade.'²⁹⁰ Had both of these telegrams been communicated to the Chamber, the deputies might well have seen, in the last sentence of the second, the explanation of the King's refusal "to receive our Ambassador" as stated in the first.²⁹¹ Communication of the second telegram by itself would have destroyed the assertion of "the haughty rupture."²⁹² We shall see what happened.

It was to the Cadore telegram that Lebœuf referred in his evidence before a committee of the Chamber in September 1871, when he said:

"At ten o'clock in the evening, the Council assembled and the discussion was opened. At eleven o'clock, it was almost decided that mobilization would be adjourned and that new plans would be made to terminate the question diplomatically. We were at that point, when a despatch was handed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. This despatch was read to the Council as a body; I am not able to give the terms of it, my recollections are not sufficiently precise; but the despatch was of such a nature that it produced reaction in the Council; it was decided that the order for mobilization should be maintained."²⁹³

Commenting upon this statement, Ollivier said:

"It is true that during the evening a despatch was handed to Gramont from the Foreign Affairs: it was that by which Cadore announced from Munich the official communication of the Prussian Minister, of which Guitaud had already informed us from Berne. This despatch did not change specific dispositions into bellicose, it only confirmed the bellicose disposition which we had adopted, with neither variation nor dissent, from the first moment of our meeting."²⁹⁴

Fifth. Gramont in his book²⁹⁵ insists that the dominating factor in the situation was the Prussian war-preparations. He says:

"I will not further dwell on the details of a situation which is now much better known than it was at the time; I will add only the last fact which completes it, and which dominates all the others by its importance. The armies of Prussia commenced actively their mobilization, and everything was proceeding on the other side of the Rhine as if war had been declared."

Preparations, he says, had been going on in various places openly for twenty-four hours; and:

²⁹⁰ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, pp. 374-5.

²⁹¹ *Ante*, p. 628.

²⁹² *Ante*, pp. 608-14.

²⁹³ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 618.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 619. According to de la Gorce (*op. cit.*, VI, pp. 296-7), all the telegrams had been discussed between Gramont and Ollivier prior to the evening meeting of the Council.

²⁹⁵ *La France et la Prusse*.

"In the presence of these positive facts, the gravity and the number of which made impossible any doubt or hope, the government no longer hesitated. In reality, war had been declared. There could be no further question of avoiding it; there remained only to prepare for it in all haste. It was decided that the orders of the Minister of War should not be countermanded; that the reserves should be got ready as speedily as possible; and that, on the morrow, the Senate and the Chamber should be informed of the resolution of the government and of the circumstances which had made it necessary."²⁹⁶

Ollivier, on the contrary affirms that no news of Prussian mobilization had arrived, and that:

"Lebauf had been badly informed; the armaments had not commenced until the 16th."²⁹⁷

Nevertheless, in the ministerial statement presented to parliament on the 15th, one of the three assigned reasons for war was that "armaments were being effected in Prussia."²⁹⁸

Council's Action. Capping the confusion in the testimony, Ollivier, by his own irreconcilable assertions, makes difficult the comprehension of what was done at the evening meeting of the Council. After the reading of the telegrams, he says:

"we were not permitted to waste our time in useless and dangerous sentimentalities; we had only to accept the situation imposed upon us."²⁹⁹

That is clear enough, but he adds:

"There was an exchange of ideas from which it followed that war could not be avoided, but it decided nothing. No definite resolution was taken, no irrevocable act was completed."³⁰⁰

Afterwards, in a dispute with M. Plichon (a member of the government), who affirmed that war had been decided upon,³⁰¹ Ollivier replied that war (*Italics as in original*):

"had been judged inevitable by the ministers present on the evening of the 14th, but it had been decided upon only *in principle*, which

²⁹⁶ Pp. 232-3.

²⁹⁷ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 400, note. Sorel quotes from Stoffel, Military Attaché at Berlin (*Rapports Militaires*, p. 463), and from Benedetti, to the effect that the Prussian military preparations had not commenced. Benedetti declared that "Prussia had not called out her reserves until we announced, in the sitting of 15 July, our resolution to demand by force the sureties which had been refused to us voluntarily" (*op. cit.*, p. 9; Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 176). "In this connection," says Dr. J. Holland Rose, "it is needful to state that the order for mobilising the North German troops was not given by the King of Prussia until late on July 15th, when the war votes of the French Chambers were known at Berlin": *The Development of the European Nations*, p. 48.

²⁹⁸ *Post*, p. 634.

²⁹⁹ *Op. cit.*, XIV, p. 380.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 381.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 608-9.

meant that there had been no *exterior, official, irrevocable* manifestation of a decision which at that time remained provisional.”³⁰²

Plichon made effective answer:

“You say to me that on the morning of the 15th the situation was open: On the part of the Chamber, yes; on the part of Europe, possibly; on the part of the Cabinet, no!”³⁰³

To the editor of *Le Gaulois*, who suggested to Ollivier, immediately after the adjournment of the Council, that he might resign rather than be a party to a declaration of war which he did not approve, the reply was that war had been agreed upon.

“Since,” he said, “war is decided upon, it is legitimate, it is inevitable; no human force could to-day avert it. Since we are not able to prevent it, our duty is to render it popular. If we should retire, we should discourage the country, we should demoralize the army, we should put in question the right of France and the justice of her cause.”³⁰⁴

The evidence being much confused, there can be little certainty as to the truth. Ollivier is unsatisfactory; Gramont is unreliable; and Lebœuf appears to have paid little attention to the arguments which were bothering his colleagues. Upon the whole, one feels that the final decision was, as Mr. Lloyd George said of the war of 1914-18: “something into which they glided, or rather staggered and stumbled, perhaps through folly”;

and that *un peu du sang froid* (as M. de la Gorce insists³⁰⁵) would have averted it. Torn by the impulses of hatred of Prussia and dread of the Parisian public on the one hand, and, on the other, by fear of a Prussian military success, the Emperor and Ollivier allowed themselves to be hurriedly precipitated into a war which neither desired and which the latter, if not both, disapproved.

“It is thus that, each impelling the other and believing himself impelled, these unfortunates were fleeing, ‘with light heart,’³⁰⁶ before the tempest which was pushing France to the abyss. That is the explanation; as to the facts which will decide ministers, they were first the insensate articles in the journals, then the excitements, the prayers, the menaces of the partisans of war: they besieged the ministerial offices and the antechambers of the château; they reproached the cabinet for its compromises and its negotiations; they accused it of being badly informed; they represented the German armies as marching on the frontier.”³⁰⁷

³⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 615.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 616.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 382.

³⁰⁵ *Op. cit.*, VI, p. 206.

³⁰⁶ Quoted from Ollivier, without his subsequent explanation.

³⁰⁷ Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 173. Sorel does not in this connection refer to any effect which may have been produced by publication in Paris of the Bismarck document.

Public Excitement. As Lord Lyons had predicted, public excitement, after publication of "the Prussian article," was extreme. The police report (15 July) indicated that the boulevards had presented the appearance of a fête day:

"The same affluence, the same curiosity, the same animation; the circulation of carriages was impossible, and the omnibuses were obliged to change their itinerary. On all sides one heard cries of: *Vive la guerre! A Berlin!* As the possibility of an arrangement had produced deception, so the rupture of the negotiations was welcomed with feverish excitement. Each breathed as if freed from an oppressive uncertainty."³⁰⁸

The newspaper point of view was:

"A public affront has been offered to our Ambassador. There is not a Frenchman who will not resent the injury. All hearts are united to exact, and obtain a glorious reparation."³⁰⁹

The newspapers had been misled by the Bismarck document. The Emperor and his Ministers knew that it would be published; and they knew that it was an untrue representation of what had happened at Ems. They knew, as Ollivier relates: (1) that the King had couched his refusal in courteous terms; (2) that in the incident, there had been "neither insulter nor insulted"; (3) that the conduct of the King had, by the French Council, been adjudged "irreproachable"; and (4) that the fault was in "l'acharnement" (the undue persistence) of Benedetti himself. Yet the government permitted the assertions of the document to go uncontradicted. They did more than that: They vouched for its accuracy — as we shall see. Gramont himself tells us that he regarded the Bismarck document as:

"a fantastic recital in which Count Benedetti, on the one hand, was accused of having failed in courtesy toward the King of Prussia, and the King, on the other hand, was represented as having humiliated, by his manner and his refusal, the Ambassador of France. Nothing of this story was true. Count Benedetti had, on all occasions, observed toward the King the respect and the deference due to His Majesty, and the King had never failed either in his deportment, in his language or in his messages, in the courtesy which was habitual to him."³¹⁰

That was not said until long after France had been made to believe that the Bismarck document contained a true recital of the facts — until long after, in that belief, France had declared war on Prussia.

15 JULY — PARIS

Ministerial Declaration. On the morning of the 15th, the Council met, in order, as Gramont relates:

³⁰⁸ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 384.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

³¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 224.

“to formulate definitely the terms of the communication which was to be made to the Chamber.”³¹¹

The Empress was present, and the document was agreed to. It was, as read by Gramont in parliament, as follows:

“The manner in which the country received our declaration of the 6th of July having afforded us the certainty that you approved our policy and that we could reckon on your support, we at once began negotiations with the foreign Powers in order to obtain their good offices with Prussia in order that she might admit the legitimacy of our grievances.

“In these negotiations we have asked nothing of Spain, of whom we neither wished to awaken the susceptibilities nor wound the independence. We took no action with the Prince of Hohenzollern, whom we considered as being shielded by the King; we also refused to mix up any recrimination with our discussion, or to permit that discussion to diverge from the object to which, from the commencement, we had confined it.

“Most of the Powers were full of eagerness to satisfy us, and they have admitted the justice of our demands with more or less warmth.

“The Prussian Foreign Office answered by a demurrer, pretending that it knew nothing of the matter, and that the Cabinet of Berlin had remained a stranger to it. We were, accordingly, compelled to address ourselves to the King himself, and we instructed our Ambassador to proceed to the King at Ems. While acknowledging that he had authorized the Prince of Hohenzollern to accept the candidature which had been offered him, the King of Prussia maintained that he had remained a stranger to the negotiations conducted between the Spanish Government and the Prince of Hohenzollern; that he had only intervened as head of the family, and in no way as Sovereign, and that he had neither called together nor consulted his Ministers in Council. His Majesty, however, acknowledged that he had informed Count Bismarck of the various incidents. We could not consider these answers satisfactory; we could not admit that subtle distinction between the Sovereign and the head of the family, and we insisted on the King’s advising, and, if necessary, forcing Prince Leopold to renounce his candidature.

“Whilst we were in discussion with Prussia, the relinquishment of his candidature came to us from the quarter from which we did not expect it, and was communicated to us on the 12th July by the Spanish Ambassador.

“The King having wished to remain a stranger to the question, we asked him to associate himself with it, and to declare that if, by one of those changes which are always possible in a country emerging from a revolution, the Crown were to be again offered by Spain to Prince Leopold, he would no longer authorize him to accept it, so that the discus-

³¹¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 239. Quoted by Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

sion might be considered as definitely closed. (Approval.) Our demand was moderate; the terms in which we expressed it were not less so. 'Be sure and tell the King,' we wrote to Count Benedetti on the 12th July at midnight, 'be sure and tell the King that we have no *arrière-pensée*; that we do not seek a pretext for war, and that we only ask to be able to solve honorably a difficulty which is not of our creation.'

"The King consented to approve Prince Leopold's renunciation, but he refused to declare that he would not again in the future authorize the renewal of his candidature. (Movements of surprise.) 'I have demanded of the King,' M. Benedetti writes to us at midnight on the 13th of July, 'to be so good as to permit me to announce to you, in his name, that if the Prince of Hohenzollern should again think of his project, His Majesty should interpose his authority and prevent it. The King has absolutely refused to authorize me to send you such a declaration.' (Sensation. Murmurs.) 'I have vigorously³¹² persisted, but without succeeding in modifying the determination of His Majesty. The King terminated our interview by saying that he could not, nor did he wish to undertake such an engagement, and that he would in this eventuality, as in all others, reserve to himself the faculty of consulting the circumstances.' (Exclamations. Loud dissentient cries.)

"*A voice.* — Insolence cannot go further! (Hear, hear.)

"*M. Duruy.* — It is a defiance.

"*The Minister for Foreign Affairs.* — Although this refusal seemed to us unjustifiable³¹³ — (Marks of assent) — such was our desire of preserving to Europe the blessings of peace, that we did not break off the negotiations; and, in spite of your just impatience, fearing that a discussion should hamper them, we asked you to adjourn the explanations till to-day. (Universal marks of approbation.) We were, accordingly, profoundly surprised when we learnt yesterday that the King of Prussia had notified by an Aide-de-camp to our Ambassador that he would not receive him any more — (lively movement of indignation) — and that, in order to give to this refusal an unequivocal character, his Government had communicated it officially³¹⁴ to the Cabinets of Europe. (Explosion of murmurs.)

"*Some Senators.* — It is too much impertinence and audacity.

"*The Minister for Foreign Affairs.* — We learnt at the same time that Baron Werther had received orders to go on leave, and that armaments were being effected in Prussia. Under these circumstances, a further attempt at conciliation would be a forgetfulness of dignity and an imprudence. (Loud assent — prolonged applause.) We have neglected nothing to avoid a war; we are about to prepare to sustain one

³¹² Ollivier, in his book, modified "vivement" into "vraiment."

³¹³ In his book, Ollivier modified "unjustifiable" into "regrettable": *op. cit.*,

XIV, p. 400.

³¹⁴ Ollivier omitted the word "officially."

which is offered to us — (' Yes, yes; very good — it's true ') — leaving to each a share of responsibility which belongs to them.³¹⁵

" Yesterday we have called in our reserves, and, with your assistance, we are about immediately to take the measures necessary to secure the interests, the safety, and the honor of France. (Prolonged bravos and applause.) " ³¹⁶

After the meeting of the Council, Ollivier and Gramont had a meeting at the Foreign Office with Benedetti, who had arrived at Paris, from Ems, at 10.15 A.M. Ollivier says of the interview:

" We questioned him minutely; he informed us of nothing new as to what had passed at Ems, and confirmed, without adding to them, the circumstantial details of his despatches and reports." ³¹⁷

Comments. The obvious comments upon the declaration are as follows:

1. The King's refusal to give the required guarantee, while referred to as " unjustifiable," was not deemed to have been of such importance as to cause a rupture of the negotiations.

2. It is true that the King had refused to give Benedetti an opportunity to renew a demand which he had already pressed too strongly, and to which the King had made final reply; but it is not true that there had been a notification by the King " that he would not receive him any more." The Council had agreed that the conduct of the King had been " irreproachable," ³¹⁸ and Ollivier himself blamed Benedetti for what had happened.

3. The Prussian government had communicated to the cabinets of Europe " that he would not receive him again," but that was not the fact, as the French government well knew. Ollivier, nevertheless, could make it appear to be the fact by reading the Bismarck document. And that, during the ensuing debate, was what he did.

4. Werther's conduct had been disapproved by his government. He had not been recalled. In order that his departure might be deprived of significance, it was attributed (as Bismarck said) to: " a leave of absence requested by the Ambassador for personal reasons," who had " transferred the business to the First Councillor of Legation, who had often represented him before, and had given me notification thereof as usual." ³¹⁹

³¹⁵ The document as quoted by Ollivier ends here.

³¹⁶ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 75, Enc. The text of the document as given by Ollivier (*op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 397-400) is substantially the same as above, except in the three places referred to in the notes preceding this one. Ollivier omits some of the exclamations. Cf. Gramont, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-7.

³¹⁷ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 396.

³¹⁸ *Ante*, p. 623.

³¹⁹ See Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 61; and Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 8, Enc. 1. Cf. Sorel, *op. cit.*, pp. 164, 168.

Ollivier almost apologizes for the statement in the ministerial declaration by saying:

"We did not say that he had been recalled, consequently we have stated the exact truth."³²⁰

Exact enough, but quite misleading.

5. As to Prussian armaments, Ollivier (as we have seen³²¹) frankly admits that "Lebœuf had been badly informed."

6. Eliminating the refusal of the future guarantee; Werther's "orders to go on leave"; and the Prussian armaments, there remains, as reason for war, only the alleged refusal of the King "to receive him again," which had been rendered "unequivocal" by Bismarck's actions — a non-existent action rendered unequivocal.

Other Assertions. A good illustration of the indefiniteness, even in the minds of the ministers themselves, of the reason for declaring war — of the difficulty of framing any reason other than the existence of national desire — is furnished by comparison of the ministerial declaration, just quoted, with, for example, the "motif de notre détermination" as specified by Ollivier:

"I had taken care," he wrote, "that the motive of our determination was indicated in such a manner that no person could misunderstand it, and that, insistently, at this last moment as at the first, we had obstinately refused to extend the discussion beyond the Hohenzollern candidature; that we were invoking neither the violated treaty of Prague, nor the failure to keep the promise of Luxemburg, nor the constant bad faith, nor the incessant provocation, nor the impatience to terminate and emerge from an enervating and ruinous tension, nor the necessity for redressing Sadowa; and that, even in the Hohenzollern affair, we were not in a similar way aggrieved; that we were invoking as a decisive reason neither the refusal to us of a guarantee for the future by a simple word, nor the refusal to clothe in official form an altogether private approbation, nor even the refusal to receive and hear our Ambassador. We were revolting against that refusal of audience solely because it had become a palpable outrage by divulgence of the telegram posted in the streets, addressed to the legations and to the newspapers. In other words, our declaration was only a reply to the slap of the Ems despatch — a reply that Germany herself, while awaiting it, seemed to counsel us as inevitable."³²²

It will be observed that Ollivier discards the two refusals as sufficient reasons for war — (1) the refusal of the guarantee, and (2) the refusal "to receive and hear our Ambassador"; and that he alleges as the sole reason for war that the refusal to receive the Ambassador:

³²⁰ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 400, note.

³²¹ *Ante*, p. 630.

³²² Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 391-2.

“had become a palpable outrage by divulgence of the telegram posted in the streets,” &c.

In other words, Ollivier drops one of the reasons assigned by the ministerial declaration (refusal to receive the Ambassador), and changes the assertion that by publication “an unequivocal character” had been given to the refusal into an assertion that the character of the refusal had, by divulgence of it, been altered — “had become a palpable outrage.” The Council’s statement was untrue, and Ollivier’s impossible.

The Debate. Bearing these divergencies in mind, it will be instructive to observe the attitudes assumed by the ministers in the course of the debate which followed the reading of the declaration.

Thiers. Thiers, an Opposition leader, amid almost continuous interruption, insisted that no reason for war existed:

“Very well, gentlemen, is it true, yes or no, that upon the main point, that is to say the candidature of the Prince of Hohenzollern, your demand has been listened to, and that the matter has been set right? Is it true that you break upon a question of very honorable susceptibility? I hope so, indeed, but you break upon a question of susceptibility (*Murmurs*). Very well, gentlemen, do you wish it to be said, do you wish that all Europe should say that the main point was yielded, and that upon a question of form you have decided to pour out torrents of blood?”³²³

Ollivier. Ollivier replied to Thiers:

“we find ourselves in the presence of an affront that we cannot brook, in the presence of a menace which, were we to allow it to become a reality, would cause us to descend to the lowest rank of states.”³²⁴

The “affront,” to which he was mendaciously referring, was that the King “would not receive” the Ambassador any more. Appearing to ground the rupture upon the refusal of the King to give a guarantee for the future, Ollivier said:

“If they had accorded us some real satisfaction, we should have received that satisfaction with joy; but that satisfaction has been denied us. The King of Prussia, it is necessary that history should not forget, constantly refused to intervene in order to procure or facilitate the renunciation of the Prince of Hohenzollern. When it was obtained, he affected to regard himself as a stranger to it; and when finally, wishing to obtain assurances for the future, we said to him in the most respectful form: ‘Declare that this renunciation is definitive,’ how has the King of Prussia conducted himself? He has refused us. Is it we, then, who have shown ourselves susceptible? Is it we who are carried away in the face of a negative reply? No, No.”³²⁵

Returning to the refusal of the King to receive the Ambassador, Ollivier completely misled the Chamber, by saying:

³²³ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 405.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 415.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 415-6.

“In the midst of these negotiations, we learned that, in all Europe, the Prussian representatives announced and caused to be announced in the journals, that the King of Prussia had sent an aide-de-camp to our Ambassador to inform him that he refused to receive him. (*Cheers and applause from the Centre and the Right. — Questions from the Left.*) The honorable M. Thiers has called this sentiment susceptibility. I do not recognize in this expression the ordinary accuracy of his language. It is not of susceptibility that it was necessary to speak; it is of honor, and in France the safeguarding of honor is the first consideration.”³²⁶

Making the deception clearer and more emphatic, Ollivier added:

“I said — because in such a matter it is always necessary to state the truth mathematically — I said that the King of Prussia had refused to receive our Ambassador, and that, in order that that decision might not appear, what it might seem to be in effect, an act of no consequence, in order that its character might not be equivocal, his Government had officially communicated that decision to the cabinets of Europe; this assuredly was not done in the case of all audiences that he refused to Ambassadors. . . . This news of the refusal to receive our Ambassador was not spoken in the ear of the ministers; they spread it all over Germany, the official journals published it in supplements. The Prussian ministers announced it to their colleagues; it was the talk of Europe.”³²⁷

As proof of the King's refusal, he read parts of the telegrams from Berne and Munich — the latter containing the Bismarck document, which he knew to be untrue. Adhering to his assertion of the refusal, he urged that publication of it proved its offensive character (*Italics as in original*):

“It may happen that a King refuses to receive an Ambassador; that which is wounding is the intentional refusal, divulged in newspaper supplements, *in telegrams* addressed to all the courts in Europe (*Movements of various sorts.*) And that fact has appeared to us all the more significant in that the aide-de-camp who announced to M. Benedetti the refusal of audience did not fail in any of the forms of courtesy (*Interruptions on the left*), in such a way that our Ambassador did not at first suspect the significance that one might attach to a refusal which, imparted in a certain manner, might be disagreeable without being offensive. The offence results from the intentional publication.”³²⁸ Ollivier might properly have complained of Bismarck's false assertion of the King's decision “not to receive the French Ambassador again.” But that would not have sufficed. For Ollivier's purpose, it was necessary that the Chamber should believe that there had been an actual

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 416.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 418, 420.

³²⁸ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 425-6.

refusal. And, worried by the Opposition, he exceeded his previous misrepresentations by assertion of the "haughty rupture":

"We have asked only an assurance for the future. They have repeatedly refused it to us. Have we menaced, insulted? We have continued to negotiate. How have they responded to our moderation? By the haughty rupture of pourparlers which, on our part, were carried on with the greatest loyalty."³²⁹

Turning upon his opponents, and touching upon the real reason for war, Ollivier said:

"Then you ignore the force of the point of honor between two nations placed for years in the situation that has been made for France and Prussia by perpetual excitations? And whence have come these excitations? Is it not from you, gentlemen of the opposition, is it not from you who, since 1866, have not ceased to represent Sadowa as an intolerable loss which must be effaced? (It is true! it is true!) Is it not you who, all these years, at least once in a session, have risen to repeat this humiliating demonstration, that France has lowered her rank, that she should prepare for the struggle which would restore it to her? (It is true! it is true!). . . . How many times has not my attention been directed to the unfortunate position of the Danes in Schleswig? How many times have not I been pressed to claim in their favor the execution of the treaty of Prague."³³⁰

Returning to the subject of the grounds of complaint against Prussia, Ollivier specified the two referred to in the ministerial declaration — the two which in his book he discarded: (1) the refusal to give a guarantee for the future, and (2) the King's conduct toward Benedetti. He said:

"Is it the excess of our demands that is attacked? Could one conceive of more moderate? If others had persisted as have we in conserving good relations, was it so difficult, after the days of anxious waiting, to give us the assurance that we need not fear a change of purpose? Is it finally the rupture, after the affront received in the person of the Ambassador, that you find blamable? Here I no longer reason, I feel and I affirm. No ministry, no Government, would have been able to maintain peace by accepting the situation which they wished to impose on us."³³¹

Gramont. Gramont put his case better, if not more frankly, in one of his sentences:

"After all that you have heard, this fact suffices, that the Prussian Government has informed all the cabinets of Europe that he [the King] has refused to receive our Ambassador and to continue with him the discussion. It is an affront for the Emperor and for France."³³²

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 427.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 427-8, 429.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 431.

³³² Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 446.

Gramont, however, did not explain that the information thus supplied was untrue — that, in fact, there had been no refusal. On the contrary, he gave the Chamber to understand that it was accurate:

“We have said that the insult offered to our dignity was the intentional publicity given at last to the refusal to receive our Ambassador, and that was, so to speak, the last drop, that caused the cup to overflow.”³³³

To the British Ambassador, in the evening of the same day, Gramont was more frank. He said:

“Nor indeed had the King really treated M. Benedetti with the rough discourtesy which had been boasted of by the Prussian Government. But that Government had now chosen to declare to Germany and to Europe that France had been affronted in the person of her Ambassador. It was this boast which was the gravamen of the offence. It constituted an insult which no nation of any spirit could brook, and rendered it, much to the regret of the French Government, impossible to take into consideration the mode of settling the dispute which was recommended by Her Majesty’s Government.”³³⁴

Gramont could not very well have said to the Chamber that there had been no rudeness of any kind; and that his reason for war was that a Prussian despatch had untruthfully indicated that France had been insulted. Such a despatch would plainly have been a subject for diplomatic complaint, and not a reason for precipitate declaration of war.

Documents Concealed. Knowing that he had misled the Chamber, and knowing, too, that the Benedetti telegrams and despatches would reveal the truth, Ollivier refused to produce them. Early in the debate, Jules Favre had said:

“Where is the official despatch? Where is the report of the conference in which our Ambassador saw the national dignity slighted? We demand the production of those despatches, and particularly of those by which the Prussian government has notified foreign governments as to its intentions.”³³⁵

Ollivier’s reply was:

“We have received only confidential despatches, which diplomatic usages do not permit to be communicated. We have extracted from them all that was useful to communicate; we will communicate nothing more.”³³⁶

Gambetta pressed for the documents themselves. (*Italics as in original*):

“Well, then, I say it is not by extracts, by allusions, but by a direct *authentic* communication that you ought to inform the Chamber;

³³³ Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 70, Enc.

³³⁴ Lyons to Granville, 15 July 1870: Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 63. Cf.

Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

³³⁵ De la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 305.

³³⁶ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 417.

it is a question of honor, you say, and it is necessary that we should know in what terms they have dared to speak of France.”³³⁷

But he could not get them. Ollivier said:

“The Government, in this affair, has, above all, the desire to make known absolutely the truth; it has nothing to dissimulate. And when, to demands for communication of despatches, it replies that it has nothing to communicate, it is because there have not been, in the true sense of the word, despatches exchanged; there have been only verbal conversations, contained in reports which, according to diplomatic usage, are not communicated. (M. Emmanuel Arago: ‘It is upon these reports that you are entering upon war!’)”³³⁸

Commenting afterwards upon the episode, Ollivier wrote:

“As all the negotiations were carried on in conversations with the King, we were debarred from printing and distributing the reports from Ems. . . . Our refusal to communicate was not then inspired by a dictatorial purpose, or by the fear of investigations; it was the result of circumstances; it was a diplomatic necessity.”³³⁹

It is difficult to imagine that Ollivier, when asking the Chamber to vote supplies for war against Prussia, partly (at all events) because of the conduct of the King, should have felt himself bound to conceal the documents which showed what the King had done. That he did not so believe is proved by the facts (1) that he had read to the Chamber an extract from the Benedetti telegrams,³⁴⁰ and (2) that he produced all of them before a committee of the Chamber — in what way we shall see.

Further Refusal. At a later stage of the debate (after report of a committee) pressing demand was made for the telegrams from the French representatives at Berne and Munich. Ollivier had pretended to give the substance of the messages to the Chamber;³⁴¹ but Gambetta and others were not satisfied, and made strong appeal for the production of the documents themselves.³⁴² Ollivier refused. His plea for diplomatic usage being inapplicable to telegrams from French Ambassadors, he declared that they were immaterial;³⁴³ that, at most, they only removed the possibility that the King’s refusal to receive Benedetti might not have been intentionally offensive;³⁴⁴ that they had been produced before the committee;³⁴⁵ and, basing himself squarely on the fact of the King’s refusal to receive the Ambassador, and referring to the despatches as

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 418. Cf. de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 313.

³³⁸ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 425.

³³⁹ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 424.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 399.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*

³⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 464-6.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 465-9.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 469.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 470.

merely evidence of the fact, otherwise sufficiently well known, he argued as follows:

“Who has spoken of a Prussian despatch? When, then, to establish the fact that an affront has been offered to France, have we invoked chancellery protocols? despatches more or less mysterious? Our language has been otherwise. We have said: Now when we are debating, there is a fact, a fact publicly known in Europe, of which not an ambassador, not a journalist, not a politician, not a person conversant with diplomatic affairs is ignorant; it is that, according to the Prussian accounts, our ambassador was not received by the King and that the King, through an aide-de-camp, refused to hear from him, for the last time, the courteous, moderate, conciliatory explanation of a courteous, moderate, conciliatory request, the justness of which is incontestable. Of what importance to us are chancellery protocols — despatches that might raise debate? On our honor as honest men, on our honor as ministers, we affirm a fact. . . . You speak to me of despatches. I speak to you of an act known throughout all Europe. Only, when one is on the point of making one of those decisions which shake the conscience, one has need of light, of light, of much light. Evidence is never sufficiently irrefragable. We have proved it. The act is incontestable, we tell ourselves; but it is perhaps unintentional, it is perhaps one of these rumors escaped from alarmed patriotism, and it would be unjust, even in moments of excitement and passion, to charge it to a Government; these are the scruples which the despatches have calmed. We have no longer doubt of offensive intention when from all corners of Europe, comes to us what? The text itself, the text itself of the instructions of M. de Bismarck.”³⁴⁶

Jules Ferry interrupted: “But you have not given them to us.”³⁴⁷ To which Ollivier replied:

“And since indeed, Ministers of France are obliged, under the attack of an Opposition which pretends to be moderate, to prove that they did not alter, and that they did not fabricate documents. . . . (*Now interruptions on the left*) we have communicated the original texts to the Commission.”³⁴⁸

When, at the end of the debate, Ollivier, in private conversation, chided Gambetta for questioning the existence of the telegrams, the latter replied: “I do not contest them, but you have not read them in full.”³⁴⁹ Ollivier then admitted that he had not read the following part of the telegram which he had received from M. Cadore, the French Ambassador at Munich (Italics as given by Ollivier):

“The King of Bavaria would, without doubt, be impressed by this

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 468-9.

³⁴⁷ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 470.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 472.

fact that M. Benedetti *accosted* the King of Prussia on the promenade in a provocative manner.”³⁵⁰

Gambetta retorted:

“Well, that is precisely what I wished to induce you to read also.”³⁵¹

Ollivier’s reply was:

“I could not do it without making impossible the situation of Cadore at Munich; that which my reading would have added to the debate was not sufficiently decisive for me to believe it necessary to brave that inconvenience.”³⁵²

There can be little question that Ollivier was more fearful of the effect of the “reading” upon his own situation than upon that of Cadore. For the Chamber might have been led by it to doubt the truth of the assertion “that an affront has been offered to France,” and that the despatches proved its “offensive character.”³⁵³

The Committee. During a short interval in the debate, Gramont produced, or rather read or partially read³⁵⁴ to the Credits Committee of the Chamber, the Benedetti and other telegrams (Benedetti himself, although available, was not asked to attend);³⁵⁵ and the committee, by way of indicating that the demand for a future guarantee had formed part of the original requirements, and was not (as it really was) something improvised after the original demands had been satisfied, reported: “that the first despatch to our Ambassador at Ems ended with this phrase: ‘In order that the renunciation produce its effect, it is necessary that the King of Prussia associate himself with it, and give us the assurance that he will not again authorize this candidature.’”³⁵⁶

That was not true. These words were not in “the first despatch,” namely, that of the 7th July.³⁵⁷ They formed part of Gramont’s telegram of 12 July at 7 P.M.³⁵⁸ — the telegram arranged between the Emperor and Gramont after Leopold’s withdrawal and in pursuance of Gramont’s view that “it was evidently necessary to find some new expedient.”³⁵⁹ Prior to that message, there had been no demand for a guarantee.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 375.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 472.

³⁵² *Ibid.*

³⁵³ Gramont’s interpretation of the telegram makes quite clear the reason for its concealment. In his book, he says that the telegram “represented Count Benedetti as having several times accosted the King without formality, either on the promenade or at the springs, and added that His Majesty the King of Bavaria certainly could not fail to resent deeply these repeated offences against the respect due to royal majesty” (*La France et la Prusse*, p. 232).

³⁵⁴ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 450, 452.

³⁵⁵ De la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 309. He was in the Chamber, listening to what he knew was not true: Welschinger, *op. cit.*, I, p. 183.

³⁵⁶ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 455. Upon this point, see de la Gorce, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 307-10; Welschinger, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 179-86.

³⁵⁷ *Ante*, pp. 592-3.

³⁵⁸ *Ante*, p. 602.

³⁵⁹ *Ante*, p. 596.

Gramont has been charged, and not without reason, with having misled the committee.³⁰⁰ Naturally, he would not have wished its members and the Chamber to understand (as was the fact) that, after his first demands had been, or were in course of being, satisfactorily disposed of, he had made, for the first time, a demand for a future guarantee. Very clearly, he would have wished the committee to understand the facts exactly as the committee reported them. And what he did was to erase such of the words of the despatch of the 12th as would have indicated that it could not have been "the first despatch," and to present it as having been sent five days previous to its real date. The following is the despatch of the 12th. The words italicised are eliminations. The committee reported that the remaining words appeared at the end of Gramont's despatch of the 7th.³⁰¹

"*Nous avons reçu des mains de l'ambassadeur d'Espagne la renonciation du prince Antoine, au nom de son fils Léopold, à sa candidature au trône d'Espagne. Pour que cette renonciation du prince Antoine produise tout son effet, il paraît nécessaire que le roi de Prusse s'y associe et nous donne l'assurance qu'il n'autoriserait pas de nouveau cette candidature. Veuillez vous rendre immédiatement auprès du roi pour lui demander cette déclaration. . . . etc.*"³⁰²

The importance to the government of the view thus imposed upon the committee is obvious. It was noted in the *Journal Officiel* of the next day:

"As the marquis de Talhouet, reporter for the committee, has remarked with much justice, the government of the Emperor, at the time of the commencement of the incident, and from the first phase of the negotiations up to the last, has loyally followed the same, without enlarging or modifying the debate for a single instant. The first despatch addressed to our ambassador, arrived at Ems to interview the King of Prussia, terminated with this phrase:"³⁰³

Then follows the text as in the committee's report. Dréolle, the member of the committee who prepared the report, afterwards complained of the deception, saying:

"Gramont purposely effected suppressions in the text of the despatch, and carried it back to the 7th; so it is upon this antedated and altered

³⁰⁰ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 458-60.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 643.

³⁰² "We have received from the hands of the Spanish Ambassador Prince Antoine's renunciation, in the name of his son Leopold, of his candidature to the throne of Spain. In order that this renunciation of Prince Antoine may produce all its effect, it appears necessary that the King of Prussia associate himself with it, and give us the assurance that he will not authorize anew this candidature. Be good enough to wait immediately upon the King, in order to demand from him this declaration . . . etc." (Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 189).

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 191, note.

despatch that war has been begun. Gramont has deceived the committee, and by it the Chamber and the country.”³⁶⁴

Talhout, the member of the committee who read the report to the Chamber, agreed with Dréolle's view.³⁶⁵ And Thiers, afterwards, when excusing, to the British government, French precipitation of the war, declared (13 September 1870) that neither France nor the Chamber wanted the war, and that France:

“had allowed herself to be swept away only by the very culpable falsehood of a pretended outrage to France.”³⁶⁶

Sorel, in referring to the incident, says that the Chamber and the public:

“believed, on the faith of the report, that the question of guarantee had been raised on the first day of the negotiations; M. Thiers had contested it; the report affirmed it; it furnished proof of it; that proof was an apocryphal document; and this document was presented to the country as one of the causes of the war. That is a fact. It is one of the most saddening signs of the lightness with which the affairs of France were conducted.”³⁶⁷

Unable to deny that the committee was misled, Gramont repudiated responsibility for the mistake, but almost admitted it when he said that:

“The committee had been led to this conclusion by the very complete and very clear explications given by the Government of the text of the diplomatic documents which had been passed under their eyes, and the chronological résumé which we have just reproduced is nothing but the summary of these explications.”³⁶⁸

Gramont was quite capable of the act with which he is charged. His reputation for veracity was bad. In a despatch of 16 July 1870, Lord Lyons, the British Ambassador at Paris, said:

“I am the more alarmed with regard to Gramont, as his reputation for inaccuracy is so universal that there must be some foundation for it.”³⁶⁹

Ollivier has defended Gramont,³⁷⁰ but he has disregarded several important facts:

I. He himself affirms that Gramont argued to the committee that the demand for a guarantee was *in effect* made in the first despatch:

“At the outset, we asked the King to counsel or command his relative to renounce, which carried with it implicitly a guarantee that the candidature would not repeat itself. The King having refused to inter-

³⁶⁴ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 458.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁶ Gramont, *op. cit.*, p. 342. Cf. Jules Favre: *Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale*, p. 135.

³⁶⁷ *Op. cit.*, pp. 190-1.

³⁶⁸ *Op. cit.*, pp. 269-70.

³⁶⁹ Newton: *Lord Lyons*, I, p. 300.

³⁷⁰ *Op. cit.*, XIV, p. 458.

vene, and the candidature having disappeared without his knowledge, we asked again, under explicit form, the guarantee implied in our first request. Now, asking the King, before the renunciation, to impose it or to counsel it; or, after the renunciation made without his knowledge, to approve it and to promise that he will not authorize it anew — that was to demand the same thing, suiting the demand, identical as to its object, to the circumstances of the occasion.”³⁷¹

That was flimsy enough, but Ollivier tells us that:

“The Committee regarded this second remark as important as the first, and decided that it should be inserted in the report.”³⁷²

Acceptance of argument as to the effect of the despatch does not account for the quotation of an edited telegram of one date as the real telegram of another.

2. Ollivier also overlooked the fact that, during the debate in the Chamber, Gramont offered no correction of the report.³⁷³ Talhouet, the Reporter for the committee, has testified that Gramont was in the Chamber when the report was read.³⁷⁴ Gramont denied it. He said:

“When I arrived . . . the report of the Commission already had been read. . . . I was only made aware of it the next day by the *Journal Officiel*. But for this circumstance, I should not have failed to point out to the honorable reporter an error, insignificant in itself, and that would have been easy to correct.”³⁷⁵

The “error” is one he had taken a good deal of trouble to create.

3. Ollivier also overlooked the fact that Gramont published (31 July) in the *Journal Officiel* an account of the negotiations, and, in it, made identically the same misstatement that he made to the committee:

“The first despatch addressed by the Duc de Gramont to Count Benedetti after his arrival at Ems concludes thus: ‘In order that the renunciation may be effectual, it is necessary that the King should join in it and give you the assurance that he will not again authorize the Prince’s nomination.’”³⁷⁶

4. Ollivier also overlooked the fact that, in a circular despatch of 24 July 1870, Gramont said, with reference to his speech in the Corps législatif (6 July):

“I did not admit that this manifestation³⁷⁷ would have been determined by parliamentary necessities. I explained our language as due to the keenness of the wound which we have received, and I in no way considered the personal position of the ministers as a determining motive

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 453.

³⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 453-4.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 456, 464.

³⁷⁴ Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 191, note.

³⁷⁵ *La France et la Prusse*, p. 275; Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 191, note.

³⁷⁶ Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 70, Enc.

³⁷⁷ He is referring to the declaration in the Chamber on 6 July.

for their conduct. What I said was that no minister could keep, in France, the confidence and support of the Chambers in consenting to an arrangement which did not contain a solemn guarantee for the future.”³⁷⁸

It will be observed that Gramont here places the determination to demand the guarantee as early as his speech of 6 July — one day earlier than his “first despatch” to Benedetti. It entered his mind only after compliance with his first demand (12 July) had made it “necessary,” as he himself said, “to find some new expedient.”³⁷⁹

5. Finally, Ollivier has admitted that the committee’s report was wrong, and that the words, “The first despatch to our Ambassador,” should have been followed by “after the renunciation of Prince Antoine.”³⁸⁰ But that would have been to make clearly apparent the fact that Gramont had formulated a new demand after the one already made had been, or was on the point of being satisfied. And that was precisely what Gramont did not wish the committee to know.

The Votes. Acting upon the report, and in the absence of the documents, the Chamber was unaware of the truth when it passed the war-credits. Upon the vote for production of the documents, the ministry was sustained by 159 to 84. The credits were passed almost unanimously. Upon which, de la Gorce comments as follows:

“The thing was done! From a perverse deception that no perspicacity had unmasked, proceeded an entire series of unconscious deceptions; Gramont and the courtiers deceiving the ministry, the ministry deceiving the credits committee, the credits committee deceiving the Chamber, the Chamber, in its turn, deceiving the nation.”³⁸¹

15 JULY — THE SENATE

“At twenty minutes past 1 the Duc de Gramont stated in the Senate that, the negotiations with Prussia having failed, the reserves would be called out, and steps would be taken to maintain the honor and interests of France.”³⁸²

In these words, the British Ambassador at Paris, on 15 July, reported to his Foreign Office the official announcement of the determination of the French government to engage in war with Prussia. After passing, with enthusiastic unanimity, the required votes of credit, the Senate waited upon the Emperor, and, through M. Rouher, its President, presented an address to him as follows (in part):

“A dynastic scheme, hurtful to the prestige and to the security of France, had been mysteriously endorsed by the King of Prussia. Without

³⁷⁸ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 446.

³⁷⁹ *Ante*, p. 596.

³⁸⁰ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 455; Benedetti, *op. cit.*, pp. 269-70.

³⁸¹ *Histoire du Second Empire*, VI, p. 314.

³⁸² Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 54.

doubt, upon our protest, Prince Leopold had withdrawn his acceptance; Spain, that nation which knows and reciprocates the feelings of friendship that we have for her, has renounced a candidature that injured us. Without doubt, the immediate peril was turned aside, but does not our legitimate demand remain untouched? Was it not evident that a Foreign Power, to the profit of its influence and of its domination, to the prejudice of our honor and of our interests, wished to upset once more the equilibrium of Europe? Have we not the right to demand, from that Power, guarantees against the possible return of similar attempts? These guarantees are refused; the dignity of France is not recognized. Your Majesty draws his sword; the country is with you, trembling with indignation and pride. The errors of an ambition over-elated by a day of great fortune must become apparent soon or late. Not lending himself to hasty impulses, animated by that calm perseverance which is true strength, the Emperor has known how to wait; but, in four years, he has brought the armament of our soldiers to the highest perfection, raised to its full power the organization of our military forces. Thanks to your care, France is ready, Sire, and by her enthusiasm she proves that, like you, she has resolved to tolerate no hasty enterprise."³⁸³

The address was, naturally, very displeasing to Ollivier.³⁸⁴ For the Senate had fixed upon the refusal of the guarantee as the only reason for war; had made nothing of the alleged insult to the Ambassador at Ems (whether subsequently rendered "unequivocal" or "altered"); had avowed that France had been awaiting her opportunity for war; and, meanwhile, had been preparing for the struggle. One might have expected that the Emperor in his reply would have disavowed all that, but he did not.³⁸⁵ One might have expected, too, some correction or protest from Ollivier, but he, for the time, remained silent. Commenting, in his book, he says:

"Our declaration³⁸⁶ did not disavow the demand for guarantees, because that was impossible, but, on the other hand, it did not glorify it; above all it did not indicate that the cause of the war was based upon the refusal; the sole cause that it gave for the war was the Ems affront, which Rouher did not even mention. We had determined not to enlarge the scope of the debate, to confine it to the Hohenzollern affair, and to present the war as an unforeseen event, suffered and not desired by us; Rouher presented it as the result of a long-felt desire of four years, and of a cherished hope." "Such a prank on the part of a man as calculating as Rouher can be explained only by the design of wresting from us the merit of a victory in his own eyes certain, and of basing his candidature as our successor. We were much annoyed by a language

³⁸³ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 480-1.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 482-4.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 483.

³⁸⁶ *Ante*, pp. 632-5.

of which the consequences and perils were soon felt. For a moment we thought of contradicting him. But we could find no means of doing that which would not have been an indirect censure of the inadequacy of the Emperor's reply, and we were compelled to submit in silence, to this inexact, compromising, bold commentary on our conduct."³⁸⁷

Ollivier omitted to add that when, four days afterwards, he came to prepare the declaration of war, he adopted substantially the attitude of the Senate.

The comment of *The Times* (London) of 18 July was as follows:

"Those who were prepared for many things on the part of French officialdom will be surprised at the audacious avowal contained in the address of M. Rouher. One, indeed, looked for something of the sort, but one did not believe that they would be able in France to make acknowledgement of it so imprudently."³⁸⁸

WHY FRANCE DECLARED WAR

For what reason did France declare war? For answer, let us compare the ministerial declaration in the Chamber on the 15th July; Ollivier's explanation of it; the address of the Senate (all of which have already been noted); the declaration of war itself; and various subsequent pronouncements. The declaration of war (delivered to Prussia 19 July) gave as its reasons the following:

"The Government of His Majesty the Emperor of the French being unable to consider the proposal to raise a Prussian Prince to the Throne of Spain otherwise than as an attempt against the territorial security of France, was compelled to ask the King of Prussia for an assurance that such an arrangement could not be carried out with his consent. His Majesty the King of Prussia, having refused to give this assurance, and having, on the contrary, given the Ambassador of His Majesty the Emperor of the French to understand that he intended to reserve for this eventuality, and for every other, the power of acting according to circumstances, the Imperial Government could not but see in the King's declaration a reservation threatening to France and to the general balance of power in Europe. This declaration was further aggravated by the notification made to the Cabinets of the refusal to receive the Emperor's Ambassador, and to enter into any new explanation with him."³⁸⁹

On the 20th July, the following declaration was made by the French government both in the Senate and in the Chamber:

"The statement made to you at the sitting of the 15th has made

³⁸⁷ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, pp. 482-3, 4.

³⁸⁸ The *Daily News* made similar comment.

³⁸⁹ Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 9, Enc.

known to the Senate and the Corps Législatif the just causes of the war against Prussia. According to usage and by order of the Emperor, I have invited the Chargé d'Affaires of France to notify to the Cabinet of Berlin our resolution to seek by arms the guarantees we have failed in obtaining by discussion. This step has been taken, and I have the honor to announce to the Senate and the Corps Législatif that in consequence a state of war exists from the 19th of July between France and Prussia. This declaration applies equally to the allies of Prussia who may afford her armed assistance against us." ³⁰⁰

The notification to the British government was in the following form:

"His Majesty the Emperor of the French has felt himself obliged in order to defend the honor and interests of France, as well as to protect the balance of power in Europe, to declare war against Prussia, and against the Allied States which afford her the co-operation of their arms against us." ³⁰¹

The Emperor's proclamation to the people of France (22 July) stated the reason for war as follows:

"In presence of the new pretensions of Prussia, we made known our protests. They were evaded and were followed on the part of Prussia by contemptuous acts. Our country resented this treatment with profound irritation, and immediately a cry for war resounded from one end of France to the other. It only remains for us to leave our destinies to the decision of arms." ³⁰²

Having now before us the relevant documents containing the various official assertions, we ought to be able to ascertain why it was that France declared war. Observe, however, the difficulty:

1. The ministerial declaration of 15 July ³⁰³ referred to the King's refusal to give a future guarantee, but added:

"Although this refusal seemed to us unjustifiable, such was our desire of preserving to Europe the blessings of peace that we did not break off the negotiations."

Then follow the three grounds for war: (1) the King's refusal to receive the ambassador, given "an unequivocal character" by the Berlin proceedings; (2) Werther's "orders to go on leave"; and (3) "armaments were being effected in Prussia."

2. In his explanation of this declaration, Ollivier said that his government:

"were invoking as a decisive reason neither the refusal to us of a guarantee for the future by a simple word, nor the refusal to clothe in official form an altogether private approbation, nor even the refusal to receive and hear our Ambassador. We were revolting against that

³⁰⁰ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 121.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, No. 120.

³⁰² Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 11, Enc.

³⁰³ *Année*, pp. 632-5.

refusal of audience solely because it had become a palpable outrage by divulgence of the telegram posted in the streets, addressed to the legations and to the newspapers. In other words, our declaration was only a reply to the slap of the Ems despatch—a reply which Germany herself, while awaiting it, seemed to counsel us as inevitable.”³⁹⁴

3. In the debate in the Chamber on the 15th, “the haughty rupture” was prominently assigned as the reason for war. The refusal of the future guarantee became important only in connection with Gramont’s misrepresentation to the committee.

4. The formal declaration of war of 19th July proceeded upon totally different lines. The reasons assigned in it³⁹⁵ were: the refusal to give the future guarantee; the reservation by the King of future liberty of action; and the aggravation of that reservation by Bismarck’s notification to the cabinets “of the refusal to receive the Emperor’s Ambassador.” In other words, “the haughty rupture” now became a mere matter of aggravation, subsidiary to a complaint of the King’s attitude with reference to a future guarantee.

5. The ministerial statement,³⁹⁶ of the next day (20th) is consistent with the declaration of war. But, while declaring “our resolution to seek by arms the guarantees we have failed in obtaining by discussion,” it is notably silent as to aggravation.

6. The notification to the British government³⁹⁷ alleged defence of “the honor and integrity of France,” and protection of “the balance of power in Europe” as the reasons for war.

7. The Emperor’s proclamation³⁹⁸ asserted evasion of: “our protests,” which “were followed on the part of Prussia by contemptuous acts.”

Omitting, as of negligible importance, the assertions as to Werther’s recall and Prussian armaments,³⁹⁹ we may observe:

1. According to the ministerial statement (15th) and Ollivier’s explanation of it, the reason for war was “the haughty rupture,” either rendered unequivocal or changed in character by its publication; while refusal of the future guarantee was not deemed of sufficient importance to provoke war.

2. According to the declaration of war (19th), refusal of the guarantee and the Emperor’s reservation of future liberty of action were the main grounds of complaint; while the “haughty rupture” is treated as a matter of aggravation.

If, now, we take the declaration of war as the more authoritative of the documents, we shall have to say that refusal to comply with the demand for the future guarantee was the main ground upon which France asserted her justification for declaring war—a demand framed

³⁹⁴ *Ante*, p. 636.

³⁹⁵ *Ante*, p. 649.

³⁹⁶ *Ante*, pp. 649-50.

³⁹⁷ *Ante*, p. 650.

³⁹⁸ *Ante*, p. 650.

³⁹⁹ See *ante*, pp. 634, 6.

after the original cause of complaint had been removed;⁴⁰⁰ a demand improvised because, as Gramont says, "it was evidently necessary to find some new expedient";⁴⁰¹ a demand formulated by the Emperor and Gramont in the absence of any other member of the Council;⁴⁰² a demand which Ollivier disapproved and declared "could be interpreted only as a desire to bring about war";⁴⁰³ a demand which, Ollivier says, the Council on the 13th had determined, upon the happening of conditions (afterwards realized), to withdraw;⁴⁰⁴ a demand, non-compliance with which (Ollivier says) the Council, in preparing the ministerial declaration of 15 July, had determined not to invoke "as a decisive reason for war";⁴⁰⁵ a demand which, in that declaration, was treated as not of sufficient importance to warrant interruption of the negotiations;⁴⁰⁶ and, finally, a demand which the British government disapproved. It was (belief is difficult) because of:

"the refusal of the King of Prussia to give the guarantee which France was obliged to ask, in order to prevent dynastic combinations dangerous to her safety,"

that the French government (19 July) declined to accept the British offer of mediation.⁴⁰⁷

Gramont's Circular. In a circular despatch of 21 July, Gramont summarized the reasons for war as follows:

"Prussia, to whom we did not fail to recall these precedents, appeared at the moment to yield to our just demands. Prince Leopold desisted from his candidature; one was able to flatter himself that peace would not be disturbed. But this hope soon gave place to new apprehensions; then to the certainty that Prussia, without withdrawing seriously any of her pretensions, sought only to gain time. The language, at first hesitating, then decided and haughty, of the chief of the house of Hohenzollern, his refusal to pledge himself to maintain the next day the renunciation of the previous, the treatment inflicted upon our Ambassador, to whom a verbal message interdicting all new communication with reference to the object of his mission of conciliation, finally the publicity given to this unusual proceeding by the Prussian journals and by the notification which had been made to the cabinets, all these successive symptoms of aggressive intentions had terminated doubt in the most prejudiced minds. Can mistake be possible when a sovereign who commands a million soldiers, declares, his hand on the hilt of his sword, that he reserves the right to take counsel of himself alone and the circumstances? We were led to that extreme limit where a nation who feels what it owes to itself no longer traffics with the exigencies of its honor."⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁰ *Ante*, p. 596.

⁴⁰¹ *Ante*, p. 596.

⁴⁰² *Ante*, p. 602.

⁴⁰³ *Ante*, p. 603.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ante*, pp. 605-6.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ante*, pp. 632-5.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ante*, p. 634.

⁴⁰⁷ *Post*, p. 661.

⁴⁰⁸ Gramont, *op. cit.*, p. 409.

Readers of what has already been said will know: (1) that the language of the King was not "at first hesitating"—that it was unmistakably clear; (2) that it had in no respect been "haughty"; (3) that the King's conduct had been "irreproachable"; (4) that there had been no "treatment inflicted upon our Ambassador"; and (5) that, according to Gramont himself, so far from "placing his hand on the hilt of his sword," the King, "by his language, by his attitude, rather sought to safeguard peace than to kindle the flames of war."⁴⁰⁹

POPULAR DEMAND AND EXCITEMENT

The French Emperor threw the responsibility for war upon the French people. It may, indeed, be true, as he said to the Corps Législatif,

"that it is the whole nation which has, by its irresistible impulse, dictated our decisions";⁴¹⁰

but it must be added that the "irresistible impulse" had been created by those who had for four years taught the people to believe that "the wrong" of Sadowa and Prague must be repaired; by Gramont's threatening speech of the 6th July; by the misrepresentation of what had occurred at Ems; by Gramont's misleading of the parliamentary committee; by the concealment of the documents which would have revealed the truth; by all that had been done for the purpose of influencing the public mind.

The picture presented, by the documents, of the interaction of government and people is familiar enough. Within the cabinet are men who desire war; others who would avoid it; and still others uncertain and timid. Outside: the foolish crowd, the populace-pleasing press, and the wild denunciators of the "pacifists." Yielding to clamor, the Cabinet addresses the Chamber in language and tone, not only provocative but by the Emperor deemed to be excessive. Then street demonstrations, "strident cries, violent gestures, protestations against the diplomatic delays." Then (all in one day) government resolution for war; "seized with fright," resolution for peace; intervention of the ladies; wobble back to war, for otherwise "mud would be thrown at our carriages and we should be hooted"; "there will be an immense burst of laughter" in the Chamber; eager searchings for a war-declaration formula, and wide disagreement thereon.

It was into a mass of "inflammable material" that Gramont, by reading, in the Corps Législatif on the 6th July, the declaration which had been agreed to by the Emperor and his Council, threw "the spark which was to light the conflagration"—in other words, presented to

⁴⁰⁹ *Ante*, p. 614.

⁴¹⁰ Br. Blue Bk., C.-210, No. 12, Enc.

Prussia that which Ollivier characterized as "an ultimatum."⁴¹¹ When Lord Lyons said to Gramont (7 July) that he could not:

"help thinking that milder language would have rendered it more easy to treat both with Prussia and with Spain for the withdrawal of the pretensions of Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern,"

the reply was (as Lyons reported):

"that he was glad I had mentioned this, as he wished to have an opportunity of conveying to your Lordship an explanation of his reasons for making a public declaration in terms so positive. Your Lordship would, he was sure, as Minister in a constitutional country, understand perfectly the impossibility of contending with public opinion. The nation was, he said, so strongly roused upon this question that its will could not be resisted or trifled with. He had seen me in the Chamber when he had made his declaration. I had therefore myself witnessed the extraordinary enthusiasm and unanimity with which the announcement of the determination of the Government to repel the insult offered to the nation had been received. He had kept within bounds, or he might have provoked a still more remarkable explosion of feeling. Now, the indignation out of doors was equally violent and equally general. Nothing less than what he had said would have satisfied the public. His speech was, in fact, as regarded the interior of France, absolutely necessary; and diplomatic considerations must yield to the public safety at home."⁴¹²

Gramont was right in saying that the announcement of Prince Leopold's acceptance of the Spanish crown had already excited public opinion — had rendered, he might have said, the inflammable material still more sensitive to the match. And his view that "nothing less than what he said would have satisfied the public" was probably correct. But the question remains, whether he ought to have endeavored to increase the excitement by issuing an ultimatum to Prussia, or to allay it; to pillory Prussia, or to make representation to Spain; to welcome the candidature as providing an opportunity for war, or to endeavor to procure its cancellation. He thought that "diplomatic considerations must yield to public safety at home"⁴¹³ — and by "safety at home" he meant the greater security of the dynasty and the continuation in office of the government of which he was a member. To these objects, the danger of war with Prussia was subordinated. That attitude of mind is not unique.

The ministerial declaration of the 6th July in the Chamber was received, Ollivier tells us, with long and repeated applause.⁴¹⁴ That was as anticipated and counted upon.

⁴¹¹ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 11; Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 110.

⁴¹² Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 11.

⁴¹³ *Ante*, p. 654.

⁴¹⁴ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 110.

“The enthusiasm at the reading of our declaration was not less throughout the nation than it had been in the Assembly. From all parts, proofs of it flowed toward the Emperor.”⁴¹⁵

The police report of the 7th July indicated the extent of the enthusiasm amongst the people;⁴¹⁶ and the report of the 9th emphasized its continuation. Ollivier, after referring to various dates, has written as follows:

“It is difficult, the police reports of the 9th told us, to depict the animation which the expectancy of decisive news maintains in Paris. The day is passed in quest for news. Each evening our boulevards present the most agitated aspect. Spectators and journalists crowd about the edges of the entry to the Opera to follow the fluctuations of the Bourse, or mingle there to collect or spread reports more or less doubtful.”⁴¹⁷

“The organ of the war party⁴¹⁸ expressed itself in language which in violence exceeded all that is permitted to the inarticulate tumults of the deputies of the Right: ‘Prussia . . . is between menace and shame. Let her choose. It is in vain that she should try to hide herself under explanations more or less plausible, she is shut up in a dilemma brutal and insurmountable.’”⁴¹⁹

“Those who accuse us of having lacked coolness ought to re-read the collection of the journals of the time, the legislative debates: they would then praise us for having preserved an almost heroic coolness; scarcely one of these excitements made us raise our voice inopportunistly, and turned us from the four negotiations for peace already begun.”⁴²⁰

“That which rendered our deliberations more difficult was that the walls of the ministry were assailed by a tempest of indignation which demanded extreme resolutions. Public opinion, much less mistress of her sentiments than we had been of ours, manifested once more the salient feature of our character pointed out by the observers of all times: ‘The decisions of the Gauls are sudden and unforeseen, and they decide rapidly for war (*mobiliter et celeriter*),’ wrote Julius Cæsar.”⁴²¹

“Above all, the generals were among the warmest in approval. Maréchal Vaillant went to the Emperor and said to him: ‘At last there is lifted the shroud of Sadowa which has been stifling us for four years. Never again will you find a finer opportunity. It is necessary to profit by it, Sire, the nation will follow you.’”⁴²²

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 115. And see p. 143; and Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 10. The influence of the press throughout the episode is referred to in Sorel, *op. cit.*, pp. 64, 67, 69.

⁴¹⁶ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 115-6.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁴¹⁸ The organ of Paul de Cassagnac.

⁴¹⁹ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 146.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, p. 117.

"The press was, this time again, the faithful reflection of the public emotion."⁴²³

"Nowhere was there resounding opposition except in the journal of the old Bonapartist party, *le Public*, edited by the deputy Dréolle, under the lofty inspiration of Rouher."⁴²⁴

The arrival of Prince Antoine's telegram communicating the news of the withdrawal of Leopold, and its disclosure to members of the Chamber on the 12th, aroused great indignation in that body.⁴²⁵ Ollivier relates that:

"The Right, not hoping to come to the end of my resistance, furiously tore me to pieces. I was accused of lack of courage, of patriotism, and of foresight."⁴²⁶

"This unchaining of anger did not move me."⁴²⁷

"During the sitting of the Chamber, until late in the night, the 13th, the mental ferment, in the absence of definite news from Ems and Berlin, became each moment more violent in Paris. Our response to the interpellation raised an almost general reprobation."⁴²⁸

"However, the Right organized a coalition with the Left to destroy us. Clement Duvernois preserved the old relations of friendship with Gambetta; they passed the evening together; Gambetta promised to support the order of the day in favor of disarmament which would be proposed by Duvernois, and of which the consequences, if the Chamber adopted it, would be war."⁴²⁹

On the same day, Lord Lyons wrote to Lord Granville that Gramont had said to him:

"On the one hand, public opinion was so much excited in France that it was doubtful whether the Ministry would not be overthrown if it went down to the Chamber to-morrow, and announced that it regarded the affair as finished, without having obtained some more complete satisfaction from Prussia."⁴³⁰

Expressing his own opinion, on the same day, to Lord Granville, Lord Lyons said:

"It is quite true that the nation is extremely impatient, and as time goes on the war party becomes more exacting. It has, in fact, already raised a cry that the settlement of the Hohenzollern question will not be sufficient, and that France must demand satisfaction on the subject of the treaty of Prague."⁴³¹

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 229-238.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 337.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 353.

⁴³⁰ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 30; *Ann. Reg.*, 1870, p. 201.

⁴³¹ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 28.

On the 14th, before Paris had become aware of the Bismarck document (published in Berlin the previous evening), Lord Lyons again reported that:

“The public excitement was so great, and so much irritation existed in the army, that it became doubtful whether the Government could withstand the cry for war, even if it were able to announce a decided diplomatic success.”⁴³²

The prevailing attitude was reflected in the despatches which Gramont, from time to time, sent to Benedetti. In the original instructions of 7th July, Gramont said that he enclosed various documents and, among them,

“The declaration which, urged by public sentiment, we believed we ought to carry to the tribune of the Corps Législatif.”⁴³³

On the 10th July, Gramont telegraphed:

“And besides, I tell you plainly, public opinion is ablaze and goes ahead of us. It is necessary for us to commence.”⁴³⁴

During the night of 10-11 July, he again telegraphed:

“You cannot imagine to what a pitch public opinion is raised. It breaks over us from all sides, and we are counting the hours. It is absolutely necessary to insist upon obtaining a response from the King, negative or affirmative. We need it for to-morrow, the day after to-morrow would be too late.”⁴³⁵

On the 12th July, Gramont telegraphed:

“In spite of the renunciation, which is now known, the vivacity of feeling is such that we do not know whether we shall be able to control it.”⁴³⁶

On the 13th, he telegraphed:

“As I have told you, French sentiment is over-excited to such an extent that it is with the greatest difficulty that we have been able to obtain till Friday to give some explanations.”⁴³⁷

During his interview with Werther on the 12th, Gramont gave as a reason for requesting a letter from the King of Prussia, in the form above referred to,⁴³⁸ the necessity of appeasing public opinion. He said:

“Up to this point, my language has been inspired by purely political and diplomatic considerations; but it is necessary in a situation so tense, to take account, very particularly, of public opinion, since that acquires, in these moments of crisis, a force greater than that of the cabinets which deal with it. That is so true that we believe ourselves in a position to affirm that no ministry, whatever it might be, will be able henceforth

⁴³² *Ibid.*, No. 60.

⁴³³ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, p. 316.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 347.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 348.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 369.

⁴³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 384.

⁴³⁸ *Ante*, p. 599.

to keep the confidence of the Chamber and of the opinion in consenting to an arrangement which does not contain some guarantee for the future." ⁴³⁹

Benedetti, in stating his view of the situation on the evening of the 12th, said:

"We had in truth asked the King to invite the Prince to renounce the crown of Spain; the King restricted himself to giving his acquiescence to a decision which the Prince had, one might say, taken of his own accord. Should we consider as insufficient the satisfaction which had been accorded to us in that way? For my part, I did not think so, and nothing in the despatches which were being sent to me at the time from Paris made me suppose that the government of the Emperor judged otherwise. To my mind, that which it was important we should obtain was the renunciation of the Prince, validated by the approval of the King, and that result we were assured of securing. But certainly nobody has forgotten how this solution was received in Paris. In the Chambers, in the press, among the people of all classes, as I shall recall at greater length before closing this publication, the wish was to see in the renunciation of the Prince of Hohenzollern only a derisive success, and the Government, forced to take account of the state of feeling, judged it necessary to demand of the King of Prussia a new guarantee, in the conviction that thereby it would be enabled to disarm the excitement of public opinion." ⁴⁴⁰

Comment. The above quotations afford much justification for the plea of the Emperor (already noted) that:

"it is the whole nation which has, by its irresistible impulse, dictated our decision";

but the earlier part of the same sentence, "We have done all in our power to avoid the war," is certainly not true. Secondly, in view of the extracts, it cannot be pretended that "the Ems telegram" had any bearing upon the state of public opinion as indicated in the quotations, for they are all of a date prior to knowledge by the Parisian public of that document. And thirdly, the quotations make clear that had there been no "Ems telegram" war would, none the less, have ensued. The French government would not have withdrawn its demand for a future guarantee, nor would the German government have retracted the refusal to concede it. Bismarck, moreover, was ready with his counter-demands.

UNDECLARED REASON FOR THE WAR

If we are to understand the outbreak of the 1870-1 war, we must (as already asserted with reference to the war of 1914-18) distinguish between its predisposing causes (its roots) and its precipitating cause;

⁴³⁹ Gramont, *op. cit.*, p. 126; Sorel, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

⁴⁴⁰ Benedetti, *op. cit.*, pp. 368-9.

and we must relegate the second to a position of subordinate importance. But for a previously prepared international situation, the nomination and, within five days, the withdrawal of Leopold would have passed into history almost unnoticed. That the candidature resulted in war was due solely to the French attitude of hostility to Prussia, based upon the "grievances" of Sadowa and Prague — more correctly, upon jealousy of the expanding power of Prussia. A few quotations (in addition to those already noted) will help to make clear why it was that although none of the above-recited declared reasons for the war stands examination, nevertheless war ensued.

Commenting, in his book, upon the proceedings in the Corps Législatif, in connection with the Duvernois interpellation of 12 July, Ollivier said:

"The work of pacification at which I was painfully laboring is compromised; in place of a resigned public sentiment, we are going to be confronted with an irritated public opinion; the Hohenzollern question is relegated to the second place, and they talk of exacting from Prussia guarantees for the faithful execution of the treaty of Prague; shall we have the strength to arrest this movement?"⁴⁴¹

At the Council meeting on the morning of the 13th July, the Emperor said:

"We have many grievances against Prussia other than this Hohenzollern affair."⁴⁴²

La Gazette de France, the organ of the *Légitimistes*, regretting the probability of peace, said on the same date:

"Peace triumphs. There will not be war. Prussia keeps the fruits of Sadowa. All France thought that the government, having resolved to take its revenge for Sadowa, believed the moment come for engaging in a serious quarrel against Prussia."⁴⁴³

During the debate on the 15th July, Thiers said:

"More than anyone else, I repeat, I desire reparation for the events of 1866; but I find the occasion detestably chosen."⁴⁴⁴

"... and we, who have deplored Sadowa, who have always desired that it be repaired, we have always said and repeated that there would come a day difficult, supremely difficult for Prussia, and that would be when she would wish to lay hands on the States of Germany that are yet independent. That is the day, we have said without cessation, that is the day that we must know how to wait for."⁴⁴⁵

M. Kératry, a member of the Left, separating himself, for the moment, from Thiers and his other friends, said:

"For four years I have heard constantly regretted the fact of Sadowa.

⁴⁴¹ *Op. cit.*, XIV, p. 248.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 287.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 339.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 406-7.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 434.

Well, at this moment, France has, not simply a pretext, but a decisive occasion; M. Thiers says that it is necessary to await a favorable opportunity, but here is a peremptory motive for declaring war."⁴⁴⁶

During the same debate, Ollivier, turning upon his opponents, reminded them of their propaganda.⁴⁴⁷ And in his book, he wrote:

"If, among us, anyone could have been accused of having brought about the war, that would be Thiers. By his persistence in speaking of the humiliation of France, or representing Sadowa as a national catastrophe, he had created that restless, susceptible, suspicious, excited state of mind from which the war had fatefully developed."⁴⁴⁸ Referring to the indifference with which the Chamber regarded the Leopold affair, Ollivier wrote:

"The Assembly listened to my new developments with visible coldness and barely concealed dissatisfaction. With regard to the events of 1866, it was more in sympathy with the opinions of Thiers than with mine; and it desired that, adopting the proposition of the Right, I should make the Hohenzollern affair a secondary matter and invoke the necessity of rectifying the error of 1866, of preventing the creation of Germanic unity."⁴⁴⁹

As further evidence of the concentration of public thought upon Sadowa, Ollivier noted (as already quoted) that "the generals were among the warmest in approval."⁴⁵⁰

Writing to Ollivier after the war, the Emperor said:

"Show that it is Thiers and Jules Favre who, since 1866, have so continually repeated in every tone, that France had depreciated by the success of Prussia; that revenge was necessary; that it has sufficed, on the first occasion, to cause an outburst of public opinion. They have amassed the incendiary materials, and a spark has been sufficient to kindle a great fire."⁴⁵¹

As Ollivier puts it, the Empress was convinced "that France had been sick since Sadowa."⁴⁵²

Comment. Probably enough has now been said to indicate (1) that the French public had been steadily taught that they had grievances against Prussia which at some good time must be repaired; (2) that the Emperor shared that view; (3) that public opinion was in such a condition that it could easily be stirred into war-fervor; and (4) that it was so stirred.

BRITISH OFFER OF MEDIATION

Earl Granville the British Foreign Secretary, counselled the antagonists to avail themselves of the 23d protocol of the international arrangements of 1856, which provided for recourse, in case of difficul-

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 447.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ante*, p. 639.

⁴⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, XIV, p. 412.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 432.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ante*, p. 655.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 413.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 252.

ties, "to the good offices of a friendly Power"; and declared, in a letter to the British Ambassadors at Paris and Berlin (15 July 1870), that the British government was "ready to take any part which may be desired in the matter."⁴⁵³ In reporting Gramont's reply, Lord Lyons wrote (18 July):

"M. de Gramont went on to say that he presumed that I should not be surprised to hear that the French Government had been unable to agree to the suggestion which Her Majesty's Government has based on the 23d Protocol of the Congress of 1856. It appeared, indeed, to him that the present case was one to which the reservation that each nation was the sole judge of its honor and its interests, was peculiarly applicable."⁴⁵⁴

The next day, the French Ambassador at London communicated the same determination to Lord Granville, who wrote to Lord Lyons as follows:

"The Imperial Government, he said, appreciated the utility of the rule laid down in the last paragraph but one of the Protocol of the 12th April 1856, No. 23, but he reminded me of the reserve made on the subject, and recorded in the same Protocol, namely, 'Que le vœu exprimé par le Congrès ne saurait, en aucune cas, opposer des limites à la liberté d'appréciation qu'aucune Puissance ne peut aliéner dans les questions qui touchent à sa dignité';⁴⁵⁵ and he proceeded to say that, much as France would be inclined to accept the good offices of a friendly Power, and particularly of England, the refusal of the King of Prussia to give the guarantee which France was obliged to ask, in order to prevent dynastic combinations dangerous to safety, and the care of her dignity, prevented her from taking any other course than that which she had adopted."⁴⁵⁶

Observe "the refusal of the King of Prussia to give the guarantee." Bismarck's reply (18 July) was as follows:

"But the possibility of entering into a negotiation of this nature could only be acquired by a previous assurance of the willingness of France to enter into it also. France took the initiative in the direction of war and adhered to it, after the first complication had, in the opinion also of England, been settled by removal of the cause."⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵³ Letter Granville to Lyons: Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 57; and see Nos. 49, 97; *Ann. Reg.*, 1870, p. 204.

⁴⁵⁴ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 107. And see No. 123.

⁴⁵⁵ "That the wish expressed by the Congress could not in any case set limits to the liberty of appreciation — which no Power can relinquish — with reference to questions which affect its dignity."

⁴⁵⁶ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 99; Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 498-9.

⁴⁵⁷ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 115, Enc. See No. 49; and C.-210, No. 23.

OPINION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

British opinion, both official and popular, while divided as to the reasonableness of French objection to the accession of Leopold to the Spanish throne, somewhat unanimously condemned all the actions of the French government in dealing with the subject. On the 9th July, Granville wrote to Lyons that the government were "not able to perceive that the nomination of Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern to the Throne of Spain is a matter of such importance to a great and powerful nation like France as to warrant carrying to extremes a national feeling of resentment."⁴⁵⁸

Some of the English newspapers did not share this official view. Passages quoted by Ollivier (in his book) indicate that in the opinion of *The Times*, *The Standard*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Pall Mall Gazette*, the French objection to the establishment of a Hohenzollern on the Spanish throne was both reasonable and natural.⁴⁵⁹ With that view the present writer concurs.

On the other hand, the truculent character of the ministerial declaration read in the Corps Législatif on 6 July was strongly disapproved by the British government. On the 7th, Lord Lyons called on Gramont, and afterwards wrote to Lord Granville as follows:

"I observed to the Duc de Gramont this afternoon that I could not but feel uneasy respecting the declaration which he had made the day before in the Corps Législatif. I could not, I said, help thinking that milder language would have rendered it more easy to treat both with Prussia and with Spain for the withdrawal of the pretensions of Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern."⁴⁶⁰

Gramont's reply has been already noted.⁴⁶¹

Replying, on the 9th, to Lord Lyons' intimation of French commencement of military preparations, Granville said (as already noted):

"Her Majesty's Government have continued to regret the tenor of the observations successively made in the French Chamber and in the French press, which tend to excite rather than to allay the angry feelings which have been aroused in France, and may only too probably call forth similar feelings in Germany and in Spain; and their regret has been increased by the intimation now given to you by the Duc de Gramont that military preparations would forthwith be made in France."⁴⁶²

When Gramont said to Lord Lyons (as already noted) that Leopold's renunciation had "put an end to the original cause of the dispute," Lyons' reply was:

⁴⁵⁸ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 16.

⁴⁵⁹ XIV, pp. 123-6.

⁴⁶⁰ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 11.

⁴⁶¹ *Ante*, p. 590-1.

⁴⁶² Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 17.

“that the renunciation wholly changed the position of France. If war occurred now, all Europe would say that it was the fault of France; that France rushed into it without any substantial cause — merely from pride and resentment. . . . In fact, I said that France would have public opinion throughout the world against her, and her antagonist would have all the advantage of being manifestly forced into the war in self-defence to repel an attack.”⁴⁶³

In a despatch of the next day (the 13th), Lord Granville said:

“Her Majesty’s Government learned with great concern, by your telegram of yesterday evening, which I received at midnight, that notwithstanding the renunciation of the Spanish Throne made on behalf of his son by the Prince of Hohenzollern, which the French Government admitted to dispose of any question between France and Spain, the Duc de Gramont intimated to you that the French Government continued to be dissatisfied with the communication which they had received from the King of Prussia, and held over for further deliberation this day the course they would take under the circumstances. Your Excellency very properly immediately urged that the renunciation should be held to put an end to the dispute with Prussia as well as to that with Spain; but I thought it my duty at once to request you, by telegraph, to renew your representation before the French Council, summoned for to-day, assembled, and to remind the Duc de Gramont that the Imperial Government had, at the outset of the business, requested Her Majesty’s Government to exert their influence to prevent the serious consequences which it was apprehended might ensue. The Imperial Minister alluded in public to this fact, and I am sure would acknowledge that it was impossible that their efforts could have been more promptly or more energetically employed. Under these circumstances, Her Majesty’s Government, I informed your Excellency, felt bound to impress upon the Government of the Emperor the immense responsibility that would rest on France if she should seek to enlarge the grounds of quarrel by declining to accept the withdrawal by Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern of his candidature as a satisfactory solution of the question.”⁴⁶⁴

Lyons immediately communicated that statement to Gramont, who, at the moment (13 July), was sitting in ministerial council.⁴⁶⁵ On the same day, Lord Granville asked the French Ambassador:

“to represent to his Government that Her Majesty’s Government thought, after their exertions at the request of France, they had a right to urge on the Imperial Government not to take the great responsibility of quarrelling about forms, when they had obtained the full substance of what they had desired.”⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶³ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 30; *Ann. Reg.*, 1870, p. 201.

⁴⁶⁴ Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No. 33.

⁴⁶⁵ Letters to Lord Granville, 14 July: *ibid.*, Nos. 39, 40.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 35. And see No. 36.

Mr. Disraeli, the leader of the Opposition, in his speech of 11 July 1870 (as summarized by the *Annual Register*):

"dwelt on the necessity, at such a crisis, of 'more frank communication between the House and the Ministry; more precision of knowledge; and more clearness of opinion.' As for the pretexts that had been made for the war, they were so 'ephemeral and evanescent,' so 'merely the semblance of causes,' that they had already disappeared, and its real origin had become apparent enough in the 'vast ambitions striving in Europe,' which made it 'our duty to ascertain as clearly as we can our position with respect to the belligerent powers.'" ⁴⁶⁷

In reporting to the Queen (15 July), Mr. Gladstone, the Prime Minister, said that Mr. Disraeli:

"expressed opinions strongly adverse to France as the apparent aggressor." ⁴⁶⁸

On 12 July, Mr. Gladstone wrote to Lord Granville saying that: "it is our duty to represent the immense responsibility which will rest upon France, if she does not at once accept as satisfactory and conclusive, the withdrawal of the candidature of Prince Leopold." ⁴⁶⁹

On 14 July, Mr. Gladstone suggested to Lord Granville that a telegram should be sent to the British Ambassador declaring that, if questions were to be asked in parliament:

"it will be impossible for us to conceal the opinion that the cause of quarrel having been removed, France ought to be satisfied." ⁴⁷⁰

On 15 July, the French Ambassador called upon Lord Granville and said:

"It was necessary to have some guarantee for the future that the Prince would not again renew his candidature, and their representations to the King of Prussia still remained unanswered."

Commenting upon this, Granville said:

"I did not think it necessary to do more than to repeat to M. de Lavalette my opinion that after the question had been reduced to such narrow limits, France was not justified in going to the last extremity." ⁴⁷¹ Lord Granville, when afterwards pressed by M. Thiers to intervene in favor of defeated France, refused, and repeated to him the Prussian suggestion that such a step would be undignified:

"when the French had begun an unjustifiable and aggressive war against our advice, in despite of our successful efforts to remove the cause of quarrel." ⁴⁷²

Mr. Gladstone, in September 1870, wrote as follows:

⁴⁶⁷ *Ann. Reg.*, 1870, p. [98.

⁴⁶⁸ Morley, *op. cit.*, II, p. 335.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 328.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

⁴⁷¹ Lord Granville to Lord Lyons, 15 July 1870: Br. Blue Bk., C.-167, No.

“Wonder rises to its climax when we remember that this feverish determination to force a quarrel was associated with a firm belief in the high preparation, and military superiority, of the French forces; the comparative inferiority of the Germans; the indisposition of the smaller states to give aid to Prussia; and even the readiness of Austria, with which from his long residence at Vienna the Duc de Gramont supposed himself to be thoroughly acquainted, to appear in arms as the ally of France.”⁴⁷³

Lord Granville, in a letter to Lord Hartington, several years after the war (28 March 1880), said:

“We pressed as strongly as possible upon the Emperor that he had no cause for war with Germany.”⁴⁷⁴

Lord Morley in his *Life of Gladstone* has the following:

“Of the diplomacy on the side of the government of France anterior to the war, Mr. Gladstone said that it made up ‘a chapter which for fault and folly taken together is almost without a parallel in the history of nations.’⁴⁷⁵ On July 6 the French ministers made a precipitate declaration to their Chambers, which was in fact an ultimatum to Prussia. The action of Spain was turned into Prussian action. Prussia was called to account in a form that became a public and international threat, as Bismarck put it, ‘with the hand on the sword-hilt.’ These rash words of challenge were the first of the French disasters.”⁴⁷⁶

The *Annual Register* for 1870 contains the following:

“The first speeches in Parliament upon the war were clear indications of the prevailing feeling in England. In the brief interval of suspense which separated the nomination of the Hohenzollern Prince for the Spanish crown, and the declaration of war, Mr. Disraeli asked whether the Queen’s Government had used their undoubted right of intervention, whether they had tried to prevent the ‘precipitate settlement’ of long existing difficulties, whether they had in fact done their best to prevent ‘melodramatic catastrophes’ belonging to the last century.

“Mr. Gladstone said in answer, that there was ‘nothing in the differences which had arisen to justify, in the judgment and conscience of the world, a breach of the general peace.’ Both the States concerned had admitted to the full the right of her Majesty’s Government to exercise its title to friendly intervention, but the result had thus far not been favorable.

“In both speeches was clearly manifest a grave disapproval of the conduct of France.”⁴⁷⁷

Professor Huxley, in a letter to Dr. Dohrn (18 July 1870), said:

⁴⁷³ Morley: *Life of Gladstone*, II, p. 337.

⁴⁷⁴ Fitzmaurice, *op. cit.*, II, p. 70; *ante*, pp. 662-4.

⁴⁷⁵ Quoted from *Gleanings*, IV, p. 222. Lord Morley’s comment on the quotation is: “Modern historians do not differ from Mr. Gladstone.”

⁴⁷⁶ II, pp. 326-7.

⁴⁷⁷ P. [96.

“If you Germans do not give that crowned swindler, whose fall I have been looking for ever since the coup d'état, such a blow as he will never recover from, I will never forgive you. Public opinion in England is not worth much, but at present it is entirely against France. Even the *Times*, which generally contrives to be on the baser side of a controversy, is at present on the German side.”⁴⁷⁸

Mr. Justin McCarthy, a contemporary historian, was of opinion that: “it was a fatal mistake of the Emperor Napoleon to force the quarrel on such a pretext as the fact that the Spanish people had invited a distant relation of the King of Prussia to become sovereign of Spain. Louis Napoleon managed to put himself completely in the wrong. The King of Prussia at once induced his relative to withdraw from the candidature⁴⁷⁹ in order not to disturb the susceptibilities of France; and then the French Government pressed for a general pledge that the King of Prussia would never on any future occasion allow of any similar candidature. When it came to this, there was an end to negotiations. It was clear then that the Emperor had resolved to have a quarrel. Count Bismarck must have smiled to himself a grim smile. His enemy had delivered himself into Bismarck's hands.”⁴⁸⁰

Mr. W. H. Dawson, a careful student of history, has recently said:

“When the war broke out France had been cold-shouldered by all Europe as a mischievous disturber of the peace.”⁴⁸¹

Mr. Archibald Hurd, by no means an apologist for Germany, has recently declared that:

“the thoughts of most knowledgeable Englishmen, at the moment, were expressed by Mr. Gladstone” — in the passage quoted above.

And Mr. Hurd agrees with the view of Mr. Justin McCarthy as to the “sympathies of the English people.”⁴⁸²

CESSION TO GERMANY OF ALSACE AND LORRAINE

Protest of Alsace-Lorraine. During the negotiations for peace, the French parliament held its sessions at Bordeaux. Among the representatives were the members for Alsace-Lorraine, and they, on 17 February 1871, adopted the following resolution:

“The representatives of Alsace and Lorraine, prior to any negotiations for peace, laid on the table of the National Assembly a declaration most solemnly stating, in the name of both Provinces, their wish and right to remain French.

⁴⁷⁸ *Life of Huxley*, by his son Leonard, I, p. 492.

⁴⁷⁹ That statement is inaccurate: See Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, pp. 206-9.

⁴⁸⁰ *A History of Our Own Times*, IV, p. 264.

⁴⁸¹ *The German Empire*, II, p. 79.

⁴⁸² *Fortnightly Rev.*, Feb. 1917, pp. 246-7. English sympathy veered somewhat upon news of the bombardment of Paris and the nature of the dictated terms of peace.

“Having been handed over, contrary to all justice, and through an odious abuse of power, to the domination of the foreigner, we have one last duty to perform.

“We once again declare to be null and void a treaty which disposes of us without our consent.

“The revindication of our rights remains forever open to each and all, according to the dictates of our conscience.

“On leaving these precincts, where our dignity will not allow us to remain any longer, and despite the bitterness of our sorrow, the supreme thought, which lies at the bottom of our hearts, is one of gratitude to those who, for the last six months, have unceasingly defended us, as also of unalterable attachment to the Mother country from which we have been so violently torn.

“We shall still be with you in our prayers, and shall wait, with full confidence in the future, for regenerated France to resume the course of her great destiny.

“Your brothers of Alsace and Lorraine, albeit separated for the time being from their common family, will retain for France, absent though she be from their homes, a filial affection until the day when she returns to take again her place therein.”⁴⁸³

Victor Hugo, one of the members of parliament, indulged in a prediction which must have sounded theatrical at the time:

“The time will come when France will rise again invincible, and take not only Alsace and Lorraine, but the Rhineland, with Mayence and Cologne, and in return will give to Germany a republic, so freeing her from her emperors as an equivalent for the dethronement of Napoleon.”⁴⁸⁴

And now, at the close of another war, comes another protest — this time from the government at Berlin, in the form of a proclamation addressed to the inhabitants of the provinces which, by the peace treaty, have been separated from Germany:

“The unfortunate ending of this war has left us without defence against the arbitrary will of an adversary who has imposed upon us in the name of peace the heaviest sacrifices, the first of which is the renunciation of the German provinces in the east, in the west, and in the north, without regard to the principles of the right of peoples to decide their fate, and by which hundreds of thousands of our German compatriots are placed under foreign domination.

“German brothers and sisters: Not only at the hour of *adieu*, but for-

⁴⁸³ Tardieu: *The Truth about the Treaty*, p. 234. When, in the following week, British intervention with reference to the amount of the indemnity was being asked, nothing was said as to the cession of territory: Lord Granville to Lord Lyons, 25 Feb. 1871 (*Ann. Reg.*, 1871, pp. 266, 267). The peace preliminaries were signed the next day.

⁴⁸⁴ Quoted by W. H. Dawson: *The Fortnightly Rev.*, Aug. 1919, pp. 161-2.

ever, grief for your loss will fill our hearts. We swear in the name of the whole German people that we will never forget you. You, on your side, will never forget your common German country; of this we are well aware."⁴⁸⁵

The British Cabinet. Upon the British policy with reference to the German demand, at the close of the 1870-71 war, for the transfer of Alsace-Lorraine, Mr. Gladstone disagreed with his cabinet. He had no doubt as to the culpability of France, and as to the right of Germany to impose commensurate terms upon the defeated nation. His point, as he expressed it, was:

"that the transfer of territory and inhabitants, by mere force, calls for the reprobation of Europe, and that Europe is entitled to utter it, and can utter it with good effect."⁴⁸⁶

He quite agreed in condemning the refusal of France to surrender "either an inch of her territory or a stone of her fortresses"; and he declared to his cabinet that:

"it cannot be right that the neutral Powers should remain silent, while this principle of consulting the wishes of the population is trampled down, should the actual sentiment of Alsace-Lorraine be such as to render the language applicable."⁴⁸⁷

The view of the majority of the cabinet, however, was expressed by the Duke of Argyll, when he said that, although he had:

"never argued in favour of the German annexation of Alsace and Lorraine, but only against our having any right to oppose it otherwise than by the most friendly dissuasion,"

yet he held that the German did not exceed the acknowledged right of nations in successful wars, when he said to Alsace and Lorraine:

"Conquest in a war forced upon me by the people of which you form a part, gives me the *right* to annex, if on other grounds I deem it expedient; and for strategic reasons I do so deem it.

The Duke believed, as Lord Morley interprets him:

"that the consent of populations to live under a particular government is a right subject to a great many qualifications, and it would not be easy to turn such a doctrine into the base of an official remonstrance."⁴⁸⁸

British Public Opinion. As some indication of British feeling upon the subject, it may be noted that the *Daily News*, on 20 August 1870, had the following:

"There is no longer any question as to whether the Germans will take or rather retake Alsace, but rather as to whether having got it, they will give it up again. Some 200 years back Louis XIV stole it. The lapse of years may hide a theft, but not the justification of re-conquest.

⁴⁸⁵ Quoted by *Le Devoir*, Montreal.

⁴⁸⁶ Morley, *op. cit.*, II, p. 346.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 347.

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 347, 348.

The population of Alsace is German by origin, by language, and by custom.”⁴⁸⁹

Thomas Carlyle (the historian of the French revolution) wrote to *The Times* in December 1870:

“No people has had such a bad neighborhood as Germany has possessed during the last four hundred years in France. Germany would have been mad had she not thought of erecting such a frontier-wall between herself and such a neighbor—of erecting such a frontier-wall when she had the opportunity. I know of no law of nature, no heavenly Act of Parliament, by which France alone of all earthly beings was not obliged to restore a part of stolen territories if the owners from whom they were snatched had an opportunity of reconquering them.”⁴⁹⁰ *The Times*, on 14 September of the same year, had the following:

“Till the French are ready to recognize that they have acted unjustly towards their neighbours, and to offer sureties against a repetition of such conduct, the fair demands of the Germans (40 milliards and Alsace-Lorraine) cannot be considered unsatisfactory. We can assure France, if she finds these conditions hard, that there are many persons in Germany who consider them remarkably light, and who would be only too pleased to complain at their hereditary enemy getting off so lightly. Alsace-Lorraine—we mean German Lorraine, in other words the possession of Metz and a small strip of Lorraine with the Vosges and Alsace—is the minimum condition the peace-loving German can accept as a basis of peace.”⁴⁹¹

In *The Times* of 10 December of the same year appeared a further, and particularly interesting, article:

“In the present crisis it is not the duty of the Germans to show high feeling in sympathy, or magnanimously to forgive their defeated enemy. The question rather is of a simple piece of business and of prudence. What will the enemy do after the war when he has recovered his strength? People in England have but a faint recollection of the numerous cruel lessons which Germany has had from France during the last centuries. For 400 years no nation has had such bad neighbors as they have found in the French, who were always unsociable, irreconcilable, greedy of territory, not ashamed to take it, and always ready to assume the offensive during the whole time Germany endured the encroachment and insubordination of France. To-day when she has won the victory and has conquered her neighbor, it would, in our opinion, be very foolish of her not to take advantage of the situation, and not to acquire for herself a boundary likely to secure peace for her in the future. As far as we know there is no law in the world entitling France to retain

⁴⁸⁹ Quoted in *Cambridge Magazine*, 20 Oct. 1917.

⁴⁹⁰ The passage was quoted by Count Hertling in the “Observations of the German Delegation on the Conditions of Peace” (24 Jan. 1918).

⁴⁹¹ Quoted in *Cambridge Magazine*, 20 Oct. 1917.

the territories which were formerly annexed by her, after the owners from whom they were taken have laid their hands upon the stave. The French complain bitterly to those who listen to them that they are exposed to losses which threaten their honor, and they incessantly and earnestly entreat people not to dishonor France, to leave her honor unstained. Will her honor, however, be preserved if France refuses to pay for her neighbor's word which she has broken? The real fact is that she lost her honor when she broke her neighbor's word, and only her deep repentance and her honest determination not to repeat the offence can restore it."

"We believe that Bismarck will take as much of Alsace-Lorraine, too, as he chooses, and that it will be the better for him, the better for us, the better for all the world except France, and the better in the long run for France herself. Through large and quiet measures, Count von Bismarck is aiming with eminent ability at a single object: the well-being of Germany and of the world, of the large-hearted, peace-loving, enlightened and honest people of Germany growing into one nation; and if Germany becomes mistress of the Continent in place of France, which is light-hearted, ambitious, quarrelsome, and over-excitible, it will be the most momentous event of the present day, and all the world must hope that it will soon come about. The political significance of this change in the situation cannot be estimated too highly. An immense revolution has been accomplished in Europe, and all our old-fashioned traditions have suddenly grown out of date. Nobody can foretell the relations which must establish themselves between the Great Powers, but it is easy to see what, in its broader features, is the tendency of the epoch on which we are about to enter. There will be a strong and united Germany at the head of which stands a family representative of the interest of the German Fatherland, and its military reputation. On the one side, this Germany touches Russia, a strong and vigilant power; on the other France, which will either patiently abide the time when her destiny will once more change, or, burning with the thirst for vengeance, will lie in wait for an opportunity. She will certainly not be in a position for a long time to resume the great part she played in Europe, and which was conceded to her during the splendid period of the Napoleonic restoration."⁴⁰²

American and European Opinion. Sorel testifies that:

"The sympathies of North America for Prussia had been declared since the beginning of the crisis. They were fortified by the victories of the German allies. . . . Mr. Bancroft, American Minister at Berlin, wrote on the 29th September, after the Ferrières interview [negotiations]: 'In the opinion of Europe, the conditions offered were moderate. Strasbourg had surrendered one hundred and eighty-nine years, day for day,

⁴⁰² Quoted in *The Socialist Rev.*, Oct.-Dec., 1919, p. 354-6.

after Louis XIV. had taken possession of it. It is very difficult to understand what can be the hopes of the French government.'"⁴⁹³

LA REVANCHE

Gambetta's Advice. "Pensons-y toujours, n'en parlons jamais,"⁴⁹⁴ was the advice to the French people of Léon Gambetta, who, in some respects, was the leading spirit in the deposition of the Emperor, in the establishment of a government of national defence, and in the further prosecution of the war. But it was a counsel impossible of perfect observance. It was disregarded, as to the "parlons," at various periods — notably during the Jules Ferry administrations (1880-1; 1883-5); the Boulanger period (1886-7);⁴⁹⁵ the Schnaebelle incident (1887);⁴⁹⁶ the Dreyfus incident (1894-9); and also, from time to time, as the friendship between France and Russia and between France and the United Kingdom acquired strength — as the solidarity of the Triple Entente developed. The thinking, as we might expect, kept pace with the changes in the prospects of fulfilment.⁴⁹⁷ Since the close of the war, Marshal Foch, for example, in a published interview has said:

"From the age of 17, I dreamed of revenge, after having seen the Germans at Metz. And when a man of ordinary capacity concentrates all of his faculties and all of his abilities upon one end, and works without diverging, he ought to be successful."⁴⁹⁸

Not France only, but all Europe, kept in mind, between 1871 and 1914, with varying intensity, the prospect — one might say the assumed certainty — of the recurrence of the Franco-Prussian war. Every change in the European situation raised apprehension of its imminence, and the most important of the international occurrences had direct reference to its anticipated arrival. If, for example, we were to select from Bismarck's foreign policy his principal purpose, it would be that

⁴⁹³ *Op. cit.*, II, pp. 13-14.

⁴⁹⁴ "Let us think of it always, let us speak of it never": Quoted by Sir Thomas Barclay, *Thirty Years Anglo-French Reminiscences, 1876-1906*, p. 50.

⁴⁹⁵ "C'est Boulanger qu'il nous faut," was the popular song. Cf. Prof. J. V. Fuller: *Bismarck's Diplomacy at its Zenith*, pp. 60-2, 129-49, 153-8.

⁴⁹⁶ During the Boulanger period, M. Schnaebelle (a French Commissary of Police) having crossed the boundary between France and Alsace, in pursuance of a request from a German Commissary, was arrested by police agents sent specifically for that purpose from Leipsic. Boulanger was Minister for War, and, eagerly desirous for war, commenced the concentration of troops on the eastern fortresses. Better counsels prevailed. Schnaebelle was released, and the German government admitted that the request to enter German territory implied a safe conduct (*Ann. Reg.*, 1887, p. [213. Cf. Fuller, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-84.

⁴⁹⁷ By furthering French colonial expansion, Bismarck succeeded, between 1878 and 1885, in displacing, to a large extent, even the "pensons": Dawson, *The German Empire*, II, pp. 108-11.

⁴⁹⁸ *N. Y. Times*, 2 Jan. 1920.

France should be kept isolated; while, on the other hand, the endeavor of French statesmen (speaking generally) was to secure alliances without which France would be helpless. For forty-three years, Germany and France believed that the fate of Alsace-Lorraine would be settled by war (they still think so) and both countries arranged for the struggle as best they could, by alliances, by understandings, and by military preparations.

WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WAR OF 1870-71?

The Cause of the War. In the *Œuvres posthumes et autographes inédits de Napoléon III en exil*, par le Comte de La Chapelle, we may read, as from the Emperor:

“that our effectives were inadequate, our armaments in course of transformation, our Headquarters Staff ill-prepared, at the moment when the skilful tactics of Bismarck put the policy of France in the wrong, and drew it on to the declaration of war.”⁴⁹⁰

That France was “in the wrong” is certain, but that she ought to be excused on the ground of “the skilful tactics of Bismarck” is by no means clear. France, in the opinion of the present writer, was justified in making objection to a Hohenzollern being seated upon the Spanish throne, but was absolutely wrong in accompanying the announcement of her objection with a publicly declared ultimatum to Prussia. The tactics of Bismarck were not responsible for that; nor, when Leopold’s candidature had been withdrawn and all cause of quarrel ended, for the demand for a future guarantee.

Bismarck, admittedly, was anxious for war, and, that it might not escape him, fabricated a document which he believed would “have the effect of a red rag upon the Gallic bull.” But, as it happened, no incitement was necessary. Before the document reached Paris, war had become inevitable. The existing excitement, based as it was very largely upon previous antagonism toward Prussia, and inflamed as it was by French statesmen, made impossible that the French government would withdraw its demand for a future guarantee;⁵⁰⁰ and the existence of that demand made war certain. If, in its then temper, Paris could not tolerate the Prussian announcement of the refusal of the King to receive the French Ambassador, it would certainly have become delirious over a Prussian announcement that a peremptory demand, presented by the French Ambassador, had been withdrawn because rejected at Berlin. All the world would have been made aware of a Prussian diplomatic victory; and Paris would have wreaked her rage on those responsible for her humiliation. Napoleon, Ollivier, Gramont, Lebœuf, and others

⁴⁹⁰ Quoted by Hanotaux: *Contemporary France*, I, p. 12.

⁵⁰⁰ It could not have been withdrawn for the reason that such humiliating action would have meant the disappearance of the Napoleonic dynasty.

were determined to risk the defeat of France rather than face their personal overthrow.

Let any reader re-peruse the previous pages dealing with the state of public feeling prior to the 15th July, and ask himself what kind of explanation of a peaceably accomplished solution of the incident, Ollivier could have offered on that day to the Corps Législatif. What could he have said that would have suppressed the popular desire for war which Gramont had aroused by his speech of the 6th July,⁵⁰¹ which threatened, as early as the 10th, to upset the government;⁵⁰² which "flows over us from all sides";⁵⁰³ which on the 11th, in the Chamber, crushed, as by "a veritable tempest," Gramont's attempted explanations;⁵⁰⁴ which was not in the least allayed by Leopold's renunciation on the 12th;⁵⁰⁵ which on that day, in the Chamber, "tore me [Ollivier] to pieces furiously";⁵⁰⁶ which on the 13th was so intense that only "with the greatest difficulty" were two further days obtained for a governmental explanation;⁵⁰⁷ which manifested itself by crowds shouting for war, and making difficult the passage of ministers to the Council chamber? What could he have said that would have averted an overwhelming vote of reprobation, and a change of ministry, followed by the consequences forecast by Ollivier himself as follows:

"Following my resignation, a war ministry, all prepared behind the scenes, would have replaced us and responded to the refusal of the King with haughty insistences, which would inevitably have produced war."⁵⁰⁸

Frederick the Great and Napoleon III. As part of his book in refutation of Machiavelli, Frederick the Great wrote:

"Add to these considerations: some troops always ready to act, my savings bank well filled, and the vivacity of my character. These were the reasons that I had for making war on Maria Theresa, Queen of Bohemia and Hungary — ambition, interest, desire that people should speak about me, carried me away, and war was resolved upon."⁵⁰⁹

Between that avowal and the *apologia* of the French Emperor, there is striking contrast:

⁵⁰¹ *Ante*, p. 589.

⁵⁰² *Ante*, p. 593. And see pp. 596, 656, 657.

⁵⁰³ *Ante*, p. 593.

⁵⁰⁴ *Ante*, p. 595.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ante*, p. 601.

⁵⁰⁶ *Ante*, p. 601.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ante*, p. 610.

⁵⁰⁸ Ollivier, *op. cit.*, XIV, p. 274.

⁵⁰⁹ Voltaire, to whom the manuscript of the book was sent for revision, struck out the above passage, probably because it was not a very apt illustration of the writer's condemnation of Machiavelli. But Voltaire preserved the sentences, and placed them in his own *Mémoires*. From there they passed into Lord Brougham's essay on the *Mémoires*. And they came to the present writer's notice by their incorporation in an article in *The Fortnightly Rev.* of Jan. 1921, pp. 117-8.

"There is no doubt," he said, "that though the head of the French government was then only a constitutional sovereign, he could have averted the disaster of 1870. But it should be remembered that if he had done so, he would have lost all popularity, and been greatly blamed for such a course. He would have been told that he was humble with the strong and arrogant with the weak."

Admitting that he:

"should have been wiser than the nation, and should have prevented the war even if I had, by so doing, lost my crown,"

he pleaded that he:

"was carried away by the national outburst; by my great confidence in the strength of the army; perhaps, too, to be perfectly frank, by dreams of military glory; while dreams of territorial aggrandizement may have got the better for the moment of the cool reasoning of the statesman and sovereign. . . . But the truth is that the whole country asked for this war, and I could not resist the current."⁵¹⁰

Comment. The whole episode affords an excellent view of the usual genesis of war: First, a basis of antipathy, founded either upon grievances (alleged or real) as in the war of 1870-71, the Spanish-American war, and the French share in the recent war; or upon international rivalries, as in the British wars with Spain, Holland, and France, and the British share in the recent war; or upon clashing imperialisms, as in the Crimean war, the Balkan wars, and the Russian *vs.* German and Austrian shares in the recent war. And, secondly, the occurrence of some incident which between friends would disappear in easy accommodation (such as the amputation of Jenkins' ear; the candidature of Leopold; the blowing-up of the *Maine*; and the assassinations at Serajevo), but which, synchronizing with the existence of strained relations, is as a chance spark falling upon easily inflamed tinder. With all but the last sentence of the following opinion of Mr. J. Ellis Barker as to the cause of the war of 1870-71, the present writer agrees:

"Wars are due to direct and indirect causes, and, as a rule, the latter are far more potent than the former. Hence, incidents which are small, if not trivial, in themselves often bring about a long and universally expected outbreak of hostilities. The Franco-German War of 1870-71, for instance, was not caused by Bismarck's alteration of the Ems telegram, but by the pent-up and century-old hatred existing between France and Germany, by the passionate desire of the German States to form a united Empire, and by the determination of Napoleon the Third to prevent such a union and to dominate and rule the continent of Europe.

⁵¹⁰ Comte Fleury: *Memoirs of the Empress Eugénie*, II, pp. 257-9. And see p. 235. Paris, undoubtedly, was wild for war, but "the Prefects of French Departments reported that only 16 declared in favor of war, while 37 were in doubt on the matter, and 34 accepted war with regret" (Dr. J. Holland Rose: *The Development of the European Nations*, p. 48).

The aims of France and Germany were incompatible. The deep-seated Franco-German differences had produced a state of tension and bitterness between the two nations which made war inevitable, and the blustering, blundering, and interfering policy of Napoleon the Third had intensified and accelerated matters and brought them to a crisis. The Ems telegram was merely the last straw."⁵¹¹

Prior to "the Ems telegram," French action had made war inevitable.

WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WAR OF 1914-18?

We are now in a position to assign responsibility for the war of 1914-18 — responsibility for its having been a world war rather than a Balkan affair — so far as relates to the Alsace-Lorraine root of that war.

1. France was the aggressor in 1870. Distribution of the responsibility amongst the French Emperor, his ministers, and the French public is immaterial.

2. Was Prussia justified in exacting the cession of the province? At the close of the war, as at the close of the recent war, two mutually exclusive courses of action were open to the victors: either to treat France (as a few years previously Prussia had treated Austria) as a potential friend — no military humiliation, no deprivation of territory, no indemnity; or as the Entente Allies have recently treated Germany — as an irreconcilable enemy against whom military security must be obtained. The fortunes of war placed the option in the hands of Germany in 1871, and in the hands of her enemies in 1918. Both exercised it in the same way. Von Moltke, in 1871, declared that for strategic protection against France, Metz and Strasburg must be Prussian. He was undoubtedly correct. And the right of the victor to protect himself in that way (notwithstanding Gladstone's qualms) is indisputable. Whether King Wilhelm would not have acted more wisely had he foregone military security, and depended, rather, upon the safety to be derived from magnanimity, with a probability of ensuing friendship, was a point for his consideration. Alsace and Lorraine were rightfully his if he chose to demand them. He took them, with the effect inspired by Gambetta, anticipated by Bismarck, and demonstrated by forty-three years of sequel. Whether, within a like period, Germany will take or attempt her *révanche*, no one can say. That it will be delayed only until a fitting opportunity has arrived, there need be little doubt.

ALLIANCES AND COUNTER-ALLIANCES

The German alliances induced by the cession of the two French provinces were as follows:

⁵¹¹ *The Foundations of Germany*, p. 174.

1872. The Dreikaiserbund: The Emperors of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia.
1879. The Dual Alliance: Germany and Austria-Hungary. In force, by renewals, at the outbreak of the late war.
1881. The League of the Three Emperors: The Emperors of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia. Renewed in 1884, and expired in 1887.
1882. The Triple Alliance: Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. In force, by renewals, at the outbreak of the late war.
- 1883-8. The Quadruple Alliance: Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Roumania, in 1883; joined by Italy in 1888. In force, by renewals, at the outbreak of the late war.
1887. Bismarck's reinsurance treaty: Germany and Russia. Expired in 1890.

The counter-alliances and *ententes* were as follows:

- 1891-4. France and Russia: Developed in 1912, and in force at the outbreak of the late war.
1902. France and Italy. In force at the outbreak of the late war.
1904. France and the United Kingdom. In force at the outbreak of the late war.
1907. Russia and the United Kingdom. In force at the outbreak of the late war.

Because of her treaty with Austria-Hungary, Germany supported her ally in the war of 1914-18. Because of her treaty with Russia, France joined her ally in the war. Because of her *entente* arrangements and the reasons which underlay them, the United Kingdom supported France and Russia. It was, therefore, not without good warrant that M. Hanotaux said:

"The war of 1914 is closely associated with the war of 1870";⁵¹² and that Mr. Sydney Brooks said: "so far as the measureless cataclysm in which the whole world is now engulfed can be traced back to any single source, that source is Alsace-Lorraine."⁵¹³

⁵¹² *Ante*, p. 574.

⁵¹³ *Ante*, p. 574.



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