

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

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

IN TWO VOLUMES  
Volume I

NEW  YORK  
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

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THE ROOTS AND CAUSES OF THE WARS: VOL. I



PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mc Vey 327 2x 10 50

TO MY DEAR WIFE  
WITHOUT WHOSE UNSELFISH  
CO-OPERATION, DURING A  
LONG WEDDED LIFE, PRO-  
DUCTION OF THIS WORK  
WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE

220514



TABLE OF CONTENTS  
of Volume I

CHAPTER	PAGE
TABLE OF PERSONAGES . . . . .	ix
TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS . . . . .	xxvi
I. INTRODUCTORY . . . . .	I
II. WHY DID RUSSIA ENTER THE WAR? . . . . .	32
III. WHY DID GERMANY ENTER THE WAR? . . . . .	78
IV. WHY DID FRANCE ENTER THE WAR? . . . . .	95
V. WHY DID THE <u>U. K.</u> ENTER THE WAR? . . . . .	111
VI. WHY DID TURKEY ENTER THE WAR? . . . . .	200
VII. WHY DID ITALY ENTER THE WAR? . . . . .	223
VIII. WHY DID BULGARIA ENTER THE WAR? . . . . .	277
IX. WHY DID ROUMANIA ENTER THE WAR? . . . . .	302
X. WHY DID GREECE ENTER THE WAR? . . . . .	318
XI. WHY DID JAPAN ENTER THE WAR? . . . . .	377
XII. WHY DID THE U. S. ENTER THE WAR? . . . . .	393
XIII. WHY DID CANADA ENTER THE WAR? . . . . .	408
XIV. THE BELGIAN TREATY . . . . .	413
XV. GERMANY AND WORLD DOMINATION . . . . .	451
XVI. GERMANY AND MILITARISM . . . . .	479
XVII. GERMANY AND PREPARATION . . . . .	492
XVIII. THE ALSACE-LORRAINE ROOT . . . . .	573



## 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.
BARTHOUSSE, 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.
GUITAUD, 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 .....	German Foreign Minister.
JANUSKEVITCH, GENERAL .....	Chief of Russian Military Staff.
JONESCU, TAKE .....	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>
B 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.

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- Blunt, *op. cit.*: . . . . . Wilfrid Scawen Blunt: *My Diaries.*
- Bogitshevich, *op. cit.*: . . . . . M. Bogitshevich: *Causes of the War.*
- Br. Blue Bk., 1914: . . . . . British Blue Book: *Great Britain and the European Crisis. Correspondence and Statements in Parliament, together with Introductory Narrative of Events.* Of the correspondence, Nos. 1-159 were published as a White Paper, *Miscellaneous No. 5 (1914), Cd. No. 7567*; No. 160 as a White Paper, *Miscellaneous No. 8 (1914), Cd. 7445*; and No. 161 as a White Paper, *Miscellaneous No. 10 (1914), 7596*. The Book (without the introductory narrative) is reproduced in *Coll. Dip. Docs.*
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- Br. Blue Bk., C.-189: . . . . . British Blue Book: *Franco-Prussian War: Further Correspondence respecting the War between France and Prussia, 1870: Accounts and Papers, 1870, vol. 70, pp. 101-14.*
- Br. Blue Bk., C.-210: . . . . . British Blue Book: *Franco-Prussian War: Further Correspondence respecting the War between France and Prussia, 1870: Accounts and Papers, 1870, vol. 70, pp. 115-18.*
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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.
- THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS, 26.
- NECESSITY FOR STUDY, 28.
- THE SLAIN, 30.

### 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,<sup>1</sup> 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."

<sup>1</sup> 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;<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

**The Roots of the War.** The roots of the war between Principals and among Accessories, although little understood and never adequately discussed,<sup>4</sup> 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

<sup>2</sup> See cap. XXVI.

<sup>3</sup> See cap. XXVII.

<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> *Expansion of England*, pp. 29, 31.

<sup>6</sup> 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."<sup>7</sup>

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."<sup>8</sup>

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."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Dec. 1915, pp. 8-9.

<sup>8</sup> *Essays and Addresses in War Time*, p. 154.

<sup>9</sup> *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."<sup>10</sup>

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

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."<sup>12</sup>

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."<sup>13</sup>

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."<sup>14</sup>

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

<sup>11</sup> *The Nineteenth Century*, April 1917, p. 710.

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

<sup>13</sup> *Am. Soc. Int. Law Procdgs.*, April 1916, p. 148.

<sup>14</sup> 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.”<sup>15</sup>

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.”<sup>16</sup>

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.”<sup>17</sup>

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.”<sup>18</sup>

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.”<sup>19</sup>

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.”<sup>20</sup>

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

<sup>15</sup> *Nationality in Modern History*, p. 191.

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

<sup>17</sup> *Contemporary Rev.*, Oct. 1917, p. 424.

<sup>18</sup> *North American Rev.*, Sept. 1917, p. 390.

<sup>19</sup> *Contemporary Rev.*, Sept. 1916, p. 298.

<sup>20</sup> *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."<sup>21</sup>

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

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."<sup>23</sup>

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."<sup>24</sup>

2. That German militarism was the cause of the war is the opinion of very many people,<sup>25</sup> 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."<sup>26</sup>

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."<sup>27</sup>

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

<sup>21</sup> *Oxford Pamphlets*, IV: *War against War*, p. 20.

<sup>22</sup> *The War and the Balkans*, p. 103.

<sup>23</sup> *A History of England and the British Empire*, IV, p. 561.

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

<sup>25</sup> See *post*, cap. XVI.

<sup>26</sup> *The Times* (London), 25 Oct. 1917.

<sup>27</sup> *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." <sup>28</sup>

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.'" <sup>29</sup>

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

"The struggle is between a mad autocracy and a sane democracy." <sup>30</sup>

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." <sup>31</sup>

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, <sup>32</sup> "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." <sup>33</sup>

<sup>28</sup> *Nineteenth Century*, Sept. 1916, p. 442.

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

<sup>30</sup> *The Citizen*, Ottawa, 16 Feb. 1918.

<sup>31</sup> P. 29.

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

<sup>33</sup> 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."<sup>34</sup>

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

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."<sup>36</sup>

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."<sup>37</sup>

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

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

<sup>35</sup> 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.

<sup>36</sup> *N. Y. Times*, 1 Aug. 1915.

<sup>37</sup> 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."<sup>38</sup>

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."<sup>39</sup>

On the other hand, *The Round Table*<sup>40</sup> 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."<sup>41</sup>

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."<sup>42</sup>

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

<sup>39</sup> *New York Times*, 1 June 1921.

<sup>40</sup> Sept. 1918, p. 746.

<sup>41</sup> *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).

<sup>42</sup> *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."<sup>43</sup>

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."<sup>44</sup>

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."<sup>45</sup>

At another place, Mr. Marriott said:

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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.

<sup>43</sup> P. 2.

<sup>44</sup> P. 26.

<sup>45</sup> *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."<sup>46</sup>

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."<sup>47</sup>

20. Lord Shaw of Dumfermline has said that:

"we were fighting in defence of a moral order in the world."<sup>48</sup>

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."<sup>49</sup>

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.'"<sup>50</sup>

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."<sup>51</sup>

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

<sup>47</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 115.

<sup>48</sup> *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).

<sup>49</sup> Speech at Tonypanda, Wales, 29 Oct. 1917.

<sup>50</sup> *Daily News* (London).

<sup>51</sup> *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."<sup>52</sup>

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."<sup>53</sup>

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."<sup>54</sup>

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."<sup>55</sup>

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."<sup>56</sup>

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."<sup>57</sup>

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

<sup>52</sup> Sept. 1916, p. 407.

<sup>53</sup> Kautsky Docs., No. 402.

<sup>54</sup> *Contemporary Rev.*, March 1922, p. 316.

<sup>55</sup> *N. Y. Times*, 27 Sept. 1916.

<sup>56</sup> *N. Y. Times*, 17 June 1920.

<sup>57</sup> *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."<sup>58</sup>

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.<sup>59</sup>

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."<sup>60</sup>

None of these statements is true — as we shall see.<sup>61</sup>

**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),

<sup>58</sup> *The Times* (London), 30 Oct. 1914.

<sup>59</sup> Quotation may be seen upon subsequent pages.

<sup>60</sup> See pp. 9, 112.

<sup>61</sup> 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."<sup>62</sup>

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."<sup>63</sup>

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."<sup>64</sup>

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

<sup>62</sup> *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).

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

<sup>64</sup> 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."<sup>65</sup>

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."<sup>66</sup>

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.<sup>67</sup> There is, in my opinion, no ground for the belief that the Kaiser deliberately planned or desired a world war."<sup>68</sup>

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."<sup>69</sup>

Very frequently, but by no means always, is it true, as Normal Angell declares, that war is "the failure of human understanding"<sup>70</sup> — 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,<sup>71</sup> 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."<sup>72</sup>

To some extent, that was true.

<sup>65</sup> *Causes of the War*, p. 5.

<sup>66</sup> *Empire Parliamentary Assn.*, 23 Dec. 1920.

<sup>67</sup> *Contemporary Rev.*, Aug. 1921, pp. 181-2.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>69</sup> *Socialist Rev.*, XVIII, p. 221.

<sup>70</sup> *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.

<sup>71</sup> Those of the United Kingdom and Germany.

<sup>72</sup> 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."<sup>73</sup> For that purpose, debate must be silenced; dislike must be whipped into hatred; <sup>74</sup> 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.<sup>75</sup> 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."<sup>76</sup>

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

<sup>74</sup> 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."

<sup>75</sup> 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."<sup>76</sup> 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." <sup>77</sup>

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." <sup>78</sup>

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. <sup>79</sup>

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

<sup>77</sup> *Letters of Queen Victoria, 1837-61*, III., pp. 34-5.

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

<sup>79</sup> *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.' " <sup>80</sup>

<sup>80</sup> *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."<sup>81</sup>

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

"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."<sup>83</sup>

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."<sup>84</sup>

On another occasion, Sir Edward said that:

"Expenditure on propaganda was as essential as expenditure on munitions."<sup>85</sup>

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

<sup>81</sup> *N. Y. Times*, 17 Sept. 1917.

<sup>82</sup> *The Times* (London), 15 Dec. 1917.

<sup>83</sup> *The Times*, 14 Dec. 1917.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *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.<sup>86</sup>

"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."<sup>87</sup>

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."<sup>88</sup>

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

<sup>86</sup> *The Times*, 27 Sept. and 12 Oct. 1917.

<sup>87</sup> 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."

<sup>88</sup> *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.”<sup>89</sup>

**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.”<sup>90</sup>

**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

<sup>89</sup> *The Chapbook.*

<sup>90</sup> *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."<sup>91</sup> 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."<sup>92</sup>

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.<sup>93</sup>

### 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."<sup>94</sup>

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

<sup>91</sup> *The Times*, 7 Nov. 1917.

<sup>92</sup> *The Times*, 9 Nov. 1917.

<sup>93</sup> *Ante* pp. 20-1.

<sup>94</sup> *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.”<sup>95</sup>

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.<sup>96</sup> 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

<sup>95</sup> *The Contemporary Rev.*, May 1918, pp. 495-6.

<sup>96</sup> 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."<sup>97</sup>

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.<sup>98</sup>

#### 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

<sup>97</sup> *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."

<sup>98</sup> 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."<sup>99</sup>

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."<sup>100</sup>

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.<sup>101</sup>

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

<sup>99</sup> *The Origins of the Triple Alliance*, p. v.

<sup>100</sup> *Causes of the War*, p. 3.

<sup>101</sup> *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.'" <sup>102</sup>

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.*

<sup>102</sup> 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

### WHY DID RUSSIA ENTER THE WAR?

- THE ALLEGED REASON, 32. — Protection of Serbia, 32. — Poland, 34.
- THE REAL REASON, 36. — Self-interest, 36. — Traditional Policy, 36. — German and Austro-Hungarian Developments, 36. — Russia's true Plea, 37.
- WHY DID RUSSIA ENTER THE WAR? 38.
- RUSSIA'S "HISTORIC MISSION," 39. — Council of 5 December 1896, 39. — 1896-1906, 41. — International Position of the Straits, 41. — Negotiations with Austria-Hungary, 1897, 42. — Arrangements with the United Kingdom, 1907, 42. — Agreement with Austria-Hungary, 1908, 42. — British and French Concessions, 1908, 43. — Arrangements with Bulgaria, 1909, 43. — Arrangements with Italy, 1909, 43. — During the Turco-Italian War, 1911-12, 44. — During the Balkan Wars, 1912-13, 46. — Russia and Turkey during the Balkan Wars, 51. — Sazonoff's Mémoire, 1913, 54. — The Council of 21-22 February 1914, 55. — Basili's Mémoire, 57. — The Wars of 1914-18, 58.
- THE LIMAN VON SANDERS AFFAIR, 60. — Previous Situation, 60. — Grey's Embarrassment, 61. — Grey's Retreat, 62. — Presentation to the Porte, 63. — Negotiations, 64. — Proposed Coercion of Turkey, 65. — Tentative Settlement, 65. — Sazonoff's Opposition Overruled, 66. — Curb on Russia, 66. — Comment, 68.
- THE RUSSO-GERMAN "PRESS CAMPAIGN," 1914, 69.
- DID RUSSIA WANT WAR? 74.

### 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,<sup>1</sup> on the subject of which the two Governments reserve the right to reach an agreement when the moment for disposing of it arrives."<sup>2</sup>

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.<sup>3</sup>

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.<sup>4</sup> 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."<sup>5</sup>

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-

<sup>1</sup> That strip was known as the Sanjak of Novibazar.

<sup>2</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 201.

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

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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."<sup>6</sup>

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,<sup>7</sup> 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."<sup>8</sup>

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:

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<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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).

<sup>8</sup> 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? ”<sup>9</sup>

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.”<sup>10</sup>

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.”<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *Diplomatic Reminiscences*, pp. 323, 324-5.

<sup>10</sup> *Fortnightly Rev.*, March 1917, p. 376.

<sup>11</sup> 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.<sup>12</sup>

### 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.<sup>13</sup> 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."<sup>14</sup>

**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

<sup>12</sup> The subject is dealt with in cap. XXII.

<sup>13</sup> Cap. XXI.

<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15</sup>

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.<sup>16</sup> 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

<sup>15</sup> *Post*, cap. XXI.

<sup>16</sup> *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.”<sup>17</sup> 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.”<sup>18</sup> 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.”<sup>19</sup>

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.<sup>20</sup>
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?

<sup>17</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 17.

<sup>18</sup> Coll. Dip. Docs., p. 537.

<sup>19</sup> Russ. Orange Bk., 1914, No. 77.

<sup>20</sup> 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,<sup>21</sup> and the treaty of Berlin (1878) by which Russia was deprived of much of the fruit of her victory,<sup>22</sup> 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

<sup>21</sup> See cap. XXIII.

<sup>22</sup> 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. *Allea 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."<sup>23</sup>

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

<sup>23</sup> 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."<sup>24</sup>

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 protest<sup>25</sup> 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;<sup>26</sup> 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

<sup>24</sup> *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 367.

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

<sup>26</sup> 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." <sup>27</sup>

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." <sup>28</sup>

**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." <sup>29</sup>

**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 Aehrenthal entered into the agreement above referred to <sup>30</sup> by which the Russian statesman purchased the assent of Austria-Hungary to furtherance of his designs upon Constantinople.

<sup>27</sup> 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 Hertlet, *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.

<sup>28</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 125.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187.

<sup>30</sup> *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."<sup>31</sup>

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.<sup>32</sup> 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."<sup>33</sup>

**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."<sup>34</sup>

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.<sup>35</sup>

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

<sup>31</sup> *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 457.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 458.

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

<sup>34</sup> 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.

<sup>35</sup> *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."<sup>36</sup>

In making this agreement, Italy made notable departure from the policy indicated in her treaty with the United Kingdom and Austria-Hungary in 1887.<sup>37</sup>

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,<sup>38</sup> she would continue to consider herself as bound to us for the future in the question of the Straits."<sup>39</sup>

With Italy, Russia had no difficulty. She was willing to implement her promise.<sup>40</sup> In the United Kingdom, Russia found sympathy but encountered difficulties.<sup>41</sup> Points of detail were raised.<sup>42</sup> The subject was international and could be arranged only by agreement among the Powers.<sup>43</sup> Sir Edward Grey was ready, he said, to support the suggestion of 18 October 1908.<sup>44</sup> He would consider the new proposal.<sup>45</sup> And within a few days, he intimated that he would agree as requested, but subject to a previous arrangement being made with Turkey.<sup>46</sup> The Sultan, on his part, would agree only upon the condition that the

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

<sup>37</sup> *Post*, p. 155.

<sup>38</sup> The reference is to the Racconigi agreement of 1909.

<sup>39</sup> *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 137.

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

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

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

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

<sup>44</sup> *Ante*, p. 43.

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

<sup>46</sup> 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."<sup>47</sup> 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."<sup>48</sup>

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

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."<sup>50</sup>

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

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,<sup>56</sup> and a draft agree-

<sup>47</sup> Benckendorff to Foreign Office, 8 Nov. 1911: *ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 328-9.

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

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 140. See also p. 143; and II, p. 464.

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

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

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, II, pp. 464-6.

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

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, II, pp. 468-70.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 458-9.

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

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.”<sup>59</sup>

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.”<sup>60</sup>

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

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 462-4.

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

<sup>59</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 373.

<sup>60</sup> *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."<sup>61</sup>

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."<sup>62</sup>

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

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 321-3.

<sup>62</sup> *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.<sup>63</sup> 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.<sup>64</sup> 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

<sup>63</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 421.

<sup>64</sup> 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 proposal<sup>65</sup> 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."<sup>66</sup>

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:

<sup>65</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 421.

<sup>66</sup> *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.”<sup>67</sup>

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.<sup>68</sup>

4. Russia wished to preserve Bulgaria’s friendship, but not to endow her with predominating strength.<sup>69</sup>

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

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 420-1.

<sup>68</sup> 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.

<sup>69</sup> 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.<sup>70</sup>

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."<sup>71</sup>

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."<sup>72</sup>

Russia did not like the suggestion,<sup>73</sup> but assented,<sup>74</sup> and Germany having also agreed,<sup>75</sup> 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

<sup>70</sup> 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.

<sup>71</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, II, No. 193.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 220. And see No. 225.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 227.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 230.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 235.

the war — “the neutrality of Russia could be no longer guaranteed.”<sup>76</sup> To separate announcement of that kind, France made strong objection.<sup>77</sup> 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.”<sup>78</sup>

Turkey determined to submit — 22 January.<sup>79</sup> 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.<sup>80</sup> Fighting was resumed, but, experiencing further reverses, Turkey surrendered,<sup>81</sup> and on 1 April definitely accepted the terms imposed upon her,<sup>82</sup> including relinquishment of Adrianople — by that time occupied by the Allies.<sup>83</sup> Upon that basis (*inter alia*) was signed the peace treaty of London — 30 May.<sup>84</sup>

But more remained: The Allies quarrelled over the Turkish spoils — Bulgaria against Serbia and Greece.<sup>85</sup> 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.<sup>86</sup>

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

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 33, 37, 76.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 40, 78, 82. Poincaré had previously insisted upon being consulted (*ibid.*, I, Nos. 16-20, 25, 26, and see No. 82), and repeated his requirements upon a later occasion (*ibid.*, II, Nos. 71, 94, 96).

<sup>78</sup> *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).

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

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 92.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 137-140.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 194, 195.

<sup>83</sup> It was taken on 28 March.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 306.

<sup>85</sup> The subject is dealt with in cap. XXIV.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 408, 409; III, Nos. 5, 24.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, II, Nos. 406, 416, 418.

provided (a safe contingency) "that the Powers would be unanimous."<sup>88</sup> Germany and Italy at once declined;<sup>89</sup> 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.<sup>90</sup>

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.<sup>91</sup> 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."<sup>92</sup>

Relinquishing, for the moment,<sup>93</sup> separate action, Russia proposed (12 August) the exercise of financial pressure upon Turkey.<sup>94</sup> France agreed, intimating that, to be effective, all the Powers should concur, — knowing that they would not.<sup>95</sup> This proposal, not going very well, Russia urged upon the Powers (16 August) "the necessity of new and more energetic pressure on the Porte"<sup>96</sup> for the purpose, it was said, of preventing the outbreak of war by Turkey against Bulgaria.<sup>97</sup> 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."<sup>98</sup>

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 415, 417, 421.

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

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 419.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 421. Cf. No. 451.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, III, No. 3.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 10.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 9, 10, 11, 14.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 9, 16, 18, 19, 27, 28, 29, 40, 44.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 21.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 32. Cf. Nos. 22, 23, 24.

<sup>98</sup> *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.<sup>99</sup> 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.”<sup>100</sup> And Sazonoff tentatively determined to occupy one of the Turkish ports<sup>101</sup> — another purpose from which he was easily turned.<sup>102</sup>

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.”<sup>103</sup>

Russia found that the Powers would not agree to collective intervention; and, shrinking from separate coercive action as too dangerous,<sup>104</sup> — the United Kingdom and France gave warning to that effect<sup>105</sup> — nothing remained but to accept the German proposal that the two Powers — Turkey and Bulgaria — should engage in direct negotiations.<sup>106</sup> Well aware that she was helpless, Bulgaria agreed (29 August) to send her delegates to Constantinople.<sup>107</sup> 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

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 31.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 40.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 42.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 45.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 68.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>105</sup> 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.

<sup>106</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, No. 55.

<sup>107</sup> *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."<sup>108</sup>

**The Council of 21–22 February 1914.**<sup>109</sup> Although the *Mémoire* was presented to the Czar in November 1913, the Council to which the Czar —

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

<sup>109</sup> The proceedings of the Council were first published by Maxim Gorky in the *Novaia 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”<sup>110</sup>

did not meet until the following 21st February. Possibly, the pendency of the Liman von Sanders affair<sup>111</sup> may have been the cause of the delay. Sazonoff (in the chair) and nine others—principally naval and military officers—composed the Council.<sup>112</sup> 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.”<sup>113</sup>

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,”<sup>114</sup>

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

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>111</sup> *Post*, pp. 60-9.

<sup>112</sup> 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.

<sup>113</sup> *Remarques &c.*, p. 90.

<sup>114</sup> *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."<sup>115</sup> 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."<sup>116</sup>  
 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."<sup>117</sup>

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,"<sup>118</sup> 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."<sup>119</sup>

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

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

<sup>116</sup> *Remarques &c.* p. 88.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88.

<sup>119</sup> *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 *rap-prochement* 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*)."<sup>120</sup>

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."<sup>121</sup>

**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."<sup>122</sup>

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.<sup>123</sup> . . . 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

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> Churchill, *op. cit.*, II, p. 198.

<sup>123</sup> *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."<sup>124</sup>

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."<sup>125</sup>

The whole agreement appears in a telegram from M. Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London of 20 March 1915.<sup>126</sup> 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."<sup>127</sup>

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."<sup>128</sup>

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

<sup>124</sup> F. Seymour Cocks, *The Secret Treaties*, p. 19.

<sup>125</sup> *The Times* (London), 26 March 1915.

<sup>126</sup> Cocks, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>127</sup> Canadian Press Despatch, 3 Dec. 1916.

<sup>128</sup> *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 proposed<sup>129</sup> 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.<sup>130</sup>

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.<sup>131</sup> 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

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

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

<sup>131</sup> 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." <sup>132</sup>

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." <sup>133</sup>

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." <sup>134</sup>

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." <sup>135</sup>

The German Foreign Secretary, while appreciating that attitude, pointed (26 November) to the difficulty of cancelling the agreement with Turkey, <sup>136</sup> 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." <sup>137</sup>

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." <sup>138</sup>

**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 <sup>139</sup> yesterday that he is of your opin-

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

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

135-137.

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

<sup>135</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 678.

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

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 153.

<sup>138</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 679.

<sup>139</sup> 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." <sup>140</sup>

Grey agreed (2 December) that the three Powers should present, but not simultaneously, identical notes at Constantinople, <sup>141</sup> but he objected (9 December) to the Russian draft, which contained a threat. <sup>142</sup> 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." <sup>143</sup>

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." <sup>144</sup>

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." <sup>145</sup>

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

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

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 680-1.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 682.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 682-3.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 684.

<sup>145</sup> *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.”<sup>146</sup> 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.”<sup>147</sup>

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.”<sup>148</sup>

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.”<sup>149</sup>

**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.”<sup>150</sup>

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

<sup>146</sup> *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).

<sup>147</sup> *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.

<sup>148</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 687.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 688.

<sup>150</sup> *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." <sup>151</sup>

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." <sup>152</sup>

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." <sup>153</sup>

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, <sup>154</sup> 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." <sup>155</sup>

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

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 692.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 690.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 705-6.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 689-90.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 691-2.

<sup>156</sup> *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.”<sup>157</sup>

“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.”<sup>158</sup>

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.”<sup>159</sup>

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.<sup>160</sup>

**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,”<sup>161</sup> 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.”<sup>162</sup>

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?<sup>163</sup>

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

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 691.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 693. Cf. *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 217.

<sup>159</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 694.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 695.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 696.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> *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.<sup>164</sup> In accordance with the suggestion, the General was made a "Turkish Field Marshal and Inspector General of the Turkish Army,"<sup>165</sup> 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."<sup>166</sup>

**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.<sup>167</sup> 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.<sup>168</sup> Whether, to consider the question, the Council of State was again summoned, and, if so, what it did, has not been revealed.<sup>169</sup> 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.<sup>170</sup>

**Curb on Russia.** Throughout the correspondence, there is recurrent

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

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

<sup>166</sup> 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.

<sup>167</sup> *Remarques &c.*, pp. 80-1.

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

<sup>169</sup> *Remarques &c.*, p. 86.

<sup>170</sup> *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."<sup>171</sup>

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."<sup>172</sup>

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."<sup>173</sup>

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."<sup>174</sup>

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."<sup>175</sup>

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

<sup>171</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 680.

<sup>172</sup> *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.

<sup>173</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 698-9.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 703.

<sup>175</sup> *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."<sup>176</sup>

**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.<sup>177</sup> 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."<sup>178</sup>

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."<sup>179</sup>

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 707.

<sup>177</sup> *Cf.* Bethmann-Hollweg, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-3.

<sup>178</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 691.

<sup>179</sup> *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."<sup>180</sup>

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.<sup>181</sup>

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."<sup>182</sup> 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.<sup>183</sup> 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-

<sup>180</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk., Balkan Affairs, III, No. 171.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>182</sup> 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.

<sup>183</sup> *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,<sup>184</sup> and Januskevitch<sup>185</sup> — 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.<sup>186</sup> 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."<sup>187</sup>

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 men<sup>188</sup> at a capital cost of £50,000,000 spread over three years),<sup>189</sup> 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."<sup>190</sup>

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

<sup>184</sup> Minister for War.

<sup>185</sup> Chief of the General Staff.

<sup>186</sup> See cap. XXVII.

<sup>187</sup> 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.

<sup>188</sup> *Remarques &c.*, p. 99.

<sup>189</sup> *Ann. Reg.*, 1914, p. [337]. The Duma also sanctioned an expenditure of £10,000,000 for the construction of warships on the Black Sea.

<sup>190</sup> *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."<sup>191</sup>

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."<sup>192</sup>

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."<sup>193</sup>

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."<sup>194</sup>

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.<sup>195</sup> 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."<sup>196</sup>

*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-

<sup>191</sup> Quoted by Morel: *Truth and the War*, p. 145.

<sup>192</sup> Quoted *ibid.*

<sup>193</sup> Quoted *ibid.*; and in *Pre-War Diplomacy*, p. 34.

<sup>194</sup> *Remarques &c.*, pp. 95-6.

<sup>195</sup> See cap. XXVII.

<sup>196</sup> *Remarques &c.*, pp. 95, 96, 97, 98.

count. These things are well calculated to make the Germans anxious.”<sup>197</sup>

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.*’ ”<sup>198</sup>

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

<sup>197</sup> Morel: *Pre-War Diplomacy*, p. 34.

<sup>198</sup> Kautsky, Docs., 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 crisis<sup>199</sup>—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."<sup>200</sup>

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

<sup>200</sup> 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,<sup>201</sup> 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,<sup>202</sup> 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."<sup>203</sup>

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

<sup>201</sup> Caps. 23, 24, 26, and 27.

<sup>202</sup> She had not yet recovered from her defeat by Japan.

<sup>203</sup> 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.”<sup>204</sup>

(21) In a subsequent chapter,<sup>205</sup> 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.”<sup>206</sup>

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*

<sup>204</sup> *Post* cap. V, p. 154.

<sup>205</sup> XXVII.

<sup>206</sup> *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."<sup>207</sup>

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.

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

## CHAPTER III

### WHY DID GERMANY ENTER THE WAR?

GERMANY'S STATEMENT, 78.

GERMAN ALLIANCES, 80. — Preliminary, 80. — The *Dreikaiserbund*, 81. — Russia or Austria-Hungary, 81. — Dual Alliance, 1879, 82. — League of the Three Emperors, 1881, 84. — The Reinsurance Treaty, 1887, 85. — The Triple Alliance, 1882, 86. — The Quadruple Alliance, 1883, 86. — Germany and Italy: Military Convention, 1887, 87. — Russia and France, 1891-4, 87. — Italian Fidelity, 87. — Roumanian Fidelity, 92.

GERMANY'S IMPERIALISTIC PROJECTS, 92.

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,<sup>1</sup> and postponing discussion of Germany's responsibility for the outbreak of hostilities,<sup>2</sup> 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*;<sup>3</sup> 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 war<sup>4</sup> 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:

<sup>1</sup> Caps. XV and XVI.

<sup>2</sup> Cap. XXVI.

<sup>3</sup> Cap. XXIV.

<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup>

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."<sup>8</sup>

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 fœderis* 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."<sup>9</sup>

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

<sup>5</sup> Cap. XXVI.

<sup>6</sup> See cap. XXIII.

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

<sup>8</sup> V. II, p. 274.

<sup>9</sup> Kautsky Docs., 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.”<sup>10</sup> 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,<sup>11</sup> 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.”<sup>12</sup>

In this view, the *Bund* was of somewhat the same order as the Holy Alliance of earlier date.<sup>13</sup> 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.”<sup>14</sup>

**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.<sup>15</sup> 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:

<sup>10</sup> *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, pp. 252-3.

<sup>11</sup> 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.

<sup>12</sup> *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, p. 248.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. C. Grant Robertson’s *Bismarck*, pp. 398 ff.

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

<sup>15</sup> 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.”<sup>16</sup>

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.<sup>17</sup>

**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.<sup>18</sup> The enmity between Bismarck and the Russian Prime Minister, Gortchakoff, which had commenced in 1875,<sup>19</sup> 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.<sup>20</sup> Couching a letter to the German Emperor in menacing phraseology, he complained that “Your Majesty’s Chancellor has forgotten the promises of 1870.”<sup>21</sup> 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.”<sup>22</sup>

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.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231.

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

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, p. 252.

<sup>19</sup> *Ante*, p. 81.

<sup>20</sup> Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 232-47.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 256-7; 255-7. Cf. Dawson, *The German Empire*, II, pp. 136-8.

<sup>22</sup> Bismarck, *op. cit.*, II, p. 257; and see p. 253.

“ *Article II.*: Should one of the High Contracting Parties be attacked by another Power,<sup>23</sup> 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.”<sup>24</sup>

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.”

<sup>23</sup> Meaning France.

<sup>24</sup> 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.”<sup>25</sup>

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.”<sup>26</sup>

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.<sup>27</sup> 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.”<sup>28</sup>

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.<sup>29</sup>

**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.”<sup>30</sup>

It may safely be said that the Czar would not have signed this treaty

<sup>25</sup> *Reflections and Reminiscences*, II, pp. 258, 260, 262. And see pp. 256-7.

<sup>26</sup> 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.

<sup>27</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 75.

<sup>29</sup> See *post cap.* XX.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 217, 219.

<sup>30</sup> 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."<sup>31</sup> 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."<sup>32</sup>

Bismarck was again comfortable: By the treaty of 1879, if attacked

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33-5.

<sup>32</sup> *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.<sup>33</sup> 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."<sup>34</sup>

The treaty, in varying form, was renewed 20 February 1887; 6 May 1891; 28 June 1902; and 5 December 1912.<sup>35</sup> 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."<sup>36</sup>

Germany became a party to this treaty on the day of its execution. Italy acceded to it, with certain limitations, on 15 May 1888.<sup>37</sup> And thus was formed the Quadruple Alliance. It was renewed in July/November 1892;<sup>38</sup> 30 September 1896/May 1899; 17 April/25 July/12 December 1902;<sup>39</sup> and 5 February/26 February/5 March 1913.<sup>40</sup> It, too, was in force at the outbreak of the war of 1914.

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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.

<sup>33</sup> C. Grant Robertson: *Bismarck*, pp. 502-3.

<sup>34</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 67, 153, 223, 247.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 105, 151, 221, 245.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 167, 205, 263.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 85-9.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 175-183.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 165-173.

<sup>40</sup> *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.”<sup>41</sup>

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.<sup>42</sup>

**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.<sup>43</sup> She remained linked with Austria-Hungary and Italy; the United Kingdom was linked with the same Powers;<sup>44</sup> and isolated Russia turned to isolated France. The Franco-Russian *entente*<sup>45</sup> of 1891-94 was the logical result.<sup>46</sup> 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 —

<sup>41</sup> *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, p. 217.

<sup>42</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 85-7, note.

<sup>43</sup> 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.

<sup>44</sup> See *post* cap. V, pp. 155-6.

<sup>45</sup> It was really an alliance: See cap. IV.

<sup>46</sup> 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,<sup>47</sup> all the more so because the unsettled and untrustworthy character of the Italian policy could easily embroil Italy’s friends in difficulties.”<sup>48</sup>

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”;<sup>49</sup>

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.”<sup>50</sup>

He was right. In 1896, actuated by friendship toward France and perceiving a certain tenseness in the relations between Germany and the United Kingdom, Rudini, the Italian Foreign Minister,<sup>51</sup> 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.”<sup>52</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Judged by the terms of the various treaties, that statement is inaccurate (*Cf.* Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 39, 40). Its justification depended upon the belief that Italy probably would not implement her promises.

<sup>48</sup> Telg. Bismarck to Prince Henry VII of Reuss, German Ambassador at Vienna, 28 Dec. 1881: *ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82, note; and pp. 86-7, note.

<sup>51</sup> Rudini was a Francophile, while his predecessor, Crispi, had been a warm friend of Bismarck: *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi, passim.*

<sup>52</sup> 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.’”<sup>53</sup>

At the date of the automatic prolongation of the Triple Alliance treaty<sup>54</sup> 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.”<sup>55</sup>

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.”<sup>56</sup>

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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.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135.

<sup>54</sup> 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).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 147.

<sup>56</sup> *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.<sup>57</sup> 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"<sup>58</sup>; and that, a few months afterwards, Italy and Russia came to formal agreement upon various questions, including that of the Straits and Tripoli.<sup>59</sup> 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 treaty<sup>60</sup> 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.<sup>61</sup> 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 escapade<sup>62</sup> 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

<sup>57</sup> Cap. VII.

<sup>58</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>59</sup> *Un Livre Noir*, I, pp. 357-8.

<sup>60</sup> 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.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. von Bethmann-Hollweg: *Reflections &c.*, pp. 68-71. He speaks of 1913 instead of 1912.

<sup>62</sup> 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? ”<sup>63</sup>

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.<sup>64</sup> 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.”<sup>65</sup>

In Berchtold's view, the policy of Berlin was being:

“guided by the fixed idea of Italy's defection to the Western Powers.”<sup>66</sup>

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 1889<sup>67</sup> 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.”<sup>68</sup>

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

<sup>63</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 158-9.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166.

<sup>67</sup> *Ante*, p. 88.

<sup>68</sup> 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." <sup>69</sup>

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. <sup>70</sup>

The other side of the story — Italy's approachment toward France — is related in a later chapter. <sup>71</sup> 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. <sup>72</sup> 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. <sup>73</sup> Bismarck had said that the Balkans were not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian soldier, <sup>74</sup>

<sup>69</sup> *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 365. And see p. 361.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Bethmann-Hollweg: *Reflections &c.*, pp. 16, 70.

<sup>71</sup> Cap. VII.

<sup>72</sup> Cap. IX.

<sup>73</sup> See caps. VIII, IX, XXIII, XXIV.

<sup>74</sup> 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."<sup>75</sup>

#### 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."<sup>76</sup>

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.

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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.

<sup>75</sup> 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.

<sup>76</sup> *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.<sup>77</sup>

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.<sup>78</sup>

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.<sup>79</sup>

6. Apart from the maintenance of Austria-Hungary as an effective ally, and opposition to Russian aggression, Germany had no object in undertaking war.

<sup>77</sup> *Post*, cap. XXVII.

<sup>78</sup> *Post*, cap. XXVII.

<sup>79</sup> 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.<sup>1</sup> 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?*<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> The adhesion of Roumania in 1883 (completing the Quadruple Alliance) was motivated by

<sup>1</sup> XVIII.

<sup>2</sup> III.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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.”<sup>5</sup>

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.<sup>6</sup>

The Dual Entente was really an “alliance,” and a French Yellow Book has so described it.<sup>7</sup> The agreement (27 August 1891), contained in two letters,<sup>8</sup> 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

<sup>5</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 209; Fr. Yell. Bk., *Franco-Russian Alliance*, No. 17, Annexe. “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, 1870-1914*, p. 458.

<sup>6</sup> The arrangements are referred to in cap. V, pp. 155-6.

<sup>7</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk., *Franco-Russian Alliance*, No. 102, quoted *post* 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.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 17, 18. In Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, the letters appear at pp. 207-15.

the Holy Places in Palestine.<sup>9</sup> 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.”<sup>10</sup>

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.”<sup>11</sup>

**France and Russia — Military Convention, 1893–4.** After long and, to France, tedious negotiations,<sup>12</sup> expedited at last by the passage of the German military law of 1893,<sup>13</sup> and a visit of the Russian fleet to France,<sup>14</sup> a military convention was agreed to by exchange of letters — 27 December 1893 and 4 January 1894.<sup>15</sup> 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-

<sup>9</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk., *Franco-Russian Alliance*, Nos. 21, 22, 24, 25, 29.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 35.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 42.

<sup>12</sup> 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.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 87, 88.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 89.

<sup>15</sup> *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.”<sup>16</sup>

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.<sup>17</sup>

**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.”<sup>18</sup>

The purpose of the convention, as appears from a report of M. Sazonoff, was the:

<sup>16</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 215-7, and see pp. 217-21; Fr. Yell. Bk., *Franco-Russian Alliance*, No. 71.

<sup>17</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 218-21; Fr. Yell. Bk., *Franco-Russian Alliance*, Nos. 93-5.

<sup>18</sup> *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.”<sup>19</sup>

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.”<sup>20</sup> (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.”<sup>21</sup>

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

<sup>19</sup> *Post*, p. 531.

<sup>20</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 225; *Fr. Yell. Bk.*, *Franco-Russian Alliance*, No. 103.

<sup>21</sup> *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."<sup>22</sup>

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,<sup>23</sup> he signed a comprehensive treaty with the United Kingdom by which all outstanding difficulties were settled.<sup>24</sup> 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

<sup>22</sup> *The Memoirs of Count Witte*, p. 178. Cf. *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, p. 254 and note; and *Ann. Reg.*, 1898, p. [280. Earlier in the year efforts to arrange an alliance between the United Kingdom and Germany had been made: see cap. V.

<sup>23</sup> André Tardieu: *The Truth about the Treaty*, p. 440; *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, pp. 309, 316.

<sup>24</sup> A more complete reference to Delcassé's activities may be seen: *post*, cap. XXII.

her intention to support France as against Germany.<sup>25</sup> 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.<sup>26</sup>

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."<sup>27</sup>

The Franco-Russian *entente* was not the result of any crisis, unless 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.<sup>28</sup> 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.<sup>29</sup>

**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 Germany<sup>30</sup> — 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-

<sup>25</sup> See cap. XXII.

<sup>26</sup> Cap. XVII.

<sup>27</sup> P. 29.

<sup>28</sup> See cap. V.

<sup>29</sup> See cap. XXII.

<sup>30</sup> 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."<sup>31</sup>

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."<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> 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*.

<sup>32</sup> 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.”<sup>33</sup>

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.<sup>34</sup>

**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.”<sup>35</sup> That would not have fitted the occasion. Something inflammatory had to be improvised. And it was. The President

<sup>33</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 87.

<sup>34</sup> See *post cap.* XXIII.

<sup>35</sup> *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*).”<sup>36</sup>

M. Viviani, the Foreign Minister, commenced his speech with the following:<sup>37</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 158; Andriulli: *Documents relating to the Great War*, pp. 77-9.

<sup>37</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 159; Andriulli, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-93; Pamphlet No. 85 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,<sup>38</sup> 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.

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<sup>38</sup> 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*).”<sup>39</sup>

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*).”<sup>40</sup>

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!’*)”<sup>41</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 159.

<sup>40</sup> Andriulli, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-5.

<sup>41</sup> 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."<sup>42</sup> 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."<sup>43</sup>

**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";<sup>44</sup>

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,<sup>45</sup> were, of course, suppressed. "Notre devoir" was better discharged by declamatory references to the "attack, the hateful injustice of which is emphasized

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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."

<sup>42</sup> See *post*, cap. XVIII.

<sup>43</sup> *Foreign Affairs*, Nov. 1919.

<sup>44</sup> *Fr. Yell. Bk.*, 1914, No. 159.

<sup>45</sup> 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."<sup>46</sup>

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 fœderis* 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 Serbia 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."<sup>47</sup>

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;<sup>48</sup> 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

<sup>46</sup> *Foreign Affairs*, November 1919.

<sup>47</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 17.

<sup>48</sup> 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.”<sup>49</sup>

**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.”<sup>50</sup>

The judgment of the Ambassador was, to some extent, ill-founded.

<sup>49</sup> Pp. 248-9.

<sup>50</sup> *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.<sup>51</sup> 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 wars<sup>52</sup> and the report of Kokovtsef, President of the Russian Council, of 19 November 1913 — after the termination of the wars.<sup>53</sup> 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."

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<sup>51</sup> See Fr. Yell. Bk., *Balkan Affairs*, I and II.

<sup>52</sup> *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 356.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 393-4.



## CHAPTER V

### WHY DID THE UNITED KINGDOM ENTER THE WAR?

CONTRADICTIONARY ASSERTIONS, 111.

SUPPORT OF SERBIA, 113.

THE REPUDIATED OBLIGATION TO FRANCE, 115. — Long-standing Friendship, 115. — Military and Naval Conversations, 115. — Sir Edward Grey's First Letter, 117. — Existence of Obligation, 119. — Sir Edward Grey's Repudiation, 122. — Sir Edward Grey's Second Letter, 125. — The British Cabinet, 126. — Previous Deception, 127. — "Obligation of honor," or Public opinion, 129. — Conclusions, 131.

OBLIGATION UNDER THE BELGIAN TREATY, 131. — No Treaty Obligation, 132. — Belgian Neutrality not Wanted, 134. — Sir Edward Grey's Letter of 2 August, 140. — Change of Assertion, 140. — Conclusion, 141.

"SMALL NATIONALITIES ARE NOT TO BE CRUSHED," 142.

"WAR AGAINST WAR," 143.

TERRITORIAL AGGRANDISEMENT, 144.

BRITISH INTERESTS, 145. — *The Times*, 147. — *The Manchester Guardian*, 148. — Previous Diplomacies, 149.

BRITISH RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WAR, 150. — British Neutrality, 153.

ATTITUDE TOWARD GERMANY AND ENTENTE, 154. — Comment, 180.

SIR EDWARD GREY'S SPEECH OF 3 AUGUST 1914, 181.

MR. ASQUITH'S SPEECH OF 6 AUGUST 1914, 197.

CONCLUSIONS, 198. — Roots of the War, 198.

### 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";<sup>1</sup>

"the merits of the dispute between Austria and Serbia were not the concern of His Majesty's Government";<sup>2</sup> the United Kingdom had "not direct interests in Serbia";<sup>3</sup> he did not "consider that public opinion here would, or ought to sanction our going to war over a Servian quarrel";<sup>4</sup> he felt that he "had no title to intervene between Austria and Serbia."<sup>5</sup> "In the present case, the dispute between Austria and Serbia was not one in which we felt called to take a hand."<sup>6</sup>

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."<sup>7</sup> 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."<sup>8</sup>

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."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 10.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 24.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 25.

<sup>6</sup> An interview with the French Ambassador: *ibid.*, No. 87.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 6.

<sup>8</sup> P. v.

<sup>9</sup> 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.”<sup>10</sup>

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.”<sup>11</sup>

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.”<sup>12</sup>

Sir Edward Grey himself said (29 July 1914):

“There must of course be some humiliation of Serbia.”<sup>13</sup>

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.”<sup>14</sup>

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.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 62.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 161.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 90.

<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15</sup> 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.

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<sup>15</sup> 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.”<sup>16</sup>

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.”<sup>17</sup>

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

<sup>16</sup> Loreburn, *op. cit.*, p. 80, and note.

<sup>17</sup> *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."<sup>18</sup>

The plans were elaborated in lengthy documents signed by the Chiefs of the two Staffs.<sup>19</sup>

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."<sup>20</sup>

For example, the war-agreement between France and Russia of 21-27 August 1891 has no more obligatory words than "qu'ils se concerteront"

<sup>18</sup> The next day, M. Viviani read the letter in full to the French Chamber of Deputies: *Fr. Yell. Bk.*, 1914, No. 159.

<sup>19</sup> *Cf.* Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff, 23 May 1914: Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 721-2.

<sup>20</sup> *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."<sup>21</sup>

"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."<sup>22</sup>

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."<sup>23</sup>

Sir Edward Grey's letter of 22 November<sup>24</sup> 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-

<sup>21</sup> Pp. 114-5.

<sup>22</sup> P. 217.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>24</sup> *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.”<sup>25</sup>

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.”<sup>26</sup>

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.”<sup>27</sup>

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 interview<sup>28</sup> 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.”<sup>29</sup>

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

<sup>25</sup> Hansard, XVII, cols. 424-5.

<sup>26</sup> Hansard, LXV, col. 2084.

<sup>27</sup> 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.

<sup>28</sup> Interview published by *Pearson's Magazine*, March 1915.

<sup>29</sup> 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 letter<sup>30</sup> 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.”<sup>31</sup>

On the 30th, the French government pressed for a declaration:

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<sup>30</sup> *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.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 87.

“that England would come to the aid of France in the event of a conflict between France and Germany.”<sup>32</sup>

On the same day, Sir Edward Grey wrote to the Ambassador at Paris:

“M. Cambon<sup>33</sup> 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.”<sup>34</sup>

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.”<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 99.

<sup>33</sup> French Ambassador at London.

<sup>34</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 105.

<sup>35</sup> 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."<sup>36</sup>

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."<sup>37</sup>

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."<sup>38</sup>

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

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 124. Cf. No. 117.

<sup>37</sup> Coll. Dip. Docs., p. 543; Loreburn, *How the War Came*, pp. 205, 206.

<sup>38</sup> 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."<sup>39</sup>

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."<sup>40</sup>

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."<sup>41</sup>

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

<sup>39</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 126. Cf. Poincaré, *The Origins of the War*, pp. 251-3.

<sup>40</sup> Churchill, *op. cit.*, I, p. 231.

<sup>41</sup> 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.”<sup>42</sup> 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.”<sup>43</sup>

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.”<sup>44</sup>

“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.”<sup>45</sup>

“The Cabinet sat almost continuously throughout Sunday, and up to luncheon-time it looked as if the majority would resign. The grief

<sup>42</sup> Fr. Yell Bk., 1914, No. 143.

<sup>43</sup> III, p. 493.

<sup>44</sup> *The World Crisis*, I, p. 216. See also pp. 228-9.

<sup>45</sup> P. 234.



and horror of so many able colleagues were painful to witness. But what could any one do? ”<sup>46</sup>

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.”<sup>47</sup>

The reference is to the Bonar Law note already quoted.<sup>48</sup> 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.”<sup>49</sup>

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.<sup>50</sup> 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

<sup>46</sup> P. 232.

<sup>47</sup> P. 232.

<sup>48</sup> *Ante*, p. 121.

<sup>49</sup> P. 234.

<sup>50</sup> 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,<sup>51</sup> 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 see<sup>52</sup>) 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-

<sup>51</sup> See cap. XVII.

<sup>52</sup> 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." <sup>53</sup>

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." <sup>54</sup>

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." <sup>55</sup>

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

<sup>53</sup> Hansard, LXIII, cols. 457-8.

<sup>54</sup> *The European Commonwealth*, p. 159.

<sup>55</sup> *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.”<sup>56</sup>

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.<sup>57</sup> 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.

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<sup>56</sup> 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.

<sup>57</sup> *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."<sup>58</sup> 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,

<sup>58</sup> 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."<sup>59</sup>

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

<sup>59</sup> 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.”<sup>60</sup>

In other words, “our attitude would be determined,” not by the terms of any treaty, but by “public feeling.”<sup>61</sup> 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*.”<sup>62</sup>

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.<sup>63</sup> 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.”

<sup>60</sup> *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.

<sup>61</sup> 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.

<sup>62</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 148. The French Ambassador gave a very different account of this interview: See Fr. Yell. Bk., 1914, No. 137.

<sup>63</sup> 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."<sup>64</sup>

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-

<sup>64</sup> 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.”<sup>65</sup>

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.<sup>66</sup> 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.”<sup>67</sup>

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.”<sup>68</sup>

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—

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 101.

<sup>66</sup> See cap. XIV.

<sup>67</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, Nos. 114, 115.

<sup>68</sup> *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.<sup>69</sup> 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.”<sup>70</sup>

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.”<sup>71</sup>

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

<sup>69</sup> This last point is made more clear in a subsequent part of the speech.

<sup>70</sup> 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.

<sup>71</sup> *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.<sup>72</sup> 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.”<sup>73</sup> By urging Belgium to resist the passage through her territory of the German army, and pledging the support of his country,<sup>74</sup> 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

<sup>72</sup> Sir Edward’s speech is quoted upon subsequent pages.

<sup>73</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 115.

<sup>74</sup> 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.”<sup>75</sup>

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;<sup>76</sup> 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.”<sup>77</sup>

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.”<sup>78</sup>

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.”<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Belg. Grey Bk., 1914, No. 11. Cf. Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 128.

<sup>76</sup> Belg. Grey Bk., 1914, No. 25.

<sup>77</sup> 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.

<sup>78</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 155.

<sup>79</sup> Belg. Grey Bk., 1914, No. 22.

But the Belgian Minister in London had been advised of the resolve early on the previous day,<sup>80</sup> 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.”<sup>81</sup>

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.”<sup>82</sup>

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.”<sup>83</sup>

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,”<sup>84</sup>

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.”<sup>85</sup>

The next day (5 August), at the opening of the House of Commons, the British Prime Minister read the Belgian appeal, and afterwards (6th)

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 23.

<sup>81</sup> Belg. Grey Bk., 1914, No. 38.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 40.

<sup>83</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 153.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 114.

<sup>85</sup> *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 Serbia 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."<sup>86</sup>

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."<sup>87</sup>

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."<sup>88</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Quoted by Norman Angell: *The Fruits of Victory*, p. 106.

<sup>87</sup> Quoted *ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> 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."<sup>89</sup>

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:

<sup>89</sup> *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.”<sup>90</sup>

Still more significant was his indifference to the fate of Luxemburg when invaded by Germany,<sup>91</sup> for the United Kingdom was one of the treaty-guarantors of Luxemburg’s neutrality.<sup>92</sup>

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.<sup>93</sup> 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.”<sup>94</sup>

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

<sup>90</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, Nos. 5, 87.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 148.

<sup>92</sup> 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.

<sup>93</sup> See cap. IX.

<sup>94</sup> *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.”<sup>95</sup>  
 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

<sup>95</sup> 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)."<sup>96</sup>

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,'" <sup>97</sup> 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

<sup>96</sup> *After the Peace*, pp. 75-7.

<sup>97</sup> 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.<sup>98</sup> 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.”<sup>99</sup>

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*<sup>100</sup> 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

<sup>98</sup> Caps. XIX, XX, XXI.

<sup>99</sup> Quoted in *Fortnightly Rev.*, July 1920, p. 20.

<sup>100</sup> 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.”<sup>101</sup>

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),<sup>102</sup> and Austria-Hungary and Italy, as against Serbia and Montenegro in 1913.<sup>103</sup> 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

<sup>101</sup> Hansard, pp. 734-5.

<sup>102</sup> Cap. XXII.

<sup>103</sup> 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.<sup>104</sup> 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.”*<sup>105</sup>

*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

<sup>104</sup> It is unusual to qualify such an obligation by the adjective “moral.”

<sup>105</sup> *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.<sup>106</sup> They explain the settlement of all disputes with France by the treaty of 1904.<sup>107</sup> 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;<sup>108</sup> and the later letter of 2 August 1914.<sup>109</sup> 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."<sup>110</sup>

They explain why Sir Edward Grey said to the French Ambassador on 29 July 1914:

<sup>106</sup> See *post* cap. XIV.

<sup>107</sup> 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.

<sup>108</sup> This letter is quoted *ante*, p. 117-8.

<sup>109</sup> This letter is quoted *ante*, p. 125.

<sup>110</sup> 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."<sup>111</sup>

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."<sup>112</sup>

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

<sup>111</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 87.

<sup>112</sup> *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."<sup>113</sup>

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.<sup>114</sup> 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.<sup>115</sup> 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."<sup>116</sup>

(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."<sup>117</sup>

(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.<sup>118</sup>

(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

<sup>113</sup> *How the War Came*, p. 218. And see pp. 186-9, 190, 192, 198, 205.

<sup>114</sup> 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.

<sup>115</sup> *Ante*, pp. 122-4. And see cap. XXVII.

<sup>116</sup> Br. Blue Bk., 1914, No. 6.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 17.

<sup>118</sup> 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.”<sup>119</sup>

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.”<sup>120</sup>

(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.”<sup>121</sup>

(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.”<sup>122</sup>

(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.”<sup>123</sup>

(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.”<sup>124</sup>

(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

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 99.

<sup>120</sup> Coll. Dip. Docs., p. 543.

<sup>121</sup> *Current History*, X, Pt. 1, p. 105. Quoted by Loreburn, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

<sup>122</sup> *L'Allemagne avant la Guerre*, p. 306.

<sup>123</sup> Loreburn, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

<sup>124</sup> 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.”<sup>125</sup>

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.”<sup>126</sup>

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 noted<sup>127</sup>) 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:

<sup>125</sup> III, p. 508.

<sup>126</sup> *The Citizen* (Ottawa), 6 Nov. 1922.

<sup>127</sup> 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.”<sup>128</sup>

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,<sup>129</sup> and Poincaré had undertaken to deliver “a kind of lecture” to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador there.<sup>130</sup> 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.”<sup>131</sup>

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,<sup>132</sup> British, French, and Russian co-ordinated preparations for war, let us notice here a number of incidents which make clear the following:

<sup>128</sup> A communiqué to the *Russkoe Slovo*. Quoted and commented upon by Signor Tittoni in *Nuovo Antologia*, Rome: *Current History*, V, p. 466.

<sup>129</sup> 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.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 45.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, III, No. 42.

<sup>132</sup> 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.<sup>133</sup>

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.”<sup>134</sup>

To this declaration, by letter of 24 March, Austria-Hungary adhered.<sup>135</sup> 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.”<sup>136</sup>

<sup>133</sup> 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.

<sup>134</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 94-103.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 99-103.

<sup>136</sup> *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.<sup>137</sup>

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.”<sup>138</sup>

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.

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<sup>137</sup> 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. <sup>138</sup> 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.”<sup>139</sup>

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.”<sup>140</sup>

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.<sup>141</sup>

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.<sup>142</sup> 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.”<sup>143</sup>

<sup>139</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk; *Franco-Russian Alliance*, No. 17, Annexe. See *ante cap.* IV, p. 96.

<sup>140</sup> *Fortnightly Rev.*, vol. LXVI, p. 911.

<sup>141</sup> 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.

<sup>142</sup> 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.

<sup>143</sup> 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.”<sup>144</sup>

The speech was received in Germany with “a storm of indignation both in the press and in parliament.”<sup>145</sup> 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.<sup>146</sup>

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.<sup>147</sup> 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.<sup>148</sup> 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.”<sup>149</sup>

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

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reference to other occasions, two of which will be mentioned in a few moments: pp. 158, 160; and p. 160, note.

<sup>144</sup> Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, p. 130. Cf. *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, 277-9.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143. And see pp. 144-5, 151.

<sup>146</sup> 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.

<sup>147</sup> Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

<sup>149</sup> *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."<sup>150</sup>

Nothing having been arranged, the French initiated negotiations<sup>151</sup> 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."<sup>152</sup> 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."<sup>153</sup>

Edward spoke of the Kaiser as the "most brilliant failure in history."<sup>154</sup>

**1901, 17 April.** Negotiations for the Anglo-Japanese alliance commenced between Lord Lansdowne and Count Hayashi.<sup>155</sup> 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

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185-6. And see pp. 222-3.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>152</sup> *The Times* (London), 22 Dec. 1920: quoted in *Cam. Hist. Br. For. Pol.*, III, p. 307.

<sup>153</sup> *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).

<sup>154</sup> Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

<sup>155</sup> *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.”<sup>156</sup>

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.”<sup>157</sup>

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.”<sup>158</sup> 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.”<sup>159</sup>

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.”<sup>160</sup>

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.”<sup>161</sup>

<sup>156</sup> Eckardstein, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 207.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 220.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 217. Cf. *Cam. Hist. Brit. For. Pol.*, III, pp. 282-3.

<sup>161</sup> 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."<sup>162</sup>

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."<sup>163</sup>

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

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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).

<sup>162</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 221. And see p. 225.

<sup>163</sup> *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.'"<sup>104</sup>

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."<sup>105</sup>

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."<sup>106</sup>

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-

<sup>104</sup> *Ann. Reg.*, 1902, pp. [4-5.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. [5-6. Cf. Eckardstein, *op cit.*, p. 228.

<sup>106</sup> *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.”<sup>167</sup>

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.<sup>168</sup> 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.”<sup>169</sup>

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.”<sup>170</sup>

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.”<sup>171</sup>

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.<sup>172</sup> The British military staff

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 229.

<sup>168</sup> Referred to in cap. XXII.

<sup>169</sup> Poincaré: *The Origins of the War*, p. 72.

<sup>170</sup> *The Kaiser's Letters to the Czar*, p. 198. And see p. 199.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 147.

<sup>172</sup> 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 Kaiser<sup>173</sup> 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,<sup>174</sup> 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.”<sup>175</sup>

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.”<sup>176</sup>

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.”<sup>177</sup>

<sup>173</sup> Haldane: *Before the War*, p. 22.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 29-33.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42-3.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>177</sup> 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.<sup>178</sup> 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."<sup>179</sup>

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,<sup>180</sup> 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.

<sup>178</sup> King Edward had met the Kaiser at Kronberg in Aug. 1906, and at Wilhelmshöhe in Aug. 1907: *Ann. Reg.*, 1907 pp. [247-8.

<sup>179</sup> Haldane, *op. cit.*, p. 52. Curiously enough, Haldane passes in silence the German "naval scare" in the United Kingdom in 1909.

<sup>180</sup> 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."<sup>181</sup> 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."<sup>182</sup>

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 Aehrenthal 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.<sup>183</sup> 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!"<sup>184</sup>

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."<sup>185</sup>

<sup>181</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 478-9.

<sup>182</sup> 1908, p. [320.

<sup>183</sup> *Quarterly Review*, Jan. 1923, pp. 3-4.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>185</sup> 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."<sup>186</sup>

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.<sup>187</sup>

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,"<sup>188</sup> although, in the opinion of the French government,<sup>189</sup> the Serbian demands were "difficult to justify" and did not touch Russian "vital interests";<sup>190</sup> although, in the opinion of the British government, Serbia ought not to demand compensation;<sup>191</sup> and although adherence to such a demand "must inevitably lead to war," and was therefore regrettable.<sup>192</sup> 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

<sup>186</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 481-2.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 482.

<sup>188</sup> Benckendorff to Isvolsky: *ibid.*, p. 231.

<sup>189</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 232.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 233-251.

<sup>192</sup> *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.”<sup>193</sup>

1909. The navy question became specially prominent in 1909 — the year of the German “navy scare”<sup>194</sup> 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.”<sup>195</sup>

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.”<sup>196</sup>

<sup>193</sup> Asquith, *op. cit.*, cap. I.

<sup>194</sup> See *post*, cap. XIX.

<sup>195</sup> Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 486. See also *post*, cap. XIX.

<sup>196</sup> *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."<sup>197</sup>

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."<sup>198</sup>

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."<sup>199</sup>

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."<sup>200</sup>

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."<sup>201</sup>

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-

<sup>197</sup> Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 498.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 524-5.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 614.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 525.

<sup>201</sup> *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."<sup>202</sup>

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 opportuntiy to exploit it to her own advantage.<sup>203</sup>

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.<sup>204</sup>

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.<sup>205</sup> 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.<sup>206</sup>

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

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 563.

<sup>203</sup> *Post* cap. XXII.

<sup>204</sup> *Post* cap. XXI.

<sup>205</sup> See cap. XXII, and Sir Edward Grey's speech of 3 Aug. 1914, *post*, pp. 184-6.

<sup>206</sup> 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." <sup>207</sup>

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." <sup>208</sup>

**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." <sup>209</sup>

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*.' <sup>210</sup> Haldane replied: 'Precisely.'" <sup>211</sup>

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." <sup>212</sup>

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." <sup>213</sup>

The Chancellor proposed an agreement, of which the two principal clauses were as follows:

<sup>207</sup> Asquith, *op. cit.*, cap. XVI.

<sup>208</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 614.

<sup>209</sup> Haldane, *op. cit.*, p. 56. Cf. Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 613-39.

<sup>210</sup> A relaxation of strain rather than the creation of an agreement.

<sup>211</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 627-8.

<sup>212</sup> Haldane, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>213</sup> *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."<sup>214</sup>

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."<sup>215</sup>

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."<sup>216</sup>

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."<sup>217</sup>

Trying to reach agreement, the two men recast, for purposes of consideration only,<sup>218</sup> 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

<sup>214</sup> Haldane, *Before the War.*, p. 64. Cf. Bethmann-Hollweg, *Reflections on the World War*, p. 50.

<sup>215</sup> Bethmann-Hollweg, *op. cit.*, p. 52. Cf. p. 53.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>218</sup> 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.”<sup>219</sup>

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.”<sup>220</sup>

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.”<sup>221</sup>

In case one of these was agreed to, Germany would meet British wishes with reference to navy construction.<sup>222</sup> 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.”<sup>223</sup>

<sup>219</sup> *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 835; Asquith, *op. cit.*, cap. VIII.

<sup>220</sup> *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 836. Cf. Bethmann-Hollweg, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>221</sup> *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.

<sup>222</sup> British Foreign Office statement, as published in *N. Y. Times*, 1 Sep. 1915.

<sup>223</sup> *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."<sup>224</sup>

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."<sup>225</sup>

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

<sup>224</sup> *The Times* (London), 9 Sept. 1915.

<sup>225</sup> 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. Times*, 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.”<sup>226</sup>

**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.”<sup>227</sup>

**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.”<sup>228</sup>

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

<sup>226</sup> *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 269. See also *ibid.*, pp. 275, 313.

<sup>227</sup> Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 644.

<sup>228</sup> 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.”<sup>229</sup>

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.”<sup>230</sup>

1912, October–November. During the Morocco incident of 1911, Russia had deemed the moment opportune for improvement in her posi-

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, cols. 2035–6. See Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 648–9.

<sup>230</sup> *Un Livre 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.<sup>231</sup> 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.”<sup>232</sup>

Interrogated as to the attitude of the United Kingdom in case of war, Sir Edward Grey gave assurances of “diplomatic support” for Russia,<sup>233</sup> but, when pressed as to participation in the war, his stereotyped reply was that it depended “on the attitude of the remaining Powers.”<sup>234</sup> 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.”<sup>235</sup>

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.”<sup>236</sup>

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.”<sup>237</sup>

Reporting a conversation with Sir Edward Grey, the Russian Ambassador said (20 November):

<sup>231</sup> Cf. Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 320, 326, 328–9, 417–8.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 373. And see pp. 374, 420, 421.

<sup>233</sup> Benckendorff to Sazonoff, 14 Nov. 1912 (*ibid.*, p. 399); Isvolsky to Sazonoff, 17 Nov. 1912 (*ibid.*, p. 403).

<sup>234</sup> 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).

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 400.

<sup>236</sup> *Post*, p. 182.

<sup>237</sup> *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.”<sup>238</sup>

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.<sup>239</sup> 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.”<sup>240</sup>

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,<sup>241</sup> 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-

<sup>238</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 405.

<sup>239</sup> *Ante*, pp. 117-8.

<sup>240</sup> *The Origins of the War*, pp. 73-4.

<sup>241</sup> 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."<sup>242</sup>

**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."<sup>243</sup>

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."<sup>244</sup>

**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."<sup>245</sup>

"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."<sup>246</sup>

**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-

<sup>242</sup> *Un Livre Noir*, I, pp. 366-7.

<sup>243</sup> Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 668.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 669.

<sup>245</sup> Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 674.

<sup>246</sup> *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.<sup>247</sup>

**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."<sup>248</sup>

A similar view expressed by Poincaré has already been referred to.<sup>249</sup>

**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 government<sup>250</sup> proves that it has made up its mind to cultivate this amelioration<sup>251</sup> only within the limits permitted by the principles of the Triple Entente."<sup>252</sup>

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."<sup>253</sup>

<sup>247</sup> Cap. XVII, p. 532-7.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 720; *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 316.

<sup>249</sup> *Ante*, p. 178.

<sup>250</sup> The reference is to the agreement with Russia for the arrangement of a naval convention.

<sup>251</sup> Better relations with Germany.

<sup>252</sup> *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 323-4.

<sup>253</sup> *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 Alliance<sup>254</sup> — 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

<sup>254</sup> 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.<sup>255</sup> 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

<sup>255</sup> 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.<sup>256</sup>)

**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.

<sup>256</sup> 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 out<sup>257</sup>).

**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*

<sup>257</sup> *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"<sup>258</sup> — 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.<sup>259</sup> 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.<sup>260</sup>

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:

<sup>258</sup> *Ante*, p. 133.

<sup>259</sup> *Ante*, pp. 134-7.

<sup>260</sup> That is not correct. See cap. XIV. 57

"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."<sup>261</sup> 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,

<sup>261</sup> 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."<sup>262</sup>)

**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-

<sup>262</sup> *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,<sup>263</sup> 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,

<sup>263</sup> *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.<sup>264</sup>)

#### 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."<sup>265</sup>

<sup>264</sup> 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*.

<sup>265</sup> 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,<sup>266</sup> 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.<sup>267</sup>

### 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.<sup>268</sup> 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

<sup>266</sup> Cap. XIV.

<sup>267</sup> Cap. XIX.

<sup>268</sup> 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.<sup>1</sup> 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!

<sup>1</sup> 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.”<sup>2</sup>

Observing<sup>3</sup> 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

<sup>2</sup> Djemal Pasha: *Memories of a Turkish Statesman, 1913-1919*, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup> 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.”<sup>4</sup>

Of Russian imperialistic designs, Turkey had good reason to be afraid.<sup>5</sup> 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.”<sup>6</sup>

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-

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 124-5.

<sup>5</sup> 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).

<sup>6</sup> P. 111.

memberment, 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.”<sup>7</sup>

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.<sup>8</sup> 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.”<sup>9</sup>

Proposals for alliance between Turkey and Greece, on the one hand,

<sup>7</sup> *My Diaries*, II, p. 436.

<sup>8</sup> “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).

<sup>9</sup> 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.<sup>10</sup>

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."<sup>11</sup>

**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.<sup>12</sup> On 28 July, the Grand Vizier, at the request of the Sultan, proposed to the German Ambassador certain terms of an alliance.<sup>13</sup> On the same day, Berlin accepted the terms and submitted a draft.<sup>14</sup> Of this the Grand Vizier objected (30 July) to one clause.<sup>15</sup> Berlin having met the objection,<sup>16</sup> a treaty was signed on 2 August.<sup>17</sup> 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,<sup>18</sup> and

<sup>10</sup> Upon these points, see *ibid.*, Nos. 81, 99, 117, 243, 466.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 117. And see Nos. 149, 285.

<sup>12</sup> His annotation on *ibid.*, No. 117; and Nos. 141, 144.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 285.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 320. And see No. 431.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 411.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 508, 547.

<sup>17</sup> *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.

<sup>18</sup> 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 . . .<sup>19</sup> 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."<sup>20</sup>

On the Turkish side, the treaty had been arranged by the four ministers above mentioned. It was revealed to some only of their colleagues.<sup>21</sup> On 5 August, Germany requested ratification of the treaty.<sup>22</sup> 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.<sup>23</sup> 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

<sup>19</sup> A group of figures is missing: Kautsky Docs., No. 733, note.

<sup>20</sup> Kautsky Docs., No. 733. Cf. *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 115.

<sup>21</sup> Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-10, 116, 122, 127.

<sup>22</sup> *Kautsky Docs.*, No. 865.

<sup>23</sup> Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

neutrality against either side. We immediately translated words into deeds."<sup>24</sup>

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.<sup>25</sup> 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.<sup>26</sup>

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 Committee<sup>27</sup> 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."<sup>28</sup>

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

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>25</sup> German Ambassador at Constantinople to German Foreign Office, 3 August 1914: Kautsky Docs., No. 795. And see Nos. 816, 836, 854.

<sup>26</sup> *Forty Years in Constantinople*: quoted in *Nineteenth Century*, May 1919, p. 1004.

<sup>27</sup> The Committee of Union and Progress.

<sup>28</sup> *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.”<sup>29</sup>

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.”<sup>30</sup>

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,<sup>31</sup> Djavid Bey,<sup>32</sup> 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,<sup>33</sup> 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

<sup>29</sup> *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.

<sup>30</sup> *Forty Years in Constantinople*, p. 345. Quoted in *Nineteenth Century*, May 1919, p. 1005.

<sup>31</sup> Said Halim.

<sup>32</sup> Minister of Finance.

<sup>33</sup> 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."<sup>34</sup>

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.<sup>35</sup> 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.<sup>36</sup> 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 neutrality<sup>37</sup> — 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."<sup>38</sup>

**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 *Reshadie*, which were being built in England for the Turkish government, and which were, at the outbreak of the war, upon the point of completion.<sup>39</sup> 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-

<sup>34</sup> Letter to the British Foreign Minister, 20 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.

<sup>35</sup> Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-2.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>39</sup> 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." <sup>40</sup>

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." <sup>41</sup>

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." <sup>42</sup>

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, <sup>43</sup> 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." <sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Br. Blue Bk.: Turkey, 1914, Cd. 7628, No. 1.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 2.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 6. Cf. Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, No. 10.

<sup>43</sup> "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.

<sup>44</sup> 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."<sup>45</sup>

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."<sup>46</sup>

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 '*Reshadie*' at the beginning of the war."<sup>47</sup>

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:

<sup>45</sup> Br. Blue Bk.: Turkey, 1914, Cd. 7628, No. 24.

<sup>46</sup> *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).

<sup>47</sup> 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.”<sup>48</sup>

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?”<sup>49</sup>

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.”<sup>50</sup>

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.<sup>51</sup> Every English officer left the fleet.

<sup>48</sup> *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.

<sup>49</sup> Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *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."<sup>52</sup>

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."<sup>53</sup>

**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-Arab<sup>54</sup> to anchor at Mohammerah in Persia, "whilst Shatt-el-Arab is under Turkish domination."<sup>55</sup>

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."<sup>56</sup>

Four days afterwards (17 October), Grey telegraphed:

"You should inform Turkish Government that there is no present intention of her<sup>57</sup> 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."<sup>58</sup>

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-

<sup>52</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 164.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 165.

<sup>54</sup> The joint stream of the Tigris and Euphrates.

<sup>55</sup> Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7628, No. 117. And see Nos. 110, 111.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 123.

<sup>57</sup> H. M. S. *Espiègle*.

<sup>58</sup> 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."<sup>59</sup>

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."<sup>60</sup> Sir Edward Grey replied the next day:

"Your telegram of 23rd October gives the impression that Turkey

<sup>59</sup> Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7628, No. 118.

<sup>60</sup> *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*."<sup>61</sup>

**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."<sup>62</sup> 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."<sup>63</sup>

To Turkish suggestions of British concessions, Mallet could offer little encouragement. Restoration of Egypt, he said, was "entirely unpractical,"<sup>64</sup> and abolition of the capitulations<sup>65</sup> could be only hypothetically

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 166.

<sup>62</sup> 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.

<sup>63</sup> Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7628, No. 91.

<sup>64</sup> *Ante*, p. 213.

<sup>65</sup> 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.”<sup>66</sup>

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.”<sup>67</sup>

**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

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<sup>66</sup> Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7628, No. 28. Cf. Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, No. 34.

<sup>67</sup> *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." <sup>68</sup>

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." <sup>69</sup>

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." <sup>70</sup>

**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,<sup>71</sup> 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.<sup>72</sup> 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 Bey <sup>73</sup> 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*

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 82.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 83.

<sup>70</sup> Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, No. 58.

<sup>71</sup> Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, p. 127. Cf. Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, No. 87.

<sup>72</sup> Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

<sup>73</sup> A former Grand Vizier.

and *Breslau* into the Black Sea. Yet the excursion of these two warships, 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.”<sup>74</sup>

On the 27th, the *Goeben* and the rest of the Turkish fleet left for the Black Sea,<sup>75</sup> where happened that which was expected. On the 29th, the fleet bombarded Odessa, Theodosia, and Novorossiysk — Russian ports.<sup>76</sup> 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

<sup>74</sup> Djemal Pasha, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-130.

<sup>75</sup> 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.

<sup>76</sup> 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."<sup>77</sup>

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;<sup>78</sup> 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.

<sup>77</sup> Br. White Paper: Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7716; *The Times* (London), 11 Dec. 1914. Cf. Russ. Orange Bk., 1915, Nos. 94, 97, 98.

<sup>78</sup> "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.”<sup>79</sup>

**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.”<sup>80</sup>

<sup>79</sup> *The Times* (London), 2 Nov. 1914. The despatch referred to is No. 145 in Br. Blue Bk., Turkey, 1914: Cd. 7628.

<sup>80</sup> *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.<sup>81</sup> 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,

<sup>81</sup> 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."<sup>82</sup>

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.<sup>83</sup> 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.<sup>84</sup> 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.

<sup>82</sup> Upon this point see cap. II, pp. 60-8.

<sup>83</sup> In Russian opinion, that was to follow upon success in a great European war. See *ante*, cap. II, pp. 36, 55-7.

<sup>84</sup> *Ante*, pp. 39-58; 200-1.



## CHAPTER VII

### WHY DID ITALY ENTER THE WAR?

THE TREATIES, 224. — Security against France, 224. — The Triple Alliance, 224. — Spanish Treaty, 227. — Triple Alliance, Naval Convention, 227. — Treaty with Austria-Hungary and the United Kingdom, March 1887, 229. — Treaty with Austria-Hungary and the United Kingdom, December 1887, 229. — Treaty with Austria-Hungary, 1900-1, 230. — Gravitation toward France, 230. — French War Treaty, 231. — Effect of the Treaties, 233. — Italy and the United Kingdom — Baja, 1909, 234. — Italy and Russia — Racconigi Treaty, 1909, 235. — Tripoli — War with Turkey, 237. — Italy and Russia, 239. — Fluctuation, 240. — Summation, 242.

ITALY AND THE WAR — THREE PERIODS, 243.

[I] PRIOR TO DECLARATION OF ITALIAN NEUTRALITY, 243. — Article VII of Triple Alliance Treaty, 244. — (1) "In the region of the Balkans," 244. — (2) Necessity for previous Agreement, 245. — (3) Compensation, 246. — Interpretation immaterial, 247. — German Pressure on Austria-Hungary, 247. — Austro-Hungarian Evasions, 248. — Austro-Hungarian Purposes, 249. — No Consultation as to Demands on Serbia, 250. — No Intimation as to War Intentions, 251. — Berchtold's partial Success, 252.

[II] FIRST PART OF THE NEUTRALITY PERIOD, 253.

[III] SECOND PART OF THE NEUTRALITY PERIOD, 254. — The Auction, 254. — Sonnino's Commencement, 255. — The War Situation, 255. — The Negotiations, 256. — Von Bülow, 257. — Austria-Hungary's Counter-Claim, 258. — A New Stage, 258. — Another Stage, 259. — Italy's Veto on Military Action, 259. — Intervention of Berlin, 260. — Italy's Demands, 260. — Italy and the Entente, 261. — Italian Basis accepted by Austria-Hungary, 263. — Sonnino's Condition, 263. — Burian's Offer, 264. — Italy's Demands, 264. — Further Negotiations, 265. — Treaty denounced, 266. — Further Negotiations, 267. — Parliament, 268. — Burian's final Effort, 268.

TREATY WITH THE ENTENTE ALLIES, 268.

DECLARATION OF WAR, 270. — Austria-Hungary protests, 270. — Italy's Choice, 271.

COMMENT ON THE FOREGOING, 272.

ITALIAN AND OTHER COMMENTS. 273.

WHY DID ITALY ENTER THE WAR? 276.

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."<sup>1</sup>

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.

<sup>1</sup> *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."<sup>2</sup> Fearful of invasion<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

"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."<sup>5</sup>

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 France<sup>6</sup> 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

<sup>2</sup> *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, 204. And see pp. 272-3.

<sup>3</sup> *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, pp. 11-26, 204.

<sup>4</sup> *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, vol. II, pp. 28, 29, 37, 58, 59.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 38-9.

<sup>6</sup> *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,<sup>7</sup> 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 two<sup>8</sup> 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”<sup>9</sup>

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-

<sup>7</sup> 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).

<sup>8</sup> Meaning France and Russia.

<sup>9</sup> 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.*”<sup>10</sup>

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 fœderis* 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

<sup>10</sup> *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.”<sup>11</sup>

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.<sup>12</sup> 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.”<sup>13</sup>

**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.”<sup>14</sup>

**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.<sup>15</sup> 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

<sup>11</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 113.

<sup>12</sup> 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).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 227, 251.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>15</sup> *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.<sup>16</sup>

“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.

<sup>16</sup> *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.”<sup>17</sup>

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.”<sup>18</sup>

**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.”<sup>19</sup> The alignment of the

<sup>17</sup> *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.

<sup>18</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 101. Cf. *ibid.*, II, pp. 82-3.

<sup>19</sup> *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."<sup>20</sup>

**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.<sup>21</sup> 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."<sup>22</sup>

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."<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 197, 199.

<sup>21</sup> 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).

<sup>22</sup> M. Barrère to M. Delcassé, 10 Jan. 1901: Fr. Yell. Bk.: Franco-Italian Accords, No. 1.

<sup>23</sup> *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.”<sup>24</sup>

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.”<sup>25</sup>

**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.”<sup>26</sup> 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.”<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Barrère to Delcassé, 10 January 1901: *Ibid.*, No. 1.

<sup>25</sup> Barrère to Prinetti (Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs), 1 Nov. 1902: *Ibid.*, No. 7; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 249.

<sup>26</sup> Barrère to Poincaré; Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 11; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 233.

<sup>27</sup> 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.”<sup>28</sup>

*Mutatis mutandis*, Italy assumed precisely similar obligations to France.<sup>29</sup> 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.”<sup>30</sup>

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

<sup>28</sup> Barrère to Prinetti, 1 Nov. 1902: Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 7; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 253-57.

<sup>29</sup> Prinetti to Barrère, 1 Nov. 1902: Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 8; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 249-51. The treaty contained no time-limit and needed no renewal: Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

<sup>30</sup> 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.”<sup>31</sup>

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.”<sup>32</sup>

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.<sup>33</sup>

**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:

<sup>31</sup> Barrère to Poincaré, 10 March 1912: Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 11; Pribram, *op. cit.*, II, p. 239.

<sup>32</sup> *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).

<sup>33</sup> 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.<sup>34</sup>

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.<sup>35</sup>

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 Baja<sup>36</sup> 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 1909) from which may be

<sup>34</sup> 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 Raceonigi 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.

<sup>35</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Franco-Italian Accords*, No. 1, Annexes 1 and 2; Nos. 7, 8. Cf. Tardieu: *La Conférence d'Algéiras*, p. 61; and Dillon: *From the Triple to the Quadruple Alliance*, p. 44.

<sup>36</sup> 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."<sup>37</sup> 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."<sup>38</sup>

**Italy and Russia — Racconigi Treaty — 1909.** Six months afterwards (23–5 October 1909), the meeting at Racconigi<sup>39</sup> 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

<sup>37</sup> A longer extract may be seen *ante*, cap. V, p. 168. The whole report is in Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 146–7.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>39</sup> 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,<sup>40</sup> 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."<sup>41</sup>

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 Raconigi; they seem to incline to the belief that Italy in the future will stand closer to the Entente than to the Triple Alliance."<sup>42</sup>

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 Raconigi was a significant victory won by Russian diplomacy over Austria-Hungary."<sup>43</sup>

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."<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup> This would include arrangements as to Albania. Cf. Isvolsky to Neratoff, 22 July 1911: Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

<sup>41</sup> *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.

<sup>42</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>44</sup> *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.”<sup>45</sup>

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.”<sup>46</sup>

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”<sup>47</sup> — that she would be actuated by no “sentiment except that of *sacro egoismo*.”<sup>48</sup>

**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.<sup>49</sup> 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.<sup>50</sup> In his written reply to Crispi, Salisbury was somewhat guarded, but ended his letter with the words:

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>47</sup> *Ante*, p. 235.

<sup>48</sup> *Ante*, p. 223.

<sup>49</sup> *The Memoirs of Francesco Crispi*, II, pp. 114-18; Dawson, *The German Empire*, II, p. 109.

<sup>50</sup> *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."<sup>51</sup>

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.<sup>52</sup>

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.<sup>53</sup>

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.<sup>54</sup>

These arrangements having been effected, Italy took advantage of the European crisis in connection with the second of the Morocco incidents<sup>55</sup> 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."<sup>56</sup>

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 Algeiras 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."<sup>57</sup>

In other words, once France was secure in Morocco, she might disregard her obligations to Italy.<sup>58</sup> In his *Mémoires de ma Vie*, Giolitti (the Italian Prime Minister) sought to justify his action by the assertion that:

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 455.

<sup>52</sup> *Ante*, pp. 230-1.

<sup>53</sup> The text of the agreement appears *ante*, p. 227.

<sup>54</sup> The text of the agreement appears *ante*, p. 235-6.

<sup>55</sup> *Post*, cap. XXII.

<sup>56</sup> Siebert & Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 159. The reference is to the Racconigi treaty: *ante*, pp. 235-6.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>58</sup> *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.”<sup>59</sup>

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.”<sup>60</sup>

As in Morocco and Persia,<sup>61</sup> 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.”<sup>62</sup>

**Italy and Russia.** When, in 1912, an “increasing coolness” in Franco-Italian relations supervened<sup>63</sup> 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

<sup>59</sup> Pp. 207-8.

<sup>60</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

<sup>61</sup> *Post*, cap. XXII.

<sup>62</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 608.

<sup>63</sup> *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.”<sup>64</sup>

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 France<sup>65</sup> 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.”<sup>66</sup>

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,<sup>67</sup> 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

<sup>64</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 192-3. And see pp. 194-6.

<sup>65</sup> 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.

<sup>66</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-200.

<sup>67</sup> French Ambassador at Rome.

may, I must direct your serious attention to the unsatisfactory relations existing between France and Italy.”<sup>68</sup>

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.”<sup>69</sup>

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.”<sup>70</sup>

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.<sup>71</sup> 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.”<sup>72</sup>

The statement was true, but misleading, and by the Entente Powers “not considered categorical enough.”<sup>73</sup> 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.<sup>74</sup> 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

<sup>68</sup> 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.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 203. Cf. *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 194.

<sup>70</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 203. Cf. *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 220.

<sup>71</sup> *Ante*, pp. 227-9.

<sup>72</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> 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.”<sup>75</sup>

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.”<sup>76</sup>

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.”<sup>77</sup>

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,”<sup>78</sup> “l’Italie est plus triplicienne que jamais”;<sup>79</sup> renewed the Triple Alliance; supplemented

<sup>75</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 208.

<sup>77</sup> *Ante*, p. 228.

<sup>78</sup> Telg. of Isvolsky, 9 Jan. 1912: *Un Livre Noir*, II p. 2; and see pp. 179–80.

<sup>79</sup> The view of the French Foreign Minister, 13 March 1913: *Ibid.*, p. 46. See, however, Kautsky Docs., No. 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 occasions<sup>80</sup>: Italy would wait, and, closely watching the course of hostilities, would prepare to fly to the relief of the victor.<sup>81</sup> She acted as foretold.<sup>82</sup>

### 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 decrees<sup>83</sup> 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;<sup>84</sup> that acute differences of view with reference to Article VII of the treaty of the Triple Alliance<sup>85</sup> 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

<sup>80</sup> *Ante*, cap. III, pp. 88, 91.

<sup>81</sup> *Post*, p. 275.

<sup>82</sup> Further observations upon this subject may be seen in cap. III, pp. 87-92.

<sup>83</sup> *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., I, No. 35.

<sup>84</sup> *Kautsky Docs.*, No. 46; *Kautsky, The Guilt &c.*, pp. 148-50.

<sup>85</sup> *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.”<sup>86</sup>

#### 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.<sup>87</sup>

(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.<sup>88</sup> Germany at once concurred in the Italian view,<sup>89</sup> and afterwards urged admission of the point.<sup>90</sup> On the 25th July, the German Chancellor telegraphed to Vienna:

<sup>86</sup> 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.

<sup>87</sup> P. 226.

<sup>88</sup> 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.

<sup>89</sup> *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., II, Nos. 50, 63; Kautsky Docs., Nos. 150, 326.

<sup>90</sup> *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., II, No. 87; III, Nos. 32, 81, 126; Kautsky, *The Guilt* &c., 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.”<sup>91</sup>

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.”<sup>92</sup>

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.<sup>93</sup> Under pressure from Germany, Berchtold eventually withdrew the condition.<sup>94</sup>

(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.<sup>95</sup> Had Berchtold, however, so stated his case, Italy might well have replied that, as he had abstained from

<sup>91</sup> Kautsky, *The Guilt &c.*, p. 156.

<sup>92</sup> 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.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 107, 108, 109.

<sup>94</sup> Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 43, 44.

<sup>95</sup> 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."<sup>96</sup>

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."<sup>97</sup>

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."<sup>98</sup>

(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

<sup>96</sup> Aus. Red Bk., O. F., II, No. 52.

<sup>97</sup> *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.

<sup>98</sup> *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.”<sup>99</sup>

Upon the other point — with reference to the source from which compensation might be derived — Italy had legally the stronger case.<sup>100</sup> 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.<sup>101</sup>

**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.”<sup>102</sup>

Under these circumstances, Jagow, at the express instance of the Kaiser, telegraphed to the German Ambassador at Vienna (27 July):

<sup>99</sup> 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.

<sup>100</sup> 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.*

<sup>101</sup> See cap. XXII.

<sup>102</sup> 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."<sup>103</sup>

Jagow went so far as to recommend the voluntary cession of the Trentino.<sup>104</sup> 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,<sup>105</sup> 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."<sup>106</sup>

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."<sup>107</sup>

Having acted upon this instruction,<sup>108</sup> the Ambassador received from the Italian Foreign Minister (29 July), the reply that "It is evident that an agreement upon this point is urgent."<sup>109</sup> 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,"<sup>110</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Kautsky Docs., No. 267; Kautsky, *The Guilt, &c.*, p. 156.

<sup>104</sup> Kautsky Docs., No. 46. Cf. Nos. 94, 326, 328.

<sup>105</sup> Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I, No. 32.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 42.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, II, No. 51. And see No. 63.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 85. And see No. 86; and III, No. 139.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, III, No. 111.

<sup>110</sup> 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.”<sup>111</sup>

**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,<sup>112</sup> 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.<sup>113</sup> 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.”<sup>114</sup>

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*.”<sup>115</sup>

Italy was not to be put off with such trifling,<sup>116</sup> 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.”<sup>117</sup>

<sup>111</sup> Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, No. 79. And see II, Nos. 81, 85, 86.

<sup>112</sup> The proceedings of the Council will be referred to in cap. XXVII.

<sup>113</sup> See *post*, cap. XXVII.

<sup>114</sup> Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I, No. 34.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 43. The Ambassador made the same distinction in a later interview (31 July): *Ibid.*, III, No. 60.

<sup>116</sup> Kautsky Docs., No. 119. See Kautsky, *The Guilt &c.*, p. 153.

<sup>117</sup> 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.”<sup>118</sup>

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.”<sup>119</sup> 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.”<sup>120</sup>

There can be little surprise that Italy was irritated.<sup>121</sup> London, Paris, and St. Petersburg had the same experience as Rome. Even Berlin felt constrained (as we shall see<sup>122</sup>) 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

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.* Cf. Kautsky Docs., No. 428; and see No. 328.

<sup>119</sup> Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, No. 148.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> Kautsky Docs., No. 771.

<sup>122</sup> Cap. XXVII.

afternoon of the 23d.<sup>125</sup> Of this incivility, Italy made strong comment to Serbia.<sup>123</sup> Berchtold had proposed to treat Italy in the same way,<sup>124</sup> but changed his mind and delayed communication until the afternoon of the 23d.<sup>125</sup> Of this incivility, Italy made strong complaint to Berlin as well as to Vienna.<sup>126</sup> 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.”<sup>127</sup>

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.”<sup>128</sup>

**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.<sup>129</sup> The Foreign Offices came to agreement. German support was assured.<sup>130</sup> Italy, on the other hand, was kept in the dark,<sup>131</sup> 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.”<sup>132</sup>

His idea was that Italy being unreliable,<sup>133</sup> 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.”<sup>134</sup>

He proposed, he said (18 July), “to place the Italian Government before a *fait accompli*.”<sup>135</sup> Very naturally, Italy resented the treatment. Reporting a conversation with San Giuliano (Italian Foreign Minister) on 3 August, the German Ambassador said:

<sup>123</sup> 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.

<sup>124</sup> Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I, Nos. 16, 20, 22, 35, 49, 50.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 50, 56.

<sup>126</sup> Kautsky, *The Guilt &c.*, p. 152. And see Aus. Red. Bk., O. F., III, Nos. 38, 88.

<sup>127</sup> Aus. Red Bk., O. F., II, No. 50. Cf. Kautsky Docs., No. 78.

<sup>128</sup> Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, No. 164. See also No. 167; II, Nos. 53, 87; and Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 37.

<sup>129</sup> See cap. XXVII.

<sup>130</sup> Ger. White Bk., 1914; Coll. Dip. Docs., p. 406.

<sup>131</sup> Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 35, 36, 88.

<sup>132</sup> Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I, No. 3.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 35, 41; II, No. 86.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, I, No. 16.

<sup>135</sup> 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.”<sup>136</sup> 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.”<sup>137</sup>

On 4 August, the Ambassador went to Rome in order, if possible, to turn Italy from the policy which she appeared to have adopted.<sup>138</sup> 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.”<sup>139</sup>

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.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 745. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 88.

<sup>137</sup> Kautsky Docs., No. 573. And see No. 577.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 844; Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, No. 141.

<sup>139</sup> *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";<sup>140</sup> 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."<sup>141</sup>

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 admitted<sup>142</sup>), 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,<sup>143</sup> unprepared; that her troops in Libya would be left without

<sup>140</sup> *Ante*, p. 225.

<sup>141</sup> 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.

<sup>142</sup> *Post*, cap. XXVII.

<sup>143</sup> 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,<sup>144</sup> and her newly acquired territories taken from her; that popular opinion being Austrophobe, no government dared propose an anti-Serbian war;<sup>145</sup> and that, whatever the treaty might require, for the King and government *ultra posse nemo obligatur*.<sup>146</sup> When the Italian King telegraphed to the Emperor-King (2 August) that Italy "will maintain an attitude of amicable neutrality,"<sup>147</sup> 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."<sup>148</sup>

On 3 August, Italy formally declared her neutrality.<sup>149</sup> 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.<sup>150</sup>

### 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.<sup>151</sup> 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.

<sup>144</sup> Kautsky Docs., No. 614.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 46, 261, 745, 771, 840, 850.

<sup>146</sup> There is no obligation beyond the possible.

<sup>147</sup> Kautsky Docs., No. 700; Aus. Red Bk., O. F. III, No. 100.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 117; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 37.

<sup>149</sup> Aus. Red Bk., O. F., III, Nos. 113, 134.

<sup>150</sup> Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 35-73.

<sup>151</sup> 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 <sup>152</sup>) 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."<sup>153</sup>

**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-

<sup>152</sup> *Ante*, p. 226.

<sup>153</sup> 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.<sup>154</sup> Up to the present there had been only "momentary" occupation.<sup>155</sup> Pressed<sup>156</sup> 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,"<sup>157</sup> 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.<sup>158</sup>

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."<sup>159</sup> 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";

<sup>154</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 3. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 75, 76, 78.

<sup>155</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, Nos. 3, 4. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 78.

<sup>156</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, Nos. 5, 8. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 77.

<sup>157</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, Nos. 8, 9.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 14.

<sup>159</sup> *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.<sup>160</sup> 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."<sup>161</sup>

**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 1914<sup>162</sup> 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

<sup>160</sup> 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).

<sup>161</sup> 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.

<sup>162</sup> 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.'"<sup>163</sup> 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,<sup>164</sup> and that Valona was occupied merely for the purpose of maintaining order, and would be dealt with by Europe at the end of the war<sup>165</sup> — 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."<sup>166</sup>

**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."<sup>167</sup> 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."<sup>168</sup>

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 11.

<sup>164</sup> 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.

<sup>165</sup> *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.

<sup>166</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 12.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 15. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 103, 104.

<sup>168</sup> 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.”<sup>169</sup>

**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.”<sup>170</sup>

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.”<sup>171</sup>

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.”<sup>172</sup>

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

<sup>169</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 17.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 22. And see Nos. 23, 26, 27. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 106.

<sup>171</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 24.

<sup>172</sup> *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."<sup>173</sup>

**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.<sup>174</sup> 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."<sup>175</sup>

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."<sup>176</sup>

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."<sup>177</sup>

**Italy's Demands.** Sonnino now (4 March) formulated his demands in six propositions<sup>178</sup>:

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 27. The reply is in No. 28. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No.

109.

<sup>174</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915., Nos. 29, 31.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 32. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 111, 113.

<sup>176</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 33.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 34. And see Nos. 27, 32.

<sup>178</sup> *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”<sup>179</sup> — 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.”<sup>180</sup>

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.

<sup>179</sup> Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 90. And see Nos. 119, 133, 137, 160, 162.

<sup>180</sup> 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.<sup>181</sup> 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

<sup>181</sup> 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."<sup>182</sup>

**Italian Basis accepted by Austria-Hungary.** It was probably the opening of the London negotiations and consequent pressure from Berlin<sup>183</sup> 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."<sup>184</sup>

**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.<sup>185</sup> To the latter stipulation, Burian (16 March) raised his former objection,<sup>186</sup> saying that in that respect he had the concurrence of Germany.<sup>187</sup> 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.<sup>188</sup> Sonnino replied that if, as Burian alleged,<sup>189</sup> 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.<sup>190</sup> 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.

<sup>182</sup> May be seen in Cocks: *The Secret Treaties*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>183</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 39.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 39. And see Nos. 40, 41. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 115.

<sup>185</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, Nos. 42, 44. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 117.

<sup>186</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 43.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 45.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 46, 48, 49.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 46.

<sup>190</sup> *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.”<sup>191</sup>

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,<sup>192</sup> 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.<sup>193</sup> 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.<sup>194</sup> 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.<sup>195</sup> Four days afterwards, he asked that Italy formulate her wishes.<sup>196</sup>

**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:

<sup>191</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 48. And see No. 49. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 117, 118, 122.

<sup>192</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 46; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 121. Burian did not approve the proposal: *Ibid.*, No. 125.

<sup>193</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 56. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 131.

<sup>194</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 58. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 132.

<sup>195</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 60. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 134.

<sup>196</sup> 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.<sup>197</sup>

(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.<sup>198</sup>

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.<sup>199</sup> 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.”<sup>200</sup>

Five days afterwards (26 April), “the Pact of London” — Italy’s agreement with the Allies — was secretly<sup>201</sup> signed. The negotiations with Austria-Hungary, nevertheless, continued. On the 27th, Burian offered to send Count Goluchowski, as special envoy, to Rome.<sup>202</sup> 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

<sup>197</sup> 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.

<sup>198</sup> 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.

<sup>199</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 71; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 144. Cf. *ibid.*, Nos. 146, 147, 149, 150.

<sup>200</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 72. Cf. Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 153.

<sup>201</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, No. 168.

<sup>202</sup> *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.<sup>203</sup> 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.”<sup>204</sup>

**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

<sup>203</sup> Ital. Green Bk., 1915, No. 75; Aus. Red Bk. (Second), No. 158.

<sup>204</sup> *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."<sup>205</sup>

**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.<sup>206</sup> 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."<sup>207</sup>

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

<sup>205</sup> 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.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 174.

<sup>207</sup> *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." <sup>208</sup>

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." <sup>209</sup>

In the Senate (21st), there was no minority; the debate:

"exceeded, in patriotic superlatives, yesterday's proceedings in the Chamber of Deputies." <sup>210</sup>

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.'" <sup>211</sup>

### TREATY WITH THE ENTENTE ALLIES

By the Pact of London (26 April 1915), <sup>212</sup> 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 Quarmer, 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. <sup>213</sup> 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.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 192.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 198.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 201. Giolitti's account of the development of the feeling in his *Mémoires de ma Vie* (pp. 332-341) is interesting.

<sup>211</sup> Aus. Red Bk. (Second), Nos. 202, 203.

<sup>212</sup> Cocks, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-41.

<sup>213</sup> 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.”<sup>214</sup>

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.”<sup>215</sup>

*The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy* has the following:

<sup>214</sup> 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.

<sup>215</sup> *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.”<sup>216</sup>

#### 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.”<sup>217</sup> 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.<sup>218</sup>

**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

<sup>216</sup> III, p. 511.

<sup>217</sup> 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.

<sup>218</sup> 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 Isonzo, 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."<sup>219</sup>

**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.<sup>220</sup> 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.<sup>221</sup> 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."<sup>222</sup> Such is the operation of *sacro egoismo!*

<sup>219</sup> *N. Y. Times*, 29 May 1915. Cf. *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, pp. [218-9.

<sup>220</sup> *Aus. Red Bk.* (Second), Nos. 135, 137, 142, 143.

<sup>221</sup> Cf. Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

<sup>222</sup> *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.”<sup>223</sup> Giolitti refers to the Italian demands as having been advanced “in a spirit of equity and moderation.”<sup>224</sup> 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 — ”<sup>225</sup>

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.”<sup>226</sup>

On an earlier occasion, Sonnino spoke as follows:

“The allied nations took up arms for a high ideal, for the restoration

<sup>223</sup> *Mémoires de ma Vie*, pp. 334-5.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 335.

<sup>225</sup> *N. Y. Times*, 4 March 1918.

<sup>226</sup> *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."<sup>227</sup>

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."<sup>228</sup>

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."<sup>229</sup>

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."<sup>230</sup>

The French Senator who, exasperated at Italy's delay in entering the

<sup>227</sup> *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.

<sup>228</sup> *Italy and the World War*, p. 215.

<sup>229</sup> P. 166.

<sup>230</sup> *Current History*, IX, Pt. 2, p. 210.

war "on the side of freedom," said that "l'Italie viendra au secours du vainqueur,"<sup>231</sup> was more correct than calumnious.

Mr. Sidney Low, by complimenting Italy in various pages of his book,<sup>232</sup> 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."<sup>233</sup>

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."<sup>234</sup>

On other pages, the fact alone appears:

"If they have gone to war for an idea," the idea "was that of a greater Italy."<sup>235</sup>

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."<sup>236</sup>

"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."<sup>237</sup>

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 —"<sup>238</sup>

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-

<sup>231</sup> "Italy will fly to the relief of the victor": Page, *op. cit.*, p. 213; *Contemporary Review*, Oct. 1921, p. 499.

<sup>232</sup> *Italy in the War*.

<sup>233</sup> P. 236.

<sup>234</sup> P. 304.

<sup>235</sup> P. 15.

<sup>236</sup> P. 237.

<sup>237</sup> P. 238.

<sup>238</sup> 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 '*perfidie 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."<sup>239</sup>

#### 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.

<sup>239</sup> *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."<sup>1</sup>

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."<sup>2</sup>

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,<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup> *Ency. Brit.*, 11th ed., IV, p. 780.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Bulgaria became a principality under the suzerainty of Turkey.

<sup>4</sup> 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.”<sup>5</sup>

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.<sup>6</sup>

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.”<sup>7</sup>

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,<sup>8</sup> and

<sup>5</sup> Pribram: *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary, 1879-1914*, I, pp. 43, 45.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> Br. Blue Book., *Turkey, 1887* (1), p. 240. Quoted by Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

<sup>8</sup> 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 Rumelia. . . . 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."<sup>9</sup>

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.<sup>10</sup> 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 interviews<sup>11</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 277, 279. "As in the past" were usefully qualifying words.

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> 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."<sup>12</sup>

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.<sup>13</sup> 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."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 124-33.

<sup>13</sup> The description includes Bulgaria.

<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15</sup>

**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.”<sup>16</sup>

**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

<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

avoid in consequence everything which might engender between us elements of conflict or of mistrust.”<sup>17</sup>

The meeting created a more friendly feeling; a sort of *modus vivendi* endured for eleven years.<sup>18</sup>

**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.”<sup>19</sup> The treaty was denounced by Russia in 1912.<sup>20</sup>

**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.<sup>21</sup> 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

<sup>17</sup> Pribram, *op. cit.*, I, p. 195. Cf. Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>18</sup> It terminated with the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary in 1908.

<sup>19</sup> P. 36.

<sup>20</sup> Buchanan, *op. cit.*, I, p. 143.

<sup>21</sup> *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.”<sup>22</sup>

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.”<sup>23</sup>

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.”<sup>24</sup>

For the time, the negotiations halted. The correspondence in connection with the attempt may be seen in Siebert and Schreiner.<sup>25</sup>

**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

<sup>22</sup> Bogitshevich: *Causes of the War*, p. 117.

<sup>23</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 277-8.

<sup>24</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

<sup>25</sup> *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."<sup>26</sup>

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."<sup>27</sup>

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)."<sup>28</sup>

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 Roumania<sup>29</sup> 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

<sup>26</sup> See Map in cap. XXIV.

<sup>27</sup> Bogitshevich, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

<sup>28</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 362; *Un Livre Noir*, I, p. 333. Cf. Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 277, 343-5.

<sup>29</sup> 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.”<sup>30</sup>

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-Hungary<sup>31</sup> — the first open confession that the Russian Government anticipated a war with the Central Powers as inevitable.”<sup>32</sup>

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,<sup>33</sup> 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?”<sup>34</sup>

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.”<sup>35</sup>

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

<sup>30</sup> 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.*

<sup>31</sup> That conviction found expression elsewhere. See cap. II, pp. 55, 56, 57.

<sup>32</sup> *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.

<sup>33</sup> *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.

<sup>34</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

<sup>35</sup> *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,<sup>36</sup> for they were distinctly russophile, and eventually they pushed him into the combination which he disapproved; or rather Daneff first pushed Gueshoff,<sup>37</sup> 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.”<sup>38</sup>

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.”<sup>39</sup>

By November, preliminary arrangements between Serbia and Bulgaria had been reached, and on 13 March 1912 a treaty was signed.<sup>40</sup> Its terms had been settled in consultation with Russia.<sup>41</sup> 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,<sup>42</sup> the Russian Ambassador was tactless enough to say to him:

<sup>36</sup> Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

<sup>37</sup> 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.

<sup>38</sup> 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.

<sup>39</sup> Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 45. And see p. 55.

<sup>40</sup> 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).

<sup>41</sup> 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).

<sup>42</sup> 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."<sup>43</sup>

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."<sup>44</sup>

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."<sup>45</sup>

Shortly afterwards, the King mortgaged to Russia his personal liberty by borrowing two million francs from the Czar.<sup>46</sup>

Negotiations for alliance between Bulgaria and Greece had proceeded simultaneously with those between Bulgaria and Serbia.<sup>47</sup> On 29 May 1912, a treaty was signed.<sup>48</sup> By verbal agreements with Montenegro,<sup>49</sup> 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:

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 65-6.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>47</sup> 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.

<sup>48</sup> 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.

<sup>49</sup> 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.”<sup>50</sup> 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.”<sup>51</sup>

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.”<sup>52</sup>

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 114-15.

<sup>51</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, I, No. 24. Cf. Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

<sup>52</sup> 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.<sup>53</sup> To that pretence, the Great Powers — all anxious for peace<sup>54</sup> — replied by declaring (10 October 1912) that:

“they take in their hands the execution of the reforms in the government of European Turkey.”<sup>55</sup>

Bulgaria refused (13 October) to agree to that best of methods for securing reforms,<sup>56</sup> and preceded her reply by making upon Turkey a series of demands (12 October) which would certainly be rejected.<sup>57</sup> 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.<sup>58</sup> 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.<sup>59</sup> 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.<sup>60</sup> 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.”<sup>61</sup>

Nevertheless, France would support Russia.<sup>62</sup> The friendly relationships of the Triple Entente must be maintained.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Bulgaria’s circular to the Powers on the commencement of hostilities: Gueshoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-60.

<sup>54</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, I, Nos. 101, 115, 116, 127, 135, 168.

<sup>55</sup> Gueshoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-3.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54-5.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 55-6.

<sup>58</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, I, No. 184.

<sup>59</sup> Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 55; Bogitshevich, *op. cit.*, p. 27; Buchanan, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 121-2.

<sup>60</sup> 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.

<sup>61</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, I, No. 184. Cf. *ibid.*, III, Nos. 72, 75.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, I, No. 263.

<sup>63</sup> *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,<sup>64</sup> 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.<sup>65</sup> Serbia insisted upon revision.<sup>66</sup> Russia insisted (9 June) upon her right to act as arbitrator,<sup>67</sup> 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."<sup>68</sup>

That was a wide departure from the terms of the treaty,<sup>69</sup> and was keenly resented by Bulgaria.<sup>70</sup> Radoslavoff, the new prime minister, spoke for more than himself when he said (23 November 1913): "Bulgarian policy will no longer be Russophile."<sup>71</sup> Upon assuming the premiership (5 July), he wrote to the King declaring that:

<sup>64</sup> Russia supported Bulgaria also diplomatically as against Roumania (*ibid.*, II, Nos. 91, 94, 128), but declined to render military assistance (*ibid.*, Nos. 371, 383).

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 274, 327, 332, 342, 347, 351, 356.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 328, 331, 333, 338, 347, 355, 381.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 321, 322.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 389. France urged Bulgaria to submit: *ibid.*, No. 449.

<sup>69</sup> 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.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Balkan Affairs*, II, No. 389.

<sup>71</sup> *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." <sup>72</sup>

Sazonoff soon became aware of the change in the Bulgarian attitude. <sup>73</sup>

**Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary.** While Russia, by her support of Serbia <sup>74</sup> was forfeiting the friendship of Bulgaria, Austria-Hungary, by her objection to the Bucarest peace-treaty, <sup>75</sup> even to the extent of willingness to reverse its arrangements by force, <sup>76</sup> became the recognized champion of the Bulgarian interests. <sup>77</sup> Radoslavoff was:

"the only Bulgarian leader of any prominence who had always displayed hostility to Russia." <sup>78</sup>

**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; <sup>79</sup> having as its immediate object the isolation and reduction to helplessness of Bulgaria, <sup>80</sup> 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. <sup>81</sup>

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; <sup>82</sup> 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; <sup>83</sup> 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

<sup>72</sup> *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.

<sup>73</sup> *Un Livre Noir*, II, pp. 178-9. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 167-71.

<sup>74</sup> Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 217; A. L. Kennedy: *Old Diplomacy and New*, p. 248.

<sup>75</sup> *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, VIII, Supp., p. 13.

<sup>76</sup> Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 209; *Ann. Reg.*, 1913, p. [333. Austria-Hungary was restrained by Germany: *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., I, No. 3.

<sup>77</sup> Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

<sup>78</sup> Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

<sup>79</sup> Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-3. Cf. *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., I, No. 1; *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 93.

<sup>80</sup> Nekludoff, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

<sup>81</sup> *Cap*, IX, pp. 308-9.

<sup>82</sup> *Aus. Red Bk.*, O. F., I, No. 1, pp. 7-8.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

formation of an anti-Serbian League, under her own ægis, composed of Roumania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey.<sup>84</sup> 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 Rusophile.

(2) Russia's friendship when most needed (1913) had been valueless.

(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 1878<sup>85</sup> 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."<sup>86</sup>

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."<sup>87</sup>

(6) Germany and Austria-Hungary were interested jointly with Bul-

<sup>84</sup> *Post*, cap. XXVI.

<sup>85</sup> Russia.

<sup>86</sup> Auguste Gauvain in his preface to Kuhne: *Bulgaria Self-Revealed*, p. x. And see *post* cap. XI.

<sup>87</sup> 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,<sup>88</sup> and on 2 August submitted a draft of the bases of an agreement.<sup>89</sup> Berlin immediately agreed.<sup>90</sup> Austria-Hungary (4 August) expressed concurrence,<sup>91</sup> but appears to have neglected on both that and the next day to send the necessary instructions to Sofia.<sup>92</sup> And the opportunity passed. With contrary intent, Mr. Winston Churchill (presumably with the assent of Sir Edward Grey<sup>93</sup>) 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.”<sup>94</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Kautsky Docs., No. 162.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 673. And see No. 857.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 697. And see Nos. 866, 873.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 798.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 857, 872.

<sup>93</sup> 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.

<sup>94</sup> 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.<sup>95</sup> 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.<sup>96</sup> 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."<sup>97</sup>

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.<sup>98</sup> He entered into rivalry, rather than into cultivation of friendship, with his Russian colleague.<sup>99</sup> And he regarded Buxton as an intruder.<sup>100</sup> 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."<sup>101</sup>

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.<sup>102</sup> 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."<sup>103</sup> Meanwhile, Germany had not been inactive.

<sup>95</sup> 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.

<sup>96</sup> Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 259-60.

<sup>97</sup> Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

<sup>98</sup> Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 257.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 244.

<sup>101</sup> Winston Churchill: *The World Crisis*, II, p. 200.

<sup>102</sup> Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 246. <sup>103</sup> *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.”<sup>104</sup>

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.<sup>105</sup> 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.”<sup>106</sup>

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:

<sup>104</sup> *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.

<sup>105</sup> Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 248-9.

<sup>106</sup> *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.”<sup>107</sup>

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.<sup>108</sup> Serbia and Greece declined to agree. The offer added materially to the difficulties which Venizelos was experiencing at Athens in his pro-Entente endeavors.<sup>109</sup> As late as 15 September, efforts to purchase Bulgarian support were being made by the *entente* Powers.<sup>110</sup>

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.<sup>111</sup>

“ 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.”<sup>112</sup>

In the same month, a pact was arranged between Bulgaria and Turkey by which Bulgaria’s aspirations to the south were satisfied.<sup>113</sup> The preliminary agreement was signed on 22 July. The completed document was dated 6 September.<sup>114</sup>

**War.** On 19 September 1915, the Bulgarian Government suddenly issued an order for general mobilization, announcing that the intention

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. [248-9. Cf. Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 252-3.

<sup>108</sup> *Ency. Brit.*, tit. *Bulgaria*, XXX, p. 519.

<sup>109</sup> See cap. X.

<sup>110</sup> *Ency. Brit.*, XXX, p. 519.

<sup>111</sup> Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 260, 270.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 260-1. Prof. Pribram assigns 6 Sept. as the date of the treaty: *Aus. For. Pol. 1908-18*, p. 90.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 254.

<sup>114</sup> 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 neutrality<sup>115</sup> — 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.”<sup>116</sup>

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

<sup>115</sup> *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [250. 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.

<sup>116</sup> 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.<sup>117</sup> 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."<sup>118</sup>

On the other hand, Mr. Radoslavoff, the Bulgarian Prime Minister,<sup>119</sup> 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

<sup>117</sup> Greece objected to large cessions from Serbia to Bulgaria as disruptive of the balance of power in the Balkans.

<sup>118</sup> Interview with correspondent of *Petit Parisien*: Serbian Press Bureau, Corfu, 17 Feb. 1917: Quoted by Kuhne, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-9, note.

<sup>119</sup> 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.”<sup>120</sup>

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.”<sup>121</sup> 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

<sup>120</sup> *The Times* (London), 13 Aug. 1915.

<sup>121</sup> *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.”<sup>122</sup>

#### 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.”<sup>123</sup>  
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.<sup>124</sup>

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.”

<sup>122</sup> *The World Crisis*, II, pp. 485-7. Cf. Buchanan, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 228-34. And see Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-3.

<sup>123</sup> *Current History*, V, Pt. 1, pp. 74-5.

<sup>124</sup> 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,<sup>1</sup> but not until after the matter had been well discussed and opinions declared.<sup>2</sup> 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-

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Berlin Congress*, pp. 156, 162-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 156-60.



corded when the only question was as to the passage of the Imperial armies through Roumania."<sup>3</sup>

After short discussion,<sup>4</sup> 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,<sup>5</sup> Bismarck saying that:

"On the other hand, the work of the Congress would not, in his opinion, be durable, as he had already remarked,<sup>6</sup> 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 Highness<sup>7</sup> ought to think only of the general interest, which counselled the creation of a new guarantee of the peace of Europe."<sup>8</sup>

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."<sup>9</sup>

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:<sup>10</sup>

"*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.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 163.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 161-70.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170: arts. 4-7 of the treaty.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160.

<sup>7</sup> Meaning Bismarck.

<sup>8</sup> Fr. Yell. Bk.: *Berlin Congress*, p. 169.

<sup>9</sup> *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.

<sup>10</sup> 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 fœderis* 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.<sup>11</sup> 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.”<sup>12</sup>

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

<sup>11</sup> A military convention between Austria-Hungary and Roumania was agreed to in September 1900: Gueshoff, *The Balkan League*, p. 35.

<sup>12</sup> *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.”<sup>13</sup>

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.<sup>14</sup> 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.”<sup>15</sup>

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.”<sup>16</sup>

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.’ ”<sup>17</sup>

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

<sup>13</sup> Roumanian Green Bk.: Quoted in *Nationalism and War in the Near East*, by a Diplomatist, p. 270, note.

<sup>14</sup> *Ante*, cap. VIII., p. 291.

<sup>15</sup> Aus. Red Bk., O. F., I, No. 3.

<sup>16</sup> *Un Livre Noir*, II, p. 133. Cf. p. 371.

<sup>17</sup> *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.”<sup>18</sup> 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.”<sup>19</sup> 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.”<sup>20</sup>

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.

<sup>18</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 436-7.

<sup>19</sup> Aus. Red. Bk., O. F., I, No. 2.

<sup>20</sup> 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.”<sup>21</sup>

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.”<sup>22</sup>

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.”<sup>23</sup>

Count Czernin has supplied further testimony as to the aloofness of Roumania.<sup>24</sup> 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 Bratinau<sup>25</sup> 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.”<sup>26</sup>

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

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 12.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 8.

<sup>24</sup> *In the World War*, pp. 77-82, 90, 106, 109, 112.

<sup>25</sup> Roumania’s Prime Minister.

<sup>26</sup> *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.”<sup>27</sup>

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.<sup>28</sup> 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.”<sup>29</sup>

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

<sup>27</sup> *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.

<sup>28</sup> Montenegro was at the same time negotiating for political association with Serbia: *post*, cap. XXVI.

<sup>29</sup> Siebert and Schreiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 440-1.

have disengaged Roumania from the coalition opposed to us, and not the diplomatic success obtained."<sup>30</sup>

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.<sup>31</sup> On 11 July 1914, nevertheless, the Roumanian King could deny knowledge — official probably — of such efforts.<sup>32</sup>

**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;<sup>33</sup> and in that position he found himself when appealed to (2 August) by Germany at the opening of the war.<sup>34</sup> 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 King<sup>35</sup> 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.<sup>36</sup> 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 Book<sup>37</sup> 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

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 443.

<sup>31</sup> See *ante*, p. 292; *post*, cap. XXVI.

<sup>32</sup> Kautsky Docs., No. 41. Cf. No. 129.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, Nos. 15, 39, 41.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 646.

<sup>35</sup> 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.

<sup>36</sup> 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.

<sup>37</sup> 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."<sup>38</sup>

Germany at once declared that the attitude of Roumania was considered as "responding to friendly relations."<sup>39</sup> 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."<sup>40</sup>

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.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 811. See also Nos. 699, 786, 841, 868; Czernin, *In the World War*, pp. 12, 13, 90.

<sup>39</sup> Kautsky Docs., No. 847.

<sup>40</sup> *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.”<sup>41</sup>

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,<sup>42</sup> 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.<sup>43</sup> 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;<sup>44</sup> and should receive also

<sup>41</sup> Cocks: *The Secret Treaties*, p. 50.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Také Jonescu's pamphlet, *The Origins of the War*, p. 26.

<sup>43</sup> 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.

<sup>44</sup> “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.<sup>45</sup>

4. Then occurred the Russian retreat in Poland and Galicia (April–July 1915,<sup>46</sup> 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.<sup>47</sup> 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.”<sup>48</sup>

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

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 51–2. Cf. Buchanan, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 228–9, 235; II, p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> 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.

<sup>47</sup> The document may be seen *post*, cap. X, pp. 335–6.

<sup>48</sup> 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.”<sup>49</sup>

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.<sup>50</sup>

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

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<sup>49</sup> *In the World War*, pp. 106-7, 109.

<sup>50</sup> 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,"<sup>51</sup>

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 arms<sup>52</sup>), is to be found in the necessity for inducing Roumania to join in the hostilities against the Central Powers.<sup>53</sup> Is that sufficient? Justification of the Italian war-treaty also depends upon an affirmative reply.

**Declaration of War.** On the 27th of August 1916,<sup>54</sup> 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.<sup>55</sup> 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

<sup>51</sup> *Current History*, X, Pt. I, pp. 346-7.

<sup>52</sup> *Ante*, pp. 142-3.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. A. L. Kennedy: *Old Diplomacy and New*, pp. 238-9.

<sup>54</sup> Synchronously with Italy's declaration of war against Germany.

<sup>55</sup> *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.”<sup>56</sup>

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:

<sup>56</sup> *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.”<sup>57</sup>

**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 Jonscu (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.”<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Cocks, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>58</sup> *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

### WHY DID GREECE ENTER THE WAR?

- INTRODUCTORY, 319. — Division of the Subject, 319. — The King, 319. — Venizelos, 322. — Greco-Serbian Treaty, 322. — Greece and Turkey, 322.
- THE VENIZELOS PERIOD, 323. — Greek Offer of Co-operation, 323. — Proposals of Allies, 324. — Allied Proposals for Co-operation at the Dardanelles, 329. — Seizure of Islands, 330. — Gounaris succeeds Venizelos, 330. — Further Proposal of the Allies, 330. — Pressure by the Allies, 331. — Elections — Venizelos reinstated, 332. — Greece Offended by Proposal of the Allies, 333. — Further Proposals — Mobilizations, 334. — Salonica, 334. — Salonica Sequel, 336. — Parliament, 336.
- THE ZAIMIS-SKOULLOUDIS PERIOD, 337. — Zaimis succeeds Venizelos, 337. — Cyprus, 337. — Bulgarian Attack — The Greco-Serbian Treaty, 337. — Skouloudis succeeds Zaimis, 338. — General Election, 338. — Coercion, 340. — Further Coercion, 341. — Corfu — The Serbian Army, 342. — Bulgarians at Fort Rupel, 343. — Situation of Allies, 344. — Further Coercion, 345.
- THE MORIBUND PERIOD, 346. — Demands of 21 June 1916, 346. — Zaimis succeeds Skouloudis, 347. — Further Coercion, 347. — Cavalla, 347. — Roumania and Venizelos, 347. — Further Coercion, 348. — Successors of Zaimis — Lambros, 348. — Venizelos' Revolution, 349. — Further Coercion, 351. — Surrender of Arms, 352. — The Battle of Athens, 353. — Further Coercion, 354. — Removal of the King, 355. — Venizelos in Power, 356.
- WHY DID GREECE ENTER THE WAR? 357.
- THE GRECO-SERBIAN TREATY, 357. — Attack by Austria-Hungary on Serbia, 358. — Attack by Bulgaria and another Power, 360. — Excuses for non-compliance, 360.
- THE ALLIES AND THE GREEK CONSTITUTION, 362. — Sir Edward Grey's Contention, 362. — Meaning of "constitutional," 363. — Allies' Interpretation of "constitutional," 364. — Venizelist interpretation of "constitutional," 366. — M. Theodore P. Ion, 367. — Object of the Allies, 369. — Independence, 370. — Comment, 371.
- ALLIES AT SALONICA, 371. — Greek Complaisance, 373. — The Coercive Actions, 374.
- EPILOGUE, 374. — Venizelos overthrown, 374. — The Explanation, 374.

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."<sup>1</sup>

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."<sup>2</sup>

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,<sup>3</sup> 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,<sup>4</sup> 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-

<sup>1</sup> Despatch of 6 Nov. 1862: British Accounts and Papers, 1863, LXVIII; Strupp: *La situation internationale de la Grèce*, p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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."

<sup>4</sup> 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.”<sup>5</sup>

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.”<sup>6</sup>

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;<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> *N. Y. Herald*, 31 Jan. 1921. See also references in the speeches reported in *The Vindication*, pp. 77-80.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> 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 success<sup>9</sup> 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.”<sup>10</sup>

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 June<sup>11</sup>), 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.

<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 1.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 3.

Constantinople of joining with Greece.<sup>12</sup> 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.”<sup>13</sup>

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.”<sup>14</sup>

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.”<sup>15</sup>

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

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 4.

<sup>13</sup> *The Genesis of the War*, cap. XXIX.

<sup>14</sup> *The World Crisis*, I, p. 529.

<sup>15</sup> *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.”<sup>16</sup>

Greece was:

“advised to reserve herself as long as Turkey did not intervene.”<sup>17</sup>

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 Kerr<sup>18</sup> 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.”<sup>19</sup>

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.”<sup>20</sup>

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

<sup>16</sup> *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].

<sup>17</sup> Asquith, *op. cit.*, cap. XXIX.

<sup>18</sup> The head of the British naval mission to Greece: Churchill, *op. cit.*, I, p. 532.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 533. And see p. 534.

<sup>20</sup> *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.”<sup>21</sup>

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.<sup>22</sup> 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.<sup>23</sup>

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.<sup>24</sup> 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

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<sup>21</sup> Greek White Bk., Supp., No. 6.

<sup>22</sup> Mélas, *op. cit.*, pp. 244-7.

<sup>23</sup> Cocks: *The Secret Treaties*, p. 81.

<sup>24</sup> 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 sector <sup>25</sup> 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." <sup>26</sup>

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

<sup>25</sup> This sector formed part of Serbia.

<sup>26</sup> 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.”<sup>27</sup>

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

<sup>27</sup> 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.<sup>28</sup> The negotiations failed. Arrangements could be made with neither Bulgaria nor Roumania nor Serbia.<sup>29</sup> 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."<sup>30</sup>

**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."<sup>31</sup>

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."<sup>32</sup>

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.<sup>33</sup> 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.<sup>34</sup> 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.<sup>35</sup> Russia wanted neither Germany nor Greece in control at the

<sup>28</sup> Cocks: *The Secret Treaties*, pp. 81, 2.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. cap. VIII, pp. 296-300; cap. IX, pp. 310-14.

<sup>30</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 20. Cf. Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>31</sup> Churchill: *The World Crisis*, II, p. 178.

<sup>32</sup> Mélas, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

<sup>33</sup> Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-4. Cf. Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>34</sup> 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.

<sup>35</sup> 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.<sup>36</sup> 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.”<sup>37</sup>

**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,<sup>38</sup> 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,<sup>39</sup> 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 — ”<sup>40</sup>

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.

<sup>36</sup> 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.

<sup>37</sup> Churchill, *op. cit.*, II, p. 203. Venizelos' account of the incident appears in his speech of 26 August 1917: *The Vindication*, pp. 81-90.

<sup>38</sup> *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, pp. 562-4; Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 128. See Strupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 219, 228, 232.

<sup>39</sup> Churchill, *op. cit.*, II, p. 178.

<sup>40</sup> 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."<sup>41</sup> 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,<sup>42</sup> and being at the moment embarrassed by the conflicting territorial demands of Italy, the Powers declined the proposal.<sup>43</sup> They wanted Greek support, but for Greek territorial assurance they declined to give the required guarantees.<sup>44</sup>

**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.<sup>45</sup> Mr. Churchill alleges, and with reason, that:

<sup>41</sup> Cocks, *op. cit.*, p. 82; Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>42</sup> Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

<sup>43</sup> 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.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> 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.”<sup>46</sup>

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.”<sup>47</sup>

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

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 447.

<sup>47</sup> *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.<sup>48</sup> 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;<sup>49</sup> 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.<sup>50</sup> The Liberals secured a majority of the seats, variously estimated at from 16 to 45.<sup>51</sup> Venizelos was reinstated as President of the Council on 23 August.<sup>52</sup>

**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.”<sup>53</sup>

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.”<sup>54</sup>

<sup>48</sup> *Post*, pp. 367-9.

<sup>49</sup> *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, pp. [254-5.

<sup>50</sup> *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.

<sup>51</sup> *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [255. See also speech of Nicolas Stratos, 23 Aug. 1917, in *The Vindication*, p. 169.

<sup>52</sup> 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.

<sup>53</sup> *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.

<sup>54</sup> 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."<sup>55</sup>

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."<sup>56</sup> Bulgaria replied by decreeing general mobilization."<sup>57</sup>

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."<sup>58</sup>

Three days later, the troops disembarked and established camp in the neighborhood of the city.<sup>59</sup> In his recent book, Mr. Churchill offers only the following as reason for this action:

<sup>55</sup> Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-5.

<sup>56</sup> The treaty (26 April 1915) by which the Allies induced Italy to enter the war prevented acceptance of this condition.

<sup>57</sup> P. 56. Mobilization took place 23 Sept.: Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>58</sup> *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 564.

<sup>59</sup> 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.’”<sup>60</sup>

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.<sup>61</sup> 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

<sup>60</sup> *Op. cit.*, II, pp. 499-500.

<sup>61</sup> *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.”<sup>62</sup>

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.<sup>63</sup> 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.<sup>64</sup>

**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:

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 505.

<sup>63</sup> 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.

<sup>64</sup> 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."<sup>65</sup>

The Chamber indicated its confidence in Venizelos by a vote of 147 to 110.<sup>66</sup> 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.<sup>67</sup> But, treaty or no treaty, Venizelos saw amply sufficient reason for siding with the Entente.<sup>68</sup>

## 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.<sup>69</sup> 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."<sup>70</sup> 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."<sup>71</sup>

Venizelos promised to support the government:

"so long as it did not subvert the foundations of the Venizelist policy."<sup>72</sup>

**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.<sup>73</sup>

**Bulgarian Attack — The Greco-Serbian Treaty.** On the 11th October 1915, Bulgaria commenced her attack upon Serbia, and the ques-

<sup>65</sup> Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

<sup>66</sup> *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.

<sup>67</sup> The statement is quoted *post*, p. 360.

<sup>68</sup> *Ante*, pp. 322; 325-8.

<sup>69</sup> 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.

<sup>70</sup> Speech of 26 Aug. 1917 in the Boulé: *The Vindication*, p. 110.

<sup>71</sup> Greek White Bk., No. 33; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 126. See Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>72</sup> Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

<sup>73</sup> 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.<sup>74</sup> In any case, the government declined to intervene.<sup>75</sup> Upon the question whether by the treaty<sup>76</sup> 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."<sup>77</sup>

**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."<sup>78</sup>

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."<sup>79</sup>

**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:

<sup>74</sup> 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.

<sup>75</sup> 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.

<sup>76</sup> Greek White Bk., No. 2, *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 89.

<sup>77</sup> *The Vindication*, p. 119.

<sup>78</sup> Greek White Bk., No. 35; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 129.

<sup>79</sup> 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.”<sup>80</sup>

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.”<sup>81</sup>

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.”<sup>82</sup>

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.”<sup>83</sup>

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,<sup>84</sup> Venizelos himself being returned for Lesbos.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

<sup>81</sup> *The Vindication*, p. 120.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>83</sup> *Fortnightly Rev.*, February 1921, p. 300.

<sup>84</sup> Speech of Venizelos, 26 August 1917: *The Vindication*, p. 156.

<sup>85</sup> 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,<sup>86</sup> 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.”<sup>87</sup>

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.<sup>88</sup> 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,<sup>89</sup> and generally looking ‘to the use of Greek territory as a base of field operations.’”<sup>90</sup>

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.”<sup>91</sup>

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

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 143.

<sup>87</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>88</sup> *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [257.

<sup>89</sup> 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).

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>91</sup> *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.”<sup>92</sup>

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.<sup>93</sup>

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.”<sup>94</sup>

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.”<sup>95</sup>

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.<sup>96</sup>

“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.

<sup>92</sup> *The Citizen* (Ottawa), 7 Dec. 1916.

<sup>93</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150; *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, pp. [257-8.

<sup>95</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-1.

<sup>96</sup> *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.'" <sup>97</sup>

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." <sup>98</sup>

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." <sup>99</sup>

Then followed the seizure of Suda Bay in Crete,<sup>100</sup> and of the great port of Argostoli on the Ionian coast.<sup>101</sup>

**Corfu—The Serbian Army.** In January 1916, the Allies seized the island of Corfu,<sup>102</sup> 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." <sup>103</sup>

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.<sup>104</sup> 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." <sup>105</sup>

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 181-2.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.

<sup>102</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

<sup>103</sup> 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.

<sup>104</sup> In Corfu, the Allies assumed the right to arrest those whom they regarded as German spies: *N. Y. Times*, 17 Jan. 1916.

<sup>105</sup> *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.<sup>106</sup> 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 110,000<sup>107</sup> displeased Serbian soldiers were passing through his capital, might well have been regarded as doubtful. The Allied Ministers insisted, but the King stood firm.<sup>108</sup> The troops, eventually, went safely by water — their passage through the Corinth canal and the Straits of Euboia (Greek territory) being permitted.<sup>109</sup>

**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,<sup>110</sup> occupied certain strategic positions, among others Fort Rupel at the entrance to the defile Demir Hissar from which the Greek garrison withdrew.<sup>111</sup> 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

<sup>106</sup> See diplomatic correspondence (Nos. 39-43) in Greek White Bk., and in *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., pp. 133-9.

<sup>107</sup> *Current History*, VI, p. 159.

<sup>108</sup> 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.

<sup>109</sup> Greek White Bk., No. 43; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 139; *Ann. Reg.*, 1916, p. [278].

<sup>110</sup> Greek White Bk., No. 53; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., pp. 145-6.

<sup>111</sup> 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."<sup>112</sup>

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.<sup>113</sup>

**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.<sup>114</sup> 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."<sup>115</sup>

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

<sup>112</sup> Greek White Bk., No. 60; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., pp. 151-2. Cf. Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-6.

<sup>113</sup> 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.

<sup>114</sup> *Ante*, p. 341.

<sup>115</sup> 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."<sup>116</sup>

**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."<sup>117</sup>

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.<sup>118</sup>

On 3 June, Sarrail declared martial law in all parts of Greece occupied by Entente forces,<sup>119</sup> a proceeding which, as Venizelos afterwards said, "amounted to a revocation of Greek sovereignty."<sup>120</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Greek White Bk., No. 58; *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 149.

<sup>117</sup> *The Globe* (Toronto), 5 June 1916.

<sup>118</sup> *N. Y. Times*, 9 June 1916.

<sup>119</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 230; Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

<sup>120</sup> Speech on 26 Aug. 1917: *The Vindication*, p. 137.

On 6 June, commercial blockade of Greek ports recommenced.<sup>121</sup> It lasted until 3 July.<sup>122</sup>

About 8 June, the island of Thassos, off Cavalla, was occupied.<sup>123</sup>

On 12 June, with the hope of getting rid of the blockade, the King ordered demobilization of the Greek army.<sup>124</sup>

### 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,”<sup>125</sup> 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.”<sup>126</sup>

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,<sup>127</sup> excepting that requiring a new election, which was withdrawn at the request of Venizelos.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>121</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235. See Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

<sup>126</sup> *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, pp. 797-8. Cf. Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 235-6; *Ann. Reg.*, 1916, p. [279; Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 112; Strupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 243-4.

<sup>127</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

<sup>128</sup> *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."<sup>129</sup>

**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.<sup>130</sup>

On 8 August, the Allies decreed that importation of wheat, flour, sugar, coal, and rice should be limited to certain quantities.<sup>131</sup>

**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.<sup>132</sup> The Greek government issued a communiqué announcing disapproval of the action of the Greek commanding officer.<sup>133</sup> 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-

<sup>129</sup> Issue of 22 Sep. 1916.

<sup>130</sup> *The Citizen* (Ottawa), 22 June 1916.

<sup>131</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

<sup>132</sup> Venizelos' complaint upon this subject may be seen in his speech of 26 Aug. 1917, reported in *The Vindication*, pp. 142-6.

<sup>133</sup> *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 (*écauré*) by such a felony, joined himself to me with General Danglis and we decided to raise the standard of revolt immediately."<sup>134</sup>

**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 Piraeus,<sup>135</sup> 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.<sup>136</sup>

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."<sup>137</sup>

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:

<sup>134</sup> Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-3.

<sup>135</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 293. The Piraeus is the port of Athens.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 297.

<sup>137</sup> *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."<sup>138</sup>

And at last (10 October), in Professor Lambros, a man was found acceptable to the Allies.<sup>139</sup>

**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.<sup>140</sup> 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."<sup>141</sup>

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."<sup>142</sup>

Venizelos claimed to have 60,000 men.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 134. See also Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

<sup>139</sup> Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

<sup>140</sup> 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.

<sup>141</sup> 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.

<sup>142</sup> *The Citizen* (Ottawa), 20 Dec. 1916.

<sup>143</sup> 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.<sup>144</sup> 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."<sup>145</sup>

Besides according to Venizelos this partial recognition, the *entente* governments furnished him with munitions and money.<sup>146</sup> On the other hand, Major Mélas, 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."<sup>147</sup>

<sup>144</sup> *Ann. Reg.*, 1917, p. 1. Lord Granville afterwards (23 Aug.) became Minister at Athens: *ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>145</sup> *The Times* (London), 1 Nov. 1916.

<sup>146</sup> So declared in a statement issued by Venizelos: *The Times*.

<sup>147</sup> *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.<sup>148</sup> 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."<sup>149</sup>

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."<sup>150</sup>

"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."<sup>151</sup>

On 13 October, several platoons of French marines were landed and marched to Athens.<sup>152</sup>

At the same time, France and the United Kingdom demanded that all Greek troops should be shut up in the Peloponnesus.<sup>153</sup> And censorship of the Press was instituted.<sup>154</sup>

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."<sup>155</sup>

On 19 November, the Admiral issued an order: "addressed to the envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary of Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, Germany, and Turkey, summoning

<sup>148</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 359, 434.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 359.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 368-9.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 379-80.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 387.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 390.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 407.

them to leave the neutral country to which they were accredited by nine o'clock of the morning of November 22."<sup>156</sup>

**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."<sup>157</sup>

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."<sup>158</sup>

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.<sup>159</sup> In some respects, this was the most serious, for the most humiliating of the demands yet made, and compliance with it was refused (22 November<sup>160</sup>). 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

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 427.

<sup>157</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 415. See Gauvain, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

<sup>158</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 416. And see *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 803.

<sup>159</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 421.

<sup>160</sup> Strupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-6; Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 423-431.

take, after December 1, whatever measures the situation may require." <sup>161</sup>

On the 30th, Lambros repeated his refusal, affirming that although the arms were not in present use, they might be needed in the future. <sup>162</sup>

**The Battle of Athens.** The next day (1 December), the Admiral, true to his word, landed 3,000 marines <sup>163</sup> and marched them upon Athens equipped for their task, and with full instructions as to the intended operations. <sup>164</sup> 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. <sup>165</sup> 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. <sup>166</sup>

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." <sup>167</sup>

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. <sup>168</sup> 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." <sup>169</sup>

<sup>161</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 433-4. Cf. Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-3.

<sup>162</sup> Strupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 246-7; Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 453-4.

<sup>163</sup> *Ann. Reg.*, 1916, p. [280.

<sup>164</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 446-8.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 478.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 473. Cf. Gauvain, pp. 153-4.

<sup>167</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 488-9.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 504.

<sup>169</sup> *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."<sup>170</sup> Reduced to helplessness, the Greek government submitted.<sup>171</sup>

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

<sup>170</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 507-8.

<sup>171</sup> *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.”<sup>172</sup>

To all of these demands the Greek Government submitted.<sup>173</sup> 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.”<sup>174</sup>

At the same time, by an “*aide-mémoire*,” Jonnart declared that, as successor to the King:

“the Diadoque<sup>175</sup> 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.”<sup>176</sup>

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.<sup>177</sup>

Shortly after the receipt of the Jonnart note, the Greek government learned that, for the purpose of enforcing the demand, 4,000 soldiers

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 523, 4. And see *Ann. Reg.*, 1917, p. [265.

<sup>173</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, pp. 529-31.

<sup>174</sup> Strupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 248-9; *Current History*, VI, Pt. 2, p. 281.

<sup>175</sup> The eldest son.

<sup>176</sup> Strupp, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

<sup>177</sup> *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.<sup>178</sup> 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"<sup>179</sup> — 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."<sup>180</sup>

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."<sup>181</sup>

<sup>178</sup> Gauvain, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-200; *Ann. Reg.*, 1917, pp. [265-6; *Current History*, VI, Pt. 2, pp. 84-5.

<sup>179</sup> 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.

<sup>180</sup> Speech, 26 Aug. 1917: *The Vindication*, p. 156.

<sup>181</sup> *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 Græco-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.”<sup>182</sup>

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.”<sup>183</sup>

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.<sup>184</sup> 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

<sup>182</sup> *Ante*, p. 325.

<sup>183</sup> *Ante*, p. 327.

<sup>184</sup> *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)<sup>186</sup> for the purpose, as recited, of preserving "a durable peace in the Balkans." The treaty and accompanying military convention were very badly drawn,<sup>186</sup> 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 fœderis*,<sup>187</sup> 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,

<sup>185</sup> 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.

<sup>186</sup> 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.

<sup>187</sup> 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 <sup>188</sup> flagrantly contradict the two articles first quoted, for

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<sup>188</sup> 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.<sup>189</sup> 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."<sup>190</sup>

**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.

<sup>189</sup> *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 131.

<sup>190</sup> 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.<sup>191</sup>

(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*.<sup>192</sup> 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.”<sup>193</sup>

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.”<sup>194</sup>

The co-operation of Roumania had not been obtained, and Bulgaria was a belligerent enemy.<sup>195</sup> 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

<sup>191</sup> Within two months after starting, the larger number went back to Salonica.

<sup>192</sup> No one is bound to attempt the impossible.

<sup>193</sup> *N. Y. Times*, 14 June 1917.

<sup>194</sup> Hibben, *op. cit.*, p. 554.

<sup>195</sup> 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.<sup>196</sup>

### 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.<sup>197</sup> 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."<sup>198</sup>

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

<sup>196</sup> 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.

<sup>197</sup> 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.

<sup>198</sup> *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 75.

troops to neutralize the King's unconstitutional action was both their right and their duty."<sup>199</sup>

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,<sup>200</sup> and announcement was made that on his becoming of age a constitution would be granted.<sup>201</sup> 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 parties<sup>202</sup> 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,<sup>203</sup> 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."<sup>204</sup>

<sup>199</sup> *N. Y. Times*, 9 Dec. 1916. The contention had previously been formulated in *The Times* (London), 28 and 29 Nov. 1916.

<sup>200</sup> Strupp, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

<sup>201</sup> Larned: *History for Ready Reference*, III, p. 1647; Ashley, *Life of Lord Palmerston*, II, p. 131.

<sup>202</sup> Larned, *op. cit.*, III, p. 1647.

<sup>203</sup> 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.

<sup>204</sup> 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."<sup>205</sup>

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."<sup>206</sup>

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."<sup>207</sup>

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."<sup>208</sup>

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*):

<sup>205</sup> *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, Supp., p. 76.

<sup>206</sup> Strupp, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>208</sup> *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.*”<sup>209</sup>

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.”<sup>210</sup>

Such being the sort of “constitutional” government which existed in

<sup>209</sup> Ashley: *Life of Lord Palmerston*, II, p. 134.

<sup>210</sup> *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 Bolsheviki. 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."<sup>211</sup>

<sup>211</sup> *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.”<sup>212</sup>

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.”<sup>213</sup>

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.”<sup>214</sup>

Of this dissolution, Venizelos also complained, alleging its unconstitutionality.<sup>215</sup> 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,”<sup>216</sup>

and if that were the fact, the King would have had little excuse for a

<sup>212</sup> Vol. XI, p. 46.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 328.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 329.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 351-2. After Venizelos and his party had won several subsequent by-elections, assertion of their unconstitutionality became difficult.

<sup>216</sup> *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 fœderis* 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."<sup>217</sup>

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."<sup>218</sup>

"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."<sup>219</sup>

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:

<sup>217</sup> *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, pp. 330-1. And see Crawford Price: *Venizelos and the War*, p. 53.

<sup>218</sup> *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 569. See also *Contemporary Rev.*, Jan. 1918, p. 34.

<sup>219</sup> *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.”<sup>220</sup>

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.”<sup>221</sup>

**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,”<sup>222</sup> 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.”<sup>223</sup>

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,<sup>224</sup> the Allies, after the landing, gave Zaimis (who refused to declare war on Bulgaria) “every proof of friendliness,” and “even supplied him with money.”<sup>225</sup>

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167. See also pp. 201-7.

<sup>221</sup> *The Citizen* (Ottawa), 7 Dec. 1915; *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 May 1921.

<sup>222</sup> *Ante*, p. 355.

<sup>223</sup> *Ante*, p. 334.

<sup>224</sup> *Ante*, p. 338.

<sup>225</sup> *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."<sup>226</sup>

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.<sup>227</sup> 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."<sup>228</sup>

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.<sup>229</sup> 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,"<sup>230</sup> 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

<sup>226</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

<sup>227</sup> *Ann. Reg.*, 1915, p. [257.

<sup>228</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>229</sup> *Ante*, p. 362.

<sup>230</sup> *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 September<sup>231</sup> 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.<sup>232</sup> 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."<sup>233</sup>

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."<sup>234</sup>

— "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 to<sup>235</sup>), 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.

<sup>231</sup> The date is sometimes given as the 24th: *ante*, p. 334.

<sup>232</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 68. Cf. Churchill, *op. cit.*, II, p. 499.

<sup>233</sup> *The Times* (London), 1 Nov. 1916.

<sup>234</sup> *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."

<sup>235</sup> *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."<sup>236</sup>

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.<sup>237</sup> 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."<sup>238</sup>

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,

<sup>236</sup> Quoted in *Am. Jour. Int. Law*, XII, p. 568.

<sup>237</sup> 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.

<sup>238</sup> 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.”<sup>239</sup>

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.”<sup>240</sup>  
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.”<sup>241</sup>

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.”<sup>242</sup>

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

<sup>239</sup> *The Citizen* (Ottawa), 7 Dec. 1915.

<sup>240</sup> *Ante*, p. 334.

<sup>241</sup> Mélas, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

<sup>242</sup> 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.”<sup>243</sup>

**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.”<sup>244</sup> 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.”<sup>245</sup> 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;

<sup>243</sup> 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.

<sup>244</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 386.

<sup>245</sup> *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.<sup>246</sup>

“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.”<sup>247</sup>

Not only Major Mélas, but the Greek people drank “the cup to the

<sup>246</sup> 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.”

<sup>247</sup> 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." <sup>248</sup>

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." <sup>249</sup> 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." <sup>250</sup>

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 ?

<sup>248</sup> *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey*, pp. 81-3.

<sup>249</sup> *Fortnightly Rev.*, April 1921, p. 617.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 614.