

Germany has, as a consequence, disregarded Belgian neutrality to prevent what means to her a question of life and death—a French advance through Belgium.' ”

Premier Asquith then said:—“I have to add this on behalf of his Majesty’s Government:

“We cannot regard this as in any sense a satisfactory communication. We have in reply repeated the request made last week to the German Government that it should give us the same assurance regarding Belgian neutrality as was given to us by France last week. We have asked that the German reply to that request and a satisfactory answer to our telegram of this morning should be given before midnight tonight.”

The Premier concluded his grave statement amid a great outburst of cheering from all parts of the House.

Britain’s Declaration of War.

Germany’s reply to Great Britain’s ultimatum was a summary rejection of the request that Belgium’s neutrality should be respected. The British Ambassador at Berlin thereupon received his passports, and the British Government notified Germany that a state of war existed between the two countries.

The momentous decision of the British Cabinet came before the expiration of the time limit set by Great Britain. The reason of this, as well as of the declaration of war, was set forth in the following statement issued by the British Foreign Office:

“Owing to the summary rejection by the German Government of the request made by His Britannic Majesty’s Government that the neutrality of Belgium should be respected, His Majesty’s Ambassador at Berlin has received his passports, and His Majesty’s Government has declared to the German Government that a state of war exists between Great Britain and Germany from 11 o’clock p.m. August 4.”

Earlier in the day the House of Commons voted \$525,000,000 for emergency purposes, and a proclamation by His Majesty King George commanding the mobilization of the British army was read from the steps of the Royal Exchange.

With the declaration of war by Great Britain on Germany, the five greatest powers in Europe were at war, Austria and Germany on the one side and Russia, France and Great Britain on the other. With the latter were also Serbia, whose independence at the outset was threatened by Austria, and Belgium, whose neutrality was violated by Germany. The small kingdom of Montenegro, in sympathy with Serbia, and to ensure her own security, was also with Serbia in common cause.

Britain’s declaration of war was followed by a reconstruction of the British Cabinet. Lord Kitchener was taken in as Minister of War, Sir Ian Hamilton was made Commander-in-Chief of the Home Forces of the British Army and General French placed in Command of the Forces to go to

the Continent. Supreme command of the British home fleets was given to Vice-Admiral Sir John Jellicoe. It speedily left for the North Sea. Lord Kitchener, through the Prime Minister, asked Parliament for power to increase the British army to 500,000 men, and Mr. Asquith asked the House of Commons to vote a war credit of \$500,000,000. Both requests were promptly authorized. An expeditionary force was immediately got ready, and within a few days British regiments were landed on the continent of Europe, where, along with regiments of the French army, they went immediately to the support of the Belgian soldiers in their resistance of the attempted invasion of Belgian territory by the German troops.

VI. AUSTRIA AND FRANCE.

ON Monday, August 10, France formally declared war on Austria. This declaration followed the failure of the Austrian Government to make satisfactory explanation of the movement of Austrian troops from the Austrian Tyrol through Switzerland to the Alsatian border. The declaration of war had been expected for some days, inasmuch as it was known that Austria was coming to the assistance of Germany in her attack upon the French frontier. France, however, was determined that she would not act until something definite had taken place on which a declaration could be based. This was in order to prevent Italy being forced into conflict as an ally of Austria. The Austrian Ambassador to Paris, to whom was addressed a sharp note of enquiry as to what Austria planned to do, and requesting further explanation of the presence of Austrian troops on the frontier, announced that he had referred the whole matter to his Government, and that he was awaiting an answer.

In announcing the breaking off of relations with Austria, the French Foreign Office made the following statement:

“Contrary to assurances given by Austria to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, that no Austrian troops were taking part in the Franco-German war, the French Government has ascertained, beyond any possible doubt, that certain Austrian troops are at present in Germany, outside the Austrian frontier.

“These troops, which have set free certain German troops destined to be employed in fighting the French, ought indubitably, *de facto* and *de jure*, to be considered as acting against France. In these circumstances, the French Ambassador was ordered to leave Vienna.

“The Austrian Ambassador at Paris on being informed of France’s decision, asked for his passports.”

The French Ambassador at Vienna on the same day asked for his passports, and left the Austrian capital.