

Obviously it was here that the European train left the rails, and we know now where to place the responsibility, with all its unspeakable consequences, for refusing to accept the Servian reply even as a basis of negotiation. If each and every one of the Powers had been sincerely and genuinely interested in the maintenance of peace, they could surely have attained their ends at this stage by the simple process of getting round a table for conference and discussion. The horror of the *denouement* is intensified by the fact, subsequently communicated by our representative at Vienna, that some change of heart had made Austria willing in the end to re-open conversations with Russia on the basis of the Servian reply. But meanwhile there had been mutterings of mobilization, and Germany's ultimatum to France and to Russia rendered a peaceful settlement impossible.

Whether it can be proved, or not—with the material at present available—that the military faction at Berlin was working for the war which it had so long gloated over in imagination, there can be no doubt that Germany must take the blame of having blocked the proposed conference. It is said by his apologists that the Emperor laboured sincerely to the end—working along a private path of his own—in the cause of peace. But it must be asked, with all deference, what right he had to any private path when the peace of Europe was known to be trembling in the balance? This is where we might have expected to hear from the various Peace and Arbitration Societies, especially on the continent of America. With all respect to the obligations of the official neutrality so carefully laid down at Washington—obligations which individual Americans like ex-President Eliot have found it hard to observe—the question naturally suggests itself why those who have worked so devotedly for peace have not as yet raised their voices, no matter how ineffectually, in protest against the influences which refused to invoke the concert of Europe in the only way by which war might have been avoided. By keeping silence they seem to me to have rendered much of their previous work ineffec-