

## MY MISSION TO LONDON 1912-1914.

Needless to say a mere hint from Berlin would have decided Count Berchtold to content himself with a diplomatic success, and to accept the Serbian reply. This hint was not given; on the contrary they urged in the direction of war. It would have been such a splendid success.

After our refusal Sir Edward requested us to submit a proposal. We insisted on war. I could not obtain any reply but that Austria had shown an exceedingly "accommodating spirit" by not demanding an extension of territory.

Sir Edward rightly pointed out that even without an extension of territory it is possible to reduce a state to a condition of vassalage, and that Russia would see a humiliation in this, and would not suffer it.

The impression grew stronger and stronger that we wanted war under any circumstances. It was impossible to interpret our attitude, on a question which did not directly concern us, in any other way. The urgent requests and definite assurances of M. Sazonow, followed by the Czar's positively humble telegrams, the repeated proposals of Sir E. Grey, the warnings of the Marquis San Giuliano and Signor Bollati, my urgent counsels, all were of no avail. Berlin persisted; Serbia must be massacred.

The more I pressed the less were they inclined to come round, if only that I might not have the success of averting war in conjunction with Sir Edward Grey.

Finally, on the 29th, the latter decided on the famous warning. I replied that I had invariably reported that we should have to reckon with English opposition if it came to a war with France. Repeatedly the Minister said to me: "If war breaks out, it will be the greatest catastrophe the world has ever seen."

After that, events followed each other rapidly. When at last Count Berchtold, who up till then had, at the behest