

the House of Hapsburg to bring about the unity of the Empire through internal organization. There remained the alternative of external pressure.

For centuries Austria has dreamed the dream of domination in south-eastern Europe, of rule in the Balkans, of sea coast on both Adriatic and Aegean, with harbors where forests of masts flying the Imperial flag might bear witness to dominion on the seas. Sea coast she has obtained, but her position is ever precarious while Servia menaces Trieste, and Albania and Montenegro threaten the lower Adriatic. The Emperor, whose personality and tact hold her rival races in seeming unity, is tottering to the grave. Meanwhile Austria is goaded onward by her ambitions, and so the House of Hapsburg sees in the cementing power of external pressure its sole hope of immediate preservation and future continuance. And this external pressure is war.

It is a mighty force. We ourselves are feeling its power. All over our far-flung Empire, nerve centres are quivering as we gather together for the conflict. The cohesion of public effort is welding together people of every language and every race. Sikh and New Zealander, South African and Canadian are side by side with Kitchener's Territorials on that far-flung battle line.

And it is this cohesion which Austria has craved. Her great ally has also her ambitions. "From the North Sea to the Persian Gulf, from the Baltic to the Mediterranean" is the motto of Pan-Germanism. With characteristic patience and thoroughness, Prussia had built up the most perfect system of surveillance the world has ever known. Her spies were everywhere, and one and all brought back the tale that "The Day" was at hand. England might safely be ignored. Conservative and Liberal were divided into warring camps, and eighty Irish Nationalists held the balance of power. The price of their support was a Home Rule Bill; and immediately upon its introduction, volunteers began drilling as for civil war. Ulster demanded that her territory

should be excluded from the application of the bill, but the Nationalists would come to no agreement. The domestic legislation of Lloyd George was considered by the landed classes to be nothing less than confiscation. Capital it was said would be alarmed by the proposed measures and would leave the country. Recruiting was at a low ebb. Nor were matters seemingly in better condition on the outposts of Empire. India was filled with a vague unrest, and an emigration movement was beginning. The Crown Colonies, however, looked with suspicion upon the Hindoo brother; South Africa denied him equality of status; Canada refused to admit him at all. To the outside observer, it seemed, and seemed with reason, that Britain would long hesitate before she entered a great war.

France was by no means prepared. Her artillery was admittedly old and defective. The frontier forts were by no means in repair. The efficiency of her aeroplanes had been greatly exaggerated, and the opposition to conscription was steadily increasing in force throughout the country.

Russia had not yet recovered from the effects of the Japanese war. Her finances were at a low ebb, and her mobilization would be necessarily slow as a result of her vast extent and the inadequate nature of her facilities for transportation.

On the other hand, Germany and Austria had improved their armies. The German fleet had been put on a war basis. No immediate domestic difficulties threatened Austria so long as the Emperor lived, and nothing troubled Germany save socialism; a cloud upon the horizon as yet no bigger than a man's hand.

In the opinion of the general staff "The Day" had come. A last attempt was made to detach Britain from her Allies. Assurances were given that the territorial integrity of Continental France would be respected, though a pledge that the French Colonies should remain untouched was refused; and lastly, if Belgium would offer right of