

GERMANY AND THE 'FEAR OF RUSSIA' 17

in 1909, emerged triumphantly from this fratricidal struggle.

Both in Vienna and in Berlin, it was felt that a severe blow had been dealt to the position of the Germanic Powers in South-eastern Europe, and that the situation could only be retrieved by taking action which would inevitably involve the risk of bringing Russia into the field. It was then that, for the first time, German statesmen began to talk about the 'Russian peril', and the impending conflict between German 'culture' and Russian 'barbarism'. In Vienna, the talk was more about Serbian insolence, and the necessity of chastising it. The murder of the Austrian heir apparent and his consort at Serajevo on June 28 provided the long-sought-for opportunity. That abominable crime overbore the old Emperor Francis Joseph's reluctance to sanction any kind of warlike enterprise, whilst the German Emperor, who had been a close friend of the Archduke, unquestionably felt it deeply, and as a personal injury not less than as a political misfortune. The counter-blow was dealt swiftly and brutally. The Austro-Hungarian ultimatum to Serbia, charging her with a deliberate conspiracy against the safety and integrity of the Hapsburg dominions, as well as with the actual connivance of some of her officials in the crime, demanded an abject and quite unparalleled surrender of Serbia's independence. We know now that, though the German Foreign Office may have been content to give a free hand to Austria without asking or wishing to be made acquainted with the details of the Austrian demands, it was not so with the German Emperor. His ambassador in Vienna, Herr von Tschirschky, whose influence was throughout exerted for war, enjoyed his special confidence; through the am-