

King, on the advice of Premier Asquith, called a conference of both parties, which, so far as the world knew, was for the purpose of obtaining a compromise. In the light of words then used by the King and afterwards commented upon by the press, it looks as though the King and the Premier both knew that during the silent three weeks between the 29th of June and the 23rd of July, a German monarch was framing up a world-war that should stagger Europe. It was rumoured that the King of England placed this matter before the Home Rule conference; and that the failure to arrive at any solution of the deadlock was really the temporary burial of the hatchet for other purposes.

Still there was not a syllable of what might be passing between the autocrat at Potsdam and the poor old man at Vienna.

ALL this while, as the world waited on the verge of a war too vast for even a Sphinx to forecast, little Belgium, the back door into France, was supposed to be neutral and independent, her neutrality and independence guaranteed by the signatory powers at The Hague Convention, in 1907. But that Belgium also was in the mysterious zone of expectancy over a great war is proved by the fact that in the session of 1913 Belgium passed a Militia and Defence Act which called for a standing army almost equivalent to a war footing, a vote of a huge increase in the war budget, and outlined the possibility of what might happen if Germany in any possible invasion of France should decide to ignore The Hague Convention affecting neutrality and independence.

So that in the courts and counsels of all the nations now actively at war, with the exception of Japan, it was diplomatically understood by signs without words, that the great war so long looked forward to by Germany and anticipated by the other powers was somehow about as certain to come about as "that far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves"—and was probably scheduled in the brains of the war lords to begin before very long.

Perhaps that shudderingly silent three weeks between the murder of the Archduke and his wife and the ultimatum of Austria to Serbia was the very time when the schedule was being made. The brain of no man was able to say so. No pen was dipped in ink ready to sign the order releasing the dogs of war. Not even Kaiser Wilhelm was as yet ready to write the necessary "sieben buchstaben," his own seven-lettered name, to the declaration of war. Had there been some omniscience on the planet Mars equipped with wireless and a superhuman telescope, he might have decided that the cosmic shuffle of events had produced the "psychological moment."

As has been noted, Germany had her war machine on land almost absolutely ready. It was not possible to squeeze any more from the German people for a war machine that was merely a magnificent creator of manoeuvres, without precipitating a revolution. German writers had freely predicted a great war and prodded the German press and people up to a point of expectancy. The Kiel Canal had been enlarged and finished as a strategic base capable of harbouring the entire German navy under the guns of Wilhelmshaven and Heligoland. Germany had put a crimp into the outflow of gold and had imported \$200,000,000 of gold into the country largely for the augmentation of the war chest in the Julius Thurm. Leaving England out of count, dealing only with France and Russia, perhaps Germany was ready for war. With France unequipped and menaced by Rouge Socialists, with Russia in the midst of a labour revolution, with England on the verge of civil war, and the army said to be disaffected, the time seemed to be now.

Twenty-three days of silence became twenty-four. Then the world got the news that Austria had sent her 24-hour ultimatum to Serbia. The world would like to know whose pen made the final interlinear change in that document. Was it German ink? Russia asked Austria to give Serbia more time. Austria refused. Serbia got her reply to Vienna on time. It conceded all but two points. It was declared by Austria to be evasive. The Austrian ambassador left Belgrade. Serbia mobilized. The seat of government was shifted from Belgrade across the Danube from Austria to Nish further inland. At this time the Kaiser was said to be yachting in the North Sea and the Czar cruising in Finnish waters. Both were said to have hurried home, completely taken by surprise; one to the palace at Potsdam, the other at St. Petersburg.

FROM the evening of July 25th, a state of war without formal declaration existed between Austria and Serbia. Then began the almost heroic efforts of Sir Edward Grey to keep the peace. He warned the Austrian ambassador that if four great powers in Europe went to war, European credit and industry would be smashed. He scarcely realized that the German motto just then was—"Business be damned." On July 27th he stated to the House of Commons that his suggestion to the powers to hold

a joint conference of mediation had been accepted by all but Germany, whose sublime autocrat suavely said that there was still hope of Austria and Russia having "direct conversations." On July 28th England still believed the Kaiser sincere. That day Austria declared war on Serbia. On July 30th the British ambassador at Vienna stated to Sir Edward Grey his private information that the German ambassador understood, endorsed and telegraphed the Austrian ultimatum to Kaiser Wilhelm before it was forwarded to Serbia. And for several days longer, while Germany kept the Triple Alliance guessing as



Showing how an air-flung bomb, when it burst in Antwerp, blew holes in a brick wall over a foot thick, ten yards from the point of explosion.

to her real intentions, she was secretly getting the buttons all ready to touch for war.

Russia began to mobilize in the south and southwest near the line fence of Austria. Some hot-headed French cavalymen skirmished across the border. Belgrade was bombarded. Kaiser Wilhelm held an all-night conference with his ministers and general staff. France was beginning to mobilize.

On July 30th the Kaiser gave Russia and France each twenty-four hours to explain why they were mobilizing or quit. Martial law was proclaimed in Germany; which meant that the world's biggest war machine took full possession of the State, railways, telephones, telegraphs, all public works and as much as necessary of private property. For it must be remembered that Germany was in a state of perfect and constant mobilization in times of peace. All the Kaiser needed to do was to press the button and start the machine.

During one of the very brief intervals in the chain of mobilizations, according to Mr. Barclay Warburton, of Philadelphia, who was in St. Petersburg when the war broke out, the Kaiser sent a personal note to the

Czar giving his word as a soldier that if Russia would cease mobilizing, Germany would. Against the advice of his ministers, the Czar gave orders to quit. For eight hours no Russian troops were moved. For that same eight hours Germany was busy touching buttons from Potsdam. The trick was revealed. The Kaiser's word of a soldier was found to be the word of a brigand. Russia mobilized again. On the first day of August Germany formally declared war on Russia. At almost the same hour German troops were flung into Luxembourg on the borders of Belgium. This was a two-handed stroke that gave the

world a dazzling reminder of Napoleon. British naval reserves were called out. Sir Edward Goschen had informed Sir Edward Grey of the offer made by the German Chancellor that if England remained neutral, Germany would not carve up French territory at home whatever happened to French colonies, in the event of Germany being victorious. Sir Edward Grey continued his conversations, to no avail. On August 3rd he stated to the House of Commons that he had assured France of England's determination to block the German fleet from any exit out of the North Sea or into the Channel for the purpose of attacking France.

THE third day of August there was a naval skirmish in the Baltic between German and Russian ships, and some talk of a bombardment of Sveaborg, with a probable attack on St. Petersburg, which seems to have been postponed. But as yet England had not declared war. England was trying as never in the world she had tried to keep out of it. That same day the mailed fist rapped on the gates of Belgium and demanded permission to move German troops through Belgium into France, because it would be a great deal shorter route than to break through the long line of French forts along the Franco-German border.

King Albert said he thought that was out of order. Belgium was a neutral state and her neutrality had been guaranteed by Germany at The Hague. He did not understand that the Kaiser had arranged to "dine in Paris" on August 15th. For the Kaiser expected that by using the back door of Belgium he could crush France in two weeks and swing his great army across to the Russian borders, where he had left Austria and five German army corps to keep back the "steam roller" which he expected would take at least thirty days to get into effective motion full speed ahead.

Here was the first kink in the programme of the machine. Russia was mobilizing ahead of the Kaiser's schedule; and Belgium thrust Liege into the Kaiser's face. So Belgium being obstreperous—because she was fore-armed and the Kaiser didn't know it—Germany declared war on Belgium, which was a summary way of getting the machine through on time. Liege held out against the Germans and the Kaiser decided to smash Liege, not supposing that England would take any particular notice. But England had already named the navy as her refusal to sell Germany her support of France. Belgium was next.

(Continued on page 19.)

## BOMBS FROM THE BLUE

*Just now the Zeppelin Looks about as Dangerous as "The Flying Dutchman"*

WE have become pretty well informed now as to the relative efficiency on both sides of the three land arms of war—infantry, cavalry and artillery. We still wait for news of the fourth great arm, the navy, which by some was expected to prove its efficiency much earlier in the game. And we have had spasmodic tidings of what has been done by the modern fifth arm never used in any great war before—the aircraft.

On the battle-field, air-craft have been freely used by both sides in scouting, for which purpose they are immensely superior to cavalry. From a height of 5,000 feet an air-man is able to give not only news of how the enemy's forces are disposed, and movements of troops, but also to direct the fire of artillery by a system of signals. All the armies are supplemented by aviation corps. The French are popularly supposed to have the finest aerial navy. The British fleet of aeroplanes crossed the Channel and took part in the engagements. During the earlier part of the German prolonged assault on the allies' left wing, the German air fleet was numerically greater than that of the allies, which were later augmented by fresh arrivals. General French, in his report of Sept. 10, highly praised the British aviators who went aloft in all kinds of weather. He said: "Their skill, energy, and perseverance have been beyond all praise. They have furnished me with most

complete and accurate information which has been of incalculable value in the conduct of operations. They were fired on constantly, both by friend and foe. By actual fighting they destroyed five of the enemy's machines."

From what has been said about the tremendous fleet of German air-craft in the shape of bomb-dropping Zeppelins and huge airships, it was expected that by this time, especially when worsted in the three land arms of battle and with the fourth idle on the sea, the Kaiser would have loosed some of his Zepps for bomb-dropping performances on Paris and London. But up to the present, Antwerp is the only city of the allies attacked by the Zeppelin. That was first on the night of August 25th, when bombs wrecked several buildings in the provisional capital of Belgium, one hit a hospital in which were several wounded Germans, and all were aimed at the house in which King Albert had made his temporary palace after the removal from Brussels. As the photographs show, these did considerable damage. One wrecked a building only a hundred yards from the palace.

Surgeon Major Seaman, of the U. S. Reserve Corps, who was in Antwerp at the time, cabled the New York Herald concerning this:

"I am with the dead and wounded of the Zeppelin slaughter. The Germans attacked the city like a hyena in the night, murdering helpless women and