

England,\* were known to be embarrassed, little or nothing will be required to make the story complete. When told, it may even help to reconcile the German people themselves to the defeat and discomfiture which they so richly deserve.

But even with our present knowledge of the facts, is it not amazing to us that Germany should seek to fasten the blame on the other side, when she herself had drawn up such an advance programme as that which has just been described? Take England, for instance. Everybody knows, or ought to know, that there is no country in the world that has a greater interest than England in the continued maintenance of peace. She wants nothing from anybody—except to be let alone. She certainly would not have been likely, on any flimsy pretext, to provoke a conflict with her best customer. But the Germans insist that she had two motives for going to war against them; first, alarm at the rapid growth of their navy; and second, envy and jealousy on account of the marvellous expansion of German trade and commerce. No doubt the rivalry in naval armaments, where the pace has been set by Germany, has for the last ten or twelve years been a tremendous strain on England, especially under a government that would far rather have spent the money on something else; but she was doing fairly well in the competition, and with the Dominions ranging themselves at her side she would soon have had nothing more to fear. As to commercial

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\* "The time had been carefully chosen. England was supposed to be on the verge of a civil war in Ireland and a new mutiny in India. France had just been through a military scandal in which it appeared that the army was short of hoots and ammunition. Russia, besides a great strike and internal troubles, was re-arming her troops with a new weapon, and the process was only half through. Even the day was chosen. It was in a week when nearly all the ambassadors were away from their posts, taking their summer holiday—the English ambassador at Berlin, the Russian ambassadors at Berlin and Vienna, the Austrian Foreign Minister, the French Prime Minister, the Servian Prime Minister, the Kaiser himself, and others who might have used a restraining influence on the war party. Suddenly, without a word to any outside power, Austria issued an ultimatum to Servia, to be answered in forty-eight hours. Seventeen of these hours had elapsed before the other powers were informed, and war was declared on Servia before all the ambassadors could get back to their posts. The leading statesmen of Europe sat up all night trying for conciliation, for arbitration, even for bare delay. At the last moment, when the Austrian Foreign Minister had returned, and had consented to a basis for conversations with Russia, there seemed to be a good chance that peace might be preserved; but at that moment Germany launched her ultimatum at Russia and France, and Austria was already invading Servia. In twenty-four hours six European powers were at war."—Professor Gilbert Murray, in "How can War ever be right?"