

Russia, an ever present danger, would be thrust back upon their steppes and forests. Such were the grandiose ambitions, the impossible dreams, which emanated from her rulers and permeated her whole people.

To German eyes some such scheme of conquest seemed not only feasible but also necessary. Fear of Russia, an inheritance from the days when the Teutonic Knights formed a barrier between civilization and Slavdom, underlay the German belief that the Russian giant must be bound before he attained full growth. Germany was thoroughly persuaded, and not without reason, that the Franco-Prussian war had been but an episode in the long struggle between Frank and Teuton for the possession of the debatable ground of Alsace-Lorraine, and that the final reckoning was yet to come. She thought that her industrial and military efficiency would prove more than equal to Russia's great but ill-organized strength. France she considered a despicable foe. She was certain that the British, in her eyes a decadent people, would never submit to the sufferings entailed by participation in a Continental war. Russia and France first; then Britain's turn would come. Britain's defeat would usher in an era in which Teutonic arms would render Teutonic influence and culture paramount throughout the world. So, curiously enough, the people of Germany were convinced that their safety could be best secured through a tremendous war of conquest.

Germany, though mad with lust of power, was not insane enough to try to conquer the world unaided. Austria, conquered by Prussia in 1866, had become her subservient ally. Italy had been driven by an unsympathetic France into an alliance with Germany in 1881. Every effort had been made to attach the lesser peoples of Europe to the German cause. German kings ruled in Rumania and Bulgaria. King Constantine of Greece was