

disregard of all moral obligations', and characterized as bringing 'disgrace upon international politics'.¹ The significance attached to a balance of power has varied from time to time, but in one form or another it is as old as the beginnings of international politics. It took the form at one time of an insistence on the maintenance of the condition of the map of Europe as prepared by some international congress, first the Treaty of Westphalia, later the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713, in which the expression is used for the first time—and many wars were waged with the avowed object of preventing any change. It has played a part in our own legislation; for the Army Act in its preamble states that among the reasons for the maintenance of a standing army in time of peace was the balance of power. The doctrine in its form of the maintenance of the *status quo* has been strongly opposed by many statesmen and writers, who have laid stress on the manifold abuses to which the application of the theory has led, for it has undoubtedly been used in the past to hinder the legitimate progress and increase of States. It was an application of one view of this doctrine that led to the iniquitous destruction, by a combination of the more powerful, of smaller States which were even subdivided and split up at congresses of the Great Powers, so as to be thrown into the balance of the European equilibrium. It was seen at its worst in the policy of Napoleon III, and his demands for compensation when any of his neighbours received any accession of strength. Such a theory of the balance of power is I think worthy of condemnation. But the doctrine in the form in which it is supported by statesmen and

¹ Letter of the Bishop of Hereford in *The Times*, August 12, 1914.