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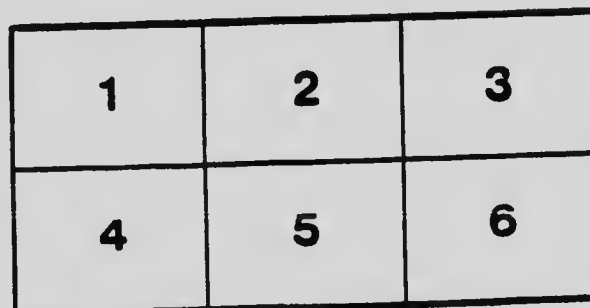
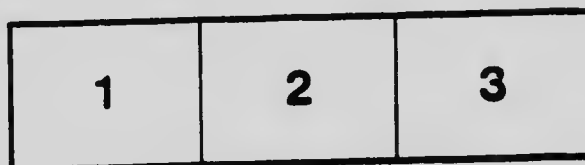
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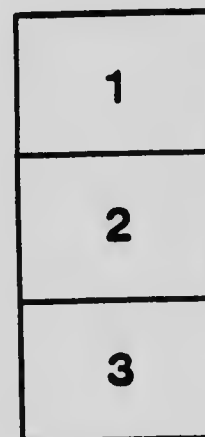
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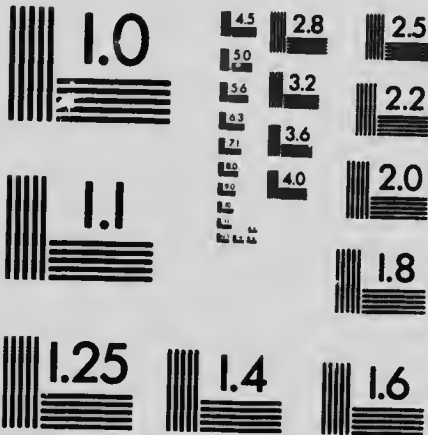
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THE COMING OF THE WAR

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EDITORIAL PREFACE

THESE essays were written for the *Morning Post* and appeared at different dates from July 27 to September 15. By the kind permission of the proprietor, they are reprinted, practically as they first appeared. They contain some conjectures which have been falsified by the event. But these conjectures are interesting if only as a proof of the extreme difficulty which the best informed and most acute critics felt in gauging the elements of the political situation and the military probabilities in the first weeks of the European strife. The conjectures are not in any way essential to the author's purpose: and one can only marvel at the general accuracy of his reasoning from the data which were available. Speaking broadly, these articles discuss: (1) the European situation at the outbreak of the war; (2) the obligations and the interests of Great Britain, both before and after her declaration of solidarity with France and Russia; (3) the best method for Great Britain of prosecuting the war; (4) the problem of raising and training an army to supplement the original Expeditionary Force; (5) the strategy of the opposing armies in the western theatre of the war. On these subjects Professor Spenser Wilkinson has said much that is of lasting interest and importance. Each day of the war since he wrote his last essay has only emphasized the truth and the importance of his warnings to the Government and to the country.

H. W. C. D.

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I

THE QUESTION OF SERVIA

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At end

July 27.

THE British nation, in company with all the other nations of Europe, is now confronted with the choice between peace and war, and all men are aware that upon the issue hang the fate of England, the welfare of Europe, the future of mankind. England's decision is the more momentous because in the balance of Europe hers may well be the determining voice. She ought to speak with greater freedom than any other nation, because in regard to the issue raised her insular position renders her less accessible to those instant hopes and fears which cannot but affect the Continental States. Her people are not just now swayed by strong passions, moving her one way or the other. Centuries of freedom, won and maintained by the blood of our forefathers, have given us the habit of thinking and acting each for himself, and in doing so of bearing in mind the common good. We have all been so brought up that in every crisis of life, public and private, the question each of us puts to himself is 'What is right?' and where there are two questions the first thing each of us does is to try to see them in due proportion, in true perspective, so that the smaller one may be subordinate to the greater. Every man's instinct tells him to-day that the great overshadowing question is the European one, Peace or war? beside which the domestic question, momentous though it is, shrinks into comparative insignificance.

The history of wars is that of the struggle for right.

It resembles the history of litigation ; both are processes in which the suitors risk their stakes—in the one case their substance, in the other their national welfare and the lives of their people—in support of a cause which they believe to be that of righteousness. The verdict is not in the power of either antagonist, it is the result of a trial in which neither side can do more than his best. That men recognize this to be the case is shown by the well-worn expressions which crystallize men's direct intuitions into short sayings. Our king's motto is ' God and my right '.

The last word of the theory of war is that a nation's strength in conflict is measured by the hold which the motive of the war, the cause, has upon the hearts of the people composing the State engaged ; in other words, a nation united in support of a cause unanimously recognized as good, and fighting because fighting is the only way, should have good hopes of victory, for in such a case the whole nation and every man in it will apply the rule of common sense which says ' Do it with thy might '. All the rest is of comparatively small account. Defects of forethought and of preparation handicap the nation which has been negligent in these matters, but if a race must be run a clean man must take his handicap.

What, then, are the issues to-day ? There is a conflict of long standing between the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the kingdom of Servia. It concerns the existence of a Serb nation identical with the Serb race. There once was a Serb nation which was conquered by the Turks. Its people remained for centuries under the Turkish power. They were *rayah*, ' the herd ', to be fleeced by the Turks, to be let alone so long as they submitted quietly and to be slaughtered if they resisted. That was the doctrine of Islam, the faith to which its

believers submitted. The rayah were outside this religion, their faith was of no moment to the Turks: it was their own affair. They had no rights; how can the cattle of the herd have rights? The believers are equal; the herd have the equality of cattle they cannot be citizens, they cannot be witnesses. How can the herd give evidence? what can their voices weigh against the people of Allah, the followers of the Prophet?

Against the surging flood of Islam the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation required a warden of its Eastern marches, and out of that warden's conflict with the Turk arose the Eastern realm, Austria. In concert with the leaders of the Magyars and Rumans, the Austrian leaders by degrees pushed back the Turks and collected round and under them such peoples, or fragments of peoples, as were at hand. Thus grew up the Austrian Empire, Europe's bulwark against the Turk—an arrangement improvised, as occasions arose, of many races and fragments of races. The empire was very strong; its rulers came to rule half of Europe, and aspired to rule it all.

After the great conflict between Europe and the Revolution, Austria emerged as one of the Great Powers, with her face towards Europe and her back towards Turkey. This new Europe was dreaming the dream of nationhood, every people desiring to have a State of its own, taking example first from England and then from France. The great antagonist to this dream was Austria, and the history of the nineteenth century is that of Germany and Italy making good that dream by fighting against their Austrian opponent. At the same time, the same dream came to the rayah in Turkey, and they too began to make it good while Austria was looking the other way or was intent upon a strange

growth within her. For the Magyars too had a dream to realize. They found themselves in a position like that of the Turks ; they were eight millions dwelling among many millions of other races. Their dream was a kingdom in which they should rule those other races, and they have gone far to make it good.

The Serbs are one of those other races. A hundred years ago most of their land was within the Turkish Empire, and many of them, those who were landlords, had become Turks to keep their lands. The rest were either Catholics (called Croats) or Orthodox (plain Serbs). The Serbs rose again and again against their Turkish overlords, and were able by degrees to free a portion of their land and to persuade the Powers of Europe to recognize their little Serb principality of Servia. The great war between Russia and Turkey sprang out of the rising against the Turks of the Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, followed by a rising of Bulgarians. Russia, determined to free the Bulgarians, had to bargain with Austria for liberty of action, and the bargain was that Bosnia and Herzegovina, instead of being added to Servia, the Serb State, should be 'occupied' by Austria-Hungary. The two provinces were occupied, and when the Government at Vienna decreed that all the young men must be soldiers in its army there was a great rising and a great war, in which the two provinces were conquered by Austria. Five years ago the word 'occupation' was dropped, and Europe was informed that Bosnia and Herzegovina were provinces of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. There was to be no Serb nation ; three-quarters of the race were to be subjects of the emperor, the rest might remain subjects of the King of Servia, but none of the race must dream of a common nationhood. Then was seen the meaning of the occupation

agreed to at the Congress of Berlin. It meant the prohibition of the national dream of the Serbs.

The Russians felt that in the bargain of 1877 they had been duped. They protested. The British Government held that as the authority to occupy had been given to Austria-Hungary by Europe—that is, by the six Great Powers in concert—the same authority should have been consulted on the change from occupation to incorporation. It seemed, however, that the difference was unsubstantial. At the critical moment Germany declared that she would support Austria, even by arms. Russia, weakened by her then recent unhappy adventures in the Far East, was not prepared to take up a challenge. The issue seemed a small one, and the Powers acquiesced.

Then came the general rising of the small nations against the Turks, and their victory. The Powers attempted to promote the conclusion of peace, and Sir Edward Grey, at the Conference of London, did his best to persuade them to agree. Austria-Hungary, supported by Italy, made hard conditions. The two Serb States, Servia and Montenegro (of which the people are of the same race, language, and religion), had to abandon Scutari, which they had taken after tremendous effort. Servia had to abandon Albania, which she had overrun, and, the territorial arrangement which the allied States had agreed upon being thus upset, the opening was given for that quarrel between them which led to a second war and to the recovery of Adrianople by the Turks. The Serbs of Servia felt that they and their kinsmen had been harshly treated by Austria.

Between the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Balkan War a number of Croats or Catholic Serbs were thrown into prison at Agram on a charge of treason. The accusation was that they were engaged

in a conspiracy, hatched at Belgrade, for the creation of a Serb nation, and for a revolt by the Serbs of Austria-Hungary against the emperor. Europe was amazed at the barbarous manner in which it was conducted, which seemed to recall the proceedings of the Spanish Inquisition. But after the trial and the sentence passed upon many of the prisoners, evidence was produced at Vienna which caused an independent inquiry, and it was proved and admitted that the evidence against the prisoners was forged, and that it emanated from the house of Count Forgach, the then Austrian Minister at Belgrade. This disclosure destroyed men's belief in the integrity of the Austrian Bureaucracy.

The attitude of menace which from that time on has been that of Austria towards Servia greatly embittered the whole Serb race. Bitter feelings of this kind are the soil in which conspiracies grow. Thus is intelligible the plot for the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand. It is a remarkable fact that within twenty-four hours of the murder, before any judicial inquiry could have been carried out, the press of Vienna and Budapest was filled with assertions that the murders were attributable to persons in the kingdom of Servia, and with insinuations that the Servian Government was to blame for them. Not a particle of evidence was produced, though it was then stated, and has since been repeated, that the prisoners themselves had said so. What the prisoners said may never be known, for they have not been publicly examined, and even what they said need not necessarily be true. Men charged with murder and conspiracy frequently lay the blame on others, not always truly. I have myself sat in the room of the Austrian Foreign Office in which one of the officials sitting at his desk communicates to the editors of the Austrian and Hun-

garian newspapers the statements which he wishes them to publish and the comments which he proposes that they should make on them. When I saw the statements and comments made in those newspapers upon the assassination I quite understood their unanimity. Those Austro-Hungarian statesmen who are determined that there shall not be a united Serb nation, except under their own control, had decided that the time had come to crush the kingdom of Serbia. Their policy was that which has been so well described by Bismarck as that of Austria between 1850 and 1860 towards Prussia. It was *avilir la Prusse et puis la démolir*. The policy of the Austrian Foreign Office, of which Count Forgach, of Agram fame, is now the head, is to humiliate Serbia and then to demolish her. An archduke has been assassinated: that is to furnish the pretext for the assassination of a nation.

But is not the first duty of Austrian statesmen to maintain the Monarchy under which men of so many races and languages live together in peace? Assuredly it is. The problem of Austrian statesmanship is to maintain the Empire by making its existence accord with the welfare of the peoples who live in it. The Empire can subsist only if the centripetal forces, the motives which hold those peoples together, are stronger than the centrifugal forces, those which tend to pull them asunder. The strongest of all the forces that we know of in the life of the peoples of to-day is the impulse towards national existence, the dream which the statesmen of Austria have so long tried to repress; for national existence means freedom and obedience to a common welfare. With the measures taken by Austrian statesmen within their Empire the other nations are not concerned, but when those measures affect the existence

of an outside State which has been recognized by the common voice of Europe, every State in Europe is concerned. It is a question of the common will—of whether there is in Europe a right, analogous to law, or whether one State, Austria-Hungary, is to have its own way regardless of the rest of the European community. The question whether an independent State shall be destroyed by her neighbour is not a local question, not the private interest of the neighbour, but affects the interests of the European community. Is it right that one Power should dictate a decision to the rest? What must be the result of the establishment of a precedent like that? The progress of civilization is from arbitrary will towards law, from despotism to representative government, from the maxim of the absolute monarch, 'I am the State', to the maxim of nationhood, 'The State is all of us'. Ever since the Treaty of Westphalia the nations of Europe have from time to time affirmed and reaffirmed the principle that Europe is all of us. The cause of civilization, of freedom, of the good government of mankind, of their progress in manhood, is bound up with the maintenance of that principle.

II

GERMANY AT THE CROSS ROADS

July 28.

A VERY potent element of success in war is surprise. It is a bad thing for a leader without a plan, whose troops are unready to be caught in that condition by a determined enemy. It is awkward for a general, when he is imagining that he will find the enemy's army by advancing straight before him, to find that it is coming against him from a flank, or that it is behind him. It is embarrassing for a Government which has no thoughts but of peace and is not ready for war to find its policy suddenly challenged.

He who would have on his side the advantage of surprise must keep the secret of his intentions and must act swiftly. In that way he gives the adversary little time to think and little time for preparation. All soldiers are imbued with the belief in the value of surprise, of secrecy, and of swiftness, and the military advisers of every Government lay stress on these elements of advantage. But there is a condition without which the advantages of surprise may become disadvantages. Surprise gives you the initiative, the first move; it enables you to force your opponent's next move, but it will not have that effect unless your move was the right one. If your secrecy and swiftness lead to rashness and hurry the surprise may recoil against you. In this way military advisers have sometimes landed their Governments in difficulties.

Some of the military advisers of the Austro-Hungarian Government and some of its statesmen have long held

the view that it was Austria's mission to regulate and control the disappearance of Turkey from Europe, which was seen to be inevitable ; that she must aim at establishing herself not only on the east coast of the Adriatic, but also in possession of Salonica, the great harbour on the Aegean. The road from Belgrade to Salonica is the best and easiest that there is over the mountain chain that forms the southern limit of the Danube valley. The Austrian strategists would like to control it and for that purpose to possess Servia, the land through which it runs. This strategical purpose adds weight to the political motives which I have already explained, which impel Austrian and Hungarian statesmen to wish to conquer Servia. The plan has probably long been thought out, but its execution put off from motives of prudence and from men's natural hesitation to take great risks, for it is well known that Russia has always been the protector of Servia, and it has always been thought probable, if not certain, that rather than allow Servia to be conquered she would fight. Would it be wise for Austria by attacking Servia to throw down the gauntlet to Russia ? How would the other Powers of Europe regard an Austrian aggressive policy of this kind ?

In 1879 a treaty was concluded between Austria and Germany, of which the first clause was as follows :

If, contrary to the hopes and against the honest wish of the two high contractors, either of the two Empires should be attacked by Russia, the high contractors are pledged to help one another with the whole fighting force of their Empires, and accordingly to make peace only together and in agreement.

This is a defensive treaty. It binds Germany to help Austria if Austria should be attacked by Russia. It

certainly was not the intention of Bismarck, who negotiated the treaty, to encourage Austria to throw down the gauntlet to Russia; it was meant to secure Austria against unprovoked attack. It is not known whether since 1879 that article has been modified, but it is in the highest degree improbable that the German Government has ever contemplated or agreed to a change in its spirit, or to the transformation of a defensive into an offensive alliance. Austria's action is based on the assumption that Germany is prepared for just that transformation of the purpose of the agreement of 1879, and the future of Germany and of European civilization is wrapped up in the question whether Germany will accept the change of purpose which Austria has thus tried to impose upon her.

The German nation has certainly not consciously armed itself for aggression, in spite of the arguments of General von Bernhardi and the writers of his school. It has armed and made great sacrifices, believing them to be necessary for self-defence. The attempt is made by some of the soldiers to confuse the two, but I doubt whether any responsible person, except General von Bernhardi, who is a retired officer and speaks only for himself, has openly advocated a policy of aggression. I have read the lecture by Professor Buchholz, entitled 'Bismarck and We', upon which the Crown Prince instantly telegraphed his congratulations to the author. It is a glowing expression of patriotism which would naturally appeal to a young prince. The writer very truly says 'the peace and security of every State rest upon its own sword', and calls upon Germans to have confidence in themselves. This is right and proper. No one who knows Germany will be surprised at the Professor's quoting some of Bismarck's very strong

expressions. I think the words chosen for quotation show that the Professor is more anxious to encourage his countrymen to rely upon force than to help them to think of justice. He recalls Bismarck's saying, 'If we do not prepare ourselves to play the part of the hammer we may perhaps find that we have to play that of the anvil.' It seems to me most unfortunate that he should have recalled from a speech of 1887 Bismarck's words, 'The next war means the blotting out either of Germany or of France from the surface of Europe.' Yet I am afraid that these words express the popular idea in Germany of the next war. That being the case I should expect Germany and her statesmen to be determined that no act of theirs should promote or precipitate that war.

Englishmen ought to have the greatest sympathy with the German Emperor at this moment, for he is confronted with a decision the most momentous in the modern history of Europe. A very strong appeal is made to him by his ally of many years and by some of the soldiers of General von Bernhardi's way of thinking. If he decides to support Austria in what seems to be her intention to conquer Servia, and so joins with Austria in throwing down the gauntlet to Russia, he will be staking Germany's existence upon a war in which the initiative certainly would not have been taken by Germany's adversaries, but by Austria. But if he thinks, as God grant that he may, that that course would not be right, he runs the risk of being misrepresented in Austria, and possibly in Germany also. Yet I think that if he should decide in favour of peace he will have saved the civilization of Europe. His choice of peace would win for him the respect of England, would restore the good feeling towards Germany which has long been absent, and would pave the way for a reconsideration of the relations

between Germany and France, which have been the source of so much disquiet in Europe these many years.

It is impossible to know what communications took place between Berlin and Vienna in the weeks before the ultimatum, but it does not seem probable¹ that the German Government was acquainted with the terms of that document. If the text was not disclosed in advance to the German Government the Austrian Government has carried secrecy too far, and has played false to its ally by endeavouring to embroil it. For there is another treaty, of which the text has not been published, by which it is believed that in case Russia should be at war with Germany, France is pledged to come to Russia's assistance. The Austrian statesmen, therefore, have deliberately attempted to provoke a European war, relying, no doubt, upon the belief that Russia and France would not dare to accept the challenge, or perhaps believing that Germany and Austria are sure of victory in case of conflict. The terms on which Italy is a member of the Triple Alliance are unknown to me, and therefore I will not speculate on the part which Italy might play in a general war, nor will I enter into the intricate question of what may or may not be done by the other Balkan States and Turkey. The vital problem is the attitude of England.

Though I think that Austrian policy towards Serbia and the whole Serb race has long been harsh and short-sighted, I have never thought, and do not now think, that it is England's business to go to war with Austria to save Serbia from destruction. When I was at Belgrade some years ago I told the Ministers as plainly as I could that they would make a mistake if they counted

¹ It is now known that the text of the ultimatum was communicated to the German Emperor before it was sent to Belgrade (Oct. 22).

upon British help in any circumstances, because no British Government would be justified in calling upon Englishmen to shed their blood except for British purposes. The question put to England at this moment is that of her duty as one of the Great Powers of Europe. Can she sit still and take no part in a war in which the existence of France would be at stake? Ten years ago England and France made up their differences, and from that time on they have treated each other as friends. Twice England has declared to the world that in case of an attack upon France she would stand by her. Is it possible now for England to desert her in case a war is brought on not by the action of France but by that of Austria, which if it comes to war will have the support of Germany?—for if Germany remains quiet there will be no European war. To that question I think there can only be one answer.

The position in which England is placed may enable Englishmen to grasp the difficulty of Germany's position, for Germany is Austria's close ally and friend, and undoubtedly feels that she cannot stand by and see Austria destroyed. A war in which Austria, while attacking Serbia, was herself attacked by Russia would certainly endanger the existence of Austria, which Germany regards as vital for herself. Moreover, Austria regards the idea of a united Serb nation as incompatible with her own existence, or at any rate with her peace and quiet. The attack upon Serbia is therefore supposed by Austrians to be a necessary measure of self-defence.

I pointed out the difficult and delicate position of the German Emperor, whose contribution to peace would take the shape of an attempt to moderate the zeal of the Austro-Hungarian Government. Sir Edward Grey's position offers a close analogy to it. For England's

relations with France and Russia make it incumbent upon her to put to them the question whether, after all, the situation which has arisen necessarily requires them to appeal to arms, and it is to Russia especially that this question would be addressed. It is a hopeful sign that there has been at least a pause, that no decisive action has yet been taken. Time is thus given to the people of this country to grasp the nature of the issues, and to realize how far they overshadow the domestic questions which divide them. Their desire is for peace at home and abroad ; their deep determination, I believe, to do right. In that determination I have great confidence. England may cheerfully exert herself for peace, if peace is possible, and, if not, for victory.

THE ISSUE

August 2.

A WEEK ago I discussed the situation created for Europe by Austria-Hungary's unprovoked attack upon Serbia. The Austro-Hungarian Government has long been meditating the conquest of Serbia as part of a policy of Austrian aggrandizement, cherished for years at Vienna and at Budapest. There is no longer any doubt that Austria was encouraged from Berlin to make this attack ; and part of the plan was that Germany should keep a ring within which Austria should be free to murder Serbia. Germany, two years ago, made an enormous increase to her army in order to be ready for a great stroke. She has refused to listen to any suggestions for a peaceful settlement with Serbia, well knowing that the attack on Serbia was a blow against a vital Russian interest, which must bring Russia into the field unless that Power should be unready, as she was five years ago : well knowing that France must needs stand by Russia, and well knowing again, after the warning of 1911, that England must stand by France.

If Germany had wanted peace she would have warned Austria against the attack on Serbia, for which the assassination of an archduke by Austrian subjects, not by Servian subjects, was taken as a pretext. The story that the assassination was arranged in Belgrade rests only on statements by Count Forgach, whose word, after his Agram forgeries, no diplomatist in Europe believes. Has not the whole business been arranged

between Berlin and Vienna with a view to bring on a war in which Germany should appear to be acting on the defensive and to be the injured party? How comes it about that Germany is ready, has declared war on Russia, and has sent an ultimatum to France, and that her first step has been to occupy neutral Luxemburg? Germany has been browbeaten by her soldiers, who have told her for years that she cannot be safe unless she conquers France. She hopes to be able to defend herself against Russia until she has settled with France. She has hoped, also, that England would be neutral, so that she could afterwards at her leisure settle with England. Prince Bülow has explained to his countrymen, in his memoirs, that the great difficulty he had as Chancellor was to hush England's suspicions until the German Navy should be so strong that even the British Navy could not overpower it. The service he claims to have rendered to Germany is to have accomplished this.

Germany, then, has undertaken to conquer France. A week ago I thought that no Englishman could doubt what, in that event, was England's duty. If France were conquered it would be England's turn next, and the German Emperor would be Emperor of Europe, whom England could disobey only at her peril. The German plan has been to keep England quiet. It has almost succeeded. When Austria declared war on Servia the Government was under the spell of the 'Pacifists'; of men who have never in their lives given a day's study to war, and who have thought that, in complete ignorance of war, they could explain to their countrymen the nature of peace. The instinct of the British nation has proclaimed unmistakably what the nation's bounden duty is, though the Cabinet has been

hesitating and undecided. We were at loggerheads about Ireland, but at the first sign of a war in Europe our domestic quarrels dropped. We were all ready to stand together. What for? To fold our hands and watch Germany attempt to destroy France, in order that Austria might strangle Servia, and that the German Emperor with his Austrian ally should extend themselves from Amsterdam to Constantinople and govern Europe with the mailed fist? No—Englishmen sank their differences to be able to fight as one man for the freedom of Europe; that is, for the maintenance of France as a Great Power, and for the continuance in Europe of a community of independent States.

The first condition of modern war, written many years ago in plain German in the late Count Moltke's popular account of the war of 1870, is that when a compulsory service army is once mobilized war has become inevitable. Mr. Asquith, Prime Minister and Minister of War, announced on Friday that he presumed that the German Army was mobilizing. Did he realize that his own words meant that nothing could prevent the German attack upon France? The only possible condition upon which the British Expeditionary Force could be ready in time to assist France was that it should be mobilized immediately when war was seen to be inevitable. The British Government's hesitation was a terrible blow to the French Government: It meant the French Army going into the field with the sense that England had deserted the cause, which over and over again her Government and her people had declared to be hers. If that doubt remains, if it is not instantly removed, the French Army will go to battle with a sense of having been betrayed. That is the greatest handicap from which an army can suffer. The Government has

gone on with its hesitations even after it knew that Germany had sent an ultimatum not only to Russia but to France, even after the French Government, under the constraint of circumstances which left it no choice, ordered on Saturday a general mobilization, fixing the first day yesterday. Yet the only condition in which we can help France in the field is that the expeditionary force should be in its place in time. The Government have postponed mobilizing that force until the moment was passed. It may never be possible to regain the time so lost. Yet in the opinion of the best strategists the issue of the war very largely depends upon this factor.

The British nation will speak to-day with no uncertain voice. It will say not merely 'England expects every man to do his duty', but 'England expects the Government to do its duty'. Even the Pacifists will be agreed in presence of one fact, which conveys everything: France, after discussion with the British Government, long ago sent her fleet to the Mediterranean, where it was to defend British interests as well as those of France, while the interests of both countries in Western waters were to be defended by the British Navy, to be there concentrated. Is it conceivable that England can now turn round and tell France that the British Navy will not be used, and that the German Navy is to be at liberty to act against the French coast? I am anxious, as every Englishman is, to strengthen the hands of the Government. At this moment England, against her will by force of circumstances, over which, alas! her Government could exercise no control, is plunged into a war, which will be the most desperate fight the world has ever seen—a fight for national existence, with no way out but victory. But the Government will not

be strengthened by shams. It will not be strengthened by deceiving itself. Though it has failed to lead at the critical moment, no good will be done by a change of Ministry. All the mistakes that have been made by Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey were made fifteen years ago by Mr. Balfour and Lord Lansdowne. The failure is not due to faults of character. The leaders of both parties are upright and able men. There is little to choose between them. They are by profession politicians, leaders of parties. If the country is to be saved they must forget parties, and think of one thing only: Victory. The weakness of both sets is that they know nothing about war; that none of them, except Mr. Churchill, has ever seriously thought about it, and that they have supposed that they can lead a nation in time of storm and stress without grasping the elementary laws that govern the employment of force. The Government of 1899 refused until the last moment to listen to its military advisers. The Government of 1914 has done the same. The first thing to be done by the present Government now is to call to its councils the men who understand war, and to learn from them. The Government remains, and must remain, in authority. It must lead the country, but it must arm itself with the military judgment which its members do not possess.

The first condition of success in war is the simple rule, 'Whatsoever thy hand taketh to do, do it with thy might.' England has now one business and only one; it is to obtain victory for her allies and herself, at any price. The first thing, the vital thing, is victory at sea. Unless the British Navy can win the command of the sea, everything else will be doubtful. But victory must also be obtained on land. Great Britain to this end

must call out all her resources. The Regular Army and the Territorials will no doubt be instantly mobilized. The young men who are not yet trained must at once offer themselves for training. The Irish Volunteers of both sides must receive the King's orders, which, I believe, they will gladly obey. All classes must restrict their expenditure to what is absolutely necessary. For the Government cannot carry on the war without money, and it has no money but that of its people. The King's dominions beyond the seas will do what they can. In one respect the country has learned something since the last war. The Navy, the Army, and the Territorial Force are better organized than ever before, and if the difficulties caused by last week's delays can be overcome we may be hopeful.

IV

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

August 4.

At the eleventh hour the Government has taken the right decision. England is to fight side by side with France. Precious time has indeed been lost which cannot be recovered, but England can yet make a good fight if no more time is wasted. Sir Edward Grey said on Monday that the country had not had time to realize the issue. The country has understood the issue from the beginning; the Government was slow in grasping it.

Germany knows the enormous military advantage of surprise, and has gained it. The Government, not seeing what was plain and palpable, has imagined that Germany would pause to negotiate. Germany may have made, and still may make, offers, seemingly large, to buy England's neutrality. For an English Minister to listen to them would be treason. Their sole purpose is to gain time and to divide the three Powers. The notion that to refrain from attacking Belgium would upset Germany's plans is false. A general's plans are not cut and dried in that way. If Belgium were left neutral the Belgian Army would not be among the forces that Germany would have to crush, just as if England remained neutral, or if she were to keep her troops at home, Germany would have so many fewer adversaries to meet her in France.

The British Ministry has been studying how it could unite this country, but this country was united, and showed itself united, on the first day of the crisis. No doubt the Government's hesitation has had the effect

of enabling people more fully to grasp what the war means. It has inflicted upon most of us the bitter humiliation of doubting whether those who must be our leaders were 'playing the game'. The misery and humiliation of those days of doubt will never be forgotten. But now that, as we hope, the Government has made up its mind, and the die is cast, we shall go into this fight cemented together as we have never been before. The Government is quite right in feeling that it ought not to enter into a fight for life and death unless and until the heart and conscience of the country have seen that this was the only way. Most of us know that it is so, and even those who have not yet grasped it, even those who still doubt, will yet be with us heart and soul and will do their duty faithfully. We must all the time remember that their position is harder than ours, and that he who serves his country believing his country to be in the wrong shows a heroism which can hardly be claimed by him who never had doubts. Let us, then, overcome the feelings of bitterness that are too apt to spring up towards a minority which cannot see eye to eye with the majority. In that way we shall get rid of the bad habits that have grown up during many years when public life was party life and nationhood forgotten.

The cause of the delay was in the Government, not in the situation. The Government ought to have known and to have said on Friday that England would stand by France at all hazards. It ought on Friday to have issued the orders to mobilize everything. England can mobilize her forces without going to war. To mobilize the Navy in no way disturbs the country. It does not affect the labour market. To call out the first-class reserve and the special reserve relieves the labour market.

To have mobilized the Territorial Force in the three days ending with a Bank Holiday would be to utilize time otherwise devoted to enjoyment. A Continental nation is in a different position. For where every man is a soldier mobilization stops all work. Once it has been ordered it cannot be interrupted, and once the Army has been collected it must fight. That is a new and modern condition known to every student of war. When the German Emperor proclaimed martial law in Germany it was as certain as anything in this world can be, not only that Germany was mobilizing, but that she was determined to fight France and Russia. A mobilization in England disturbs the bulk of the population so little that it could be carried out without disastrous consequences of any sort, and would in no way commit the country on the question of peace or war. If it had been ordered on Friday night Sir Edward Grey could have made his speech on Monday exactly as he made it, and with just the same results, but the troops would have been ready three days sooner than they can now be. It is a question of the value of time. Unless that is understood both by the Government and the nation we shall probably be defeated.

No one but a madman would wish now to have a change of Government. The Government we have must lead us through this conflict. Within a month from to-day victory will have declared itself.¹ If it is

¹ On August 4 I wrote, 'within a month from to-day victory will have declared itself.' My meaning was that probably within a month we shall know which way the great struggle between the French and German armies is inclining. But I find that some of my readers have understood me to mean that the war will be over in a month. That is an unfortunate misunderstanding which I am anxious to remove. I am afraid that the war will last a long time. For neither set of Allies will be willing to accept a first defeat as final.—August 11.

Germany's victory the map of Europe will be reconstructed at Germany's dictation, and England be left alone to fight for her independence either immediately or after a short truce against all Europe commanded by Germany. If it is a victory for England, France, and Russia, the nations will remain as they are, except that there will be some slight changes of frontier and that the smaller nations will be free. The Powers will take rank according to their contributions to victory.

Upon what does victory depend? That is, when war comes, the question of questions. A war consists of a series of battles at various times and places. There are preliminary battles and secondary battles, and there is the decisive battle on which everything turns, in which the whole war centres. That is the meaning of such names as Austerlitz, Waterloo, Königgrätz. It is the decisive battle or battles that must be won. There are two branches of the war into which we are going, battles at sea and battles on land. We are to fight side by side with France and Russia, who are now necessarily our allies. It is one war, not three wars, and the battles will hang together. The great centre of decisive action is in the land war, because it is necessary for the Allies to break the power of Germany: they must either do so or be one and all defeated. The power of Germany is in her Army. The destruction of her Fleet would be no great blow to her, though it would have the effect in time of weakening her Army. For the side to which we belong, therefore, the one thing needful is to win the decisive battle on land. That battle will be fought between the French and German armies, because Germany is throwing the bulk of her forces at the outset against France. The dominating principle in the direction of armies is that he who seeks

victory must have the superior force at the decisive point. France will strain every nerve to have as large a force as possible to meet the German Army, and Germany in the same way will strive to have a still stronger force to oppose the French Army.

Until the decision has been reached in France, Germany will postpone her struggle with Russia. This is at any rate regarded as the most probable course for Germany. The greatest service that England can render to the common cause is, therefore, to strengthen the French Army. The mere knowledge that England is standing by her will be a great encouragement to the French, but encouragement is not help. The first duty of England to the common cause is to send as large and as efficient an army as she can to take part in the fight between France and Germany, which is necessarily and inevitably the kernel of the whole struggle. The Expeditionary Force, as soon as it is ready, is the proper force for that purpose. I understand that if the order for mobilization had been given on Friday there would have been time before the German Army can attack the French for the Expeditionary Force to have been in line with the French Army. It is not clear to me whether that is now possible, and it certainly will not be possible unless the Government promptly sanctions this use of the Expeditionary Force. If no British troops take part in the decisive battle England will have lost her best chance of helping France and of contributing to the victory of the three Powers. That is the importance of the time lost by delay. I do not know whether it is still too late for England to help in the first great struggle on land. But I am quite sure that she must strain every nerve to be able to do so, and throughout the war to do her utmost to strengthen the

French Army by her own troops. She must send to France as many troops as possible and as fast as possible, and these troops must be under the command of the French generalissimo.

The English commander must take his orders from the French commander-in-chief and should have no other instructions from his own Government. If the English troops cannot help in the first battle they must help in the second. That will not be as effective, but it will still be the best move. The more the troops sent, the better they are, and the sooner they are on the spot the better the chance for the three Powers. Accordingly, so much of the Territorial Army as is not required at home and is fit to take the field should be sent to France as well as the Expeditionary Force. They will volunteer to go fast enough. The function of our military forces is to fight the German Army, which will be found confronting the French Army on the Continent, and not in England.

What about the invasion of England? This question brings me to the naval war, in which victory is vital for England. No army, except at great risk, can be taken across the sea in ships, if those ships are liable to be attacked by men-of-war during the voyage and before the landing is completed. What am I to do if I want to move my army across the sea while my adversary has a fleet of men-of-war? Evidently his fleet, if it could, would attack and sink my transports and drown or capture my soldiers. If I had a fleet of my own my safest plan would be to destroy the enemy's fleet before embarking my troops, which would then be quite safe, as there would be no one to molest them. But if my fleet were so strong as to have a good chance of destroying the enemy's the hostile admiral would

avoid battle, so as to give me no chance of sinking his fleet. He might take shelter in a fortified harbour or dodge me by going into some land-sheltered haven with two or more exits. If he could evade me he would still try to attack my transports. It is a question partly of the relative strength of the two fleets and partly of the relative skill of the two admirals.

The British Fleet is very much stronger, so far as the number of its ships is concerned, than the German. It has been all these years the Admiralty's duty to train its admirals and to pick out the ablest for command. We have now to rely on them to do their best. If they know their business as well as their German rivals England is perfectly safe from invasion. Even if a few parties were landed by ships which had given our Navy the slip they must end by surrender, for divisions of Territorials can be quickly collected by our railway system at any point in the country. The admirals know and the Admiralty knows whether the Navy can undertake to secure the transport of troops across the Channel. If they can, there ought to be no hesitation. It will be seen that if there were no German Navy, not only would these islands and our merchant ships at sea be quite safe, but the movement of troops to France would be attended with no risks. The function of the Navy, therefore, is to create that condition of safety. Its mission is to destroy the German Navy as soon as it can, and if that can be done, to help the French Navy to destroy that of Austria. At sea time is even more vital than on land, because fleets move twenty times as fast as armies.

It will be seen that England's part in the war rests upon the Navy, because the Navy is the only instrument by which the sea, which connects us with France and

with the rest of the British Empire, can be kept open. If the Navy can win the command of the sea England will grow stronger week by week, for the Territorial Army, exercising continually, as it now must, will rapidly improve in every respect. Meantime, those young men who have never been trained will enroll themselves and will be receiving training. How, when, and where, the War Office will decide.

My reason for discussing the meaning of the loss of time is in order that it may not occur again. It would not have happened if there had been in the Government a man chosen for his knowledge of war, because such a man would have explained to the Cabinet that success in war depends not only on the cause but on the right use of the means, in which time is all important. It is the Government's first duty to find such a man and to associate him with themselves.

A word in conclusion on the duty of us all. After what I have already said, my readers will begin to realize that in war we have to pass through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Rich and poor will alike perceive that there is no absolute security in this world for life, health, or wealth. Each man can make sure of his own self-respect, but of nothing else. None of us can foresee what is in store, but at least we can all resolve that we will bear ourselves like men, thinking only of duty, helping one another in the misfortunes that are inevitable during war, of which we have already had a foretaste. We cannot better begin than by facing in our minds the worst that could happen, so that we may not be dismayed by such bad tidings as every war brings. Thus prepared, we shall stand together, and on that condition we may be of good hope. A nation united and determined, fighting for a righteous cause, is not easily beaten.

V

THE THEATRE OF THE WAR BETWEEN FRANCE AND GERMANY

August 11.

THE war in which England is now engaged, and which until it is over will be her sole business, is on such a vast scale that the mind can only grasp it by considering its parts one at a time. To-day I will attempt a sketch of the conditions of a part of it, the struggle between the French and German armies, which will probably form the first act of the drama.

A word, first of all, on the general programme, in order that the first act may appear in its proper place. There was a prelude, the Austrian attack on Servia, of which the purpose was to throw down the Austro-German challenge to the other Powers. Unaccepted, the challenge would have been the declaration of German rule in Europe. The reply given to it means that Europe will have no master except after the destruction of France, the overthrow of the British Empire, and the humiliation of Russia. So soon as it was clear that the central Empires must fight to obtain their will, Austria appears to have abandoned her invasion of Servia, to have left only a few troops along her southern border, and to have moved the rest towards Russia, sending a detachment, of which the strength can only be guessed, to help the Germans against France. The distances over which the Russian troops must be moved before they can be assembled to act together as an army are so great that Russia's action can hardly be effective

until some time after the fighting has begun between the French and German armies. The delivery of Russia's blow will therefore constitute the second act. It will probably be aimed in the direction of Berlin, and be accompanied or followed by a subsidiary conflict between Russian and Austrian forces. Germany's first great blow is aimed at France, which has the assistance of Belgium and such help as half-armed England can give at the outset. The great masters of war have always considered first all the unfavourable possibilities, for if you are prepared for the worst you will not be taken aback whatever comes. If, then, Germany should be successful at the start, England will have to help the French to expel the invaders, and sooner or later to defeat them. It would require a tremendous effort, though one not beyond the power of this country. The first great victory may perhaps influence the decisions of those States which have not yet felt compelled to take part in the war. They will not necessarily join the victors. The consideration which will determine them will be that of their own future. Will they be happier as the vassals of Germany or as free and equal members of a European Commonwealth?

Side by side with the first two phases of the Continental struggle will be carried on the naval war in the North Sea and the Mediterranean. So long as the British Navy maintains its preponderance communication between England and France will be maintained, subject, of course, to some risks. A British victory over the German Fleet would secure not only the communications between England and France, but the command of all the seas, including the Mediterranean. For the present there is no command in the Mediterranean, as the Austrian Navy still exists. The con-

clusion to be noted from this general survey is that England has laid upon her the duty of carrying on this war to victory. There is no other issue except her destruction. So soon as all her people have fully grasped that this is the nature of the war they may be confident of ultimate success. It will be seen, too, that England's power to play her part depends upon the right handling of the Navy, for when the British Navy commands the sea, troops from the Dominions and from India can be brought to Europe safely, and can take the field sooner than the new troops which Lord Kitchener is about to raise.

The region in which the French and German armies will shortly meet is the country bounded on the east by the river Rhine from Basle to the sea, on the west by the North Sea and the Channel, and on the south by a line drawn from Geneva to Paris and thence to Havre or Dieppe. From Calais to the point where the French frontier is nearest to Basle is about 330 miles ; from Paris to Basle, Strassburg, Coblenz, or Cologne, about 240 miles ; from Paris to Metz, Liège, or Brussels, about 170 miles. The French frontier at the points nearest to Paris is about equidistant between Paris and Cologne, 120 miles from either. Thus Maubeuge and Sedan are each of them about eight or nine days' march from Paris.

From a military point of view this whole region may best be subdivided into those parts through which troops can move freely and easily and those in which the movements of masses of men are impeded by hills, ravines, and forests. Follow on any map the River Oise from the Seine just below Paris, and you will find it continued by that of the Sambre to Namur, and thence by that of the Mense to Liège. Between this line of rivers and the sea the whole country is a plain, quite flat as it

approaches Holland and the sea, but south of the line Liège, Brussels, Calais, a region of gently rolling downs. To the east of this river-line the country is divided into two halves by the Meuse, from its source near Langres to its confluence with the Sambre at Namur. Between Paris and the Meuse the country is a rolling plain, everywhere practicable for troops, except in the Forest of the Argonne, near Verdun, and in the part of Belgium between the Sambre and the Meuse represented by the triangle Maubeuge, Namur, Mézières. To the east of the Meuse the whole country is hilly and broken, especially between the Meuse and the Moselle. This is the district of the Ardennes and the Eifel, sparsely populated, thickly wooded, with comparatively few roads, and in the Ardennes deeply intersected by a multitude of river ravines. Between the Moselle and the Rhine are two ranges of considerable hills, the Hunsrück by the Moselle and the Vosges, with their continuation, the Hardt. Between these two ranges the valley of the Nahe offers a good route for troops from Mainz to Saarlouis and Metz, while the valley of the Rhine is full of railways and roads.

The French frontier, starting from the Jura, runs due north along the crest of the Vosges for seventy or eighty miles, and then turns north-westward towards the sea, passing a few miles south of Metz and touching the frontier of Luxemburg between Thionville and Longwy. From Longwy to the sea it divides France from Belgium. The eastern frontier of Belgium runs due north from Longwy to Aix-la-Chapelle, and between Belgium and Germany is interposed the triangular territory of Luxemburg.

In the early years after the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, the French Government reconstructed its defences towards Germany. It was thought that the frontier

between Dunkirk and Longwy was protected by the neutrality of Belgium and Luxemburg, but that special precautions were needed between Longwy and Basle, where only a conventional line separates French from German territory. In this region were constructed four first-class fortresses, each of which consists of a central citadel surrounded by a girdle of detached forts, enclosing in their circumference an area several miles in diameter, within which a whole army can, if need be, rest without being exposed to the enemy's projectiles, because his guns cannot come within range of those of the detached forts. Such a first-class fortress cannot be taken by assault, but only by the always prolonged and costly operation of a siege. These four fortresses, in order from right to left, are Belfort and Epinal, Toul and Verdun. Belfort blocks the gap between the south end of the Vosges and the north end of the Jura, the natural way from the Rhine Valley towards Lyons. Behind it, fifty miles away, is the similar fortress of Besançon. Between Belfort and Epinal there is a chain of forts crowning the hills which here form the left bank of the Moselle. Similarly Toul is connected with Verdun by a chain of forts on the right bank of the Meuse, and Toul and its outworks fill up the gap between the Meuse and the Moselle. From Belfort to Verdun is about 150 miles. The first fifty miles from Belfort to Epinal are covered by those two fortresses and their connecting forts; the third fifty miles, Toul-Verdun, are likewise covered by these two fortresses and their intermediate works. But the central fifty miles, Epinal-Toul, are unfortified. The idea was that the French armies should assemble in security behind the two fifty-mile lines to right and to left, and could fall upon a German army if and when it should offer to move through the

central fifty-miles' gap. In the same way the French Army assembled behind the Verdun-Toul line could fall upon a German army attempting to pass between Verdun and the Belgian frontier. During the latter part of the nineteenth century the relations between England and France were not what they have since become, and France had to take precautions on her coasts against the possibility not only of German but of English attack. Accordingly, to the left of the long frontier line there is a strong fortress at Calais, and the towns of Gravelines, Dunkirk, and Bergen are also fortified. Between this group and Verdun the frontier is open and undefended except for the fortresses of Maubeuge, on the Sambre, and of Lille, each of which is of the same general character as the four great fortresses on the frontier towards Germany, having a ring of detached forts and a central citadel.

Germany has her fixed defences on the Rhine, where the fortresses of Wesel, Cologne, Coblenz, and Mainz control the principal crossings. To these, after 1870, was added the great fortress of Strassburg, while Metz and Thionville, on the Moselle, are regarded both as bulwarks against a French attack and a protection for the German Army during its assembly. The reader who has followed on any map this general sketch of the frontier will understand the meaning of the German invasion of Luxemburg and Belgium and of the attack on Liège. Count Moltke, the present Chief of the German Great General Staff, or Director-General under the Emperor of the movements of the German armies, does not propose to be content with the effort to break through the frontier between Basle and Longwy, of which France has carefully prepared the defence. He prefers to turn those defences and to move his armies along the shortest line towards Paris. That line is the

straight line from Cologne. An army does not move along one road, but along many. It moves rather by a wide belt of country than by a line. The belt of country chosen must be that which begins on the Rhine at Wesel and Coblenz, and of which the centre is marked by the straight line Cologne-Paris. But the country between the Meuse and the Moselle is broken and difficult, with sparse population. The German armies live by requisition, the military name for organized plunder. They take the food of the inhabitants. Where the inhabitants are few there is not enough food to take, and an army would starve unless there were abundant other supplies brought to it from behind. Belgium north of the Sambre and Meuse is a populous, rich country, where there are plenty of roads and railways, and plenty of food to be had by well-organized stealing. So a part of the German Army is to march through this portion of Belgium. Liège blocks the way, so Liège must be taken, and meanwhile must be surrounded, or, in technical terms, invested.

The defences of Belgium were planned by the great military engineer Brialmont. He made a first-class fortress at Liège and a second at Namur, with a smaller fort between them at Huy. Behind these he made a great fortress at Antwerp and connected it with Liège by a small fort at Diest, midway between the two towns.

From Antwerp to Namur is nearly sixty miles, so that there is plenty of room for the movements of great armies and for a great battle, which seems probable enough, as French troops are believed to have already entered Belgium to help its brave defenders. This would, however, hardly be the great decisive battle, but only an engagement intended to clear the way for the further advance of one of the German armies.

VI

POLICY AND STRATEGY IN THE WAR

August 17.

THE fundamental condition of success in war is harmony between policy and strategy. A Government or a nation should not go to war without knowing the purpose for which it fights, nor without seeing how the employment of its armies and navies is to lead to or to contribute to the fulfilment of that purpose. This principle may seem so obvious as not to be worth repeating. Yet very few Governments conform to it, as will be seen from a review of the policy and strategy of the Powers during the last three weeks.

The occasion of the war was the ultimatum sent by Austria-Hungary, with Germany's approval, to Serbia. What did Austria want? She complained that certain of her own subjects, who had assassinated the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, had been enabled to do so because they had been helped by Servian officials. She professed to want guarantees that the Servian Government would suppress all agitation in Serbia aiming at closer union between the Serb race. The Servian Government was willing to fulfil this wish, and none of the other European Governments raised any objection to it. There was, therefore, no need for war as a means of obtaining what Austria professed to want. The Austrian purpose, therefore, was not that which was announced, but something else. In the ultimatum to Serbia, Austria demanded that officials of her own should superintend the measures taken by the Servian Government for

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giving satisfaction to Austria. That was equivalent to asking for an admission of the suzerainty or supremacy of Austria over Servia. The means taken to assert this supremacy consisted in the invasion of Servia by a large army. At the same time Austria proclaimed and Germany repeated that the dispute between Austria and Servia was a purely Austrian affair, and that no interference by any other Power would be tolerated. This showed that in the opinion of Austria and Germany some other Power would be likely to interfere—in other words, that Germany and Austria very well knew that it was not a purely Austrian affair. Russia has always taken a great interest in Servia, and has contributed very largely towards the establishment of a Servian State, towards its enlargement, and towards the recognition of its independence by all the Powers of Europe. The ultimatum was communicated to the German Emperor before it was sent, so that Germany approved of the Austrian proceedings. Thus the two Empires had determined to confiscate for the benefit of one of them an independent State of whose freedom Russia was the champion. Their action was a challenge to Russia either to submit to Austrian and German dictation or to fight for her protégé.

The principle from which I set out suggests that before the ultimatum was sent the two emperors would have been wise to consider whether their forces would suffice to make good their intention of taking possession of Servia against such forces as would probably be used to prevent that operation. There was, to begin with, the Servian Army, and if Russia would not submit to Austro-German dictation, there would be the Russian Army. Then, as France and Russia were bound to one another by treaty, there would be the French Army

also. The two emperors must have felt pretty sure that their united armies could defeat those of Russia, France, and Servia. But, while Austria wanted Servia, Germany also wanted more territory. For immediately on mobilizing her Army she asked for a free passage through Belgium, explaining that if it were granted she would undertake not to annex Belgium at the conclusion of the war. The inference is that if the Belgians should oppose the passage of the German troops, Germany, in case she should be successful, would annex Belgium. It was well known by both emperors that England was bound by treaty to uphold the neutrality of Belgium, which means to fight any nation that should violate it, and also that the English people felt bound in honour to stand by France in case of unprovoked attack upon her. It was also well known to them that England's policy for centuries has been to oppose any such claim to a dictatorship on the Continent as was implied in their own claim to deal with Servia as the vassal of Austria. The German and Austrian emperors together control very great and formidable forces. Are those forces strong enough to impose a German dictatorship upon Europe by the crushing defeat of the great armies of France and Russia, of the small armies of Belgium, Servia, and England, and of the British Navy? If not, the two emperors have made a fundamental miscalculation by adopting a policy which it is beyond their means to carry through. If it is a miscalculation, it must lead to disaster.

How does the principle of harmony between policy and strategy apply to the coalition of which England is a member? Each of the States concerned has had the war forced upon it by Austria and Germany. In their case it has not been a matter of calculation, but of

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necessity. The Governments, however, are not absolved from the duty of making the calculation. Unless their policy and strategy can be harmonized they can hardly succeed. Their common object is to make an end of the Austro-German claim to dictate to Europe, and to vindicate the common law of Europe, which is violated by the German invasion of Belgium. The independence of Servia and the integrity of her territory must also be secured. The only means by which these objects can be accomplished consist in the defeat of the Austro-German armies and navies. The Powers of the Coalition must, therefore, exert themselves with all their strength to win the victory over the Austro-German combination. But besides their common aim each of the Powers has desires of its own, and common sense suggests that they should, as soon as possible, compare notes, so as to bring their several wishes into harmony. This is a more difficult matter than it may seem at first sight.

In order to clear our minds, the best plan may be to consider the end of the war rather than that beginning which is now absorbing so much of our thoughts. The end of every war is a treaty of peace, and of a European war a European treaty like those of Westphalia, Utrecht, and Vienna. A European treaty will be made if and when one side or the other is beaten and exhausted, or if both sides should be exhausted without any great change in their relative situations. It may be well to assume first the result most disagreeable to ourselves.

If the Austro-German arms are successful the two emperors will recast the map of Europe to their own taste, and send in the bill to France and England. In that case, Austria would lay claim to the suzerainty of the Balkans; Germany would annex Belgium and Luxemburg, to which she would probably add a large

strip of France, while Holland, Denmark, and perhaps Switzerland would become her vassals. If the British Navy had been beaten Germany would certainly demand such British colonies as she thought would be convenient and digestible. She would, perhaps, transform the Polish provinces of Russia into a buffer State between herself and her Eastern rival. The two Empires would make their own arrangements for the maintenance of Turkey under their protectorate, in which Egypt would be included. It will, perhaps, be said that all this is unthinkable and impossible. That only means that it must be made impossible. To prevent it is the aim of British policy, and the only means of her own which Great Britain can employ to prevent it consist in her Navy and an Army strong enough to bring about the victory of her allies on land. England has to see this war through to the end, to a peace which she can accept, even if it costs her ten years of fighting and a million men.

Take the case, which is possible, though I hope improbable, of a crushing defeat of the French Army, involving the Belgians and the British Expeditionary Force, and suppose the British Navy should remain undefeated. Could England then make peace with Germany, leaving France prostrate under her heel? In the last great war England was placed in that position, the only difference being that the struggle was against France and the prostrate ally was Germany. The England of those days decided to continue the war, and carried it on to the final triumph. Is the England of George V less spirited than that of George III?

Consider now the opposite case, and suppose the Coalition to be victorious. France in that event would certainly demand the restoration of her old frontier and the

recovery of Alsace-Lorraine. I think that upon those terms the quarrel between France and Germany might be ended. Germany has failed in forty years to win the hearts of the population of those countries. The Coalition would surely go on the principle of nationality. That would involve the creation of a Serb State to include all the lands of Serb population, Croatia, Slavonia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Dalmatia. The Bocche di Cattaro would become the harbour of Montenegro. Italy would recover the Trentino and Trieste. Rumania would claim, and ought to have, Transylvania. The Danish portion of Schleswig would be restored to Denmark. Russia would demand—what is already foreshadowed in the Russian general's proclamation—the reunion of Poland under Russian instead of under German protection. The frontiers of the Balkan States would probably be modified, because if a united Rumania and a united Serbia were constituted the boundaries of Bulgaria could be expanded to meet her intelligible wishes, while the Coalition would without difficulty restrain the reactionary ambition of the restless Turkish Government. This reconstruction would leave Holland and Belgium as they are, and would not materially diminish the area, the German population, or the unity of Germany. It would reduce the Austro-Hungarian Empire by lopping off most of its Slavonic provinces, so that it would be composed of the kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia, the duchies of Austria and the Tyrol. With these alterations the map of Europe would offer more chances of peace and stability, and the upshot of the war would be not a German Empire co-extensive with Europe outside of Russia, but the establishment of the United States of Europe.

The sooner the Powers of the Coalition can come to

an agreement about their ultimate aims the better their chances of success, for the programme which they can then make known will appeal to all the neutral States. It will be seen that, on any view of what the Coalition desires or requires, the vital thing is victory as soon and as complete as possible. And it will be seen, too, that the chief reason why there can be a doubt about the result is the inadequate organization of England's resources for war. The appeal for 100,000 men seems to have struck the public imagination as something great, and it is thought remarkable that there is the prospect of the whole number being enrolled during the next two or three weeks. But I am sure that there are in London alone more than 100,000 able-bodied men, whom it would have been easy, with previous forethought, to have enrolled in a week.

VII

DUTY

August 25.

'The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house.'

A GREAT war is the day of judgment ; a mighty earthquake, in which everything that can be broken is shattered to atoms, in which men and nations find themselves alone and naked in the presence of God. Only what is indestructible abides the shock.

Will this British nation stand the test ? It is a question of the foundations. All that is built upon the sand will be swept away ; the house that is founded upon a rock will stand. England's foundations are the true hearts of her people. They will abide. All the rest may go, for what else matters ? We Englishmen have never asked or planned to rule the world. We have been taught each man to mind his own business and to play the game. We have been thought arrogant because we have been prosperous ; we have made ourselves comfortable in our beautiful home, and have been taking things easy. Too many of us have drifted into selfishness, and have thought we could live our lives each for himself. Thus in a long peace we have deposited ourselves in strata one above the other—the unemployed, the working class, the middle class, the wealthy—we have come to be arranged in two great layers, employers and employed. Each and every set has been full of its rights. Now we are to be shaken up, to realize that we are all of us only men and women, with one common bond between us—our country.

It is time now for us to look the war in the face and to

see exactly where we are. Very likely we have muddled into this war. But it is not a muddle of which we need be ashamed. A few years ago we made it up with France, partly no doubt because we were puzzled by the actions of Germany. Once or twice since then, when we thought that Germany was rattling the sabre, our impulse was to stand by our friends. So our foreign policy has come to be *Vive la France!* 'Let France live!' Perhaps we had not thought it out, but there is nothing in it for which we need blush. We rather fancied that our policy meant peace; we were not convinced that we ought to arm ourselves, though we knew that Germany was armed and was extra-arming. Before we were going to arm we wanted to know the reason why. Some of us said 'Arm to protect our Island', but we supposed that the Navy would do that. If anybody said 'Let us arm so as to be ready, in case of war, to fight the enemy in his own country instead of in our own, and to be able to help France in case that should be our duty', nobody minded him. So England is in the position of the Knight in the story, who had had no soldier's training when the call came to him to put on armour and fight for the right. We have sent our little Army to help France, and, so far as we know, France is very hard beset. Our Army will do all that is possible; it will share in weal or woe with the French Army. We do not yet know what its fate will be. But whatever happens we have given our word, '*Vive la France!*' and we have to make it good. The naval battle is yet to come. We trust our Navy; we know that it will do its duty. We cannot know beforehand which way victory will incline.

Now, therefore, at the eleventh hour, which is passing rapidly. England must put on her armour. Now she must show that she is a nation. Now the spirit of

England stirs in us all as we become aware of the choice that confronts us—death or victory.

Germany is in deadly earnest. Her people believe themselves to be fighting for their national existence. All her men from seventeen to forty are in the field, fighting. They have all been well trained, most of them for two years, the educated men for one year, in the ranks of the Regular Army. The officers have been well instructed, the leaders trained in Moltke's great military university. Their Navy has been built and trained under the supervision of past masters in the arts of war. Though not nearly so large as our own, it is a very formidable force. Germany's intention is to strike down France. But her leaders regard that as only a preliminary. The great aim is to strike down England. Germany's aim gives us the measure of what we have to do. We have to overcome Germany. The only other possible result is the fall of England.

A people can hardly be destroyed, but it can be enslaved. The Turks, who in their day were as formidable in war as the Germans of our time, struck down the peoples of the Balkans, who have lived for centuries in something very like slavery. But those peoples were not destroyed ; we have seen them awakening to nationhood and fighting for it like men. Neither the German nor the English people will be destroyed in this war, but, if Germany wins, England will have ceased to be free and independent. She will be subject to Germany's dictation. If Germany is beaten there will no doubt be changes in Germany, but Germany will still remain one of the nations of Europe. So this war is for our people a matter of death or victory.

A nation is made up of a Government to lead and the people to follow. For forty years what has been called

the Government has been the committee of a party, with its first business to carry out a party programme, to keep the party together and to win the next election. A Cabinet is a party committee which puts one of its members in charge of each department of government, irrespective of his knowledge of the business of that or of any other department. But its members are Englishmen, like the rest of us, and would not be where they are if they had not qualities deserving respect. The breath of war has blown away party ; no one thinks of it any more. The Government is now a Committee of Public Safety with no other mission than to lead England to victory. It would be hard to choose a better committee than the one we have. The Cabinet must go on with its work, and, if it thinks needful, can reconstitute itself or enlarge or contract itself for that work. It has begun nobly. Its best man, Mr. Asquith, has called the best soldier he knows to take charge of the administration of the Army. Mr. Asquith and his colleagues will pick the best men they can find in the country for every task which requires special qualifications, irrespective of tradition, rank or title, and irrespective of party.

The Government must lead, because without leading the people are helpless, and cannot act as a nation. The members of the Cabinet are perhaps appalled by the suddenness and the magnitude of the emergency. Few of them have thought much about the nature and conduct of war. When in doubt they must take advice, but, above all things, they must have courage, knowing that England is behind them and the Empire behind England.

The first thing to be done is to make a new army to fight the German Army. To those who do not know war this may seem impossible. It looks so like a miracle.

But the miracle was performed by France in her great Revolution, when she was distracted, her society disorganized, and the whole country torn by civil war. England will repeat the miracle, for men will drop their prejudices. The first prejudices which must be dropped are that of the civil population against a regular army, and that, which is just as dangerous, of the regular army, especially of its officers, against all military institutions which are not the regular army. If the Government will rise above these distinctions it will have half a million men in a week. Every man in England now between twenty and forty wants to be taught as soon as possible how to fight the Germans. He wants to be trained as a soldier and will learn with a will. There is no need to label him as regular, territorial, or reserve. All he wants is the chance and the certainty that when victory has been won he may return to the occupation of his choice, whatever that may be. But time presses, and the War Office has its hands full. In a week a good organizer can duplicate the War Office without disturbing the one which is already busy. But there should be no hurry, for hurry always means confusion. First the organization, then the cadres—that is, the staff of instructors—and then the call for volunteers. The volunteers will be there with the call. The first call will be for the young and unencumbered. The married men's turn will come next, and they, too, will go if they are wanted. Meantime, every man and every woman is thinking, How can I serve England? Each of us by quietly doing his work unless and until he sees the way to some service more useful to the nation. Each of us by recognizing in thought, act, and speech that we are all one body. Thus, doing our duty, we shall prove the sincerity of our silent prayer, 'England for Ever'.

VIII

FOR OUR COUNTRY

August 27.

OUR country to-day has something to make good. We are all of us anxiously waiting to hear the result of the battle. It is not an ordinary battle. On each side there are five or six armies, each of them a great deal larger than that which Wellington commanded at Waterloo. The battle-field reaches from Switzerland to the Channel, as far as from London to Edinburgh. On one side are fighting all the hale and hearty Frenchmen between twenty and forty, together with a British Army which seems tiny in this tremendous conflict, but which is probably larger and certainly better trained, equipped, and officered than any British Army that has ever fought in Europe. The world has never seen a battle on this scale. It will be decisive. The whole German nation is united and determined, its purpose to crush France for ever. No French nation and no French civilization are ever again to be able to rival the purposes and ideals of Germany. The conflict has begun badly for France. In the first engagement, of which the results were roughly known on Sunday night, the Germans claimed that three of their armies had won victories, and the French admitted that in Lorraine, in Belgian Luxemburg, and in Belgium their own armies had fallen back, while the British Army had conformed to the general movement by withdrawing from the neighbourhood of Mons to a line further back, which seems to be that of which Maubeuge is the centre and Valenciennes and possibly

Avesnes mark the flanks. It is a country where British blood has been freely spilt in past times, in the days of Queen Anne and in those of George III. Then the British Army was facing the other way, fighting against France, but the cause then was the same as now, that of a free Europe and a free England against a great Monarchy that sought to extend its power.

The news for which we are waiting will come soon enough. If it is victory we shall breathe freely, if not—we shall find out what stuff we are made of.

Suppose the British Army now fighting had been half a million men instead of 150,000. In that case there would still have been anxiety; there would still have been the chances of war; but the chances in favour of France and England would have been better than they are by 350,000 men. The population of the United Kingdom is larger than that of France. The greatest decisive battle of the world is being fought by England and France in common against a foe determined to strike them both down equally. France is doing all she can. England is not doing her share of the work. That is what we have now to make good.

England has been surprised by a war for which she has not made ready. Hereafter, when we shall have made good, we shall have to inquire how and why we were caught napping. We shall not throw stones at each other. Each man will search his own heart and ask himself how it was that he could not see what was coming. To-day every Englishman who is not unworthy of the name is asking himself what he can do.

To begin with, let him remember what it has meant up to now to be an Englishman. Will you as you read let me try to remind you? This England where we have grown up has given us all our best thoughts. Town and

country, hills and lakes, villages, busy workshops, and the sea waves rippling on the sands where the children were playing, these have been the familiar features of the land we love so well, and in this country, our home, of which the like is not to be found, we have been brought up to truth, to loyalty, to goodwill to one another. Each of us has been bred upon the grandest tradition that any nation ever had. When King Edward VII came to the throne we looked back upon a thousand years since an earlier Edward was king of England, a thousand years of movement onward from freedom to freedom. During the last fifty years this has been a land where every man was at liberty to do that which was right in his own eyes, for our people have learned to be a law unto themselves. Freedom has been used for the common good. A few years ago an educated and refined foreign lady came on her first visit to this country. She had been told and believed that we were a rough people of no manners. I had the privilege of reading a long letter which, on her return home, she wrote to her son. Its substance was this : ' I never knew until I had been a month in England that it was possible anywhere to meet with that universal kindness, consideration, and courtesy which I experienced at every turn '. I have myself been something of a traveller and mixed freely with the men of other nations, and after every journey I have brought back the ever-deepening conviction that there is something in the Englishman that no other people possesses. I have seen and felt something of the respect—if you will, the admiration—that is felt for this country by every nation under heaven. To be an Englishman is the proudest position in the whole world. But what will it be to-morrow ? What will it be if, by our neglect, France is crushed ? Probably

nothing that any of us can now do can affect the battle raging over there. Victory or defeat we shall have to take as it may come. We need not to-day consider victory. If victory comes ours will not be the credit, though ours the gratitude. But defeat—can the England that we know accept defeat and see France conquered? Better for us all to die and leave England nothing but a great name than to have the shame of France prostrate.

Is not every man's course clear? He that is young and strong must go to the war. He must square his accounts with Death and give himself at once to his country. The door is open, the call has gone forth, there is a free choice, Regular or Territorial. He that goes will be relieved of his anxieties. England will clothe him, England will pay him a soldier's wage; if he falls it is for England, if he comes back it will be after victory, and he will be able to hold up his head. The hardest choice is for the women. They are the best of us, for they have been brought up by mothers who train the heart, while the schools too often train only the head. The women have to sit at home while the men can relieve their feelings in action. What the women have now to do they know. They will send their men.

But England will not be helped by confusion. The Government and the War Office cannot possibly drill and train the whole nation at once. Men must go in the order of the calls. The first was for those between twenty and thirty who choose the Regular Army. The second is for a new Territorial Army, which means about 300,000 men. Those who are over or under the ages named must wait. Their presence at the recruiting stations will only cause overcrowding. Those must not yet go who have others dependent on them alone. But for the young man whose earnings are his own, the course

is clear. Whatever his work or his wages he must leave them now for England's work and England's wages. Let every man think it out without hurry and be ready to respond at once to the call which his county association will make. London's call was made on Wednesday evening. England will know by Saturday whether London is giving her the lead. The answer rests with London's young men and with London's women.

IX

JUDGMENT

August 30.

A NATION that has not during peace given its attention to war is bound, when war comes, to experience disasters great and small. They are a gauge of that nation's inward, spiritual strength. A nation is not the same as a people. It is a unit made up of people and Government, of leaders and followers, and one of the marks of a well-knit nation is the mutual trust between these two parts. In war the enemy wishes to produce disorder, weakness, confusion. If he can sow distrust between people and Government he has half won his battle. Accordingly to attack the Government during a war is a treasonable act. In England the Government is always that of the people's choice ; it represents the majority. The system by which this choice is exercised, of a dissolution and re-election of the House of Commons, together with the tradition of free discussion in which all men take part, without regard to the extent, the nature and the subjects of their knowledge, has led in England to what is known as the party system, which is an excellent arrangement for government by public discussion, and is, indeed, on the whole, the best-known plan by which a population of many millions can exercise self-government. But it has some disadvantages. The party which is not in office is in opposition. A generation ago a brilliant politician, Lord Randolph Churchill, enunciated the maxim 'the business of an opposition is to oppose', and this maxim has since been adopted by his

followers as though it were a law of nature. But it is not a law of nature. It is merely a rough rule for men who are agreed in their wish that their own side being in a minority should manage in the next election to become a majority. There are some matters in which the Government, of whatever party, is the trustee for the whole people of the United Kingdom, as well as for the whole Empire, matters in which either the Government must act or no action can be taken. Such matters are the conduct of England's relations with foreign Powers and of war. Applied to these matters Lord Randolph Churchill's maxim is high treason.

In war at any rate the Government must be supported. There is only one enemy, the foreign foe. The processes of party are inapplicable during war except with a profound modification. In peace the members of each party take counsel together in order that they may co-operate effectively against the other. In war this whole nation is one party and the enemy the other. In war, therefore, the whole nation, both parties or all parties, must take counsel together in order to defeat the enemy. Every man must contribute his best to the common stock, giving his person, if he is hale and hearty and of the military age, giving his money and his work if and when they are wanted, and contributing, if he can, to the national deliberation in order to help towards right decisions being reached.

There is, however, a deep distinction between the deliberation of a party during peace and the deliberations of a nation during war. The object of a party during peace is to suggest and promote legislation and administration in accordance with the opinions and feelings cherished by its members. The object of the leaders is to propose measures which will be agreeable to

public opinion and to the temper of the people. Even a Government acting for the nation, when it has to decide whether or not to make war, which is a national and not a party act, considers public opinion. It will not decide to make war unless and until it is sure that the people understand and will support it. For these reasons the whole habit of our political leaders, of the members of a Government and of the members of an Opposition, is to watch what is called public opinion and to seek guidance from it. In peace that is natural and may be right.

But in war it would be absurd. It would be worse than madness for a Government to seek guidance in regard to its military and naval action from public opinion. War is an art. A Government engaged in a war against another Government is like a chess-player. The only advice that will help a chess-player is that of a man who is master of the game, and a Government can no more hope to defeat another Government unless it understands the game, than a man who never played chess in his life to win a game against a chess champion.

War is a much harder game than chess. Only those can understand the moves who have given the best of their lives to studying them. In England this kind of study was until quite recently neglected. None of the politicians and comparatively few officers of the army have been devoted to it. The General Staff has cultivated it, but the General Staff is only about ten years old, so that as an institution for the study of war it is still in its infancy.

How then is the nation, the combination of Government and people, to know what to think of the course of the war now going on, and how is it to satisfy itself that a given measure of preparation or of action is sound,

that is, will conduce towards victory and not towards defeat ?

There is, I think, one way, and one only, by which men can hope to estimate truly either the events taking place in the theatre of war or the measures proposed to or adopted by the Government. They must be considered not according to likes or dislikes, but according to the principles which constitute the science of war and in the right application of which lies the art of carrying it on.

A nation, a Government, and a people may learn something from mistakes, and perhaps the value of mistakes is that, if we think about them rightly, we shall learn from them. We have, for instance, already violated the first principle of war, which is that a nation's policy and its naval and military preparations should go together like body and soul. Our policy for ten years has been to stand by France. The preparations suited to that policy were a navy sure to beat the German Navy—we hope we have that—and an army able by its numbers as well as its quality to fight the German Army on the Continent. Every one now sees that that is the main military business of England at present. The politicians did not think so. Those who criticized them did not think so. The advocates of compulsory service told us that we ought to introduce compulsory service for home defence. If they thought otherwise, if they hoped that the army so raised would really have to be sent abroad, they were not quite frank with us. The principles of war, now and always, have been the same. An island is best defended by a navy, which operates by destroying the enemy's navy. A Continental State is best overcome by defeating its armies in its own territory. We can all now see how much better off we should have been to-day if we had trained all our young men so that

we could have sent to France at once twenty or thirty divisions instead of four, five, or six. If we now make up our minds that we will in future let policy and naval and military measures go hand in hand, we shall at least have profited from one of our mistakes.

There are other principles of war which we should do well to bear in mind. One is a consequence of the unity between policy and military measures. The best master of the principles of war ought always to be a member of the Cabinet, because the Cabinet determines the policy, and how can the policy square with the conditions of war unless those conditions are explained by a competent judge of war, and unless the Cabinet explains to him the nature of the policy? The Government, as soon as the crisis was there, recognized this principle. The Prime Minister then sent for the man whose judgment of war he thinks best, and made him a member of the Cabinet. But it would have been better if the connoisseur of war had been consulted years ago, when the Government began to co-operate in policy with France, concerning the means of naval and military co-operation with her.

Two more principles are worth considering, because they explain the battle which as I write is being fought out in France. A Government in war must find out the centre of gravity of the enemy's power, and must strike at that centre of gravity with all the forces that it can possibly collect. To use forces at some minor point may sometimes be desirable, but the forces dedicated to any minor ends should be as small as possible. Above all, it is a mistake to hold back under the name of reserves any forces that could by possibility be employed in the decisive battle. Reserves are of two kinds: they may be forces kept for unforeseen contingencies or they may

be troops which a general has ready at hand but does not put into the battle until he sees where best to employ them. The only unforeseen contingency which has to be reckoned with is a German landing in England. It cannot take place unless and until the Navy has broken down, of which there is no sign, and even then it will not take place if the battle in France ends in a German defeat, for in that case Germany will have her hands full at home. The decisive battle of this war is that now going on in France. The best way to prevent a German landing in England is to gain the victory now in that battle. Thus the great military principles, that of the concentration of the action in space and time and that which asserts that the best defence is to beat the enemy's army, concur in indicating that the right course, from the instant the war was seen coming, was to send every available trained unit to join the French Army. We do not know the strength of the force which has been given to Sir John French, but it is certain that the principles of war pointed to its including every fully trained soldier that England possesses, every Regular unit and every Territorial unit, if any, which was fit to stand by the Regulars in the terrible ordeal through which we know them to be passing. If report be true, some Regular troops, even some units of the Expeditionary Force that had been organized, were not at first sent but were kept at home. Unless they have all been sent in time to take part in the action, the effort that England has made in the decisive battle has not been as great as it might have been. According to military principles that would be a sin of omission. It might make all the difference between victory and defeat. If defeat comes we must bear it like men, and continue our preparations to compel victory to come to our side. But in the event of

defeat we must keep our heads cool ; we must help the Government, not attack it. The Government itself is in the same position as the nation, not familiar with the principles of war. It has had to decide and has decided, as any British jury would, to the best of its insight and judgment. It will have had military advice, which we hope was based upon the great principles. Sometimes soldiers themselves forget the principles. It is then hard for Ministers who are not soldiers to abide by those principles. Sometimes the soldier, though inspired by the principles, is unable to convince his unmilitary superiors. These are the difficulties always experienced by democratic Governments in the conduct of war. There is no better illustration of them than the case of President Lincoln in the American Civil War. It took him a long time to discover which of the soldiers who were reputed to understand the principles were equal to their reputations. He found the right way in the long run, but it was only through disaster, and was possible to him only because he was an honest man with a single eye to his country's good. Of our own Ministers, and of all our political leaders, we are sure that their hearts are in the right place. What they do not know about war they will have to find out by experience. We must stand by them, even in the darkest hours. In that way, and in no other, this nation, the leaders and the people, will weather the storm. Then the England of our children will be better and greater than the England that our fathers left us. If not, we had better all die fighting.

X

SHOOTING

August 31.

SECURE behind her Navy, England has sent off her small army to help France in her desperate struggle against Germany. The little force has done, and will do, all that is possible, and the arrangements made during peace enable the Government to replace its losses, which have been, and will continue to be, heavy, by trained men, men prepared to take their places among the band of heroes who are shedding their blood for England and for the Right.

The nation's task now is to make new armies. Any one who has read the accounts of the fighting at Mons and at Cambrai will see that only first-rate soldiers will be able to stand in that kind of fiery ordeal. Raw troops, half-trained men, would be swept away like chaff. The United Kingdom therefore has now to be one training ground, in which the forces at home and the new forces now being raised have to be turned into soldiers fit to face such an attack as the Germans have been delivering against the English and French Armies. Lord Kitchener has undertaken to superintend this process. In that effort he requires all the help he can get.

There are two precedents for the attempt to make a new army during a war. They are both French. The first is that of the Convention and the Committee of Public Safety in 1793 and 1794; the second that of Napoleon in 1815. The first succeeded; the second failed. The first succeeded because scope was given to every Frenchman to do what he could; the whole

intelligence of the country exerted itself. There was a good deal of confusion and a good deal of disorder, but there was only one will. The second attempt, directed by the genius of Napoleon, failed, for Napoleon would not and could not give free play to the intelligence of the country and could not therefore delegate authority to a sufficient number of independent minds, of men throwing their whole souls into the work. Spontaneity had been crushed out by his dictatorship. A nation does not resemble a machine which can be set to work by one man pressing a button or turning a handle while others merely shovel coal into the furnace. A nation is a society of men, out of whom the best can be got when every man throws his wits as well as his will into the business. In such a case a hint is as good as a command, for the readiness with which quick-witted men grasp the nature of a task set them is one of the perpetual miracles of life. Tell an eager man what to do and he will find a way to do it ; try to tell him how to do it and you will put him into a strait waistcoat and half cripple him. In Ireland Sir Edward Carson and Mr. Redmond, whom I name in alphabetical order, are co-operating heart and soul to make an Irish army. They would not be Irishmen if they were not. In Great Britain we have two armies, one already organized, the Territorial Force, and the other the new Regulars which Lord Kitchener is organizing. Of these the Territorial Force has the start ; its organization is complete ; it has its officers and non-commissioned officers, and it has the tradition of half a century's effort to learn. What it requires is a process of annealing.

Living together in complete units at full strength, the Territorial troops must be gradually gaining that quality of cohesion which marks an army. Daily marches will

harden them for the field. Their officers are keen and intelligent and many of them have studied war. What they are now acquiring is the confidence which comes from practice. But there is one other thing needful, one thing which is indispensable to give officers and men the spiritual quality which will enable them to emulate the achievements of the Army now in France. That one thing is the power to shoot straight. It is everything.

The weapon with which the infantry soldier destroys his enemy is the 120 bullets which he carries. The rifle is merely a machine for directing them. Give a recruit a rifle and he will be afraid of it. When he fires it kicks him, and the bullets seem to go everywhere except to the particular point at which he thought he was aiming. A man in that condition is bound to be afraid when he hears the enemy's bullets whistling past him in the air. He may hope that one of his bullets may hit an enemy, but in his heart he is quite sure that it will not. But let the recruit be quietly taught to handle the rifle; let him practise every day on the range, firing in every practice only a few deliberate shots, and let this practice be continued day after day for weeks. By degrees the man will find that he can hit the target and even the bull's-eye. The practice should begin at short ranges, and continue until the recruit has reached the stage when he knows that at short range he will hit the target and probably the bull's-eye. Then the bull's-eye may be diminished and, in proportion to the power the recruit has acquired, the range may be lengthened. The object is not merely to teach the man to hit, but to give him the knowledge that he can do it and the confidence that comes of that knowledge.

The second stage consists in practice against the kind of targets which are offered by the battle-field, small objects,

moving objects, objects that appear and disappear. Only constant practice will give the necessary skill. Yet only in proportion as that skill is really acquired can the man be expected to rely upon himself. All this is a matter of individual training; it is an education in which each man must conquer for himself, of course under proper guidance and instruction, the mastery of his weapon.

Then comes the third stage. A group of men, each of whom has made himself a good shot, must be placed under a leader for the attack by bullets upon a group of targets. They must be extended, must advance towards the target as they would in battle, and halt from time to time to fire. In these conditions they will be disciplined by the fact that every shot means a bullet fired. This collective practice must aim at something more than mere steadiness; it must convince the soldiers of the value of control. A description of two exercises will illustrate what is meant. Suppose a squad of ten men with ten rounds apiece advancing from a distance of a thousand yards against a row of ten targets representing men lying down a few yards apart, and let each target be such that when hit it will fall down and disappear, the targets being numbered from one to ten. It is assumed that the men's previous training has been such that each of them may be expected to hit his target with one at least of his ten bullets. In the first practice each man will aim every time at the target corresponding to his own number. When the ten rounds have been fired all ten targets should be down, but they will fall irregularly. In the second practice all the ten men will fire at the one target named by the leader, beginning with number one. In this case the targets will go down in orderly succession, one at each round. The men will then be asked to consider the frame of mind of the enemy represented by the targets.

Which kind of practice would be most likely to make an enemy's squad of ten men go away? They will say to themselves that any ten soldiers lying down and exposed to fire will expect some of their number to be hit. So long as the hits are irregular each of them will trust to his luck and keep his place, hoping that his own turn will not come. But if they fall in regular order, beginning from a flank, by the time the first five are down the sixth, unless he is an absolute hero, will be off. In this way the men of the practice squad will perceive the nature of the effect on the enemy's spirit of a fire which is directed and controlled. A perfectly disciplined battalion would be one which was accustomed to advance for a thousand yards in extended order, firing bullets at targets.

All that is required to make the Territorial Force a first-rate army is daily practice with bullets against targets, beginning with individual practice until that has produced its full results, and then going on to field-firing by squads, by platoons, and by companies. The only requisites are plenty of ammunition and plenty of ground. The Government has taken powers, I believe, to occupy for military purposes any ground that may be required. We may therefore expect the County Associations each of them to requisition whatever areas it may require for ranges, and each Territorial division to take the same step. Ten rounds a day per man for thirty days fired attentively would put the infantry of the Territorial Force at least on a level with the infantry of any Continental army. A second ten rounds a day for a second month would make them the best shooting troops in the world.

These shooting practices properly arranged will occupy each company only a fraction of each day; the rest of the time is available for marching, and for the various branches of instruction in evolutions and in field service.

XI

LONG VIEWS

September 5.

THE Prime Minister, in his memorable speech at the Guildhall on Friday, spoke with reserve of the actual progress of the war, with regard to which he urged our countrymen to take long views. The end to which we look forward is victory, a righteous peace imposed upon Germany by force of arms. That end is not at present visible, for Germany occupies outraged Belgium and a considerable part of the territory of France. We see victory and the peace to come only with the eye of faith, and that faith rests on our will, finely expressed by Mr. Asquith in a passage which implied that England would rather be destroyed than acquiesce in the triumph of force over law and of brutality over freedom. England has vowed, and her people have vowed, to win or die. In that spirit we must look the war boldly in the face and try to see the truth. Courage must be allied with good counsel. We must not only hope for victory, but follow the road that leads to it.

The war is little more than a month old. It is only a fortnight since we heard of the fall of Namur, which was the beginning of the offensive forward movement of the German Army. While I am writing—on the 5th of September—we suppose the front of the French Army to correspond roughly with the line of the Marne from Paris towards the east, and perhaps with that of the Seine from Paris to Rouen. Thus in a fortnight the Germans have pressed back an army, made up of the

whole manhood of the French nation, across a strip of country forming perhaps in area one-seventh or one-eighth of France. The German right wing has moved during that time from the Belgian frontier to the neighbourhood of Paris. Suppose for a moment that an army moves by strides, and take the distance from Maubeuge to Paris as one stride. Three more such strides would bring the German Army to Toulouse. Of course, we all hope that no such further advance will be made, but it is quite certain that the Germans wish to make it. What is to stop them? The French Army.

We may be absolutely certain that the French Army if it could would have prevented the first stride. The condition of France to-day is not in the least like that of England. In England life goes on much as it did before. The Territorials are collected up and down the country, and we see many more of them in uniform than usual, but the streets in the evening are still fairly crowded with men and women; and though people are all thinking of what may perhaps happen, and of the little band of heroes which forms a small fraction of the French line, nothing particular is happening in this country. But from every town and province of France the men between twenty and forty have disappeared; they are in the fighting line, and no one knows how many of them have fallen. The rest of France is desolate. That northern strip is in the hands of the Germans, and we know from what has happened in Belgium what is happening there. Those millions of French soldiers are fighting for life, for France, for all that they hold dear. There is no flinching; they are all out to fight to the death; that has been their temper from the beginning; but up to now the Germans have proved stronger. It may be numbers, it may be generalship; the result is plain.

We all hoped, of course, that the French Army would be able to stop the German Army at the beginning. It was not to be. We still hope that the German advance may be arrested. At this moment England can do little more to help. Every week for a short time she may be able to send a small force, perhaps a division. There must be eighty divisions in the French line. But every little helps. Napoleon thought it wise to have every possible battalion on the decisive battle-field. Yet, while our Government does all that is possible, it seems prudent to consider what the situation may become, supposing things go against our wishes. We need not trouble ourselves about what will happen if things take a favourable turn.

The French Army, with its British contingent, has been fighting splendidly, pressed back all the time. That is very hard work; it puts a great strain on the endurance of the troops and on the cohesion of the army. This kind of effort may have to be continued, the French contesting their territory step by step, yet being constantly pressed back by a stronger army. So long as the French Army is not broken nothing will have been finally decided. The enemy's effort is not less exhausting than our own. Sooner or later, however, one of the two must be tired. The further the Germans penetrate into France without shattering the French Army the greater will be the strain upon them, but so long as the French Army holds together the German effort cannot be relaxed. When either Army feels the strain too great the breaking point will be near, and when either Army breaks the other will be victorious. If now, or at any point between the Seine and the Pyrenees, the French Army should break, then the Germans would be completely victorious. They would have conquered France ;

they would be able to occupy the whole country and to send the bulk of their army to fight Russia. But suppose the French Army to hold together, even though it retreat to the Garonne, the Germans will not yet be victorious, the decision will not yet have come. The German Army will be strained to the uttermost. If, then, while the German Army is still on the rack, some new force can be brought to bear against it, the strain would be too much, the organism would be over-exerted and would collapse, and instead of German victory there would be a German disaster, greater and more tremendous in proportion to the distance over which the German Army would have previously advanced. A German defeat on the Meuse would have been easily reparable; a German defeat on the Seine would not end the war; a German defeat on the Garonne would be ruinous.

This sketch of the possibilities of good and evil may be taken as a starting-point from which to consider what England has to do in order to help France, which is her best way of helping herself. She may send such reinforcements as she can to strengthen a little the resistance of the French army. It cannot be much, because a reinforcement of twenty thousand means so little to an army of a million. Suppose, then, that the French Army keeps its cohesion and that the British Navy retains the superiority at sea. Sooner or later England will be able to throw into the scale an army that will count for something—perhaps after two months a quarter of a million Territorials, after four months a quarter of a million new Regulars. Those would be helps such as may turn the scale, provided that for two months the French Army can keep the field, and, if the decision has not then been produced by the first reinforcement, can, with the aid of that reinforcement, keep the field for

a second two months until the second reinforcement can come up.

So much for what England can do to turn the scale now inclined to the disadvantage of the Allies. It is a question of time. Can England be ready soon enough?

The same considerations apply to what Russia can do. It is clear that if the Russian Army can strike a deadly blow upon Germany while France still holds out, the Germans must let go France and turn against Russia. What would constitute such a deadly blow? The mass of Germany lies to the west of Berlin. To the east of Berlin lie the great provinces of East and West Prussia, of Posen and of Silesia. Germany could do very well without any of them. There can be no deadly blow to her until the Russian armies, victorious, have reached Berlin and Dresden. Those cities are a long way from the region where the Russian armies first assembled. If we take as one stride the distance from the Belgian frontier to Paris, then Berlin is three strides away from Insternburg, where the Russians won their first battle, and Dresden three strides away from Lemberg, where the Russians have won a great victory over the Austrians. From Warsaw to Berlin is not quite three strides. But in these eastern lands roads are fewer than in the west. Railways are fewer. An army as it advances must be fed; while it walks along the roads its food must come by train. The pace depends upon the number of roads and railways, upon the greater or less difficulty of the country, and upon the power of the resistance offered. I think the German Emperor might be quite satisfied if he were able to stop the Russian advance at the river Oder, and that until that river is approached he will not let go whatever grip he has upon France, or relax his effort to crush the French Army.

The danger evidently is that Russia, in spite of her strength and her determination, may not be able to deliver her blow soon enough to save France, and that England's new Armies may not be ready in time.

But even if that should prove to be the case, though the situation then would be very black, we must still hope for the ultimate victory. While the British Navy holds the sea England can go on training her men. The Dominions can go on sending their contingents. In six months the new Armies ought to amount together to a million, and that million would then have to set to work to reconquer France from Germany for the French.

This is, I believe, a true account of the conditions of success, and it will be completed by one more sentence. If England fails to do, at the least, what has here been described, Germany will become the mistress of Europe, and in that position will find the means to defeat the British Navy and to conquer England.

XII

THE BATTLE IN FRANCE

I

September 9.

It seems now possible, and is certainly worth while, to attempt a general view of the war in order to see more clearly the meaning of the battle now going on in and around the plain of Châlons.

It may be best to place ourselves in the first instance at the German point of view. Germany undertook this war, staking her existence and that of Austria upon the result, for the conquest of Europe, or to say the same thing in terms of German thought, in order to spread over all Europe the inestimable benefits of German culture, which the Russian barbarians, the decayed Latin races, and the stupid English have failed to appreciate. With a view to this great effort the German Emperor has given his life to preparations. The best energies of his nation have long been given to military and naval organization and to the arrangements for the propaganda of German culture; for the truth is the Emperor's will, and those who do not recognize it are smitten with blindness, for which they must pay the penalty. Such infatuated persons, if men, should be shot; if women, should be treated as Prussian officers know how. The plans were carefully thought out. Russia was believed to be behindhand with her preparations and her armies a long way off. The French Army, therefore, was to be crushed at once, and the Russian Army to be delayed by the Austrian and a small portion of the German forces until France was

prostrate. The first thing was to crush the French Army, and for this purpose superior numbers were to be thrown across the frontier at the earliest possible moment. France had relied on the neutrality of Belgium, and had not fortified that part of her own frontier which faces Belgium and Luxemburg. The great irruption was therefore made here. The French Army was spread out on a line from the Swiss frontier to the Sambre. The German Army threw an immense force into Belgium to turn and throw back the French left wing. This manœuvre succeeded. The French left wing, originally reaching from Verdun to Mons, was driven back from this line to the line Verdun-Rouen. Then the German right wing turned to its left, neglected Paris and the Lower Seine, and made for the line Meaux-Châlons-Saint Menchould. The first object was not, as non-military observers thought, the capture of Paris, but the destruction of the French Army. A German advance along the line Laon-Rheims-Châlons-Chaumont, if it could be carried through, must break the French left wing and bring the German Army which accomplished it on to the rear of the French right wing, spread out from Verdun to Belfort. Then a vigorous attack from Alsace and Lorraine would drive back the French right wing, which would be taken in the rear by the victorious German right wing. That is evidently the plan, and if it succeeds the position of the French Army will be desperate. I find it hard to believe that the Germans can have sent any troops away from France to Russia before the decision of the battle now raging. I think it much more likely that troops moved by rail from Belgium have been sent round to Alsace and Lorraine for the attack on the French right wing, which ought not to be delivered until the battle round Châlons

has been decided. If the Germans have really sent off a considerable number of troops to the Eastern frontier, this plan of trying to break through between Paris and Verdun has the advantage that in case of failure their retreat across the Meuse to Luxemburg is much shorter than would have been a retreat from the Seine below Paris. The movement of this right wing towards the left may therefore be a consequence of the pressure exercised by Russia upon the Austrian army in Galicia and upon the defences of East Prussia. But the attempt to break through the French line south of Châlons may fail. The three or four German armies engaged in it must then retreat, and, as the French army from the Lower Seine is marching for all it is worth in probably the direction of Rheims, the retreat will have to be precipitate or these German armies will be destroyed. The retreat must pass across the Meuse between Mézières and Verdun, and the French left wing would follow it to this line, possibly beyond it. The attack on the French right wing may be expected in order to give relief to the German retiring right wing. The two armies would then face one another along the original front from Belfort to Givet, with the Germans occupying Belgium. The next business of the Allies would be to free Belgium from the invaders, which they would best do by attacking and defeating the German armies in their own front. With the German armies beaten, a comparatively small force would bring about the evacuation of Belgium, especially if that force followed the line of the Meuse, so as to cut off the retreat of the German army of occupation.

So much for the situation in France, which in my judgment shows no modification of the German design, for that has evidently always been to roll up the French

Army from its left and to capture its right wing. Whether it has succeeded or failed will be known by the issue of the great battle now raging around Châlons. England's rôle in case of a French defeat would be to create armies as fast as she can for the reconquest of France from Germany. In case of a French victory, she must equally press on the creation of new armies. The ultimate object is peace, and no peace is admissible except upon terms which will secure Europe for fifty years from the inestimable advantages of German civilization. Such a peace can be had only by crushing the German armies. It can hardly be expected until the Allied forces from East and West have met in the middle of Germany. When the French are at Munich and Weimar, the Russians at Berlin and Vienna, and the British at Hanover, it will be possible to arrange a settlement. But before those points can be reached, the German armies have to be made an end of, and the German and Austrian navies rendered harmless. That is the goal; there is no other. The reader will judge whether its attainment does not represent a colossal task.

The German nation went into this war united and enthusiastic. Even if the battle of Châlons is won by the Allies, and if the second Austrian army, between the Bug and the Vistula, is defeated by the Russians, Germany will still be immensely strong for her own defence. On her western frontier, even supposing her armies beaten, there are the great fortresses of Metz, Strassburg, Mainz, Cologne, and Wesel to be taken. In the east there are great fortresses at Dantzic, Dirschau, Graudenz, Thorn, Posen, and Küstrin, to say nothing of Breslau and Oppeln. All these fortresses have been carefully planned to sustain indefinitely the action of a defensive field army. Each of them gives the

defenders a secure passage over a great river or over two great rivers at their confluence. Thus the invasion of Germany, which must be carried out before an acceptable peace can even be proposed, involves a military effort greater than has ever been known. In this effort England has to play her part, which she will be able to do provided that the success of her Navy gives her security at home for a sufficient number of months. If the Navy succeeds in its efforts England's task can be fulfilled. The German theory seems to be that Germany should strike her blow at sea about the time of the decisive battle on land. Now, therefore, is the time for the Admiralty to be specially vigilant.

A victory for the Allies would have some influence on the neutrals. It would convince them that Germany has over-estimated not only the value but the power of her civilization. It would probably lead Italy's statesmen to think that the time has come when they must exert themselves to obtain possession of the territories known as *Italia Irredenta*. It would perhaps also convince Rumania's statesmen that their chance of realizing the Greater Rumania of their people's hopes is now or never.

The Magyars are not enamoured of German civilization. A victory at Châlons for the Allies would reveal to them that their best hope for the future is to accept their national unity unimpaired and to agree, while there is time, to accept a Magyar kingdom, a kingdom embracing the Magyar country but no lands inhabited by Rumans, Serbs, or Czechs. They must, of course, give up the sea. The coast of the Adriatic north of Scutari belongs mainly to the Serbs and partly to Italy. Agram is a city of Serbs where the Magyars have no place.

XIII

THE BATTLE IN FRANCE

II

September 15.

ANY one who wishes to understand the great battle which has just been fought on both sides of the Marne in the country between Paris and Verdun would do well to begin by considering the picture of an army corps on the march. Let the reader, then, suppose himself seated beside one of the fine high roads of Northern France to watch a German army corps pass by. At six in the morning three hundred cuirassiers, marching three abreast, go past him at a walk. At a quarter past six comes an infantry battalion—that is, a body of troops of about the strength of one of the Territorial battalions that have been recently watched passing through London. After them a dozen guns and their wagons, followed by two more infantry battalions, and behind them for twenty minutes a string of ammunition wagons and ambulance carts. They have passed him by half-past six. This was the advance guard of the army corps. At a quarter past seven more troops come up, first three battalions of infantry, followed by a tremendous row of guns, of which the last passes him at eight-thirty; then more infantry for an hour, followed by cavalry for twenty minutes. About ten o'clock the procession ends, but at eleven there begins a new procession of military carts and wagons lasting for half an hour. At twelve begins yet a fresh train of military carts, which goes on without interruption until four o'clock in the afternoon. All these bodies together, which have

taken ten hours to move past the point where the imaginary watcher was sitting, constitute an army corps of thirty thousand, with its ammunition and supply trains. This is the most convenient way in which an army corps can march along a road, the spaces left clear of troops allowing each party to move freely without being impeded by the little halts or checks of the party in front of it, and the spaces left open giving room for the troops to spread out a little from the somewhat close order in which they march when at attention. If they could all be seen at once they would be stretched out along the road for a distance of twenty-four miles—the troops themselves and the carts occupying something like half that space, the other half being the intervals between the different parties.

If two army corps have to move along the same road the intervals may be reduced and the troops of the second corps will probably follow the troops of the first, the baggage wagons of both corps forming a huge train a day's walk long in rear of the second corps. The troops of the two corps, without the heavy wagon trains and with few intervals, would fill something like twenty miles of road, behind which the wagon trains would stretch for about the same distance, though if motor-carts were substituted for horse-drawn vehicles these baggage trains would be both shorter and quicker of movement.

Suppose the army corps to be marching on to a battle-field. Each body as it came within a few miles of the enemy would turn off the road to the right or left and spread itself out parallel to the enemy's front, forming a series of lines of men. The army corps with thirty thousand infantry would then be stretched out perpendicular to the road, in a line five or six miles long.

with here and there a gap of half a mile filled up by lines of guns. To get the army corps, which on the road was like a twelve-mile-long snake, into a six-mile-long snake perpendicular to the road takes several hours, for the last man must walk twelve or fifteen miles from the rear of the marching column to his place in the fighting line. While this is going on, the baggage carts, twelve or fifteen miles away from the fighting line, will be moved off the road into the fields, so as to clear the way for another army corps to come up.

A number of army corps, from three to seven, under a single commander, constitute what it is the fashion to call an army, and each army corps may be from twenty-five thousand to forty thousand strong, according as it has two or three divisions of infantry. The Germans had in the late battle no less than five such armies, comprising altogether from fifteen to twenty corps. They started for the battle-field from places in a great semicircle, stretching from Amiens to Dun, on the Meuse, and when the battle began the heads of their columns were in a long curved line from Meaux, on the Marne, by Coulommiers, Sézanne, and Vitry le François to Révigny, on the Ormain. After a week's fighting they have been driven back, so that their front stretched from some point on the Aisne between Rheims and Soissons to Thiancourt, to the north of Révigny. We have to imagine the fifteen army corps going back. Of each corps the huge baggage train must first get well away to the rear, lest it should block the way and stop the troops. Then the troops must be withdrawn from the fighting line and put on to the road home, protected during the operation by a rear-guard to delay the French attack until the bulk of the army corps has got well away. The rear-guard will be heavily pressed,

but it will sacrifice itself to ensure the escape of the army corps. If the French guns can get within range of the road by which the troops are marching, it will be a very bad time for those troops. Suppose the road should be blocked at some point, so that the rearward march is impeded, that the enemy's guns command the road while his skirmishers are pressing forward on the flank. Some part of the army corps must turn round and fight while the rest can clear the road and get away. But fifteen army corps, if they are to march away smoothly, require fifteen good roads. Between Rheims and Thiancourt there are only four great national or departmental roads leading to the north-west ; the rest are local roads, good enough for troops in small bodies, but not likely long to stand the wear and tear of great masses of wagons and guns. If the German Army were confined to the region between Verdun and Réthel, an orderly retirement would be no easy matter ; but if it could use the roads which lead north from Rheims and Soissons, its movement would be much easier. The interest of the Allies is therefore to prevent it from using these roads, to destroy the bridges over the Aisne to the north of Rheims, to limit in every way the number of roads along which it can retreat. If the retreat can be confined to a narrow belt of country, so that each road must be used by two or more army corps, and if then incursions can be made by the Allied cavalry divisions into this narrow strip from one or both sides, it is easy to see what the result may be. Imagine a cavalry division with its horse artillery catching sight of a baggage train retiring along a high road. The first few shells would break down two or three wagons and the road would be blocked. In ten minutes the whole baggage train would be a confused mass of wreckage

so obstructing the road that to clear it would be many hours' labour. When the retreating troops reached this spot they would have to leave the road, and if at that moment the artillery opened upon them, they would have to fight to clear the way. The news would rapidly spread to the troops behind them and to the rear-guard trying to delay the pursuing French.

Suppose a series of roads opening out like a fan from a centre. Let there be fifteen roads and let there be on each an army corps marching towards the centre. In the case of the German armies during their late advance the centre of the fan would be about Troyes, and its outer edge the French frontier from Longwy to Lille. Then suppose when the fifteen corps have moved rather more than half-way from the circumference to the centre that they are checked and have to go back. If all the fifteen roads are still open to them, the operation will be easy. But if half the fan near its circumference is in the enemy's possession, the whole of the fifteen corps must retire along the seven or eight roads still open, and they will have the enemy after them. That is the situation which the French Commander-in-Chief would have prepared for the German Army if he could possibly manage it. In either case the German Army's advance has been stopped. But whereas in the one case its retreat would be easy, and it might find a new line where it could again halt and resist, in the other case its retreat would be difficult, its various armies and army corps would be likely to get jammed, and if vigorously pursued and attacked while in that condition, might easily become involved in a terrible disaster. We do not yet know which of these two pictures corresponds to the actual situation.

The German Army brought with it supplies of

ammunition and food from Germany, but its practice is to save the food thus carried by requisitioning food from the inhabitants of the country which it invades. It is a system of plunder more or less organized. The country through which these five German armies have advanced is divided into two halves by the Sambre and the Meuse. North of those rivers is one of the richest countries of the world, populous and fertile. We know how the Germans have plundered it. South of the Sambre and the Meuse the country is for the most part hilly, wooded, and sparsely populated. We may be quite sure that the three German armies as they advanced through this comparatively barren region have eaten up practically everything they could find. There will be nothing left for them in the retreat, and if the two armies which came through Belgium have to join the other three in retiring through Luxemburg and the Ardennes, they will be very hungry. If their supply trains were thrown into confusion, they would starve.

There is something more important in war than all the matters more or less technical which I have attempted to explain: it is the spirit of the armies engaged. When the Germans set out at the beginning of August they were in high spirits, which would rise as they advanced. But when they found themselves unable to break through the French line they would be disappointed. It is a bitter thing to have to go back. The French and British troops have had that experience. But what a change when their turn came to go forward and when they found that they were driving the German armies before them! It was well expressed the other day by a French trooper, who said as his regiment moved forward: 'Each of us is two men now.'

Up to the moment of writing—Tuesday morning,

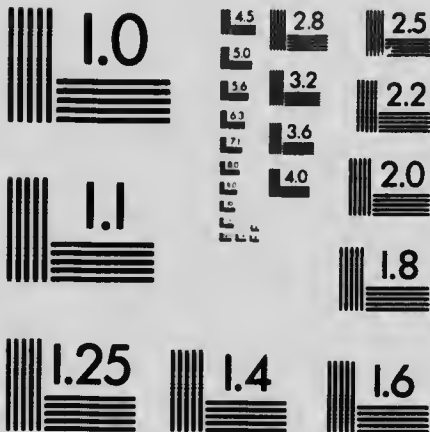
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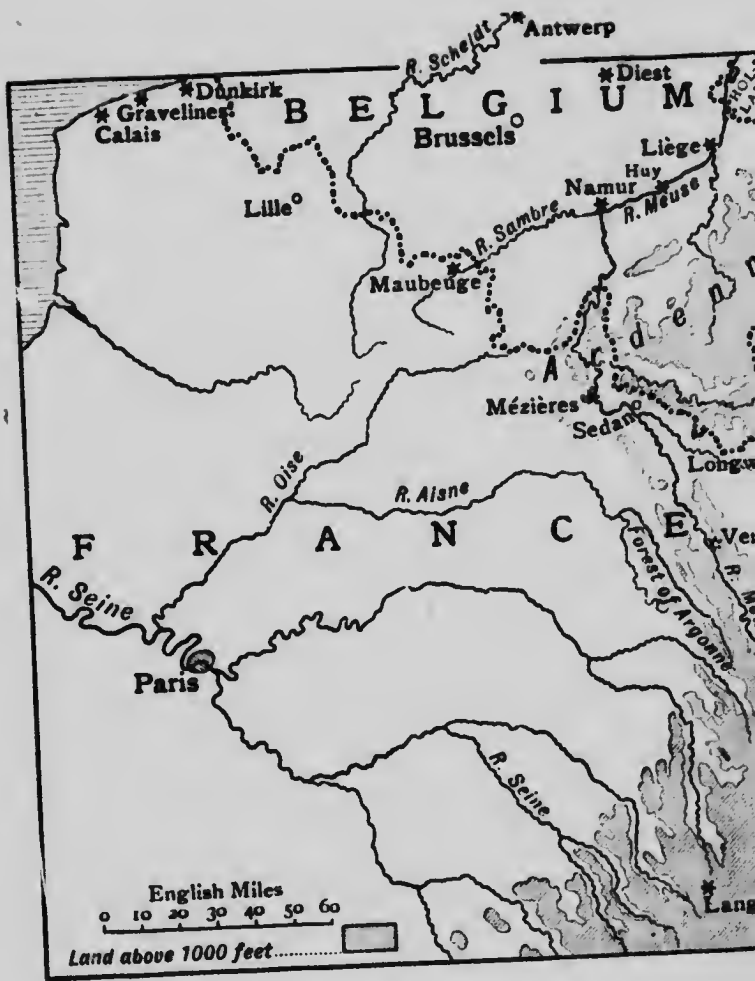
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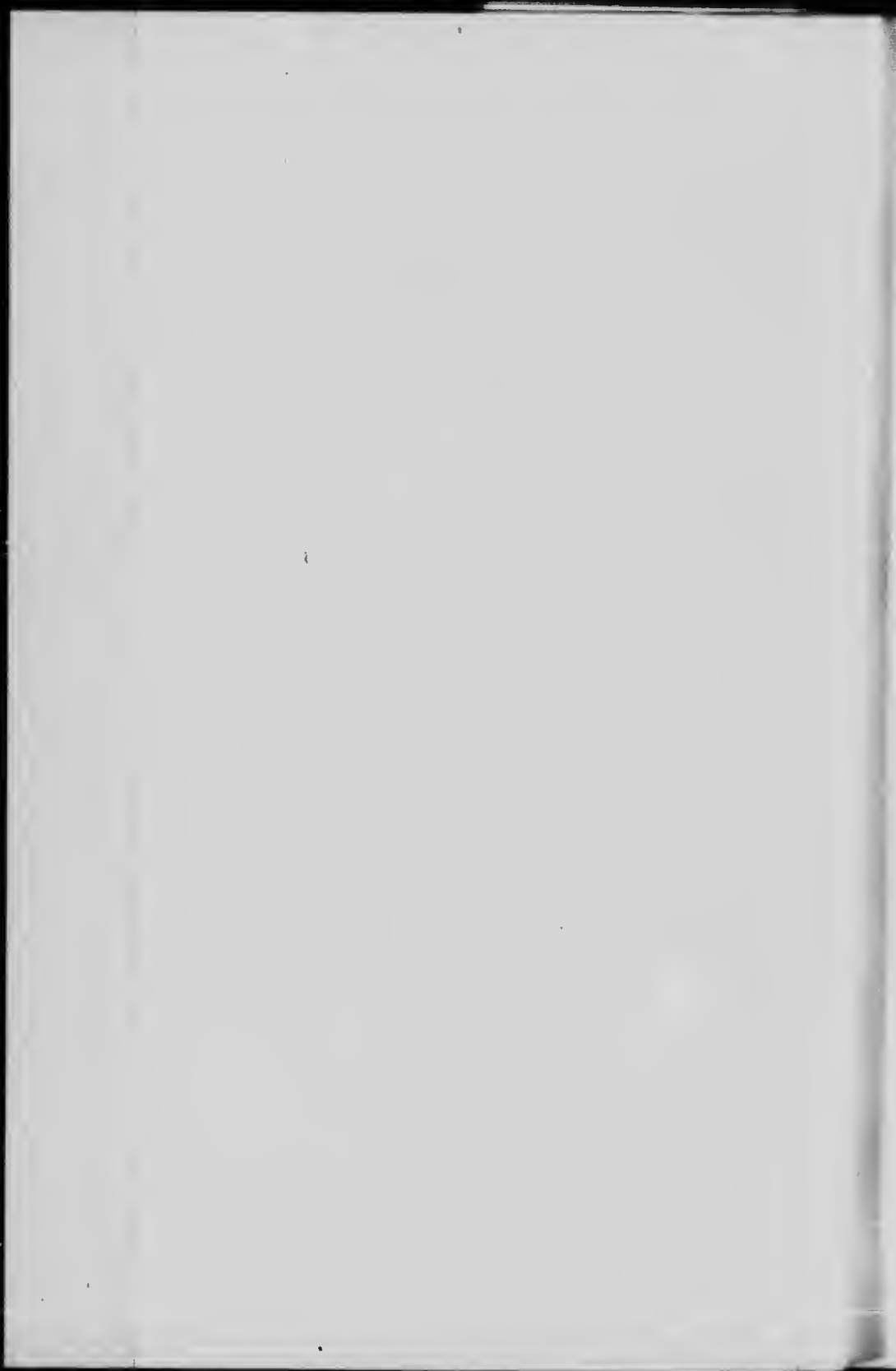


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the 15th—the signs are not those of a decisive victory. The German Army has retired, keeping a broad and, as it seems, unbroken front. The French Army in its pursuit has to spread itself rather than to concentrate. The effort to pursue is considerable, and cannot be indefinitely prolonged. The Germans may shortly be able to make a stand, and if that should happen there will be a fresh wrestle. Not until one side or the other is thrown and is down will the word 'Victory' be quite in place. Yet until that moment comes neither side can relax its exertions. The British Government, therefore, must not for a moment suspend its efforts to strengthen and reinforce Sir John French. The enlistment of armies at home in no way affects the struggle now going on. The new levies to be called 'Regulars' are an asset of the future; they are not at present armies at all. The British Government still has troops capable of being now thrown into the scale. There are enough Regulars and Special Reserves at home to keep the Expeditionary Force at full strength till Christmas. The Indian troops must be expected by the end of the month. Then there is the Territorial Force, which, if it has been practising with bullets and targets, individually and in the field firing, since it was mobilized, ought by this time to shoot better than the German troops. A large part of it has volunteered for service abroad. It will be fit for the field long before the new Regulars. If the Government counts the Territorials after instead of before the new Regulars, it will be making two terrible mistakes—that of not appreciating its best men, and that of not understanding the value of time in war.

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