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*with the author's  
Compliments*

# WHO CAUSED THE WAR

A STUDY OF THE  
DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS  
LEADING TO THE WAR

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19148

BY

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THE MORE IMPORTANT PERSONS IN THE  
NEGOTIATIONS.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY : Emperor Francis Joseph, succ. 1848.

Foreign Secretary : Count Berchthold.

Ambassadors in Germany : Count Ladislas Szögyény-Marich

Russia : Friedrich Count Szápáry.

France : Count Scézen.

Great Britain : Count Albert Mensdorff-  
Pouilly-Dietrichstein.

GERMANY : Emperor William II., succ. 1888.

Imperial Chancellor : Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg.

Foreign Secretary : Herr von Jagow.

Ambassadors in Austria-Hungary : Herr von Tschirscky-und-  
Bögendorff.

Russia : Count Pourtalès.

France : Baron von Schoen.

Great Britain : Prince Lichnowsky.

Belgium : Herr von Below.

RUSSIA : Emperor Nicholas II., succ. 1894.

Foreign Secretary : M. Sazonof.

Ambassadors in Austria-Hungary : M. Schebesco.

M. Kondacher (Chargé d'Affaires).

Germany : M. Swerbeier. M. Bronewsky  
(Chargé d'Affaires).

France : M. Isvolksy. M. Sevastopoulo  
(Chargé d'Affaires).

Great Britain : Count Benckendorff.

Servia : M. Strandtmann (Chargé d'Affaires).

FRANCE : Raymond Poincaré, President, elected 1913.

Premier : M. Viviani.

Acting Foreign Secretary : M. Doumergue.

Ambassadors in Austria-Hungary : M. Dumaine.

Germany : M. Jules Cambon.

Russia : M. Paléologue.

Great Britain : M. Paul Cambon.

GREAT BRITAIN : King George V., succ. 1910.  
Foreign Secretary : Sir Edward Grey.  
Ambassadors in Austria-Hungary : Sir Maurice de Bunsen.  
Germany : Sir Edward Goschen. Sir Horace  
Rumbold (Councillor).  
Russia : Sir George Buchanan.  
France : Sir Francis Bertie.  
Servia : C. L. des Graz. D. M. Crackan-  
thorpe (First Secretary).  
Belgium : Sir Francis Villiers.  
Italy : Sir Rennell Rodd.

SERVIA : King Peter, succ. 1903.  
Premier : M. Pachitch.

BELGIUM : King Albert, succ. 1909.  
Minister for Foreign Affairs : M. Davignon.

ITALY : King Victor Emmanuel III., succ. 1900.  
Foreign Secretary : Marquis di San Guiliano.

#### EXPLANATION OF SIGNS USED.

W.P.—British White Paper.  
R.P.—Russian Orange Paper.  
F.P.—French Yellow Book.  
G.P.—German White Book.  
B.P.—Belgian Grey Paper.  
de B.—Review of negotiations at Vienna by Sir Maurice  
de Bunsen.  
G.—Report of Sir Edward Goschen.  
G.B.—An introductory narrative of events, issued by the  
British Government.

## WHO CAUSED THE WAR

On Sunday, June 28th, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, the Duchess of Hohenberg, while driving through the streets of Serajevo, the capital of Bosnia, were shot and instantly killed. The Austro-Hungarian Government conducted a secret investigation into the crime, and, according to the German memorandum, convinced itself that "the plot to take the life of the Archduke was planned and promoted in Belgrade with the cooperation of official Servian individuals, and was carried out with weapons from the Servian Government depot." The plot, furthermore, was, in the language of the memorandum, the climax of a series of attempts which Servia, supported if not encouraged by Russia, had made to detach from Austria-Hungary the southwestern provinces, Bosnia and Herzegovina. "Under these circumstances it was clear to Austria that it was not compatible with the dignity and the spirit of self-preservation of the monarchy to view idly any longer this agitation across the border. The Imperial and Royal Government apprised Germany of this conception and asked for our opinion. With all our heart we were able to agree with our ally's estimate of the situation and assure him that any action considered necessary to end the movement in Servia directed against the conservation of the Monarchy would meet with our approval. We were perfectly aware in this

connection that a possible warlike attitude of Austria-Hungary against Serbia might bring Russia into the field, and that it might, therefore, involve us in a war in accordance with our duty as allies. We could not, however, in these vital interests of Austria-Hungary, which were at stake, advise our ally to take a yielding attitude not compatible with his dignity, nor could we deny him our assistance in these trying days. We could do this all the less as our own interests were menaced through the continual Serb agitation. If the Serbs continued with the aid of Russia and France to menace the existence of Austria-Hungary the gradual collapse of Austria and the subjection of all the Slavs under one Russian sceptre, would be the consequence, thus making untenable the position of the Teutonic race in Central Europe. A morally weakened Austria under the pressure of Russian Pan-Slavism would be no longer an ally on whom we could count and in whom we could have confidence as we must be able to have in view of the ever more menacing attitude of our easterly and westerly neighbours. We, therefore, permitted Austria a completely free hand in her action towards Serbia, but have not participated in her preparations." In other words, Austria said, There is a Servian movement against us ; we must check the Servian movement or perish. Germany accepted this account of the matter, influenced also by her conviction that the destruction of Austria would mean the downfall of Germany. Once satisfied, therefore, that the issue was one of life and death both for her ally and for herself, Germany determined to assist Austria in checking the Servian movement. Germany knew that Russia might

intervene in Serbia's behalf, and that the result might be war. She would accept the result,—it was better on her premises to fight the issue out now, than to perish by inches. No one can hesitate after reading the German memorandum to fix upon Germany the responsibility for this decision.

It does not follow, however, that while Germany acknowledges her share in the decision, she confesses herself guilty either of the present war against Serbia or of the larger war which followed. She argues on the contrary that the decision was forced upon Austria and herself in self-defence. They resembled a man pursued by a bear, who determines on arriving at any given point that he will round on his pursuer. The decision is his, not that of the bear. Still, the responsibility for the situation does not rest with him, but with the bear. Hence the above account and indeed the whole German memorandum seeks to picture Russia as the pursuer who has at length compelled Germany and Austria to turn. Russia is accused of having supported Serbia in conspiracies against the safety of Austria-Hungary and indirectly of Germany. The action, if we may change the figure, becomes that of a melodrama:—Austria and Germany are the innocents alone in a wicked world; Russia the villain, using Serbia as a tool, weaves his net around them; he hides in dark corners; he springs upon them with uplifted dagger, but the brave pair turn in the nick of time and the villain is foiled. This is all a very simple and picturesque story but it must be carefully tested by the facts. We shall then find that it is far from being supported either by recent Balkan history or by the course of the negotiations. The responsibility for the Balkan



disturbances of recent years must rest at least as much with Germany and Austria-Hungary as with Russia and Serbia. Moreover, as we now know from the evidence of the last Prime Minister of Italy, Austria-Hungary proposed to attack Serbia in August, 1913, and asked for Italian support. The war was to be described as a defensive one. Italy refused her assistance on the ground that the war would be aggressive, and urged Germany to restrain Austria. It would appear, therefore, that Austria was merely waiting for an opportunity to declare a defensive war upon Serbia. The murder of the Archduke afforded the opportunity. It was easy to assert Serbia's guilt. No evidence, however, was submitted to Europe and previous charges of a similar kind against Serbia have not borne examination. Finally, while Russia and Serbia adopted throughout the course of the negotiations a very reasonable and conciliatory attitude, Germany and Austria-Hungary showed themselves decidedly aggressive.

The truth is that Germany and Austria-Hungary decided that this was a suitable occasion on which to humble Serbia. Russia might intervene in Serbia's behalf; the risk had to be taken. There was a chance—and it must have entered into their calculations—that they might not be checked. Russia and the other Powers of the Entente, France and England, had their own troubles. Russia was known to be on the point of experiencing serious disturbances among her industrial population, and her army was not thought to be ready for war. Alarming disclosures as to the condition of the French Army were made early in July. The English Government

was desirous of peace, and was perplexed by the civil strife in Ireland. German diplomatists may, therefore, have counted in some measure at least upon the inaction of the Entente. Each link in the chain was weak, and when the three Powers looked to one another for aid, each of the three would shun the burden. England would be the most reluctant of all. Thus the hope presented itself to Germany that if a bold and vigorous course were taken, Austria might not be checked in her treatment of Servia. Whether this chance seemed greater than the chance that a general war would result is impossible to determine from the evidence at hand. Probably those shaping German policy were themselves divided on the question. The German Ambassador at St. Petersburg appears to have persuaded himself that Russia would not go to war. He may have felt with some reason that after the successful intimidation of Russia in 1909 a second experiment could scarcely fail. The more timid representatives of the Foreign Office, like von Jagow, the Foreign Secretary, were perhaps carried along by assurances that the game was a safe one and that England would certainly hold aloof. The Chancellor probably believed that his recent policy had been successful in blinding England. On the other hand the German Ambassador in Vienna was thought by his colleagues to be eager for the general war. Certainly such of the official group controlling German policy as actually favoured a general war were delighted to take part in the scheme, which was to give them one war in Servia and might easily, in their eyes, produce another.

The documents indicate some such divisions as these in the German Government, but at the beginning all parties went forward together. Austria was to punish Serbia. Europe was to be kept out. This result would be secured if in diplomatic language the war were localized. Hence Germany and Austria decided when framing their policy that they must insist from the first upon the localization of the war. If they used this phrase often enough, Europe might come to believe it, and Russia would find the diplomatic atmosphere against her, should she propose to intervene. If Russia persisted, the blame for the consequences would fall upon her. Germany's concern, therefore, was to keep the ring for Austria and to convince other powers that the ring should be kept. Thus on July 22nd, the German Secretary of State is found insisting that the "question at issue is one for settlement between Serbia and Austria alone and that there should be no interference from outside in the discussions between these two countries. He had, therefore, considered it inadvisable that the Austro-Hungarian Government should be approached by the German Government in the matter. (The Foreign Secretary is sparing in his use of truth, for, as we know from the official German memorandum, Austria had certainly approached Germany.) He had, however, on several occasions in conversations with the Servian Minister emphasized the extreme importance that Austro-Servian relations should be put upon a proper footing." (W.P. 2). Germany plainly wished that the punishment of Serbia should take place in a corner, privately, aside from European intervention.

While they were reaching their decision, Germany and Austria naturally endeavoured to calm the other Powers, and to arrest suspicion. If the Powers became uneasy, the action of the allies would be met from the first by a more determined opposition. If on the other hand, the fears of the Powers were not aroused, and they were suddenly confronted with something like a *fait accompli*, they would be thrown into confusion and in the confusion the allies might gain their point. The suddenness and boldness of the move would also have the effect of convincing the powers that the only means of checking it would be war. They would shrink from the consequences of war, and again the uncertainty on their part would give their opponents the necessary lead. Austria and Germany were influenced in adopting this method by their experience in 1908. Austria had not announced in advance her intention of annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina. Had she done so she might have secured the consent of the other Powers, but on the other hand she would have afforded them time to unite against her. She suddenly revealed her policy ; and the Powers were put in the difficult position of accepting it or of declaring war. They hesitated to bring upon their subjects the horrors of war, and Austria carried the day. So in this case she endeavoured to allay suspicion and to conceal her plan until the last possible moment. "On the 7th July the Government were careful to make a public announcement that a joint meeting of the Cabinets of Austria-Hungary which had just taken place was only concerned with the question of domestic measures to repress the Pan-Serb propaganda in Bosnia. On the 8th July

the Minister-President of Hungary made on the whole a pacific speech in the Hungarian Parliament, defending the loyalty of the majority of the Serb subjects of the Emperor. On the 11th July the Servian minister at Vienna had no reason to anticipate a threatening communication from the Austrian Government, and as late as the 22nd July, the day before the Austrian ultimatum was delivered at Belgrade, the Minister-President of Hungary stated in Parliament that the situation did not warrant the opinion that a serious turn of events was necessary or even probable." (G.B.) The newspapers which had bitterly denounced Serbia were pulled up. "The Government, whether it be seriously desirous of peace or whether it be preparing a coup, is now doing everything it can to allay this anxiety. That is why the tone of the Government newspapers has been lowered first by one note and then by two until now it has become almost optimistic." (F.P. 11). "The French Ambassador received the impression that the words of warning he had been instructed to speak to the Austro-Hungarian Government had not been unavailing, and that the note which was being drawn up would be found to contain nothing with which a self-respecting State need hesitate to comply. At the second of these interviews he was not even informed that the note was at that very moment being presented at Belgrade, or that it would be published in Vienna on the following morning." The declarations made to the Russian Ambassador at Vienna were so reassuring that he felt free to leave for the country (F.P. 18). Hence the prevailing opinion in ambassadorial circles at Vienna was "that

Austria would shrink from courses calculated to involve her in grave European complications." (de B.) So circumspect were Austria and Germany that they refrained even from consulting Italy, the other partner in the Triple Alliance. The Italian ambassador to Austria-Hungary discussed the situation with Count Berchthold and was advised that matters were not grave, but should be cleared up. As to the character of Austria's demands he "was left completely in the dark." (de B.) Germany and Austria-Hungary had decided to neglect their ally. They can have entertained no hope that Italy would assist them in their design. In these circumstances, to have informed Italy would merely have given her a chance of warning England and France. "The Italian Government had neither been sounded nor warned on the subject." (F.P. 26). It was informed of the terms of the note only at the last moment, much as England had been. (W.P. 38, F.P. 51). The result was that Italy showed herself 'surprised to say nothing stronger at having been kept out of the whole affair by her two allies.' (F.P. 35).

In spite, however, of Austria's precautions the diplomatic world showed much uneasiness. As early as July 15th, the British Ambassador in Vienna received from a private source information which he communicated to Sir Edward Grey on July 16th. Four days later, Sir Edward Grey inquired of the German Ambassador in London if he had any news of what was going on in Vienna with regard to Servia. He said he had not, "but Austria was certainly going to take some step, and he regarded the situation as very uncomfortable." (W.P. 1). Since his return from Berlin a short time before, the

Ambassador was disturbed as to the relations between Russia and Germany. Even his appearance betrayed his anxiety to his colleagues. (F.P. 32). His only suggestion for improving the situation was that Russia should act as a mediator with regard to Servia. (W.P. 1). He was clearly at variance with his own Foreign Office which was at this time planning to ignore Russia altogether. This was the first of many occasions on which the German Ambassador in London seemed to hold different opinions from those of his Government. Sir Edward Grey anticipated action on the part of Austria, and desired that it should be moderate. 'The more reasonable Austria proved herself to be, and the stronger the justification she could produce for making any demand, the more chance there would be of smoothing things over.' Russia would be the more disposed "to counsel moderation at Belgrade." Sir Edward Grey 'hated the idea of war between any of the great powers, and that any of them should be dragged into a war by Servia would be detestable.' (W.P. 1). Here the British Foreign Minister first expressed the anxiety for peace which marked all his subsequent conduct of affairs. He returned to the idea three days later in a conversation with the Austrian Ambassador. "The possible consequences of the present situation were terrible. If as many as four Great Powers of Europe—let us say Austria, France, Russia and Germany—were engaged in war, it seemed to me that it must involve the expenditure of so vast a sum of money and such an interference with trade that a war would be accompanied or followed by a complete collapse of European credit and industry. In these days in great industrial

states this would mean a state of things worse than that of 1848 and irrespective of who were victors in the war, many things might be completely swept away." (W.P. 3). This was a very remarkable warning especially to the autocratic Powers. Unloose the forces of popular distress, and your thrones may be shaken down and your crowns thrown in the dust. Sir Edward Grey was concerned therefore that the Austrian demands should not close the door to conciliatory methods. 'When the Austrian Ambassador told him that he supposed there would be something in the nature of a time limit, which was in effect akin to an ultimatum, Sir Edward Grey said that he regretted this very much. To begin with, a time limit might inflame opinion in Russia, and it would make it difficult if not impossible to give more time, even if after a few days it appeared that by giving more time there would be a prospect of securing a peaceful settlement and getting a satisfactory reply from Servia. He admitted that if there was no time limit the proceedings might be unduly protracted, but urged that a time limit could always be introduced afterward; that if the demands were made without a time limit in the first instance, Russian public opinion might be less excited; after a week it might have cooled down, and if the Austrian case was very strong it might be apparent that the Russian Government would be in a position to use their influence in favour of a satisfactory reply from Servia. A time limit was generally a thing to be used only in the last resort after other means had been tried and failed.' (W.P. 3).

Meanwhile the shrewd French observers who were studying the political temper at Vienna and Berlin



had not been altogether deceived by Austria's assurances. They noticed the resentment against Serbia felt in Austrian military circles. "The Militaerische Rundschau makes no bones about it: 'The moment is still favourable for us. If we do not decide upon war, the war we shall have to make in two or three years at the latest will be begun in circumstances much less propitious; and the initiative belongs to us. Russia is not ready, the moral factors are for us, might as well as right. Since some day we shall have to accept the struggle, let us provoke it at once. Our prestige, our position as a great power, our honour are in question. There is more still, for in all probability it is our existence which is at stake 'To be or not to be'—that is really the big business of to-day.'" (F.P. 12). "There is here (at Vienna) as in Berlin, a clan which accepts the idea of a conflict on a general scale, in other words, a conflagration. The governing idea probably is that it is necessary to start before Russia can have finished the great improvement of her army and of her railways, and before France has overhauled her military organization." On the other hand "Count Berchthold and the diplomatists want at most a localized operation against Serbia, but everything has to be considered possible—everything." (F.P. 14). The German Ambassador at Vienna "showed himself to be a partisan of violent resolutions, while willingly allowing it to be understood that the Imperial Chancellory might not be in complete agreement with him on this point." (F.P. 18). Still the French Government received the impression at Berlin 'that Germany would support Austria with her authority without seeking to play a mediatory part.' (F.P. 16).

Servian and Russian suggestions were not being given enough consideration. As early as July 6th M. Sazonof, being told that Austria-Hungary might be forced to search on Servian territory for the instigators of the Serajevo outrage, uttered this warning : "No country has ever suffered more than Russia from outrages planned upon foreign territory. Have we ever claimed to adopt against any country whatever the measures with which your newspapers threaten Servia ? Do not enter upon that path." (F.P. 10). Both Russia and Servia indicated their willingness to have the guilty punished, but would not admit of claims which were likely to humiliate Servia. Great care, therefore, would be necessary if some sort of *via media* were to be found.

Such was the atmosphere prevailing in diplomatic circles when the Austrian demands upon Servia were presented. The Austrian note was handed in at Belgrade at 6 p.m. on July 23rd, and a reply was requested by 6 p.m. on July 25th, i.e. within 48 hours. The Servian Government was asked to publish a statement on July 26th, condemning the propaganda against Austria-Hungary, regretting the participation in this propaganda of Servian officers and officials, and pledging itself to suppress publications and dissolve societies inimical to Austria-Hungary, to set aside everything in the public instruction hurtful to that country, to dismiss all officers and employees guilty of the propaganda, "to consent to the co-operation of representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Government in Servia to help suppress the subversive movement against the territorial integrity of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, to institute a legal trial of the conspirators in the

plot of June 28th who are on Servian territory,"—officials delegated by the Austro-Hungarian Government would take part in the proceedings—"to arrest certain persons named, to prevent assistance by Servian officials in smuggling weapons and explosives across the border, and to dismiss and punish severely those representatives of the frontier service who helped the criminals across the border, to explain the utterances of high Servian officials in Servia and abroad who after June 28th expressed themselves as unfriendly to Austria-Hungary." At the same time the Austrian official press insisted that Austria was confronted with "an irreconcilable, bitterly hostile movement which shows itself in most varied forms, but which in its entirety keeps our border populace in a state of excitement, shatters the confidence of the various races in our monarchy as to our ability to maintain peace with the outside world, and is the main point for the beginning of all efforts against us and causes much precious blood to flow in our territories. The results of this agitation have frequently been felt in our economic life. Thousands of careers have been blasted as a result of the alarming crises following the constantly recurring Pan-Servian scare." Austria-Hungary must, therefore, protect itself and that quickly. "Servia has been allowed a brief time in which to comply with our demands. We do not wish to lengthen the period of the crisis that weighs down our economic life and is making all Europe uneasy." When Austria-Hungary had suffered from so many crises, and had taken nearly a month to prepare the note, surely the matter of a few hours should not have been

allowed to imperil her relations not merely with Serbia but with Europe. Her precipitate action was not likely to save these promising careers, about which she expressed such concern.

The note to Serbia was on the very face of it complete. Its demands were sweeping, they had to be met quickly, the Servian Government was asked to accept them in full, and to announce their acceptance in its own official publication. One or two of the demands seemed to be rather more exacting than would naturally come from one state to another, particularly five, in which Serbia was asked "to consent to the co-operation of representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Government in Serbia to help suppress the subversive movement against the territorial integrity of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy," and six, in accordance with which "officials delegated by the Austró-Hungarian Government would take part in the proceedings of the trial of the conspirators." At least it was obvious that the meaning of these demands would have to be ascertained. The note was accompanied by an enclosure giving a summary of the conclusions which had been reached by the court investigating the crime. The evidence, however, did not accompany the enclosures and we know that in the case of England at least the evidence did not arrive until August 7th. As to the authorship of the note the documents furnish very incomplete testimony. The British Ambassador in Vienna said that 'although he had not been able to verify it, he had private information that the German Ambassador knew the text of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia before it was dispatched and telegraphed it to the German

Emperor. The Ambassador knew from the German Ambassador himself that he indorsed every line of it.' (W.P. 95). The Prime Minister of Bavaria, so we learn from French sources, was cognizant of the terms of the note (F.P. 21). On the other hand, the German Foreign Secretary declared repeatedly that his Government had no knowledge of the contents of the document (W.P. 18), and the assertion of the German official apologist that Germany took no part in Austrian preparations would seem to cover the demands upon Servia. Still, whether German diplomatists had a share in shaping the note or not, the responsibility of Germany for it remains. She had given Austria a free hand, and if the note took on a character of which the German Foreign Secretary could not approve she must accept the blame. She had really signed a cheque, in favour of Austria, leaving the latter to fill in such important details as the date and the amount.

Germany's willingness to support her ally appeared when the note was laid before the powers. The ambassadors of Germany everywhere in obedience to instructions (G.P., Exhibit 1), communicated to the Governments to which they were attached a thorough-going endorsement of the Austrian position. They urged that 'the great powers ought seriously to endeavour to reserve the matter to those two immediately concerned. The Imperial Government desire urgently the localization of the conflict, because every interference of another power would, owing to the different treaty obligations, be followed by incalculable consequences.' (W.P. 9). If the conflict could not be localized and Russia came in, Germany must fulfill her treaty obligations to Austria.

Thus Russia was warned off at the outset by a thinly-veiled threat. Germany "stood beside her ally in shining armour." That she should take such a position so early in the negotiations is explained by the plan of action upon which she and Austria had agreed. Russia, France and England would be the more likely to accept the localization of the Austro-Servian war, if the consequences of their interference were before them from the first. France and England especially, whose interests were not immediately affected, might shrink from a general war. Hence these powers were urged by Germany to recommend moderation at St. Petersburg. If they did so from fear of the great catastrophe, Russia would scarcely venture to act alone. She might indeed resent the advice of her friends. Thus in the event of France and England yielding ground before the German threat, suspicion would be sown in the mind of Russia and the Entente might be shattered. German diplomacy was intended, therefore, to try the strength of the Entente, and if possible, to isolate Russia so that she would not prove an obstacle in Austria's path. While Germany threatened, Austria adopted a somewhat more conciliatory attitude, at least in appearance. In a conversation with the Russian Ambassador at Vienna the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs after going over the historical developments of the last few years, laid stress on the statement that the monarchy did not wish to appear against Servia in the rôle of a conqueror. He said that Austria-Hungary would demand no territory, that the step was merely a defensive measure against Servian machinations, that Austria-Hungary felt herself

obliged to exact guarantees for the future friendly behaviour of Serbia towards the monarchy. "It was far from him to intend to bring about a change in the balance of Powers in the Balkan." (G.P., Exhibit 3). Unfortunately this assurance was not likely to produce much effect. It was plain, that if Serbia were overrun and its army destroyed, the balance of power in the Balkans would *ipso facto* be altered.

The fear of Serbia and Russia that the note would have some such consequences was very quickly demonstrated. On the evening of July 23rd the Servian Minister of Finance communicated the contents of the note to the Russian chargé d'affaires and at the same time solicited the aid of Russia, declaring that 'no Servian Government would be able to accept the demands of Austria.' (R.P. 1). On the following day the Prince Regent of Serbia telegraphed to the Czar, reaffirming and amplifying this position. "Conscious of its international duties, Serbia from the first days of the horrible crime, declared that she condemned it, and that she was ready to open an inquiry on her territory if the complicity of certain of her subjects were proved in the course of the investigation set afoot by the Austro-Hungarian authorities. However, the demands contained in the Austro-Hungarian note are unnecessarily humiliating for Serbia and incompatible with her dignity as an independent state. Thus we are called upon in peremptory tones for a declaration of the Government in the official Gazette and an order from the Sovereign to the army wherein we should repress the hostile spirit against Austria by reproaching ourselves for criminal weakness in

regard to our perfidious actions. Then upon us is imposed the admission of Austro-Hungarian functionaries into Serbia to participate with ours in the investigation and to watch over the execution of the other conditions indicated in the note. We have received a delay of forty-eight hours to accept everything, in default of which the legation of Austria-Hungary will leave Belgrade. We are ready to accept the Austro-Hungarian conditions which are compatible with the situation of an independent state, as well as those whose acceptance shall be advised us by your Majesty. All persons whose participation in the 'attentat' shall be proved will be severely punished by us. Certain among these demands cannot be carried out without changes in our legislation, which requires time. We have been given too short a delay. We can be attacked after the expiration of the delay by the Austro-Hungarian army, which is concentrating on our frontier. It is impossible for us to defend ourselves, and we supplicate your Majesty to give us your aid as soon as possible. The precious good-will of your Majesty, which has so often shown itself toward us makes us hope firmly that this time again an appeal will be heard by his generous Slav heart. In these difficult moments I interpret the sentiments of the Servian people which supplicates your Majesty to interest himself in the lot of the Kingdom of Servia." (R.P. 6). On the same day the Servian Government requested Great Britain to induce Austria to moderate its demands, because as they stood they were "absolutely unacceptable." (W.P. 8).

The Servian appeal to Russia did not fall upon deaf ears. The text of the note was not communicated



to Russia by the Austrian Ambassador until nine o'clock on the morning of the 24th, i.e., seventeen hours after its delivery to Servia. (R.P. 77). Austria was plainly in no hurry to have Russia informed, or she may have concluded rightly that Russia would be informed at once by Servia. At once upon receiving the text of the note, M. Sazonof asked the British Ambassador to meet him at the French Embassy. The Austrian step clearly meant in his judgment that war was imminent. At the interview M. Sazonof described Austria's conduct as "both provocative and immoral; she would never have taken such action unless Germany had first been consulted; some of her demands were quite impossible of acceptance." Russia asked the other Powers of the Entente to support her in resisting the demands of Austria. France was ready to lend assistance in the negotiations and, if necessary, in war. The two Powers turned to the third member of the Entente. An immediate and great responsibility was placed upon the British Ambassador, Sir George Buchanan. He at once explained that he could not commit his Government, but that so far as his own views went he did not expect Great Britain to give any "unconditional engagement to support Russia and France by force of arms." Direct British interests in Servia were nil, and a war on behalf of that country would never be sanctioned by British public opinion. To this M. Sazonof replied, 'It is not a case of Servia alone. The general European question is involved, of which the Servian question is but a part. Great Britain cannot afford to efface herself from the problems now at issue.' Sir George Buchanan then inquired what a promise

by England would involve. 'Presumably Russia meant that Great Britain should join herself and France in telling Austria that active intervention by her in the internal affairs of Servia could not be tolerated. Suppose Austria persevered, was it the intention of Russia forthwith to declare war on Austria.' In other words, were the powers of the Entente to say at once to Austria, Stop, or we declare war? Plainly, Sir George Buchanan was not prepared to go so far. He believed that if the Austrian demand was met in this way, both groups of Powers would at once assume a belligerent attitude, and war or a complete submission by one side or the other would be the only solution. Such a crisis meant the failure of diplomacy. The issue would at once be carried into the field of war, and in this field passion and pride might rule which it was the business of careful diplomacy to hold in check. M. Sazonof did not return a direct reply to Sir George Buchanan's question. Russian mobilization might be carried out. Having refused to join in anything like an ultimatum to Austria, the British Ambassador tried to get the ordinary diplomatic machinery working again. Since the machinery moves slowly, time, delay, is the first object of diplomacy. If time can be secured, something may intervene, some chance may avert a quarrel. 'Let Austria be induced, therefore, to extend the time limit.' Then conversations and negotiations can go on. The French Ambassador thought that this method was not so likely to avert a war as a firm and united attitude. 'Austria had made up her mind to act at once, or she was bluffing. Had she made up her mind, an obstacle must be thrown

quickly in her way, if she were to be stopped. Were she bluffing, the bluff must be called.' This reasoning was good but seemed a little too logical to meet Sir George Buchanan's difficulties. Suppose that he had joined Russia and France at once, and challenged Austria, and that war had followed. A large section of English public opinion would at once have concluded that Britain had appealed to force much too soon, or even that she had joined Russia and France in an attack upon Austria and Germany. Even if peace had been obtained, Britain's position could have been misrepresented. Germany and Austria would have posed as martyrs to the encroaching policy of the Entente. Had they increased their armaments and had Britain proposed to do the same, the old cry against the British Government as the enemy of the unfortunate Germans would have been raised even more vehemently both in Britain itself and in the Dominions. Hence the Ambassador was forced to fall back upon other expedients. Perhaps Servia could meet some of Austria's demands ; it would be desirable to know. If some of the demands could be accepted, war might be averted. M. Sazonof felt that some could doubtless be acceded to. Still he continued to press his main point. He was plainly impatient of these other devices. He wished for the complete solidarity of England, with Russia and France. In reply the English Ambassador thought it possible that England might make strong representations to both German and Austrian Governments, urging upon them that an attack upon Servia by Austria would endanger the whole peace of Europe. Perhaps England might

say to them that such action on the part of Austria would probably mean Russian intervention, which would involve France and Germany, and that it would be difficult for Great Britain to keep out if war were to become general. M. Sazonof again pressed his main argument that England would sooner or later be dragged into war, if it did break out. England would have rendered war more likely if she did not from the first make common cause with Russia and with France. Then in despair of gaining his point he added his hope that at any rate Great Britain would express strong reprobation of the action taken by Austria. Sir George Buchanan's impression of the interview was from the language held by the French Ambassador that 'even if Great Britain declined to join them, France and Russia were determined to make a strong stand.' (W.P. 6). That Russia would not abandon Serbia was equally clear from other sources. The Russian Ambassador in Vienna assured the British Ambassador there that 'any action taken by Austria to humiliate Serbia could not leave Russia indifferent.' (W.P. 7). The Russian chargé d'affaires in Vienna expressed to M. Berchthold his personal view 'that the Austrian note was drawn up in a form rendering it impossible of acceptance as it stood, and that it was both unusual and peremptory in its terms.' (W.P. 7). Finally M. Sazonof himself had a long talk with the German Ambassador, presumably after his interview with Sir George Buchanan. According to the German report "he indulged in unmeasured accusations toward Austria-Hungary and he was very much agitated. He declared most

positively that Russia could not permit, under any circumstances that the Servo-Austrian difficulty be settled alone between the parties concerned." (G.P., Exhibit 4).

Hence the whole German contention that the quarrel should be isolated was to be met from the outset with a firm challenge from Russia. Still Russia was not prevented by her attitude towards the Austro-Servian dispute from putting forward or accepting proposals for a peaceful settlement of it. She never intended to defend Servia from any claims which Austria could fairly urge. She objected merely to such demands on the part of Austria as seemed to go beyond the bounds of justice. If Austria could be induced by diplomatic means to bring her claims within reasonable limits, Russia's object would be entirely secured. Russia was ready, therefore, to support all diplomatic measures which would restrain Austria. Influenced by Sir George Buchanan, M. Sazonof asked Vienna for an extension of the period within which Servia must prepare her reply to the note. Austria should give the Powers time to take note of the results of the inquiry upon which she had based her accusations. (R.P. 4).

In the circumstances England and France were even more concerned than Russia to keep the peace. The contents of the note were communicated to Sir Edward Grey on the 23rd by the Austrian Ambassador. He at once expressed regret that a time limit, and such a short one, had been introduced at this stage. He went further and expressed the view that he had never seen one state address to another independent state a document of so formidable a character. The fifth demand would be hardly

consistent with the maintenance of Serbia's independent sovereignty if it were to mean, as it seemed that it might, that Austria-Hungary was to be invested with a right to appoint officials who would have authority within the frontiers of Serbia. However, the merits of the dispute, as between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, did not concern him. He was concerned only in so far as the dispute seemed to threaten the peace of Europe. The Ambassador replied that Serbia had shown no disposition to act, and that a time limit was imposed because of her procrastination. Sir Edward Grey urged that the limit could have been introduced later, in the event of delay. (W.P. 5). On the morning of the 24th Sir Edward Grey received the text of the Austrian note and straightway saw the French Ambassador. He proposed that should 'Russia take the view of the Austrian ultimatum which it seemed to him that any power interested in Serbia would take, Germany France, Italy and Great Britain, who had not direct interests in Serbia, should act together for the sake of peace simultaneously in Vienna and St. Petersburg. If Austria moved into Serbia, and Russia then mobilized, the four powers could urge Austria to stop her advances, and Russia to stop hers, pending mediation.' The French Ambassador thought a better method would be for Germany to propose to the other Powers mediation between Austria and Serbia. (W.P. 10). In the afternoon Sir Edward Grey saw the German Ambassador and suggested that the four Powers should work together simultaneously at St. Petersburg and Vienna in favour of moderate counsels. Austria should not precipitate military action. The German

Ambassador feared that it would be difficult to check Austria. Speaking privately he said that the only chance of doing so was to have Serbia return at once a favourable answer on some points. (W.P. 11). This suggestion Sir Edward Grey adopted and telegraphed to Belgrade. The British representative there was to consult his Russian and French colleagues before presenting it to the Servian Government. (W.P. 12). Thus Great Britain found herself compelled to take a part in adjusting the quarrel between Austria and Servia. She would have preferred that the dispute could be settled by these two states alone, but the character of the Austrian demands made such a settlement impossible. She never accepted the German formula, the Austro-Servian dispute must be localized. Germany hoped that fearing a general war, Sir Edward Grey would urge upon Russia the German view and thus weaken the Entente. He did not fall into the trap. He made it perfectly clear to the German Ambassador in their first interview after the note was received, that, 'in view of the extraordinarily stiff character of the Austrian note, the shortness of the time allowed, and the wide scope of the demands upon Servia, he felt quite helpless as far as Russia was concerned, and he did not believe any Power could exercise influence alone.' (W.P. 11). He insisted that mediation not at St. Petersburg alone but at Vienna as well would have to be undertaken by several Powers. His position was entirely different from that attributed to him in the German memorandum which says that "both the French and the English Governments promised an action in the direction of localizing the conflict." Neither France

nor England gave any such undertaking. They were both too sensible of the fact that the course taken by Austria prevented the localization of the Austro-Servian dispute. The only hope of a peaceful solution lay in the exercise of restraint on the part of Austria. The French Government was careful to urge in its first interview with the German Ambassador in Paris that the door should not be closed by Austria upon a discussion of the note and of the reply which Serbia would make to it. If the matter could be kept in the diplomatic field even the war upon Serbia might be avoided. Unfortunately Germany and Austria considered such a war necessary to their policy, so that proposals for preventing it found short shrift.

On July 25th Sir Edward Grey's desire for an extension of the time limit was conveyed to Berlin. The request of M. Sazonof in the same sense had already been presented at Vienna. Berlin, however, could do no more than "pass on" Sir Edward's wish, while expressing the fear that since Count Berchthold was at Ischl, i.e. out of Vienna, at the palace of the Emperor, there would be delay and difficulty in getting the limit extended. Berlin was right. The limit was not extended, the Russian request being refused peremptorily by Austria. The fact was, as the Berlin Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs admitted, that the Austro-Hungarian Government wished to give the Servians a lesson and that they meant to take military action. He also admitted that the Servian Government could not allow certain of the Austro-Hungarian demands. (W.P. 18). What, then, was the value of diplomacy? If Austria meant war from the first, and Germany



had given Austria a free hand, how could the issue be controlled? Germany might "pass on" suggestions for peace, but so long as she continued to support and to encourage Austria, the suggestions would count for nothing. Only a complete change in German policy would render them effective. Germany had no such change in mind. She had already decided to see the Servian business through. Though she disclaimed responsibility for the wording of the Austrian note, she maintained that 'once having launched the note, Austria could not draw back.' (W.P. 25). The very proposals for peace may have confirmed her in her decision. Russia protested, as was to be expected, but the Entente as a whole had not confronted Germany and Austria with a threat of war. On the contrary all its members were suggesting means towards a peaceful settlement. Germany may well have concluded that they would not go to war, and that her first assumption was correct. The tragedy lies in this very possibility that even the steps taken to secure peace may have brought war the nearer.

The chances of peace were indeed small. As M. Sazonof said, 'Unless Germany could restrain Austria, the situation was desperate.' Serbia, though prepared to punish those proven guilty, could not accept the Austrian demands. M. Sazonof would like to see the question placed on an international footing, as the obligations taken by Serbia in 1908, to which reference was made in the Austrian ultimatum, were given not to Austria but to the Powers. If Serbia should appeal to the Powers, Russia would be quite ready to stand aside and leave the question in the hands of England, France, Germany and

Italy. Russia did not seek war, but was threatened by Austria who wished to overthrow the *status quo* in the Balkans. The Russian Minister was determined not to allow Austria to crush Serbia, and if necessary would take action together with France. (W.P. 17). Such was the feeling in St. Petersburg. It was not improved by events in Vienna. The press there left the impression that the surrender of Serbia was neither expected nor really desired. (W.P. 20). The Government required the unconditional acceptance of the note, as the Italian Secretary General informed the British Ambassador in Rome. (W.P. 19).

On the other hand, a few circumstances seemed still to point to peace. The Austrian Ambassador in London explained to Sir Edward Grey that the step taken at Belgrade was not an ultimatum but a *démarche* with a time limit, and that if Austrian demands were not complied with within the time limit the Austro-Hungarian Government would break off diplomatic relations and begin military preparations, not operations. (W.P. 14). This was good news to Sir Edward, who wanted time. He telegraphed it to his Ambassadors in Paris and St. Petersburg. He refused to join Russia and France in a direct challenge to Germany and Austria, thinking the method too dangerous for England. He continued to insist upon his initial suggestion as to the co-operation of the four Powers, Italy, France, Great Britain and Germany. Since 'the sudden, brusque and peremptory character of the Austrian *démarche* made it almost inevitable that in a very short time both Russia and Austria would have mobilized against each other the only chance of

peace would be for the other four Powers to join in asking the Austrian and Russian Governments not to cross the frontier, and to give time for the four Powers acting at Vienna and St. Petersburg to try and assuage matters. . . . The co-operation of Germany would be essential.' (W.P. 24). The German Ambassador in England was personally well disposed to the proposal. (W.P. 25). Even the German Foreign Secretary did not dismiss it. He was convinced that Russia would remain calm, and had given Russia assurances that Germany did not wish war. Still 'if the relations between Austria and Russia became threatening, he was quite ready to fall in with Sir Edward Grey's suggestion as to the four Powers working in favour of moderation at Vienna and St. Petersburg.' (W.P. 18). There was a chance that even Vienna might be persuaded to go slow. Sir Edward Grey had expressed the hope that if Austria could not extend the time limit it might at least conform so far with the Russian request as to allow the Powers time in which to consider the data on which were based the demands upon Serbia. (W.P. 26). The third member of the Triple Alliance, Italy, certainly desired peace. (W.P. 29). The best hope of peace, however, came from an unexpected quarter, from Serbia itself. Sir Edward Grey's advice was not presented, because the English agent had learned of the conciliatory nature of Serbia's reply and because his French and Russian colleagues were without their instructions. The counsel of Russia must have favoured moderation, for Serbia accepted nearly all the Austrian demands. It promised to suppress any Servian propaganda against Austria, and to punish

persons connected with the recent crime. It made real difficulties only in the case of the demands that Austrian officials should co-operate with Serbia in suppressing the movement against Austria and in investigating the murder. It declared itself "willing to admit such collaboration as agreed with the principle of international law, with criminal procedure, and with good neighbourly relations." It refused, however, to allow Austrian officials to take part in any investigation of the crime, "though in concrete cases communications as to the results of the investigation in question might be communicated to the Austro-Hungarian officials." If Austria considered the reply inadequate, Serbia was prepared to submit the question to the Hague or to the great Powers. (W.P. 39).

Yet Austria was not to be turned from her purpose. The Austrian Ambassador left Belgrade on the evening of the 25th., (W.P. 31) and though his departure did not imply a declaration of war (W.P. 35), efforts to prevent the punishment of Serbia by Austria-Hungary proved unavailing. The indefatigable British Office hoped that the Servian reply might be favourably regarded by Austria. The English hope was "passed on" by Germany to Vienna, and the German Under-Secretary of State considered 'the very fact of their making this communication to the Austro-Hungarian Government implied that they associated themselves to a certain extent with the hope.' Still 'the German Government did not see their way to going beyond this,' (W.P. 34), and since the German view was to be conveyed to the Austrian Government by the German Ambassador in Vienna, it would gain no weight in the process.

This Ambassador, who held the key of the diplomatic situation, was a notorious advocate of a strong Austro-German policy. On July 26th he told the English Ambassador 'that a pretence of giving way at the last moment had been made by the Servian Government. . . Servian concessions were all a sham. Servia proved that she well knew that they were insufficient to satisfy the legitimate demands of Austria-Hungary by the fact that before making her offer she had ordered mobilization and retirement of Government from Belgrade.' Austria-Hungary was resolved to chastise Servia. The Ambassador was confident 'that Russia would keep quiet having received assurances that no Servian territory would be annexed by Austria-Hungary.' To the English Ambassador's question, 'whether the Russian Government might not be compelled by public opinion to intervene on behalf of kindred nationality' he replied, 'that everything depended on the personality of the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs who could resist easily, if he chose, the pressure of a few newspapers. The days of Pan-Slav agitation in Russia were over, and Moscow was perfectly quiet. The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs would not be so imprudent as to take a step which would probably result in many frontier questions in which Russia is interested, such as Swedish, Polish, Ruthene, Roumanian and Persian questions being brought into the melting pot. France, too, was not at all in a condition for facing a war.' In the English Ambassador's opinion 'matters had been made a little difficult for other Powers by the tone of the Austro-Hungarian Government's ultimatum to Servia—one naturally sympathized with many of the

requirements of the ultimatum, if only the manner of expressing them had been more temperate.' The Ambassador, however, thought 'it impossible to speak effectively in any other way to Servia. Servia was about to receive a lesson which she required, but the quarrel ought not to be extended to other countries. He doubted Russia, who had no right to assume a protectorate over Servia, acting as if she made any such claim. As for Germany, she knew very well what she was about in backing up Austria-Hungary in this matter.' (W.P. 32). It was unlikely that an ambassador of this temper would press upon Vienna any proposal calculated to restrain Austria-Hungary. Like its Ambassador, Berlin still professed to count upon Russian inaction. The German Under-Secretary of State mentioned a report from the Ambassador in St. Petersburg, to the effect that if Austria annexed bits of Servian territory, Russia would not remain indifferent, and drew the conclusion that, if Austria did not annex territory, Russia would not act. (W.P. 33).

To secure the inaction of Russia remained the object of German diplomacy. For this purpose the original formula was still being insisted upon, 'the quarrel must be localized, but if it is not localized, Russia will be to blame for the consequences.' The formula was pressed at St. Petersburg where of course it amounted to a threat. It was repeated in telegrams of the 26th to Great Britain and to France. (G.P., Exhibits 10, 10A). If either Power accepted it, the Entente would be undermined and Russia betrayed. On the 26th the German Ambassador in Paris asked the French Government to join him in informing the Press that he and the French Minister

were endeavouring "with a feeling of pacific solidarity" to find means for the maintenance of general peace. (F.P. 51). The phrase "pacific solidarity" was meant to indicate that France was in accord with Germany and would have annoyed Russia. Accordingly it was rejected by France.

The truth is that German diplomacy was being left behind by events. The Russian Ambassador returned to Vienna from leave to express the view 'that the Austro-Hungarian Government was determined on war, and that it was impossible for Russia to remain indifferent.' (W.P. 40). Russia was beginning military preparations. Austria had, of course, commenced to arm against Serbia, as she had announced her intention of doing if the note to Serbia were not accepted in its entirety. Therefore Russia had to take steps if she were to save Serbia. News of the steps were being communicated to Germany (Exhibits 6, 7, 8) and were causing great uneasiness in military circles. If Russian preparations got well under way, Germany would be helpless, both in diplomacy and in war. This danger is a new motive introduced into the negotiations, and it constantly recurs until the last act of the tragedy. The diplomatists were not to be allowed to forget the military necessities. Thereafter German diplomatists had to conduct their negotiations with one eye fixed nervously on the clock. The strain first shows itself in an urgent telegram sent by the Chancellor to his Ambassador in London on July 26th. "According to news received here, the call for several classes of the reserves is expected immediately which is equivalent to mobilization also against us. [The last three words must be

inserted from the German text, if the meaning is to be given correctly.] If this news proves correct, we shall be forced to countermeasures very much against our own wishes. Our desire to localize the conflict and to preserve the peace of Europe remains unchanged. We ask to act in this sense at St. Petersburg with all possible emphasis." (Exhibit 10). This is the old formula accompanied by a threat, and intended to frighten Sir Edward Grey. His well-known love of peace might induce him to prevent German mobilization by accepting the German formula and impressing it upon St. Petersburg.

The British Minister, however, was not deceived. He said from the first that the cause of difficulty lay not in St. Petersburg, but in Vienna. Any diplomatic action, therefore, would have to include Vienna. It would not be just that, while Russia was being held back, Austria should work her will upon Servia. Now that the time limit had expired, Sir Edward Grey suggested that France, Germany and Italy should instruct their ambassadors in London to confer with him for the purpose of discovering an issue which would prevent complications, and that the same countries should request Belgrade, Vienna and St. Petersburg to suspend military operations, pending results of conference. (W.P. 36). Italy at once fell in with this proposal, (W.P. 35) as did France. (W.P. 42).

Still the proposal cannot be said to have found the atmosphere elsewhere favourable to it. Sir Maurice de Bunsen described the impression left on his mind after conversations with all his colleagues as being 'that the Austro-Hungarian note was so drawn up as to make war inevitable, that the



Austro-Hungarian Government were fully resolved to have war with Serbia ; that they considered their position as a great Power to be at stake, and that until punishment had been administered to Serbia it was unlikely that they would listen to proposals of mediation. The country had gone wild with joy at the prospect of war with Serbia, and its postponement or prevention would undoubtedly be a great disappointment.' The Ambassador proposed 'to express to the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs the hope of His Majesty's Government that it might yet be possible to avoid war, and to ask His Excellency if he could not suggest a way out even then.' (W.P. 41). Berlin was not more friendly. The Secretary of State said that Sir Edward Grey's conference 'would practically amount to a court of arbitration and could not in his opinion be called together except at the request of Austria and Russia.' The British Ambassador said he was sure that Sir Edward Grey's idea had nothing to do with arbitration, but meant that the representatives of the four nations not directly interested should discuss and suggest means for avoiding a dangerous situation. The Secretary maintained, however, that such a proposal was not practicable. (W.P. 43). He expressed himself in the same sense to the French and Italian Ambassadors. Germany was unwilling, as the Chancellor said in his telegram to his Ambassador in London, "to place our ally in his dispute with Serbia before a European tribunal." Even such concessions as the Chancellor made were vague and inadequate. (Exhibit 12). He promised to join the Powers in urging moderate courses upon Vienna and St. Petersburg. Under his instructions the German

Ambassador in London informed Sir Edward Grey that "the German Government accepted in principle mediation between Austria and Russia by the four powers." (W.P. 46). He started the mediation proposal in Vienna, (Exhibit 15), apparently meaning Sir Edward Grey's suggestion that the Servian reply should be treated as a basis for discussion and pause." (W.P. 46). (G.P. Introduction, p. 8, Exhibit 15). Yet no form of mediation received any real support from Germany. The French Ambassador in Berlin called on the Foreign Secretary on the 27th and "endeavoured to make him accept the English proposal relative to action in favour of peace, action which would be exercised simultaneously at St. Petersburg and at Vienna by England, Germany, Italy and France. M. Cambon proposed that these Powers advise Vienna in the following terms: "To abstain from any act which might aggravate the situation at the present hour." By adopting this veiled formula there would be no necessity of mentioning the necessity of abstaining from an invasion of Servia. Von Jagow opposed to this proposal a categorical refusal." (R.P. 39). He met alike the entreaties and the reproaches of the French Ambassador with a persistent *non possumus*. Austria should not be checked by her ally. (F.P. 74).

Similar treatment was given to another proposal, which came from St. Petersburg. It originated in an interview on July 26th, between the Secretary for Foreign Affairs and the Austrian Ambassador, in which the latter 'tried to explain away objectionable features of the recent action taken by the Austro-Hungarian Government. The Minister for

Foreign Affairs pointed out that although he perfectly understood Austria's motives, the ultimatum had been so drafted that it could not possibly be accepted as a whole by the Servian Government. In order, however, to put an end to the present tension, he thought that England and Italy might be willing to collaborate with Austria.' (W.P. 44). England, Italy and Austria might collaborate, that is to say, in effecting an understanding between Austria and Servia. Later in the interview M. Sazonof proposed that "the modifications to be introduced into the Austrian demands should be the subject of direct conversation between Vienna and St. Petersburg." (W.P. 45). He asked that the Ambassador of Austria-Hungary should be authorized to enter with him into an exchange of private views, with the object of an alteration in common of some clauses of the Austrian note. This proceeding would, perhaps, permit of finding a formula which would be acceptable for Servia, while at the same time giving satisfaction to Austria as to the basis of its demands. (R.P. 25). Berlin heard of 'the Russian intention of exchanging views with Count Berchthold, and thought that this method of procedure might lead to a satisfactory result, and that it would be best before doing anything else to await outcome of the exchange of views between the Austrian and Russian Governments.' (W.P. 43). Then in the usual fashion Berlin communicated M. Sazonof's wish to Vienna. (G.P. Exhibit 15). It was not willing 'to urge upon Vienna in a more pressing fashion to take up this line of conciliation.' Von Jagow told the Russian chargé d'affaires that

he could not advise Austria to yield. Austria was playing the part of a convenient waste-paper basket into which Germany dropped the successive peace proposals.

Meanwhile M. Sazonof had been asked whether he would assent to Sir Edward Grey's conference proposal. He referred 'to the conversations with the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador begun under conditions which he hoped might be favourable. He had not, however, received any reply to the proposal made by him for revising the note between the two Cabinets. If direct explanations with the Vienna Cabinet were to prove impossible he was ready to accept the British proposal or any other proposal of a kind that would bring about a favourable solution of the problem.' (W.P. 53). M. Sazonof's conversation with the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador had been so satisfactory that he showed himself to the English Ambassador 'very conciliatory and more optimistic. He would use all his influence at Belgrade to induce the Servian Government to go as far as possible in giving satisfaction to Austria, but her territorial integrity must be guaranteed and her rights as a sovereign State respected, so that she should not become Austria's vassal. He did not know whether Austria would accept friendly exchange of views which he had proposed, but if she did he wished to keep in close contact with the other Powers throughout the conversations that would ensue. He again referred to the fact that the obligations undertaken by Servia in 1908 alluded to in the Austrian ultimatum were given to the Powers.' When asked if he would prefer to the conference a direct exchange of views with Austria-Hungary, he

said he 'was perfectly ready to stand aside if the Powers accepted the proposal for a conference, but he trusted that Sir Edward Grey would keep in touch with the Russian Ambassador in the event of its taking place.' (W.P. 55). This conciliatory tone on the part of Russia showed itself in the bearing of the Russian Ambassador at Vienna. The Ambassador was perfectly frank in an interview with the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He had just returned from Russia and knew the state of feeling there. 'He could assure Baron Macchio that if actual war broke out with Serbia it would be impossible to localize it, for Russia was not prepared to give way again, as she had done on previous occasions, and especially during the annexation crises of 1909. He earnestly hoped that something would be done before Serbia was actually invaded. Baron Macchio replied that this would now be difficult, as a skirmish had already taken place on the Danube, in which the Servians had been aggressors. The Russian Ambassador said that he would do all he could to keep the Servians quiet, pending any discussions that might yet take place, and he told the British Ambassador that he would advise his Government to induce the Servian Government to avoid any conflict as long as possible, and to fall back before an Austrian advance. Time so gained should suffice to enable a settlement to be reached. He had just heard of a satisfactory conversation which the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs had on the day before with the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg. The former had agreed that much of the Austro-Hungarian note to Serbia had been perfectly reasonable and in fact they had practically

reached an understanding as to the guarantees which Serbia might reasonably be asked to give to Austria-Hungary for her future good behaviour. The Russian Ambassador urged that the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg should be furnished with full powers to continue discussion with the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who was very willing to advise Serbia to yield all that could fairly be asked of her as an independent Power.' (W.P. 56).

Thus Austria was again presented with an opportunity of securing satisfaction by diplomatic means. She had, however, decided upon a different course, and with the consent of her ally, intended to adhere to it. The Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs "saw no possibility of Austria receding from any point laid down in her note to Serbia." (W.P. 57). France was informed on the 27th that on the next day Austria 'would proceed to energetic action, the object of which would be to force Serbia to give the necessary guarantees.' (R.P. 37). Other disturbing signs showed themselves during the 27th. Germany continued to express herself as being disturbed by the chance of Russian mobilization. (W.P. 43). At the same time Russia began to feel uneasiness that Austrian preparations might advance too far. The English Ambassador at St. Petersburg felt it necessary to urge that Russia should not precipitate a conflict, but would defer the mobilization ukase for as long as possible, and not allow troops to cross the frontier even when it was issued. England was not ready to join Russia and France in any threatening action against Germany, for such action might stiffen Germany in her attitude. (W.P. 44). On the other hand, while wishing to discourage Russia from

rash courses, Sir Edward Grey strove to impress upon Germany that a general war could scarcely leave England unaffected. 'Other issues might be raised that would supersede the dispute between Austria and Servia, and would bring other Powers in, and the war would be the biggest ever known.' (W.P. 46). So when the Russian Ambassador told Sir Edward Grey of the impressions prevailing in German and Austrian circles, 'that in any event England would stand aside,' the English Foreign Minister replied that 'this impression ought to be dispelled by the orders England had given to the first fleet which was concentrated as it happened at Portland, not to disperse for manoeuvre leave.' (W.P. 47). This might mean, as Sir Edward Grey hastened to explain, co-operation only in diplomatic action. Still the reference was significant, especially since at the moment the Austrian and German Ambassadors in London were 'giving it to be understood that they were certain that England would observe neutrality if a conflict broke out.' (F.P. 63). Their purpose was to discourage France and Russia. How little ground they had for their claim appeared even more clearly from a conversation between Sir Edward Grey and the Austrian Ambassador in London. The latter, making a bid for English sympathy, remarked that so long as Servia was confronted by Turkey, Austria had taken no action, but that now Servia was a powerful state and her intrusive designs had to be checked. The Servians had refused the co-operation of Austrian officials and police, which alone would make their guarantees effective. Sir Edward Grey insisted that the rejection of the Servian reply would have a bad effect

at St. Petersburg. 'Already the effect on Europe was one of anxiety. The fleet had not been dispersed. Reserves were not being called up, and there was no menace in what had been done about the fleet, but owing to the possibility of a European conflagration, it was impossible for England to disperse her forces at this moment.' It seemed to Sir Edward Grey that the Servian reply already involved the 'greatest humiliation to Servia that he had ever seen a country undergo, and it was very disappointing to him that the reply was treated by the Austrian Government as if it were as unsatisfactory as a blank negative.' (W.P. 48).

Austria's intention of proceeding at once against Servia was known to France on July 27th, and communicated by her to Russia. The news did not, however, reach the other courts early enough on the 28th to prevent diplomatists resuming their task of spinning the web of Penelope. Sir Edward Grey confirmed the opinion of his Ambassador in Berlin that the conference proposed by him was not an arbitration, but a private and informal discussion to ascertain what suggestion could be made for a settlement. No suggestion would be put forward that had not been previously ascertained to be acceptable to Austria and Russia, with whom the mediating powers could easily keep in touch through their respective allies. (W.P. 67). The English, French and Italian Ambassadors in Berlin, to whom von Jagow had condemned the conference proposal, thought that since he expressed his desire to work with them for the maintenance of general peace he could only be objecting to the form of the proposal. 'Perhaps he himself could be induced to suggest



lines on which he would find it possible to work with them.' (W.P. 60). Sir Edward Grey was quite willing that such a suggestion should come from Germany. (W.P. 68). Meanwhile, however, Sir Edward Grey thought that a direct exchange of views between Austria and Russia would be the best method of all, and he was ready to keep 'his idea in reserve until they saw how the conversations between Austria and Russia progressed.' (W.P. 67, 68, 69). At the same moment another remarkable effort in the direction of peace was being made in Rome. The Servian chargé d'affaires went so far as to express the opinion 'that if some explanation were given regarding mode in which Austrian agents would require to intervene under Article V and Article VI, Servia might still accept the whole Austrian note. As it was not to be anticipated that Austria would give such explanations to Servia, they might be given to Powers engaged in discussions, who might then advise Servia to accept without conditions. The Austro-Hungarian Government had published a long official explanation of grounds on which Servian reply was considered inadequate. The Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs considered many points besides explanation quite childish, but thought that Austria had disclosed meaning of Article VI which Servia may have wilfully misinterpreted and that ground might be cleared there. The Minister was eager for the immediate beginning of discussion. A wide general latitude to accept at once every point or suggestion on which he could be in agreement with Great Britain and Germany had been given to the Italian Ambassador.' (W.P. 64). The British Agent in Servia was urging her to be

patient. With this disposition on the part of Serbia (W.P. 65), had time been given for a discussion of the points in dispute, there should have been no difficulty in bringing Austria and Serbia together.

Time was not given. The Austrian decision to declare war upon Serbia was announced on the morning of the 28th. The British Ambassador in Vienna expressed to Count Berchthold Sir Edward Grey's 'hopes that conversations in London between the four Powers less interested might yet lead to an arrangement which the Austro-Hungarian Government would accept as satisfactory, and as rendering actual hostilities unnecessary. Sir Edward Grey had regarded Servian reply as having gone far to meet just demands of Austria-Hungary ; he thought it constituted a fair basis of discussion during which war-like operations might remain in abeyance, and the Austrian Ambassador in Berlin was speaking in this sense. The Minister for Foreign Affairs said, quietly but firmly, that no discussion could be accepted on basis of Servian note ; that war would be declared to-day, and that well-known pacific character of Emperor, as well as, he might add, his own, might be accepted as a guarantee that war was both just and inevitable. This was a matter that must be settled directly between the two parties immediately concerned. The Ambassador said that Sir Edward Grey would hear with regret that hostilities could not be arrested, as he feared that they might lead to complications threatening the peace of Europe. In taking leave of the Minister, Sir Maurice de Bunsen begged him to believe that if, in the course of the present grave crisis the British point of view should sometimes differ from his, this

would arise not from want of sympathy with the many just complaints which Austria-Hungary had against Serbia, but from the fact that whereas Austria-Hungary put first her quarrel with Serbia, Sir Edward Grey was anxious in the first instance for the peace of Europe. The Ambassador trusted this larger aspect of the question would appeal with equal force to the Minister. He said he had it also in mind, but thought that Russia ought not to oppose operations like those impending which did not aim at territorial aggrandizement and which could no longer be postponed.' (W.P. 62). A somewhat similar conversation took place between Count Berchthold and the Russian Ambassador at Vienna. The latter 'pointed out in the most friendly terms how much it was desirable to find a solution which, while consolidating the good relations between Austria-Hungary and Russia, should give to the Austria-Hungary Monarchy serious guarantees for its future relations with Serbia.' That surely was a comprehensive message of good will. The Ambassador went on to call attention 'to all the dangers to the peace of Europe which would be brought about by an armed conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia.' Austria replied that she 'could now neither withdraw nor enter upon any discussion of the terms of the Austro-Hungarian note. Public opinion had become so excited that the Government, even if it desired could no longer consent, all the less because the very reply of Serbia gave proof of the lack of sincerity in its promises for the future.' (R.P. 45).

The declaration of war seemed at first to destroy all hope of general peace. M. Sazonof had already

telegraphed to London that from his conversations with the Ambassador of Germany he received 'the impression that Germany was rather favourable to the intransigence of Austria. The Cabinet of Berlin which might have been able to arrest the whole development of the crisis seemed to exercise no action upon its ally. The Ambassador found the reply of Servia inadequate. This German attitude was altogether alarming. It seemed to M. Sazonof that better than any other Power, England would be in a position to attempt still to act in Berlin to engage the German Government to the necessary line of action. It was at Berlin that without doubt was to be found the key of the situation.' (R.P. 43). Russia had made up her mind that if Servia were attacked, Austria's undertaking to respect Servian integrity and independence would not be satisfactory. 'The order for mobilization against Austria would be issued on the day that Austria crossed the Servian frontier.' (W.P. 72). Hearing of the declaration of war, Russia proposed to announce on the 29th, mobilization in the military circumscriptions of Odessa, Kieff, Moscow and Kazan. The declaration of war clearly put an end to the idea of direct communications between Austria and Russia. Austria, in fact, refused to open discussions. She also rejected the mediation proposal of Sir Edward Grey, that the Powers should counsel moderation at Vienna and St. Petersburg. Count Berchthold informed Berlin that after the opening of hostilities by Servia and the subsequent declaration of war the step appeared belated. (G.P. Exhibit 16). Berlin itself showed no change of purpose. It paid merely a lip-service to peace. Though the Chancellor

declared his anxiety 'that Germany should work together with England for maintenance of general peace, as they had done successfully in the last European crisis,' still he had not been able to accept the conference proposed by Sir Edward Grey. It would not be effective, and it would have had the appearance of an Areopagus consisting of two Powers of each group sitting in judgment upon the two remaining Powers. The Chancellor was disturbed by the news of Russia's mobilizing fourteen army corps in the South. Such circumstances would put it out of his power to preach moderation at Vienna. Austria who had as yet only partially mobilized would take similar measures and 'if war were the result, Russia would be entirely responsible.' This is the old formula, the rest of which the Chancellor faithfully repeated. On the British Ambassador noticing that by refusing to consider Serbia's reply Austria must bear a certain portion of responsibility, His Excellency said 'that he did not wish to discuss Servian note, but that Austria's standpoint, and in this he agreed, was that her quarrel with Serbia was a purely Austrian concern with which Russia had nothing to do.' The same opinion was expressed in the important communication which the Chancellor addressed to the Governments of Germany: Austria-Hungary is to be upheld to the end, since "the agitation conducted by the Pan-Slavs in Austria-Hungary has for its goal, with the destruction of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the scattering or weakening of the Triple Alliance with a complete isolation of the German Empire in consequence. Our own interest, therefore, calls us to the side of Austria-Hungary." Should Russia

interfere, Germany must support the neighbour monarchy with all the power at our command, (G.P. Exhibit 2), (W.P. 71). Yet Germany seemed still to reckon on the chance that Russia would not fight. The Austrian Ambassador in Berlin said to Sir Edward Goschen 'that a general war was most unlikely, as Russia neither wanted war nor was prepared for war.' The English Ambassador thought 'that this opinion was shared by many people in Berlin.' (W.P. 71). The English Ambassador in St. Petersburg felt it necessary to urge upon his German colleague that if Servia were attacked, a general war would follow, "Russia being thoroughly in earnest." (W.P. 72).

Still even in spite of these obstacles there were attempts to save the cause of peace. While preparing for a partial mobilization, Russia was careful to inform Germany that the mobilization was not directed against her. The Russian Minister considered that England should urgently undertake mediatory action. (R.P. 48), (W.P. 70). To the Russian Ambassador at Vienna, a conference in London of the less interested Powers seemed the only chance of peace: he was sure that Russia would accept it. 'So long as opposing armies have not actually come in contact, all hope need not be abandoned.' (W.P. 74). Furthermore, the direct intervention in the negotiations of the German Emperor himself at first seemed to promise well. He had returned to Berlin on the night of the 26th rather to the annoyance of the German Foreign Office, which felt that this step taken on his own initiative might "cause speculation and excitement." (W.P. 33). On the 28th, he telegraphed directly

to the Czar. He expressed his horror at the murder of the Archduke and noticed the common interest of Sovereigns to punish the guilty. As the military party in Germany expected, these motives were very powerful with the Emperor throughout the whole period. He was quite prepared, however, to recognize the difficulty which public opinion in Russia created for the Czar, and would use his influence "to induce Austria-Hungary to obtain a frank and satisfactory understanding with Russia." (G.P. Exhibit 20).

Unfortunately the Emperor's assurances did not affect German policy on the 29th. The day began with the usual attempts on the part of the other Powers to bring home to Germany the seriousness of the situation and to co-operate in keeping the peace. The Russian Ambassador at Vienna expressed to the German Ambassador there the hope that it might still be possible to arrange matters, and explained that it was impossible for Russia to do otherwise than take an interest in the present dispute. Russia had done what she could already at Belgrade to induce the Servian Government to meet principal Austrian demands in a favourable spirit ; if approached in a proper manner he thought she would probably do still further in this direction. But she was justly offended in having been completely ignored, and she could not consent to be excluded from the settlement. Italy continued to bring pressure on Germany in the interests of peace. The Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs urged at Berlin 'adherence to the idea of an exchange of views in London. The German Secretary of State might propose a formula acceptable to his Government.

This exchange of views would keep the door open if the direct communication between Vienna and St. Petersburg failed to have any result. The exchange of views might be concomitant with such direct communication. There seemed to be a difficulty in making Germany believe that Russia was in earnest. As Germany, however, was really anxious for good relations with Great Britain, if she believed that Great Britain would act with Russia and France, the Italian Minister thought it would have a great effect. Even should it prove impossible to induce Germany to take part, he would still advocate that England and Italy each as representing one group, should continue to exchange views.' (W.P. 80). A little later in the day 'when the moment was passed for any further discussions on basis of Servian note, in view of communication made by Russia at Berlin regarding partial mobilization, the Minister still hoped that Germany might use her influence at Vienna to prevent or moderate any further demands on Servia.' (W.P. 86). Russia remained no less eager for peace than Italy. Her mobilization was directed only against Austria. When denied direct conversations with the Austrian Government, the Russian Minister suggested "a return to Sir Edward Grey's proposal for a conference of four Ambassadors or at all events for an exchange of views between the three Ambassadors less directly interested, Sir Edward Grey, and also the Austrian Ambassador if Sir Edward Grey thought it advisable. Any arrangement approved by France and England would be acceptable to him, and he did not care what form such conversations took. No time was to be lost



and the only way to avert war was for Sir Edward Grey to succeed in arriving, by means of conversation with Ambassadors, either collectively or individually, at some formula which Austria could be induced to accept. Throughout, the Russian Government had been perfectly frank and conciliatory, and had done all in their power to maintain peace. If their efforts to maintain peace failed, he trusted that it would be realized by the British public that it was not the fault of the Russian Government. . . . He would agree to anything arranged by the four Powers, provided it was acceptable to Serbia; he could not be more Servian than Serbia. Some supplementary statement or explanation would, however, have to be made in order to tone down the sharpness of the ultimatum.' (W.P. 78). Lastly, Sir Edward Grey, though plainly discouraged by the failure of his own efforts for peace, continued to urge wisdom upon Germany. He found it 'impossible to initiate discussions with Ambassadors at London as he understood from the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs that Austria would not accept any discussion on basis of Servian note, and the inference of all he had heard from Vienna and Berlin was that Austria would not accept any form of mediation by the Powers as between Austria and Serbia.' (W.P. 81). When informed by the German Ambassador that the Chancellor was endeavouring to mediate between Vienna and St. Petersburg, and to make Vienna explain in a satisfactory form at St. Petersburg, the scope and extension of Austrian proceedings in Serbia, he said that he would press no proposal so long as there was a prospect of an agree-

ment between Austria and Russia. Still Austria had refused Russia's request for conversations at St. Petersburg. 'Germany while accepting mediation in principle seemed to find a conference, consultation or discussion or even conversations *à quatre* too formal a method. He urged that the German Government should suggest any method by which the influence of the four Powers could be used together to prevent war between Austria and Russia. France agreed. Italy agreed. The whole idea of mediation or mediating influence was ready to be put into operation by any method that Germany could suggest if his was not acceptable. In fact mediation was ready to come into operation by any method that Germany thought possible if only Germany would press the button in the interest of peace.' (W.P. 84). Again in the afternoon, Sir Edward Grey urged that "Germany should propose some method by which the four Powers should be able to work together to keep the peace of Europe. Russia, while desirous of mediation, regarded it as a condition that the military operations against Servia should be suspended, as otherwise a mediation would only drag on matters and give Austria time to crush Servia. It was, of course, too late for all military operations against Servia to be suspended. In a short time the Austrian forces would be in Belgrade, and in occupation of some Servian territory. But even then it might be possible to bring some mediation into existence, if Austria, while saying that she must hold the occupied territory until she had complete satisfaction from Servia, stated that she would not advance further, pending an effort of the Powers to

mediate between her and Russia." (W.P. 88). At the end of the same conversation Sir Edward Grey asked the Ambassador 'not to be misled by the friendly tone of the conversation into thinking that England would stand aside if Germany and then France came into the struggle and all European interests were involved—there would be no question of England intervening if Germany was not involved, or even if France was not involved, but if British interests required intervention, a decision would be reached rapidly. Meanwhile he was not applying a threat or pressure and would work with Germany for peace, but he did not wish Germany to think that England would not act.' (W.P. 89). This solemn warning had been rendered inevitable by the treatment which Germany had accorded to all his proposals. Yet the British Minister had no desire to encourage his friends in any course which might precipitate war. He informed the French Ambassador of the opinions which he would express to Prince Lichnowsky. 'The public, however, did not regard this case as parallel to that of Morocco, in which it appeared that Germany in an attempt to crush France, was fastening a quarrel on France on a question that was the subject of a special agreement between France and Great Britain.' In this instance even if the quarrel became one between Austria and Russia, England would not intervene, having always aimed at avoiding a war over a Balkan question. If Germany were involved, and then France, Great Britain would have to consider her position. "France would then have been drawn into a quarrel which was not hers, but in which, owing

to her alliance, her honour and interest obliged her to engage. We were free from engagements and we should have to decide what British interests required us to do." (W.P. 87).

Sir Edward Grey's warning to Germany did not reach Berlin until late on the night of the 29th. Meanwhile decisions had been taken there which were to make war almost unavoidable. The Chancellor informed the British Ambassador that Vienna thought it 'too late to act upon Sir Edward Grey's suggestion that the Servian reply might form the basis of discussion.' 'Events had marched too rapidly.' The Chancellor had given his approval of her course. Austria had no territorial designs and his only suggestion was that Austria should make this fact perfectly clear. He hoped that his having gone so far in giving advice at Vienna would shew Sir Edward Grey how much he was doing for peace. (W.P. 75). The Secretary of State was "very depressed." He had to be very careful in giving advice to Austria, as any idea that they were being pressed would be likely to cause them to precipitate matters and present a *fait accompli*. This had in fact now happened and he was not sure that his communication of Sir Edward Grey's suggestion that Servia's reply offered a basis of discussion had not hastened declaration of war.' If Austria wished thus to commit Germany, the only hope of checking her was for Germany to draw back quickly and sharply in which case Austria could not go forward alone. Germany had no such course in mind. On the contrary it is probable, as subsequent events showed, that so far from counselling moderation at Vienna, Germany was pushing Austria forward. Yet Austria's

measures were bringing in Russia on behalf of Servia. The Russian military preparations against Austria were announced at Berlin. It was necessary, therefore, since Germany had no thought of receding from her original position, to push Russia aside. Whether Russia would submit to such treatment was not yet known in Germany. In some circles it was still thought that she could not resist. The Secretary of State told the Italian Ambassador on the 29th 'that Russia would not march.' (F.P. 96). Germany must know at once. Otherwise time would be given Russia in which to complete her military arrangements. Hence it was decided to repeat with more emphasis the threat of July 26th. On the afternoon of the 29th the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg conveyed to M. Sazonof 'the resolution taken by his Government to mobilize if Russia did not stop her military preparations.' (R.P. 58). The threat failed of its purpose for as Russia had been careful to indicate from the outset she did not intend to abandon Servia. Thereupon a council was called in the evening at Potsdam to decide upon the immediate announcement of German mobilization. The Emperor himself was no longer in the conciliatory mood of the 28th. In replying to his telegram the Czar had referred to the war upon Servia as an "ignominious one." (G.P. Exhibit 21). The adjective aroused the Emperor's wrath. In a telegram of the 29th he vigorously defended Austria's action, repeating the formula to which Germany had adhered from the beginning. "It is perfectly possible for Russia to remain a spectator in the Austro-Servian war without drawing Europe into the most terrible war it has ever seen," (G.P. Exhibit 22).

Any one who took this view of the Russian position was not likely to exert much influence upon Vienna. Like his counsellors, the Emperor by dictating to Russia, was really tying his own hands. Whether the meeting at Potsdam actually determined to declare a mobilization is not definitely known. It may have done so and the decision may have been suppressed by the officials when shortly after adjournment they received Sir Edward Grey's warning. The semi-official newspapers which announced the decision were called in, and Herr von Jagow took pains to deny the report. (F.P. 105). It is more probable, however, that the meeting came to the point of deciding for an immediate mobilization, and then hesitated in order to take advantage of two possible eventualities. Russia or France might declare a general mobilization, in which event Germany would attempt to throw upon either or both Powers the responsibility for the war. The interval could be used in making another effort to detach England from the Entente. England had showed herself eager for peace. Perhaps she could be induced to remain neutral while Germany and Austria fought out the issue with France and Russia. The Chancellor returned from the meeting to summon the British Ambassador. If Russia attacked, a European conflagration might become inevitable. He understood that Great Britain would never stand by and allow France to be crushed in any conflict there might be. Germany, however, did not aim at crushing France. If Britain were neutral, Germany would not make territorial acquisitions at the expense of France. This assurance seemed definite enough, and would be accepted among business men as covering all

French territory. Fortunately, Sir Edward Goschen was trained to go beneath the surface of diplomatic engagements. He at once inquired about French colonies. The Chancellor was unable to give a similar undertaking in that respect. His first assurance, therefore, had been intended to deceive Great Britain. He went on to promise that the integrity and neutrality of Holland would be respected so long as they were respected by Germany's adversaries. French action might force Germany to enter upon operations in Belgium, but at the end of the war 'Belgian integrity would be respected if she had not sided against Germany.' His Excellency had in mind a general neutrality agreement with England, and British neutrality on this occasion might lead the way to it. (W.P. 85). After the offer to England had been made, Sir Edward Grey's warning was received in Berlin. Its reception occasioned another effort on the part of Germany to intimidate Russia. At one o'clock in the morning of the 30th the Emperor despatched another telegram to the Czar. He intimated very sharply that Russian mobilization would make it almost impossible for him to mediate at Vienna. He put the whole responsibility for war or peace upon the shoulders of the Czar. (G.P. Exhibit 23).

This message seemed to close the last avenue towards peace. Austria was proceeding steadily with her campaign against Serbia. Germany had done nothing to check her ally. Yet if Russia intervened to protect Serbia, Germany intended to bring on a general war, striking at both France and Russia. Suddenly, however, a new outlet was opened for diplomatic effort. Within an hour the condition

of a disturbed and fevered Europe changed for the better. At two o'clock in the morning of the 30th the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg called on the Minister for Foreign Affairs. He had hitherto been very vigorous in urging the Austro-German case, and had not been sparing in his use of threats. Confident that Russia would yield as she had done in 1909, he probably encouraged his own Government in its course. At last he recognized that the experience of 1909 would not be repeated, that Russia was not to be intimidated. The awful consequences of his action were clear before him. It is little wonder that in the interview "he completely broke down on seeing that war was inevitable." He appealed to M. Sazonof—a curious and humiliating position for an Ambassador who a few hours before had been dealing only in threats—"to make some suggestion which he could telegraph to the German Government as a last hope." M. Sazonof, who might certainly have been excused for a refusal to rescue Germany from her own mistakes but who would neglect no chance of keeping the peace, 'drew up and handed to the German Ambassador the following formula: "If Austria, recognizing that her conflict with Servia has assumed character of question of European interest declares herself ready to eliminate from her ultimatum points which violate principles of sovereignty of Servia, Russia engages to stop all military preparations.'" It was clear to Sir George Buchanan that 'if this proposal were rejected by Austria, preparations for general mobilization would be proceeded with and the inevitable result would



be a European War. (W.P. 97). One opportunity, therefore, remained for the Powers to find an honorable solution of their difficulties.

Fortunately Vienna showed itself more reasonable than at any previous period. The Russian Ambassador there continued his efforts for peace and almost succeeded in neutralizing the influence of his belligerent German colleague. He hoped 'that Russian mobilization [i.e., the partial mobilization of the 29th] would be regarded by Austria as what it was, viz., a clear intimation that Russia must be consulted regarding the fate of Servia. . . Russia must have an assurance that Servia would not be crushed, but she would understand that Austria-Hungary is compelled to exact from Servia measures which will secure her Slav provinces from the continuance of hostile propaganda from Servian territory.' (W.P. 95). The Ambassador saw Count Berchthold who said that 'as Russia had mobilized, Austria must, of course, do the same. This, however, was not to be regarded as a threat. The Austrian Minister had no objection to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg continuing their conversations, although he did not say that they could be resumed on the basis of the Servian reply.' (W.P. 96). Thus Austria when confronted by the danger of a general war began to recede from the position which she had taken on the 28th in refusing to carry on conversations with St. Petersburg.

Even Berlin seemed better disposed. Though all Sir Edward Grey's proposals accomplished nothing, his solemn warning had some effect. The Foreign Secretary confessed that had the report of it come

earlier, the Chancellor's bid for British neutrality would not have been made. He saw of course that the bid was the greatest possible mistake, for it disclosed Germany's hand and could bring nothing in return. As a result of the warning, von Jagow was 'asking Austro-Hungarian Government whether they would be willing to accept mediation on basis of occupation by Austrian troops of Belgrade or some other point, and issue their conditions from there.' (W.P. 98, W.P. 107). The suggestion was obviously intended to satisfy Austrian and German pride by means of a military victory, and to placate the other Powers by a promise to accept mediation. Both France and Italy learned that Germany was giving Austria more conciliatory advice. (W.P. 95). According to the Italian information she 'seemed convinced that England would act with France and Russia, and was most anxious to avoid issue with England.' (W.P. 106). Further than this, however, Germany would not go. On behalf of Austria she rejected the formula which the Russian Minister had prepared for her Ambassador. She expressed herself also as being disturbed by the military measures of France and Russia. Germany must act soon or it would be too late; and she would have to mobilize on three sides; von Jagow 'regretted this, as he knew France did not desire war, but it would be a military necessity.' Obviously the General Staff was growing impatient and leaving the diplomatists scarcely time for their task.

Meanwhile, Sir Edward Grey had disposed very quickly of the Chancellor's offer. "His Majesty's Government cannot for a moment entertain the Chancellor's proposal that they should bind

themselves to neutrality on such terms. What he asks us in effect is to engage to stand by while French colonies are taken, and France is beaten, so long as Germany does not take French territory as distinct from the colonies. From the material point of view such a proposal is unacceptable for France without further territory in Europe being taken from her, could be so crushed as to lose her position as a Great Power, and become subordinate to German policy. Altogether apart from that, it would be a disgrace for us to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France, a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover. The Chancellor also in effect asks us to bargain away whatever obligations or interest we have as regards the neutrality of Belgium. We could not entertain that bargain either. Having said so much, it is unnecessary to examine whether the prospect of a future general neutrality agreement between England and Germany offered positive advantages sufficient to compensate us for tying our hands now. We must preserve our full freedom to act as circumstances may seem to us to require in any such unfavourable and regrettable development of the present crisis as the Chancellor contemplates." Could such a development be avoided, Sir Edward Grey would endeavour to promote 'some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia and Great Britain, jointly or separately.' (W.P. 101). Such an arrangement would be possible only on condition that the present crisis were safely passed. Hence Sir Edward Grey caught at the

two formulæ which Russia and Germany had prepared, and cleverly combined them into one proposal which might please all parties : "If Austrian advances were stopped after occupation of Belgrade, the Powers would examine how Serbia could fully satisfy Austria without impairing Servian rights or independence." (W.P. 103). So long as a chance of peace remained, the British Minister was reluctant to give an undertaking to France, though he was pressed to do so by the President of France. (W.L. 99). The Entente with France merely required that in the event of either Government being attacked by a third power or of the general peace being threatened, it should discuss with the other whether both Governments should act together to prevent aggression and to preserve peace. (W.P. 105). There was no further engagement on either side. Sir Edward Grey did not wish to anticipate a danger to France, but if the danger became real he was free to act.

On July 31st Great Britain continued her efforts to avert the catastrophe. She learned 'with great satisfaction that discussions were being resumed between Austria and Russia.' (W.P. 110). The four disinterested Powers might give Austria satisfaction in Serbia, and might guarantee to Russia, Serbia's independence. Again Sir Edward Grey waited upon Germany to join in some common action. 'If Germany could get any reasonable proposal put forward which made it clear that Germany and Austria were striving to preserve European peace and that Russia and France would be unreasonable if they rejected it, he would support it at St. Petersburg and Paris and go the length of saying that if

Russia and France would not accept it, his Majesty's Government would have nothing more to do with the consequences.' This was the last and most remarkable of the British peace proposals. A reasonable suggestion put forward by Germany would almost certainly be accepted by Russia and France, who had fallen in with every attempt at peace. Sir Edward Grey was, therefore, in no sense betraying his friends. If they rejected a reasonable proposal the responsibility for the result would rest upon them and England could honourably stand aside. So long, however, as Germany made no advances, she must bear the blame. Russia and France were on the defensive, and as Sir Edward Grey went on to say, 'if France became involved, England should be drawn in.' (W.P. 111). English neutrality could be secured, only if Germany ceased to be aggressive; and if Germany abandoned her aggressive attitude there would be no war.

That Germany had no such intention was being demonstrated elsewhere. The general Russian mobilization foreshadowed on the 29th and 30th was ordered on the 31st. It followed naturally upon the two threats issued by Germany on the 26th and the 29th, to the effect that if Russia mobilized, Germany would do so. Had Russia thereupon discontinued her preparations, her action could only be taken as a surrender. Furthermore, Germany had rejected the formula submitted at the request of the German Ambassador; and, though Austria promised to resume conversations with St. Petersburg her promise did not cover the Servian note and her troops continued to move against Servia. She was plainly being encouraged by Germany,

whose war preparations were very far advanced. (F.P. 102). As early as the 29th M. Sazonof had convinced himself from his interview with the German Ambassador that 'Germany did not wish to utter the decisive words in Vienna which would safeguard peace. The Emperor Nicholas had the same impression from the exchange of telegrams which he had just had personally with the Emperor William. The Russian General Staff and Admiralty had received alarming information as to the preparation of the German army and Navy.' (F.P. 102). There appeared then to Russia only one way of intimating her unwillingness to be ignored. She ordered a general mobilization. (W.P. 113). The step was not intended, however, to cut off all negotiations. M. Sazonof had already declared "I shall negotiate up to the last moment." (F.P. 102). Mobilization was accompanied by a pledge that 'so long as conversation with Austria continued not a single man should be moved across the frontier.' (W.P. 120). Sir Edward Grey's formula was accepted. The pacific Russian Ambassador at Vienna continued to exert himself strongly in the interests of peace. (W.P. 118).

So far as Austria-Hungary alone was concerned, the result of the Russian mobilization was very different from what might have been expected. Though Vienna in turn ordered a general mobilization\* she showed no disposition to declare war. On the contrary, either the Ambassador's efforts or the Russian mobilization had the astounding effect of persuading Austria to discuss the Austrian note to Servia. (W.P.

\*NOTE—According to the French documents the general Austrian mobilization preceded the Russian.

133). 'Austria, in fact, had finally yielded, and that she herself had at this point good hopes of a peaceful issue is shown by the communication made to Sir Edward Grey on the 1st August by Count Mensdorff to the effect that Austria had "neither banged the door" on compromise nor cut off the conversations. The Russian Ambassador to the end was working hard for peace. He was holding the most conciliatory language to Count Berchthold, and he informed the British Ambassador that the latter, as well as Count Forgach, had responded in the same spirit. Certainly it was too much for Russia to expect that Austria would hold back her armies, but this matter could probably have been settled by negotiation, and the Ambassador repeatedly told Sir Maurice de Bunsen he was prepared to accept any reasonable compromise. Unfortunately these conversations at St. Petersburg and Vienna were cut short by the transfer of the dispute to the more dangerous ground of a direct conflict between Germany and Russia.' (de B.) On the 31st Germany issued her double ultimatum, one to St. Petersburg requiring Russia to demobilize within twelve hours, the other to Paris asking France to decide within eighteen hours what she would do in the event of a war between Germany and Russia.

Why did Germany issue these demands, when Austria was on the point of settling her quarrel with Russia? This is the most interesting and difficult question raised in the course of the negotiations. Knowing that Germany was bringing on the general war, Austria may have made a show of yielding, in order to throw upon Russia the blame for the outcome. Her yielding certainly came too late to avert

the disaster. The explanation, however, is too ingenious. The effect of Austria's course has been to incriminate not Russia but Germany. Moreover, the reluctance of Austria to engage in a general war was obvious. She did not declare war upon Russia until August 6th and did not enter upon hostilities against France and England until much later. The real explanation is simpler. Germany had supported, if not encouraged Austria from the beginning. Her failure to publish any of her despatches to Vienna would seem to indicate that she was the Mr. Spellow in the firm of Germany and Austria. Influenced by Sir Edward Grey's warning of July 29th some of the diplomatists may have been disposed to give Austria more conciliatory advice. (F.P. 92). Such a course, however, was most disagreeable to the more uncompromising diplomats and to the General Staff. It meant a diplomatic victory for the Entente which German prestige could not be allowed to suffer. It involved a departure from the principle laid down at the beginning of the negotiations that if Russia intervened Germany and Austria would fight the matter out. Now that Austria was becoming frightened Germany had to hurry on the crisis and to prevent Austria falling away from the Alliance. The party in favour of strong action swept aside the weaker officials like von Jagow and Prince Lichnowsky. On the 30th 'they were urging strongly that mobilization should be decreed on the ground that any delay would lose Germany some other advantage.' (F.P. 105). On the same day the French Ambassador to Berlin 'pointed out to the Secretary of State that he himself had said to the Ambassador that Germany would not consider



herself forced to mobilize unless Russia mobilized upon the German frontier and that such was not the case. He replied that this was true, and that the heads of the army insisted that all delay was a loss of strength to the German Army, that the words which the Ambassador recalled did not constitute a firm engagement on his side.' (F.P. 159). The views of the General Staff remained as they had been stated by General Von Moltke in 1913 : "Germany cannot and must not give Russia time to mobilize, as she will be obliged to maintain on the eastern frontier a force which would leave her in a position of equality, if not of inferiority, in front of France. Therefore, we must forestall our principal adversary immediately there are nine chances in ten that we are going to have war, and we must begin war without waiting in order brutally to crush all resistance." (F.P. 3). The General Staff all but decided upon mobilization at the meeting of the 29th. They had afforded the timid diplomatists one more chance, and nothing had been accomplished. England had been informed of Germany's design and Russia given time in which to advance her military preparations. Austria-Hungary was now beginning to show signs of weakness. The blow must be struck before she could abandon Germany. Therefore at midnight of July 31st, Russia was asked to demobilize. It was no longer enough that Germany should herself order a mobilization. With both countries mobilized the advantage was on the side of Russia. She had the numbers, Germany the speed, as von Jagow said. If negotiations were continued, every day would strengthen Russia's position, and weaken Germany's either in diplomacy or

in the war which might ensue. Hence the facts that on the 31st Russia had accepted the British formula and that Austria was ready to negotiate only incited Germany to a more vigorous course. It was necessary from the German point of view that Russia should be checked, and checked instantly. So that there might be no escape for Russia, the demand applied to her mobilization in both the south and the north. She could not reply that all her mobilization was directed only against Austria. (W.P. 121). If she yielded Germany would be secure, and would have gained a diplomatic triumph of the greatest value. In 1909 Germany had won a victory over Russia in somewhat similar circumstances. On that occasion also she had intervened, after Austria and Russia had adjusted their differences, merely for the purpose of humiliating Russia. History might repeat itself. Six more hours were allowed France than Russia on the chance that if Russia gave way the demand upon France could be withdrawn. Still the hope of Russia's yielding must have been very slight. The General Staff was ready to strike and when no answer came from St. Petersburg war was declared and military operations were undertaken against France.

During the crisis further telegrams passed between the Emperor and the Czar and some also between King George and the German Court. They opened no new avenue towards peace. The Emperor agreed with his advisers. Indeed to judge from the wording of the despatches he was shaping their course. In Germany military considerations now dominated all others, as the last words of the Emperor to King George clearly established: "I am off for Berlin to

take measures for insuring safety of my eastern frontiers, where strong Russian troops are already posted." The remarkable estimate of the Emperor's opinions formed by M. Cambon in 1913 proved correct: "Hostility against us (France) is becoming more marked, and the Emperor has ceased to be a partisan of peace. The German Emperor's interlocutor thought up to the present, as did everybody, that William II, whose personal influence has been exerted in many critical circumstances in favour of the maintenance of peace, was still in the same state of mind. This time, it appears he found him completely changed. The German Emperor is no longer in his eyes the champion of peace, against the bellicose tendencies of certain German parties. William II has been brought to think that war with France is inevitable, and that it will have to come to it one day or another. The Emperor, it need hardly be said, believes in the crushing superiority of the German Army and in its assured success. . . . During this conversation the Emperor, however, appeared overwrought and irritable. As the years begin to weigh upon William II, the family traditions, the retrograde feelings of the Court, and above all the impatience of soldiers are gaining more ascendancy over his mind. Perhaps he may feel I know not what kind of jealousy of the popularity acquired by his son who flatters the passions of Pan-Germans, and perhaps he may find that the position of his empire in the world is not commensurate with its power." (F.P. 6).

Meanwhile England's position was becoming more clearly defined. Sir Edward Grey's proposal for a future arrangement which would guarantee Germany and her allies against aggression was

received by the German Chancellor without comment. 'His mind was so full of grave matters,' that he could not attend to it. (W. P. 109.) The request that Germany should put forward some suggestion such as might be submitted to France and Russia was not dealt with, because it came after the ultimatum had been despatched to Russia. 'It was no use discussing it until the Russian Government had sent in their answer to the German demand' (W.P. 121). Germany had ceased to think seriously of peace. She was planning as the Chancellor's offer of the 29th showed, to attack France and to use Belgium as a highway. Sir Edward Grey did not intend, however, to abandon either France or Belgium. As matters stood, the fortunes of the two countries were bound together. If Belgium were not open to a German advance, France could not easily become the object of attack and war would be almost impossible. Hence the preservation of Belgian neutrality would be the best guarantee of European peace. For this reason Sir Edward Grey on July 31st asked the French and the German Governments 'whether each was prepared to engage to respect neutrality of Belgium so long as no other power violated it.' (W.P. 114). He informed Belgium of this request, and 'assumed that the Belgian Government would maintain to the utmost of her power her neutrality, which he desired and expected other Powers to uphold and observe.' (W.P. 115). France immediately replied that she would respect the neutrality of Belgium. Germany on the other hand refused to give a definite answer. 'The Secretary of State informed the British Ambassador that he must consult the Emperor and

the Chancellor before he could possibly answer. The Ambassador gathered from what he said that he thought any reply they might give could not but disclose a certain amount of their plan of campaign in the event of war ensuing, and he was therefore very doubtful whether they would return any answer at all.' (W.P. 122). This failure to comply with the English request, no less than the Chancellor's offer of the 29th, can have left no doubt as to the character of German designs.

When Sir Edward Grey's inquiry reached Brussels, it found the Belgian Government quite prepared to defend the neutrality of Belgium, but hopeful that such a course would not be required. As early as July 24th Belgium decided to "carry out the international duties imposed upon it by treaties in the event of war breaking out on the Belgian frontiers." (B.P. 2). On July 31st she informed France and England of this decision. (B.P. 9, 11). She still trusted, however, that no action on the part of Germany would threaten her position. She reminded the German Ambassador of engagements which the German Chancellor and Herr von Jagow had taken to respect the treaties protecting Belgium. As late as April 29th, 1913, in reply to a member of the Social Democratic Party who said, "In Belgium the approach of a Franco-German war is viewed with apprehension, because it is feared that Germany will not respect Belgian neutrality," von Jagow had declared, "the neutrality of Belgium is determined by international conventions and Germany is resolved to respect these conventions." In reply to further interrogations the Minister of War stated "Belgium does not play

any part in the justification of the German scheme of military reorganization ; the scheme is justified by the position of matters in the East. Germany will not lose sight of the fact that Belgian neutrality is guaranteed by international treaties." The German Ambassador expressed himself as 'being certain that the sentiments to which expression was given at that time had not changed.' (B.P. 11). He was either ignorant of his own Government's plans or determined to deceive Belgium into a sense of false security.

The danger which he now saw threatening Belgium added to Sir Edward Grey's discouragement. As he pointed out to the German Ambassador, 'if Germany could see her way to give the same assurance as that which had been given by France it would materially contribute to relieve anxiety and tension in England. On the other hand, if there were a violation of the neutrality of Belgium by one combatant while the other respected it, it would be extremely difficult to restrain public feeling in this country.' The Ambassador inquired 'whether, if Germany gave a promise not to violate Belgian neutrality, Great Britain would engage to remain neutral.' He could not, of course, undertake to respect Belgian neutrality, since his Government had so plainly hesitated to do anything of the kind. His object, therefore, was to discover Great Britain's position, so that Berlin might decide at what price British neutrality could be purchased. Sir Edward Grey 'did not think that Great Britain could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone.' He was 'pressed to formulate conditions on which Great Britain would remain neutral.'

The Ambassador 'even suggested that the integrity of France and her colonies might be guaranteed.' Again he did not and could not give any undertaking. He was merely hinting at a possibility in order to learn Great Britain's terms. Thereupon Sir Edward Grey 'felt obliged to refuse definitely any promise to remain neutral on similar terms, and would say no more than that England must keep her hands free.' (W.P. 123). He meant that his language of the 30th still applied to all such suggestions. Even if France did not lose territory anywhere, she might forfeit her position as a Great Power and become subordinate to German policy. The attack on France if consented to by England would be a blot upon the honour of the country. Furthermore, Belgian neutrality was never intended to be a counter in international bargaining. It was Germany's duty to keep her treaties and not to enquire how much she would gain by consenting not to break them. Finally, Sir Edward Grey can have had little confidence that Germany once victorious over France would keep any undertaking as to French or Belgian territory. If she were supreme on the continent; who could compel her to keep her pledges? Her attitude in the negotiations seemed to show that such compulsion would be necessary. It could not come from England, or could come only at the cost of war in the end. Germany's aggressive purpose left Sir Edward Grey no choice but to intervene. He had asked Germany to put forward any reasonable proposal, and had undertaken to stand aside if his friends, Russia and France, rejected it. Such were the only terms on which his neutrality could be secured.

Yet Sir Edward Grey was still unwilling to let pass even the remotest chance of peace. He had heard it said that Germany might stand aside, if France and England did not enter the war and inquired of the German Ambassador as to this possibility. The Ambassador interpreted his inquiry as meaning that if Germany did not attack France, the latter might remain neutral. The German Emperor snatched at the suggestion and telegraphed that 'if France offered him neutrality which must be guaranteed by the British fleet and army, he would of course refrain from attacking France and employ his troops elsewhere.' The misunderstanding was at once corrected by Sir Edward Grey. He believed, nevertheless, 'that it might be possible to secure peace if only a little respite in time could be gained before any great power began war. The Russian Government had communicated to him the readiness of Austria to discuss with Russia and the readiness of Austria to accept a basis of mediation which is not open to the objections raised in regard to the formula which Russia originally suggested. Things ought not to be hopeless so long as Austria and Russia were ready to converse and he hoped that the German Government might be able to make use of the Russian communications in order to avoid tension.' (W.P. 131).

Germany had already taken a very different course. Her declaration of war was delivered to Russia on August 1st. In the early morning of August 2nd her troops entered Luxembourg, thereby violating its neutrality and breaking the treaty of 1867. (B.P. 18). Luxembourg had already asked



and received from France a promise to maintain its neutrality. The Duchy protested, however, only to Germany and when questioned in the matter Sir Edward Grey referred to the definitions of the British Foreign Office in 1867, which made it clear that in the view of the office the collective guarantee which protected Luxembourg's neutrality did not oblige a single state to punish an infraction of it. The use of Luxembourg's territory was not therefore to be the occasion of the general war. Another and more far-reaching violation of neutrality immediately followed. The German Ambassador in Belgium assured the Minister on August 2nd that he still considered Belgium secure on the East. (B.P. 19). A few hours later on the same day he presented the demand of Germany that she be allowed to use Belgian territory. She would guarantee the kingdom and its possessions. If Belgium did not consent, within twelve hours, Germany would be compelled to consider Belgium as an enemy. (B.P. 20). The German plans, as discovered by France in 1913, were being carried through: "The plans made in this direction allow of the hope that the offensive might be taken immediately the concentration of the army of the lower Rhine is completed. An ultimatum with a brief delay, followed immediately by invasion, would enable us to justify our action sufficiently from the point of view of international law." (F.P. 2). Belgium's protest against this demand was unheeded. (B.P. 22). Therefore, on August 3rd the King of the Belgians telegraphed to the King of England making "a supreme appeal for diplomatic intervention to safeguard the neutrality of Belgium" (B.P. 25).

Meanwhile Sir Edward Grey had on August 2nd given France 'an assurance that, if the German fleet came into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against French coasts or shipping, the British fleet would give all the protection in its power.' (W.P. 148). It was perfectly clear from Germany's unwillingness to offer any undertaking about Belgium and from the movement of German troops into Luxembourg that war was now inevitable. Hitherto Sir Edward Grey had refused to give any pledge either to Russia or to France. Encouraged by such a pledge either Power might have adopted a threatening attitude towards Germany, with the result that before the public in England and elsewhere, English policy might bear the appearance of aggression. On the other hand, Sir Edward Grey had not failed his friends for he had been careful to impress upon Germany the fact that if she brought on war England could scarcely keep out. His diplomacy was intended to restrain both sides, so that the controversy might be kept as long as possible in the field of peaceful discussion. Now that his object had failed, he was concerned to protect France. The French fleet had been stationed in the Mediterranean while England guarded the North Sea. It was now necessary for France to know what new arrangement, if any, she would have to make. Sir Edward Grey, therefore, undertook to defend French coasts and shipping against a German attack.

The German demand upon Belgium and the telegram from the King of the Belgians rendered even more unmistakable the character of German designs. The Belgian Minister in Great Britain was told by

Sir Edward Grey on August 3rd that "if Belgian neutrality were violated it would mean war with Germany." (B.P. 26). On the same day the German Ambassador asked that Belgian neutrality be not made a condition of England's neutrality in the war. On August 4th the British Government 'protested against the violation of a treaty to which Germany was a party in common with themselves, and requested an assurance that the demand made upon Belgium would not be proceeded with, and that her neutrality might be respected by Germany.' (W.P. 153). The aid of Great Britain, France and Russia was at the same time pledged to Belgium. It was soon to be required. German troops penetrated Belgian territory on the morning of August 4th and at 6 a.m. the German Ambassador announced that Germany would carry out the measures of security which "French menaces" made indispensable. (B.P. 27). Thereupon the Belgian Government appealed to the Powers. (B.P. 40). The news that Belgian territory had been invaded and that Germany had announced her intention of treating Belgium as an enemy led Sir Edward Grey to make more imperative his request for German assurances. A last effort of Germany to reconcile him to her breach of Belgian neutrality by promising that Belgian territory would not be annexed, failed of its object. An answer to the British request was demanded by midnight of August 4th. Since no answer came, a state of war between the two countries was declared on the following day. With Austria-Hungary, bound to England by so many ties, the opening of hostilities was postponed until midnight, August 12th.

Germany's policy had reached its inevitable goal. Austria-Hungary was to strike down Serbia, and the rest of Europe was to be prevented from interfering. Threats were dealt out, mingled with vague professions of a devotion to peace so that the Powers of the Entente might be either frightened or cajoled into an acceptance of the Austrian programme. The concessions which Serbia made were disregarded and no single suggestion for keeping the peace came from Germany or her ally. Meanwhile Austria proceeded steadily with her military plans. It became necessary then that if Russia was to save Serbia from destruction she must begin mobilization against Austria. Thereupon on the 29th, Germany determined to push Russia aside by intimating that if Russia continued her military preparations, Germany must mobilize. The threat did not accomplish its purpose. It merely served to convince Russia that Germany supported the most extreme of Austria's claims. The action of Germany on the 30th in refusing, before she had time even to consult Austria, the very reasonable proposal which M. Sazonof had made to the German Ambassador, strengthened Russia's conviction. Her general mobilization followed on the 31st. It had the effect of bringing home to Austria the consequence of her obstinacy. She had counted on a war with Serbia, but probably not on a general struggle. She proceeded to make concessions which might have resulted in peace between herself and Russia. Germany, however, had gone too far either to retreat or to allow her ally to do so. She decided to strike instantly so that France might be caught unprepared, and Russia might not have time to complete her arrangements.

Germany's intentions as they unfolded themselves in the course of the negotiations, involved such a danger to France, to Belgium, to international law and to the existing order in Europe that Great Britain could not in the interest of her honour and her safety allow them to go unchallenged. When the challenge should be given was the question for Sir Edward Grey to decide. It is now said in some quarters that he should have joined Russia and France at the outset in meeting the threat of Germany by a stiff defiance, and that had he done so the war might have been averted. It is certainly possible that, confronted by the three Powers of the Entente, Germany and Austria would have retired from their first position. Yet the probability is, to judge from Germany's official memorandum and her instructions to her Ambassadors, that even then she would have held her ground. In any case a joint demonstration by the Entente might easily have taken the appearance of aggression. Many of those who are now criticizing Sir Edward Grey for supineness would then have condemned him for thwarting Germany. He had to win the support of his own people and of Parliament. His own constitutional responsibilities and his love of peace led him to employ every possible means with the object of keeping the controversy in the diplomatic field and of securing a settlement by diplomatic negotiations. He consulted his friends—he was not bound to do more. He informed them of all his plans. He urged moderation upon them, so that they would not give their opponents a pretext for the use of violence. At the same time he did not fail to remonstrate against the proceedings of Austria and

Germany and to indicate that if they caused a general war England would be brought in. If German diplomacy was so stupid as to overreach or even deceive itself, Sir Edward Grey cannot be held responsible. He had acted throughout with the utmost frankness and sincerity.

As to the whole negotiations it is sometimes said that we do not know enough at present, that we have not sufficient evidence to justify us in forming a conclusion as to the causes of the war. Only years hence, the argument runs, when all the documents are available can these historical questions be answered. In one sense of course it is true that history is unfolded very slowly. Everyone is aware that in this case there are gaps in the evidence. We shall have to wait to discover exactly who wrote the note to Servia, and why Germany struck when Austria was ready to yield. Yet there has never been a great war when such complete evidence was so quickly put before the public. Documents such as students hitherto have awaited for many years are already accessible. The truths which they establish can not be shaken. There is no denying the Austrian designs upon Servia, Germany's support of Austria, the refusal by Austria and Germany of every proposal which would keep the peace, the German demands upon Russia and France, made when Austria and Russia were drawing together, the ultimatum to Belgium and its consequences. The reasons given by Herr von Jagow for the violation of Belgian neutrality, the "just for a scrap of paper" interview and the Chancellor's confession in the Reichstag on August 4th that Germany was doing Belgium a wrong, are records as final and permanent as history can

ever secure. On the afternoon of August 4th, Sir Edward Goschen called upon Herr von Jagow and "inquired in the name of His Majesty's Government, whether the Imperial Government would refrain from violating Belgian neutrality. Herr von Jagow at once replied that he was sorry to say that his answer must be 'No' as in consequence of the German troops having crossed the frontier that morning, Belgian neutrality had been already violated. Herr von Jagow again went into the reasons why the Imperial Government had been obliged to take this step, namely, that they had to advance into France by the quickest and easiest way, so as to be able to get well ahead with their operations and endeavour to strike some decisive blow as early as possible. It was a matter of life and death for them, as if they had gone by the more southern route they could not have hoped, in view of the paucity of roads and the strength of the fortresses, to have got through without formidable opposition entailing great loss of time. The loss of time would have meant time gained by the Russians for bringing up their troops to the German frontier. Rapidity of action was the great German asset, while that of Russia was an inexhaustible supply of troops. I pointed out to Herr von Jagow that this *fait accompli* of the violation of the Belgian frontier rendered, as he would readily understand, the situation exceedingly grave, and I asked him whether there was not still time to draw back, and avoid possible consequences which both he and I would deplore. He replied that for the reasons he had given me it was now impossible for them to draw back." In the evening Sir Edward Goschen called upon the Chancellor. The latter

said "that the step taken by His Majesty's Government was terrible to a degree, just for a word—'neutrality', a word which in war time had so often been disregarded—just for a scrap of paper Great Britain was going to make war on a kindred nation who desired nothing better than to be friends with her. All his efforts in that direction had been rendered useless by this last terrible step, and the policy to which, as I knew, he had devoted himself since his accession to office had tumbled down like a house of cards. What we had done was unthinkable; it was like striking a man from behind while he was fighting for his life against two assailants. He held Great Britain responsible for all the terrible events that might happen. I protested strongly against that statement and said that in the same way as he and Herr von Jagow wished me to understand that for strategical reasons it was a matter of life and death to Germany to advance through Belgium and violate the latter's neutrality, so I would wish him to understand that it was, so to speak, a matter of 'life and death' for the honour of Great Britain that she should keep her solemn engagement to do her utmost to defend Belgium's neutrality if attacked. That solemn compact simply had to be kept, or what confidence could anyone have in engagements made by Great Britain in the future? The Chancellor said, 'But at what price will that compact have been kept. Has the British Government thought of that?' I hinted to His Excellency as plainly as I could that fear of consequences could hardly be regarded as an excuse for breaking solemn engagements." (G.) The Chancellor had already committed himself in public by the speech which he made to the



Reichstag on the same day: "We are now in a state of necessity, and necessity knows no law. Our troops have occupied Luxembourg and perhaps already are on Belgian soil. Gentlemen, that is contrary to the dictates of international law. It is true that the French Government has declared at Brussels that France is willing to respect the neutrality of Belgium, as long as her opponent respects it. We knew, however, that France stood ready for invasion. France could wait, but we could not wait. A French movement upon our flank upon the Lower Rhine might have been disastrous. So we were compelled to override the just protest of the Luxembourg and Belgian Governments. The wrong—I speak openly—that we are committing we will endeavour to make good as soon as our military goal has been reached. Anybody who is threatened as we are threatened and is fighting for his highest possessions, can have only one thought—how he is to hack his way through."

