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BELGIAN DOCUMENTS

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BELGIAN DOCUMENTS

(BELGISCHE AKTENSTÜCKE)

A COMPANION VOLUME TO "THE CRIME"

BY

DR. RICHARD GRELLING

Author of "J'accuse"

TRANSLATED BY

ALEXANDER GRAY

*Die ich rief, die Geister
Werd' ich nun nicht los.*



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BELGIAN DOCUMENTS

INTRODUCTION

THE unflagging search through the archives at Brussels conducted by the German authorities has been crowned by an extraordinary degree of success, and indeed ever since the beginning of the war a kind fortune has favoured the German Government beyond the measure of their deserts in the discovery of valuable material.

After the letter, dated July 30th, 1914, from B. de l'Escaille, the Belgian Chargé d'Affaires in Petrograd, had been intercepted by a remarkable accident which I have fully discussed in *J'accuse* (p. 256), there were discovered in Brussels the famous documents containing reports of conversations between Belgian and English military officers in 1906 and 1912, out of which the attempt has been made to construe the Anglo-Belgian conspiracy of aggression. These documents also I have already subjected to strict examination in *J'accuse* (p. 213 *et seq.*) and *The Crime* (Vol. I, p. 420 *et seq.*).

The above discoveries date from the year 1914. The year 1915 was, however, much more productive. The archives of the Belgian Foreign Office, which were strangely and imprudently left behind by the Belgian Government in Brussels, were rummaged through, and in the process there were found a great many reports from Belgian Ambassadors to the Government in Brussels. These were first of all published separately, and were later collected in a volume under the title *Belgian Documents 1905-1914* (Berlin, Ernst Siegfried Mittler & Son).

This publication provided, as they say, meat and drink to the voluntary and involuntary defenders of the German

Government. All those who had undertaken the thankless task of demonstrating the German Government's innocence of this war threw themselves with a veritable voracity on these Belgian ambassadorial reports, and wherever the heralds of the German war of defence make their voice heard, their appeal is accompanied by, and based on, a reference to those Belgian Diplomats who long years before the war had branded the policy of encirclement initiated by King Edward, who had exalted to the heavens the German love of peace, and had already in anticipation ascribed to the Entente Powers the guilt of a future European war.

In their introduction to the collected documents the German Government have sounded the *leitmotiv* for this hymn of defence. They ascribe to the Belgian ambassadorial reports "an unusual interest as a 'source' for the antecedents of the war," they praise this "objective diplomatic account of international politics before the outbreak of the war" and see in it "material in arraignment of the policy of the Entente Powers . . . than which nothing more annihilating can be imagined . . . With great penetration the Ambassadors recognised at a very early date how the peace of the world, guaranteed for decades by the Triple Alliance, was imperilled by the political efforts of the Entente."

There then follows, still as an ostensible *résumé* of the Belgian ambassadorial reports, the familiar litany regarding "England's jealousy" of Germany's industrial and commercial development, the "menacing increase of French chauvinism," "Isvolsky's ambition and rage for revenge, as well as the Pan-Slav Press with its hostility to Germany," etc. In contrast to these, "the German Emperor's love of peace" and "the pacific tendencies of German policy and the great patience of Germany in face of the provocations of England and France" are emphasised and extolled.

This underlying motive, designed to accuse the Entente Powers and at the same time to defend the Central Powers, is to be found everywhere in Pan-German literature years before the war, and in a stronger form after the outbreak

of the war. There is not a thought or a phrase contained in the German Government's introduction to their publication from the Belgian archives, which had not for years been used and abused as a *cliché* in the Pan-German Press. For the German Defenders of the Fatherland (seated at the writing-table) the novelty of the documents and the profit to be derived from them are confined to the fact that they now believe, or profess to believe, that they hear in the mouth of neutral diplomatic observers a confirmation of their accusations against the Entente Powers—a confirmation which they have now endeavoured to exploit in a truly usurious manner. It does not matter what book one opens in the German or pro-German literature of the war: every writer who has taken as his task the defence of Germany and Austria, those innocent victims of a ruthless attack, produces columns of extracts from the Belgian ambassadorial reports, which are brought to an end with the triumphant exclamation: Here are the guilty placed in the pillory; by their criminal policy England, Russia, and France provoked the war; Germany and Austria are innocent of the catastrophe.

A book written in the French language under the title *La Vérité*, from the pen of an alleged Frenchman, which seeks, as a kind of pendant to *J'accuse*, to hold up to the French Government and their Allies the chronicle of their offences, discusses in its 137 pages almost nothing but the Belgian ambassadorial reports; in other words it confines itself to the more remote antecedents of the war, and with the nimbleness of a conjurer glides over the immediate antecedents, the critical days from July 23rd to August 4th. If this is what occurs in a French pamphlet, it is easy to imagine the way in which German writers turn the Belgian documents to advantage. We have elsewhere seen that Schieman in his *Slanderer*, written against *J'accuse*, discusses the more remote antecedents of the war alone, because these can be twisted about and tampered with to any extent with the help of quotations, snippets, anecdotic accounts of plots hatched at royal visits, secret ministerial discussions, naval manœuvres, etc., but that on the contrary he disposes in a few sub-

sidary sentences of the history of the twelve critical days, which permits and demands a close and accurate study of the documents. From the very beginning of the war there existed in German apologetic literature, as may well be understood, a tendency to place in the foreground the more remote and obscure past on which it was more difficult to throw light, and to allow the clear, unambiguous present which permitted no misunderstanding to fade as far as possible into the background. When Schiemann wrote his *Slanderer* pamphlet, the isolated publications from the Belgian archives had scarcely begun; he was therefore compelled to support his accusations against the Entente Powers by drawing on the collection of snippets which he himself had kept for years. To-day the German Government have bounteously spread the table for all these purveyors of arguments from the past; they need only stretch out their hands and among the 119 courses represented by the Belgian ambassadorial reports they will always find the tit-bit which they just happen to need to prove what they are at the moment concerned to demonstrate.

* * * * *

In view of this situation, it appears to me inadmissible to pass over the Belgian ambassadorial reports more or less in silence, as is done by the greater part of the Entente Press. Arguments are never met by being ignored. On the contrary, the other side is furnished with the plea that silence is preserved because of the realisation of the justice of the arguments which cannot be refuted. In failing to discuss the Belgian ambassadorial reports, or in not according them the treatment which their importance merits, we should be open to the same charge as was rightly brought against the German Government, when they suppressed the Tsar's despatch of July 29th, when they ignored the revelations of Giolitti (not even mentioned until the present day), when from the beginning they asserted that they had exercised "pressure on Vienna," but failed to produce evidence in support of their contention until the later, indeed *very* late, revelations of Bethmann (which I have elsewhere characterised),

when they concealed, and even yet conceal, from the German people the significance of Sazonof's formulæ for an understanding of July 30th and 31st, which, even at the last moment, would have prevented the outbreak of war. The system of burying things in silence is the most false and the most fatal that can be applied in an investigation into historical truth. It is fatal not only for the ascertainment of truth itself, but also for him who applies it, inasmuch as it lays upon him the suspicion of insincerity.

This system I do not propose to follow. I have nothing to fear from the Belgian ambassadorial reports so far as my thesis of arraignment is concerned. On the contrary, I should be apprehensive of attack, if I ignored this apparently incriminating material against the Entente Powers, this alleged evidence in exoneration of the Central Powers. I should be accused of partiality, and an attempt would thus be made to enfeeble the annihilating force of my accusation.

The fact that the Entente Powers on their part and the Belgian Government also have hitherto in part made no reply, and in part only an insufficient reply to the German publication, is one which I regret exceedingly and regard as a grave political mistake. And I hold this view more especially in the interests of the establishment of truth. The Belgian Government above all should have felt called upon to subject the German publication to a critical examination, to point out its shortcomings and its gaps, to make these good as far as possible, to explain and to base the judgments of their Ambassadors by reference to the time at which, the circumstances in which, and the persons by whom they were written, in short to confront the picture produced by the German publication, at first sight an unfavourable one, with an illuminating and supplementary picture of the other side, calculated to weaken or entirely obliterate the one-sided impression conveyed by this publication.

Nothing of this kind, so far as I am aware, has hitherto been done either by the Belgian or by the Entente Governments. I have therefore had to undertake the laborious task—so far as I know, the first in the whole literature

of the war which is not influenced by Germany—of examining the German publication, of sifting and investigating it with a view to determining its value as evidence for the more remote antecedents of the war. Since I do not enjoy the good fortune of being inspired, supported, or provided with material by any Government, I have been thrown back on the study of the documents themselves, and in drawing my conclusions I was forced to restrict myself to what the documents do and what they do not contain.

It is true that to complete the material I was able to refer to the two Belgian Grey Books of 1914 and 1915, and further to the book written by Baron Beyens, the last Belgian Ambassador in Berlin, and later Prime Minister: *Germany before the War*.¹ If the Belgian ambassadorial reports dating from the period before the war are placed before us as historical documents to be admitted in evidence, it must be permissible by the same right to invoke Belgian documents dating from the period immediately before the war, and to assign to them the same force as evidence. If the German Government produce for the purposes of their demonstration eleven reports only from the two years' ambassadorial activity of Baron Beyens—concluding with a report of July 2nd, 1914, that is to say a month before the outbreak of war—it must be permissible to rely on a book written by this same diplomatist, giving a connected and detailed account of his impressions regarding German policy and German conditions during the last years of peace down to the outbreak of the war.

The material, which I will hereafter discuss, thus comprises :

- I. The "Belgian Documents 1905-14," published by the German Government.
- II. The Belgian Grey Book of 1914.
- III. The Belgian Grey Book of 1915.
- IV. The above-mentioned book of Baron Beyens.

¹ [English translation: Nelson.]

CHAPTER I

THE BELGIAN AMBASSADORIAL REPORTS

THE EXTERNAL DEFECTS OF THE REPORTS

TIME, PLACE, AND NUMBER.

THE collection published by the German Government begins with a report of Count Lalaing, the Belgian Ambassador in London, dated February 7th, 1905, and ends with a report from Baron Beyens, the Belgian Ambassador in Berlin, dated July 2nd, 1914. The collection comprises in all 119 reports, which are distributed between the years 1905-1914, that is to say nine years and five months, or 113 months. As three embassies are involved, those in London, Paris, and Berlin, and as it must at least be assumed that each embassy sent to Brussels a report twice a month—this assumption certainly falls far short of the reality—there must in those 113 months have been received in Brussels from each of the three embassies at least 226 reports, that is to say from all three at least 678 reports. Of these 678 reports (in reality there are obviously far more) the German Government publishes only 119, that is to say, slightly more than a sixth part. The remaining five-sixths, which, it must be assumed, were found in the archives in a consecutive series along with those that are published, are suppressed.

But further, as is well known, there exist not merely three Great Powers, Germany, France, and England, but three others as well, Russia, Austria, and Italy.

It appears to me that the reports of the Belgian Ambassadors, in so far as any value is to be attached to them, are at least as important and perhaps even more important when they come from Vienna, Petrograd, and Rome than when they are dated from Berlin, Paris, and London. It was precisely out of an Austro-Russian conflict that the world-war arose. The conflict of Austrian and Russian interests in the Balkans repeatedly brought Europe to the brink of a European war between 1905 and 1914, the years which come under review in the Belgian reports. If European questions of guilt are to be answered by reference to sketches of public feeling drawn by neutral diplomatists, there ought at least to be produced the complete picture of the European situation given by the Belgian representatives in the six capitals of the Great Powers, and not merely the section of the picture as it was seen in Berlin, Paris, and London. If it is assumed that the three Ambassadors at the Courts of Vienna, Petrograd, and Rome only sent to the Foreign Office in Brussels in the years in question the number of reports which we have assumed above as the minimum number in the case of the other three embassies, we have a total number of 1,356 reports which, as a minimum, must have reached Brussels from the six capitals in the nine and a half years in question. The 119 reports published thus represent only about a twelfth part of the total received.

This simple statistical fact suffices to deprive the German collection of documents of any weight as evidence. The question is rightly asked: What is contained in the eleven-twelfths of the reports which are left out? In particular, what is contained in the reports from Vienna, Petrograd, and Rome which are *entirely* omitted? Why have the reports from these capitals been so radically suppressed? Why has such a small selection only been given from the other reports? The answer is clear: what was favourable to the German Government and their thesis of defence has been sought out; everything that confirmed the Entente Powers' love of peace, their will for peace and their continued action for peace, while representing Germany and Austria as the European rowdies and

disturbers of the peace, has been omitted. The Belgian Ambassadors in Vienna, Petrograd, and Rome were presumably more penetrating in their judgment of the European situation, of the pacific or bellicose intentions of the various Great Powers, than the Ambassadors in Berlin, Paris, and London. The Ambassadors who were unfavourable to the Triple Entente and favourable to the Triple Alliance were given a hearing; those whose views were in the opposite direction were condemned to silence. Had this tendency to falsification not been present in the compilation of the ambassadorial reports which were selected for publication, characteristic reports from all six capitals would have been reproduced—so far as I am concerned a partial selection would have done—but they would not have brought forward sketches of public opinion exclusively from Berlin, Paris, and London.

Here again the system is the same as that which is met everywhere in German apologetic literature. As Herr Helfferich seeks to deduce the guilt of the Entente Powers exclusively from their diplomatic documents—as Herr Schiemann in his demonstration of guilt appeals exclusively to the more remote antecedents of the crime, while leaving the essential history of the crime entirely aside—as another of my opponents seeks to prove point by point the untenability of my thesis of accusation, although with entirely insufficient means and without any success, and then suddenly stops as he does not consider that he is called upon to bring an accusation of guilt against the Entente Powers (so that according to this sagest of all sages no one is left behind as the guilty person who “began the business”)—as each of these defenders of Germany has devised his own strangely artificial system of separation and purification to enable him to do his whitewashing, so the German Government in the publication of the Belgian ambassadorial reports also make use of these approved methods. They do not give a whole, but merely excerpts and extracts, an insignificant part of the whole, compiled arbitrarily and with prejudice; they give a confused mixture of colour, a scrawl made up of a few individual strokes, and then triumphantly point to it, exclaiming: See, there is a picture, there is *the* picture of the encircle-

ment, of the isolation, of the strangulation, of the intended attack of arms, of the great sword of Damocles which has hung for years over the head of the peace-loving German people.

THE WRITERS OF THE REPORTS.

The statistical survey of the German collection of documents furnishes, however, other interesting results. From 1905 to 1912 Belgium was represented in Berlin by Baron Greindl, a man highly regarded in Belgian diplomacy, who, however, by his origin, his family connections, his prolonged residence in Berlin, and his intimate intercourse with the Court and military circles of Germany, had gradually entirely adopted the views of those circles and was indeed scarcely any longer distinguishable from a German nationalist. We have already seen elsewhere the influence exercised by the ideas of Schiemann on the attitude of mind of this Belgian diplomatist, and have heard the admiring recognition which the diplomatist, without any critical qualification, paid to the talent, the acumen, and the great influence of the publicist of the *Kreuzzeitung*.¹ In reading the reports of Greindl, it is possible to imagine that one is looking at the leading article of some Pan-German paper. All the catch-words of Pan-German literature constantly recur in Greindl: the French thirst for revenge; English commercial envy; the Pan-Slav impulse to conquest; the peaceful Triple Alliance which has kept the peace of Europe for half a century; the presumptuous, encircling, provocative Triple Entente, which has constantly led Europe to the brink of war; the militaristic and nationalistic inclinations of the Poincarés, the Millerands, the Delcassés and their comrades; the wiles and the deceit of English policy which would most prefer to incite the Continental Powers against each other, in order to fry its own fish at the fire—all this familiar and spicy concoction, of which the fatal cook was King Edward, the jealous and envious uncle of his more capable nephew—all this is conscientiously served up for

¹ See *The Crime*, Vol. II, p. 16.

us by Baron Greindl, just as if it had been prepared in the witches' kitchen of some Pan-German. It is no wonder that Messrs. von Bethmann and von Jagow hailed the discovery of Greindl's reports with a quite unusual shout of triumph, and made these reports the pivot of their whole publication.

It may well occasion astonishment that from the period of Greindl's tenure of office, from 1905-1912, there are in all 91 reports from the three capitals which have been published, and of these more than half, namely 46, are due to Greindl ; in the year 1908, 11 out of 14 published reports come from Greindl ; in 1909, 7 out of 9. The year 1910 produces only one report, and it of course comes from Greindl. If a collection of documents is compiled in this one-sided and tendencious manner, it is of course possible to prove anything. It is exactly as if the French Government were to undertake a compilation of reports from the period when Delcassé was at the embassy at Petrograd in order to concoct out of these a chronicle of the sins of Germany and Austria. That Greindl was no impartial observer, that his reports were not, as is stated in the introduction to the German collection, "an objective diplomatic account of international politics before the outbreak of the war," but a one-sided and frequently erroneous view, seen through German spectacles, of the events, the intentions and the currents existing in the various European countries, is a fact which is at once obvious to anyone who reads Greindl's reports with a critical eye and who recognises the origins of his catch-words. Those who are familiar with the secrets of diplomatic life in Berlin in the last decade before the war could furnish all possible details regarding the personal relations of the Belgian diplomatist and the intellectual influences and suggestions to which he was exposed, and in this way explain his astonishing German national one-sidedness, which was combined with an even more astonishing blindness towards all the real events and tendencies which were taking place before his eyes. As I have adopted it as an unalterable rule in my books never to make use of anecdotic material, but always to rely on documents alone, I cannot go more fully into these personal explanations regarding

the judgment of the Belgian diplomatist which in reality was so remarkably unseeing. That Germany was the guardian of the peace of Europe, whereas France, England, and Russia, if they did not intentionally will war, yet at any rate did in fact endanger peace—a view which he frequently repeats—has been shown by the events of 1914 to be so false and so mistaken that it is unnecessary to reduce it to absurdity by other than documentary methods.

In the course of this investigation we shall see how hastily Greindl passes over the most important occurrences, as soon as they appear to be in contradiction with his pre-conceived thesis. He has almost nothing to say on the subject of the second Hague Conference, or on the Anglo-German negotiations for an understanding—so far at least as the testimony of the German publication goes. It might indeed be possible that he reported on these events in a manner unfavourable for Germany, and that for this very reason the Foreign Office suppressed these reports. This assumption is not improbable; it is certain that he also makes many observations which—in contradistinction to his main thesis—do a certain measure of justice to the Governments of the Entente Powers and deliver in passing a well-deserved thrust at the dangerous efforts of Pan-Germany. It is very interesting to note that such occasional strokes against the German side only occur in such reports of Greindl as contain elsewhere bitter attacks against the Entente Governments or against certain tendencies in Entente countries. These attacks are so welcome to the German Government, and they fit in so well with the gloomy picture of their enemies which they have undertaken to sketch with the help of the Belgian reports, that they were forced to decide that they must occasionally take into the bargain critical observations directed against Germany so that they might at the same time be able to use for their purposes the violent attacks made against the Entente Powers. Further, the German publication regularly follows the practice of displaying the attacks against their enemies in enormous heavy type, whereas the critical observations directed against Germany are put forward in the usual modest type. This device of resorting to heavy and usual type is also one of those

approved methods of gaining to their side the unwary and the superficial reader.¹ Nowhere is there contained in the whole collection a report from any of the three embassies attacking the German Government or the militaristic and Pan-German tendencies in Germany without at the same time branding much more severely the corresponding tendencies in the other countries. This means and proves that any criticism directed against Germany is on principle omitted in the German publication: it is only included in exceptional cases where no other course is possible, if it is necessary to purchase the advantage of a bitter condemnation of the Entente Powers at the price of the disadvantage involved in a *levis macula* against Germany. From this it is possible to form some idea of what may be the contents of the unpublished reports from the six European capitals, which according to the above calculation I have estimated to amount to at least 1,237.

THE INTERVALS.

There is a further point to which it is necessary to draw attention, which, taken in conjunction with the points already mentioned, contributes to reduce to a nullity the force of the ambassadorial reports regarded as evidence. I refer to the long intervals which without any manifest reason interrupt the reports from the three capitals, Berlin, Paris, and London. Anyone who is interested in this critical investigation may himself note these intervals in the Belgian documents.

I propose to refer here only to certain quite unusually long intervals of silence. Between the London report of Count Lalaing of July 28th, 1906, and the Paris report of M. Leghait of February 4th, 1907 (Nos. 20 and 21 of the Collection), there is an interval of no less than six months. No ambassadorial report dating from this interval has

¹ In order to combat the Berlin Foreign Office with its own weapons, I propose, in the following extracts from the Belgian documents, as a counter-stroke to the system of heavy type adopted in the German publication, to emphasise throughout with italics exclusively those passages which appear to me specially important and interesting.

been printed. This was the time of preparation for the second Hague Conference, which, as is well known, met in July, 1907, and for whose successful constitution the then English Government, under Campbell-Bannerman, intervened with special vigour (see *J'accuse*, pp. 83-90). It is known that Russia, after the failure of her efforts to secure a restriction of armaments at the first Hague Conference, had not put forward the question of armaments in the outline of the programme for the second Conference; that then, in response to England's wish and desire, the question of armaments was included in the programme, but that owing to Germany's resistance a platonic resolution merely was passed on the subject and no discussion was allowed. The Liberal English Government, as a kind of overture to the second Hague Conference, had voluntarily reduced the plans for naval construction approved by the Balfour Cabinet, in order to give a good example to the Powers which were competing in naval construction, and especially to Germany, and in order to exert a favourable influence on the imminent Hague discussions regarding universal restriction of armaments.

Count Lalaing reports on this as follows :—

No. 20.¹

Londres, le 28 juillet 1906.

London, July 28, 1906.

Monsieur le Baron,

Après les réductions dans l'armée proposées à la Chambre voici le tour de la marine, dans laquelle aussi on cherche à effectuer des économies. Modifiant les plans arrêtés par le Gouvernement de M. Balfour, le Cabinet actuel est d'avis de construire trois cuirassés du type Dreadnought au lieu de quatre, deux contre-torpilleurs

Monsieur le Baron :

After the reductions in the Army proposed in the House it is now the turn of the Navy, in which also it is sought to effect economies. In modification of the plans decided upon by Mr. Balfour's Government, the present Cabinet proposes to construct three cruisers of the Dreadnought type in place of four, two destroyers in place of

¹ [The English version of the extracts from the reports has been translated from the German, which does not in all cases follow the French very closely. In one passage, to which the author refers in *The Crime*, the variation amounts to a difference of meaning.]

au lieu de cinq, et huit sous-marins au lieu de douze, soit d'encourir une dépense de £6,800,000 au lieu de £9,300,000, et d'arriver à alléger le budget des années prochaines de £2,500,000. *On annoncerait cette décision à La Haye, pour prouver que l'Angleterre est favorable au désarmement naval et à la limitation des dépenses; elle continuerait dans la voie des économies si son exemple trouvait de l'écho et des imitateurs à la Conférence de la Paix en 1907. Dans le cas contraire, on construirait plus de vaisseaux.*

Mais, pour faire adopter ce plan, le Ministre de la Marine s'est trouvé obligé de déclarer que si son programme était approuvé par la Chambre, les forces navales de la Grande-Bretagne seraient encore supérieures à celle des deux autres plus grandes marines du monde, et que l'Angleterre resterait sans rivale sur mer. Sa généreuse initiative dans la voie des réformes est singulièrement diminuée par le fait qu'elle ne court aucun risque et qu'elle compte bien rester, après comme avant, maîtresse de l'Océan.

Que les Etats-Unis ou l'Allemagne surtout refusent à La Haye d'adopter les vues préconisées par les délégués anglais, on ne manquera pas de jeter sur ces nations la responsabilité de l'échec infligé aux idées humanitaires de l'Angleterre, et du nouvel apôtre de la paix, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

Comte DE LALAING.

five, and eight submarines in place of twelve, in other words to incur an expenditure of £6,800,000 in place of £9,300,000 and thus reduce the budget for the following years by £2,500,000. *This decision would then be announced at The Hague in order to prove that England is well-disposed to naval disarmament and to the limitation of expenditure; it would continue to follow the path of economy, if its example found approval and imitators at the Peace Conference in 1907. Otherwise more ships would be built.*

But in order to secure the adoption of this plan, the First Lord of the Admiralty was obliged to state that if his programme was approved by the House, the naval forces of Great Britain would still be superior to those of the two other greatest navies in the world, and that England would continue without a rival at sea. England's generous initiative in the path of reform loses very much of its value by virtue of the fact that it runs no risk, and that it reckons on continuing as before mistress of the seas.

If the United States or, above all, if Germany refuse at The Hague to adopt the views maintained by the English delegates, there will be no hesitation in throwing on these nations the responsibility for the check inflicted on the humanitarian ideas of England and of its new apostle of peace, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

Count de LALAING.

In this report, which is undoubtedly laudatory and flattering for the English Government, the German Government naturally print in heavy type those sentences which

speak of England's continued superiority at sea and of the absence of danger involved in such a generous initiative. On the other hand, all that I have emphasised in italics fades away into ordinary type: England's intention to give a good example to the other Powers by a voluntary reduction of naval armaments, the "humanitarian ideas of England and of its new apostle of peace, Campbell-Bannerman," etc. This is an example of the typographical system of falsification pursued in the Wilhelmstrasse. I only wished at this place to emphasise that after this report of Count Lalaing there occurs an interval of more than six months in the collection of documents. It might not be rash to attribute this pause to the fact that in this interval favourable reports were received by the Brussels Government regarding the attitude of the Entente Powers to the second Hague Conference and unfavourable reports regarding the attitude assumed on the question by Germany and Austria.

How negative was the attitude of the German Government at that time (as expressed by Prince Bülow), and of all the authoritative circles in Germany, is a familiar fact of which I have given a full account in *J'accuse* and *The Crime*. The reflex of the different attitudes assumed by the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente towards the work of The Hague, which presumably was manifested in the Belgian ambassadorial reports in this period of preparation, has obviously been suppressed for the same reasons as those which have governed the whole German compilation. On nearly every occasion where an astonishingly long interval occurs in the collection of reports, it is possible to show that just at that time European events were being enacted the discussion of which, it may be presumed, drew from the Belgian Ambassadors a note unfavourable to the Central Powers. This also is a proof of the tendentious compilation of the collection, an argument for its worthlessness.

The period from July 1st, 1907, until October 11th, 1907, that is to say the period in which the second Hague Conference met, is represented by three reports only (Nos. 36, 37, and 38), one of July 1st, 1907, from Baron Greindl, two

dated August and October, 1907, from the London Ambassador and his representative. Greindl's report does not devote a single word to the Hague Conference which was immediately imminent, but on the other hand he speaks at great length of the reception accorded to M. Etienne at Kiel and Berlin, of the assumption of his duties by the new French Ambassador, Jules Cambon, who "plainly entertains the desire of improving the relations of his country to Germany," etc.

No. 36.

Berlin, le 1^{er} juillet 1907.

... Quel qu'ait été le sujet de la conversation, un fait est certain, c'est que Sa Majesté a accueilli M. Etienne de la manière la plus aimable et que celui-ci en a été très agréablement impressionné. Sa Majesté reçoit du reste toujours avec une distinction très marquée tous les Français qui se présentent à Elle.

De Kiel M. Etienne s'est rendu à Berlin où il a eu un très long entretien avec le Chancelier. Une petite notice publiée par les journaux et évidemment inspirée dit que le Prince de Bülow aura sans doute été charmé par la personne de l'homme d'Etat éminent qui lui a rendu visite et que l'accueil amical et flatteur que M. Etienne a trouvé à Berlin aura correspondu à celui que l'Empereur a réservé à Kiel à ses hôtes français.

Il est visible que le nouvel ambassadeur de France à Berlin, M. Cambon, a le désir d'améliorer les relations de son pays avec l'Allemagne et il y a lieu de croire qu'il a présenté des propositions concrètes ou qu'il se

Berlin, July 1st, 1907.

Whatever may have been the subject of the conversation, one fact is certain, namely, that His Majesty received M. Etienne in the most friendly manner, and that the latter was most agreeably impressed by the fact. Indeed, His Majesty always receives all Frenchmen who are presented to him with special marks of distinction.

From Kiel M. Etienne went to Berlin, where he had a very long interview with the Chancellor. A short notice, published in the Press and obviously inspired, says that Prince von Bülow is without doubt very much charmed by the personality of the eminent statesman who visited him, and that the friendly and flattering reception which M. Etienne has met in Berlin is in agreement with that accorded by the Emperor to his French guests in Kiel.

The new French Ambassador at Berlin, M. Cambon, plainly entertains the desire of improving the relations of his country to Germany, and there is reason to believe that he has put forward concrete propositions, or that he

propose d'en faire, lorsqu'il jugera le moment favorable.

En effet M. Cambon sans me faire aucune confiance, m'a dit récemment *qu'il regrettait de trouver le gouvernement allemand toujours en défiance envers la France.* Peu de temps auparavant M. de Mühlberg m'avait dit que M. Cambon s'était exprimé dans le même sens avec lui et qu'il ne demandait pas mieux que d'être confiant, si la France prouvait sa sincérité par des faits. Le regret exprimé par M. Cambon n'aurait pas de raison d'être, si l'ambassadeur de France n'avait pas fait ou essayé de faire des ouvertures sur quelque point déterminé.

Le voyage de M. Etienne à Kiel et la manière dont il y a été reçu, sont donc à noter comme des symptômes, dont il ne faut toutefois pas exagérer l'importance. Des relations correctes entre Berlin et Paris sont le maximum de ce qui peut être obtenu. Pour un rapprochement vrai et durable il faudrait ne plus penser à la revanche et il n'y a pas un Français, même parmi les plus sages et les plus pacifiques, qui n'en conserve l'espoir au fond du cœur.

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intends doing so when he considers the moment favourable.

In fact M. Cambon, without confiding in me, recently told me that *he was sorry to find the German Government always distrustful towards France.* Shortly before, Herr von Mühlberg had said to me that M. Cambon had expressed himself in the same sense to him; there was nothing he desired more than to trust France if she proved her sincerity by her actions. There would have been no reason for the regret expressed by M. Cambon, if the French Ambassador had not made or attempted to make concrete proposals on some definite point.

M. Etienne's voyage to Kiel and the reception there accorded to him therefore deserve to be noted as symptoms, the importance of which should at the same time not be over-estimated. The utmost that can be obtained is the existence of correct relations between Berlin and Paris. A true and lasting *rapprochement* would presuppose the abandonment of the thought of revenge, and there is not a Frenchman, even among the most reasonable and the most pacific, who does not keep the hope of this in the depths of his heart.

GREINDL.

It will be seen that not a word is said about The Hague. Further, this short extract reveals Greindl's method, quite in the manner of Schiemann and his comrades, of attaching to every peace-utterance or peace-action on the part of the French the cloven hoof of secret evil intentions. An eminent French politician comes as a messenger of peace to the German Emperor and the German Government, a French Ambassador assures everyone who cares to listen that his only effort is to improve the relations

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between his country and Germany and to dispel all distrust. M. Greindl, however, utters an urgent warning against any over-estimation of these incidents, and even on this occasion permits the French thought of revenge to illumine the background.

In the London reports of August and October, 1907, it is true that the Hague Conference is mentioned, but only in an entirely parenthetic manner and in a few empty words (I count sixteen words in all). Below I print the relevant sentences, in order to give some idea of how the most important European events are reflected in the German collection of documents :

No. 37.

Londres, le 10 août 1907.

... *La Tribune*, organe des pasteurs non-conformistes et des radicaux humanitaires, signale avec mélancolie le fait que les escadres françaises et espagnoles bombardaient Casablanca au moment même où la *Conférence de La Haye* adoptait une déclaration tendant à défendre le bombardement des ports ouverts. . . .

London, August 10th, 1907.

... *The Tribune*, the organ of non-conformist clergymen and humanitarian radicals, points sadly to the fact that French and Spanish squadrons were bombarding Casablanca at the very moment when the Hague Conference was adopting a declaration intended to prohibit the bombardment of open forts. . . .

No. 38.

Londres, le 11 octobre 1907.

... Espérons plutôt, ajoute perfidement le *Times*, que l'on regrette à Berlin l'attitude hostile adoptée lors de la guerre des Boers. Nous sommes prêts à pardonner, mais pas à oublier cet incident, pourvu que le repentir soit sérieux, ce que rien dans l'attitude allemande au Maroc ou à *La Haye* n'a prouvé jusqu'ici. S'il veut montrer sa sincérité, que le Chancelier fasse à nos amis les Français des

London, October 11th, 1907.

... Let us rather hope, the *Times* adds perfidiously, that Berlin regrets the hostile attitude adopted during the Boer War. We are ready to forgive but not to forget that incident, provided the repentance is sincere, which nothing in the German attitude at Morocco or The Hague has so far proved. If he really wishes to show his sincerity, let the Chancellor make to our friends the French advances

avances analogues à celles qu'il nous prodigue aujourd'hui. Sir Edward Grey a dit que des bonnes relations entre l'Allemagne et la France dépend l'amélioration des rapports entre l'Allemagne et l'Angleterre. . . .

similar to those which he showers on us to-day. Sir Edward Grey has said that the improvement in the relations between Germany and England depends on the good relations between Germany and France. . . .¹

Apart from these two passages, I find the Hague Conference mentioned on two other occasions at a later date in Greindl's reports, in No. 44 of May 6th, 1908, and in No. 47 of May 30th, 1908. The passages may here be given :

No. 44.

Berlin, le 6 mai 1908.

. . . Immédiatement après l'assassinat de ses ressortissants à Casablanca et sans avoir aucune raison de croire que le gouvernement marocain négligerait de rechercher et de punir les coupables, le gouvernement français a riposté par un procédé plus odieux encore que celui des assassins, bombardant une ville ouverte, massacrant des femmes et des enfants, ruinant des commerçants inoffensifs, au moment même où ses délégués à *La Haye* prononçaient vertueusement de beaux discours humanitaires. . . .

Berlin, May 6th, 1908.

. . . Immediately after the assassination of their subjects at Casablanca, and without having any grounds for the assumption that the Moroccan Government would neglect to seek out and punish the guilty, the French Government have proceeded in a manner even more odious than that of the assassins, inasmuch as they bombarded an open town, massacred women and children, and ruined inoffensive merchants at the very moment when their delegates were virtuously delivering fine humanitarian speeches at The Hague. . . .

No. 47.

Berlin, le 30 mai 1908.

. . . Les déclarations pacifistes obligées et qui seront sans doute répétées à Reval signifient bien peu de chose émanant de trois puissances qui, comme la Russie et l'Angleterre, viennent avec des succès divers d'entreprendre sans autre raison que le désir de s'agrandir et même

Berlin, May 30th, 1908.

. . . The customary pacifist declarations which without doubt will be repeated at Reval have very little significance when uttered by three Powers which, like Russia and England, have just undertaken, though with varying success, wars of conquest in Manchuria and in the Transvaal

¹ [Freely paraphrased and much abridged from an article in *The Times* of 10th Oct., 1907.]

sans prétexte plausible, les guerres de conquête de la Mandchourie et du Transvaal ou qui comme la France procède en ce moment même à l'envahissement du Maroc au mépris de promesses solennelles et sans autre titre que la cession des droits de l'Angleterre qui n'en possédait aucun. Ce sont les mêmes puissances qui, en compagnie des Etats-Unis, sortant à peine de la guerre de spoliation contre l'Espagne, se sont montrées *ultra-pacifistes* à *La Haye*. . . .

without any other reason than the desire of self-aggrandisement and even without a plausible pretext, or which, like France, is proceeding at this very moment to the conquest of Morocco, disregarding solemn promises and without any other title than the cession of the rights of England, which possessed none. These are the same Powers which, in company with the United States, which had scarcely finished the war of spoliation against Spain, appeared as *Ultra-pacifists* at *The Hague*. . . .

It will be seen how well M. Greindl has learned in the school of the Pan-Germans. His ridicule of the "fine humanitarian speeches at The Hague," of the Entente Powers who there appeared "as Ultra-pacifists," is Pan-Germanism of the purest water. Messrs. Keim, Class, Bernhardi, Reventlow, Bassermann and Company could not have expressed their contempt for the efforts of The Hague better than the Belgian diplomatist does.

This is all that I have found in the Belgian documents regarding the world-historical incident which is represented by the second Hague Conference. It will be seen how extremely rich, precious and faithful a "source for the antecedents of the war" is offered by the German collection. Whether the Belgians may have written more regarding The Hague is, of course, beyond my knowledge. If such is the case, then they are exonerated, but all the heavier is the charge which falls upon the Foreign Office in Berlin—the charge of falsification, regarding which it is not merely the readers and the critics, but above all the Belgian Ambassadors who have been so misused, who have the right to complain.

* * * * *

Another great interval in the collection of reports, an interval of over three months extending from October, 1907, to January, 1908, is to be found just when the German

Emperor with the Empress went on a somewhat lengthy visit to England. On this occasion he stayed at Windsor Castle; he was welcomed in a highly sympathetic manner by the public and the Press, and in the well-known Guildhall speech he gave eloquent expression to his friendly feelings for England and the English. The reception given to the German Emperor and his Consort by the Court and the people in England was a clear symptom that neither King Edward nor his Government entertained any evil design against Germany, that on the other side of the Channel there existed no manner of hatred or evil feeling towards their German cousins. These reassuring symptoms may have been emphasised in the Belgian ambassadorial reports of the time. From the point of view of the authors of the German collection of documents this, however, did not at all fit into the complete picture which they had undertaken to draw. This is the reason of the long interval in the reports. Anyone perusing the collection carefully may with certainty rely upon it that, on every occasion when a lengthy interval occurs in the reports, some important event took place which was calculated either to throw a favourable light on the tendencies of the Entente Powers, or an unfavourable light on those of Germany. The simplest means were taken to guard against this unwelcome impression: the reports in question were omitted.

* * * * *

The report of Leghait, the Chargé d'Affaires at Paris, dated July 20th, 1908 (No. 51), is followed by an interval of more than two and a half months. The report just mentioned is interesting in many directions. M. Fallières had just begun his tour of visits to Russia and to the northern Courts, accompanied by Pichon, his Foreign Minister. A month previously King Edward had met the Tsar Nicholas in the roadstead of Reval. According to the Pan-German legend, we are to believe that it was at this meeting at Reval that the great aggressive conspiracy of the Entente Powers against Germany and Austria was forged. In so far as the Belgian ambassadorial reports are admitted as evidence, this legend is refuted by the

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following report of the Paris Chargé d'Affaires, dated July 20th.

No. 51.

Paris, le 20 juillet 1908.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Le Président de la République a quitté la France le 18 de ce mois pour rendre officiellement visite à l'Empereur de Russie et aux Rois de Suède, de Danemark et de Norvège. M. Fallières, s'inspirant de l'idée essentielle de la politique extérieure de la France et des vœux de l'opinion publique, avait à cœur de saluer le chef de la nation amie et alliée. En même temps le Président rendra aux Souverains de Danemark et de Norvège la visite qu'ils lui ont faite et profitant de sa présence dans ces régions, il ira saluer le Souverain de la Suède.

Le voyage de M. Fallières, basé sur des motifs de courtoisie, a en même temps un caractère politique qui ne manque pas d'importance en ce moment où le groupement des puissances est l'objet de toutes les préoccupations.

La France inféodée à la politique anglaise a voulu prêter à celle-ci un solide concours auprès des puissances du Nord. S'il n'est peut-être pas question pour le moment d'une nouvelle triple alliance, on voudrait du moins empêcher un groupement trop intime de ces pays sous l'égide de l'Allemagne. *Appuyée sur cette base, la France proclame hautement que le maintien de la paix est le but de sa politique* et M. Pichon, aux cours qu'il va visiter, comme il l'a fait ici, ne

Paris, July 20th, 1908.

Monsieur le Ministre,

The President of the Republic left France on the 18th of this month in order to pay his official visit to the Emperor of Russia, and to the Kings of Sweden, Denmark and Norway. Having regard to the fundamental idea of the foreign policy of France and to the wishes of public opinion, M. Fallières was anxious to salute the supreme head of the friendly and allied nation. At the same time, the President will return the visit which the Sovereigns of Denmark and Norway have paid to him, and he will avail himself of his presence in these regions to visit the King of Sweden also.

The voyage of M. Fallières, which is taking place from motives of courtesy, has at the same time a political character which is not without importance at this moment, when the grouping of the Powers occupies everyone's thoughts.

France, subordinate to English policy, is anxious to give this policy solid support with the Northern Powers. If for the moment there is perhaps no question of a new Triple Alliance, it is at least desired to prevent a too intimate grouping of these countries under the ægis of Germany. *On this basis France loudly proclaims that the maintenance of peace is the aim of her policy*; at the Courts which he will visit, as well as here, M. Pichon will not cease to

cessera de le répéter en affirmant que la diplomatie française pratiquera, fidèle à ses alliances, amitiés et engagements, *une politique d'entente entre tous et de conciliation générale des intérêts*. Il cherchera à démontrer que cette politique *n'a pas pour but d'opposer les puissances les unes aux autres ni d'opposer la France à aucune d'elle*.

Il est certain que la politique française est inspirée par des idées pacifiques, mais, entraînée dans l'orbite de l'Angleterre, la France pourra-t-elle toujours maîtriser les événements et éviter que des froissements dangereux se manifestent au delà du Rhin ?

LEGHAIT.

repeat this and will assert that French diplomacy, true to her allies, her friendships and her obligations, will follow *a policy of understanding towards all and of a general settlement of interests*. He will seek to show that this policy *does not have for its object that of setting the Powers against each other, or of setting France against any of them*.

It is certain that French policy is inspired by pacific ideas, but will France, drawn in England's train, always remain master of the situation and be able to avoid dangerous feelings of uneasiness from arising on the other side of the Rhine ?

LEGHAIT.

It is impossible to imagine a plainer confirmation of the pacific tendencies of French policy than that here given. The Belgian diplomatist does not fear any bellicose tendencies on the part of France, but only "dangerous feelings of uneasiness" which might arise on the other side of the Rhine in consequence of the closer union of the Entente Powers (as is known, the Entente agreement between England and Russia was concluded in the summer of 1907). This fundamental idea of Belgian diplomacy, which runs through all the ambassadorial reports, must be kept carefully in view. The Entente in itself is in no way following offensive intentions; it is merely a defensive union against any dangerous aspirations that may be manifested by Germany, and a means of maintaining European equilibrium, and thereby the peace of Europe, by confronting the Triple Alliance with the Triple Entente. This fundamental idea entirely agrees with the thesis of my book that the Triple Entente was a defensive alliance.¹ The German Government have therefore no occasion to invoke the Belgian ambassadorial reports as evidence in support of their contrary thesis that the Triple Entente

¹ See *J'accuse*, p. 119.

was an offensive alliance. It is, however, only this latter thesis that would serve in justification of the German Government. Be it observed that this would not justify their assertion that they are waging a war of defence; for this presupposes an actual attack; but it would, none the less, justify their assertion, which they do not expressly advance, but which they allow everywhere to be suggested and to be advanced by their defenders, that they are waging a preventive war, that is to say that they were compelled to anticipate an intended attack by their opponents. Nowhere in the Belgian ambassadorial reports is there any mention of such an aggressive intention on the part of the Entente Powers. To this point we shall return later in greater detail.

THE BOSNIAN CRISIS.

Between July 20th and October 8th, 1908, we find, as already observed, an interval in the reports extending to more than two and a half months, and immediately after the latter date there is a similar interval of nearly three and a half months coming down to January 19th, 1909. We search for the reason of this astonishing silence on the part of the Belgian Ambassadors—or rather of the German collection of documents—and we find that in this interval the Bosnian crisis had broken out in consequence of the Austrian declaration of annexation. In this critical time, when Austria's ruthlessness and selfishness had even then brought Europe to the brink of war, the Belgian Ambassadors may have said things which were not precisely flattering to the Viennese Government and to their faithful second, the Government in Berlin; for a European conflict always meant for Belgium that her neutrality and her independence would be endangered. These flattering observations may not have been read with much pleasure by the gentlemen in Berlin whose task it was to see to the collection of documents. They were disposed of by not printing them. This explains the highly suspicious interruption in the reports which occurs in this eventful period.

In No. 52, dated October 8th, 1908, which comes from the Parisian Chargé d'Affaires, mention is already made of the *fait accompli* of the annexation, and at the same time of a Russian proposal for a conference for the maintenance of the peace of Europe. The report says on the subject :

No. 52.

Paris, le 8 octobre 1908.

Paris, October 8th, 1908.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Pour faire suite aux renseignements que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous adresser par ma lettre d'hier, je m'empresse de vous transmettre ci-joint divers articles du journal le *Temps* de ce jour relatifs à l'incident des Balkans. La déclaration de M. Isvolsky est tout particulièrement intéressante, vu surtout qu'il en a lui-même affirmé l'exactitude. Il ressort de cette déclaration que les informations que je vous ai données hier au sujet du but poursuivi par la Russie en proposant la réunion d'une conférence étaient bien fondées. La Russie veut déchirer le traité de Berlin qui a été dirigé contre elle et elle compte être appuyée en cela par la France et l'Angleterre, mais on se demande si l'Allemagne laissera détruire impunément l'œuvre du prince de Bismarck.

Il résulte des entretiens que j'ai eus avec divers ambassadeurs que l'on considère la question actuelle comme très délicate, très compliquée et très difficile à résoudre.

Il ne sera pas aisé d'arriver à réunir une conférence et on ignore quel sera l'accueil qui sera réservé à l'invitation lancée par la Russie. Cet accueil dépendra

Monsieur le Ministre,

In continuation of the information which I had the honour to convey to you in my report of yesterday's date, I hasten to send you herewith various articles from to-day's *Temps* which relate to the incidents in the Balkans. The statement of M. Isvolsky is all the more interesting, inasmuch as he himself has confirmed its correctness. From this declaration it appears that the information which I gave you yesterday regarding the purpose which Russia has in view in proposing that a conference be summoned was well-founded. Russia wishes to tear up the Treaty of Berlin, which is directed against her, and in this counts on the support of France and England. But the question is asked whether Germany will allow the work of Prince Bismarck to be destroyed unpunished.

From the conversations which I have had with various Ambassadors it appears that the present question is regarded as very delicate, very complicated, and very difficult to solve.

It will not be easy to bring a conference together, and it is not yet known what reception will be accorded to Russia's invitation. This reception will depend

du programme et l'accord sur celui-ci sera fort laborieux à cause du *fait accompli* en présence duquel on se trouve et des "compensations" que l'on réclame de toute part. Toutefois on semble espérer que toutes les puissances accepteront la conférence, car, me disait-on, le *désir du maintien de la paix est si unanime et si profond qu'il dominera tout.*

on the programme, and agreement on this point will be very difficult, in view of the fact involved in the existence of a *fait accompli* and in view of the compensations which will be demanded on all sides. Nevertheless hope appears to be entertained that all the Powers will accept the conference; for, as was said to me, *the desire to maintain peace is so unanimous and so strong that it will overcome all obstacles.*

LEGHATT.

LEGHATT.

From this report the fact is especially to be emphasised that Russia, like all the other Powers, entertained a firm desire to maintain the peace of Europe, and to allow no world-war to arise out of the Austrian act of violence involved in the annexation of Bosnia. The Russian proposal for a conference of the Powers, which, as is known, failed on that occasion also through the opposition of Germany and Austria, proves that Russia and the Powers that were friendly to her, England and France, sought in 1908 to maintain peace with exactly the same zeal and indeed by the same means as in 1914. The disturber of the peace was then, as to-day, exclusively Austria-Hungary supported and instigated by Germany, her powerful friend and ally. What the annexation of Bosnia and of Herzegovina was at that time, the Ultimatum and the declaration of war against Serbia were in 1914. As Austria then flatly refused any European mediation—whether by a conference or in any other form—and simply insisted on a recognition of the annexation by the other Great Powers and by Serbia, so also in 1914 the Viennese Government—down to July 31st, the day of the issue of the German Ultimata—bluntly declined any mediation of the Great Powers, no matter in what form. They declined any negotiation on the substance of what was contained in their ultimatum, any conference of Powers or decision by arbitration, and insisted on regulating their dispute with Serbia

according to their own standard, without regard to the European consequences. The parallel between 1908 and 1914 is striking and obvious. The attitude of the Central Powers on the one hand, and of the Entente Powers on the other, is absolutely identical in the two cases. The difference is merely this, that in 1908 the act of violence succeeded and all the other Powers yielded, whereas in 1914 the measure of Austrian arrogance was full to overflowing, and on this occasion Germany, Austria's instigator and inspirer, preferred the outbreak of war to the maintenance of peace.

Views similar to these on the policy then pursued by the Central Powers may have been expressed by the Belgian Ambassadors in their reports, and this would explain the astonishing interval in the German collection.

* * * * *

Later on, when it was hastening to its end, the Bosnian crisis is again mentioned in certain reports. Greindl's report of February 17th, 1909 (No. 55)—to which I have already referred elsewhere in discussing Schiemann and in establishing the community of ideas between the Prussian publicist and the Belgian diplomatist—is concerned with the visit of the King and Queen of England to Berlin and mentions the discussions between Hardinge, the English Under-Secretary of State, and the German statesmen regarding the Bosnian crisis :

No. 55.

Berlin, le 17 février 1909.

. . . Les conversations de Sir C. Hardinge avec le chancelier et avec le secrétaire d'Etat des Affaires étrangères ne sont pas sorties des généralités. On a reconnu de part et d'autre qu'il fallait faire les plus grands efforts pour empêcher que la question des Balkans n'aboutisse à la guerre. Une déclaration dans ce sens était pour ainsi dire obligatoire. Elle n'a donc pas grande portée. Ce qui est plus

Berlin, February 17th, 1909.

. . . Sir C. Hardinge's conversations with the Chancellor and the Foreign Secretary did not go beyond generalities. It was recognised on both sides that *the greatest efforts must be made to prevent war arising out of the Balkan question.* A declaration in this sense was, however, so to speak, obligatory. It has therefore no great importance. More significant is the fact that there was *agreement as to*

significatif est qu'on s'est trouvé d'accord sur la nécessité de réunir une conférence, non pour reviser mais pour enregistrer le résultat des négociations pendantes entre les puissances les plus directement intéressées. *Sir C. Hardinge s'est donc placé au point de vue autrichien.*

Il a été convenu que de part et d'autre on se déclarerait satisfait du résultat de l'entrevue de Berlin. C'est dans ce sens qu'ont été rédigées les communications adressées aux journaux.

Jusqu'à un certain point, du côté allemand, cette satisfaction est réelle. On a su gré à Sir C. Hardinge de n'avoir fait aucune allusion aux questions brûlantes. Il n'a parlé ni de la limitation des armements maritimes ni du chemin de fer de Bagdad . . .

the necessity of calling a conference, not to review, but to register the result of the negotiations taking place between the Powers most directly interested. Sir C. Hardinge thus assumed the Austrian standpoint.

It was agreed on both sides to declare their satisfaction with the result of the meeting at Berlin. It was in this sense also that the communications addressed to the Press were drawn up.

Up to a certain point this satisfaction on the German side is sincere. Gratitude was felt towards Sir C. Hardinge for making no allusion to the burning questions. He spoke neither of the limitation of naval armaments nor of the Baghdad Railway . . .

These sentences written by Greindl prove that the English Government at that time were as much concerned for the maintenance of peace as the Russian Government, that they even assumed the Austrian standpoint, and that they regarded the same method of arriving at an understanding as was proposed in 1914, namely, a Conference of Powers, as the most appropriate solution of the existing crisis. Greindl's report serves completely to destroy the legend which has recently been put forward by the German Government to the effect that England then assumed an attitude which was directed not to the maintenance but to the disturbance of the peace of Europe. I have elsewhere already referred to the untenability of this most recent attempt at incrimination, which is quite in the manner of Schiemann. If the Belgian ambassadorial reports, regarded as evidence, possess that cogency which the German Government would so gladly attribute to them, then they prove in favour of England and her friends in the Entente that these Powers did everything

to keep the peace in the winter of 1908-9, and that thus the Reval conspiracy of June, 1908, is a German lie and an invention.

In a report from Greindl, dated April 1st, 1909, I find a retrospect of the annexation crisis, which had just been definitively overcome by the pliability of Russia and Serbia—a retrospect which contains the following sentences :

No. 58.

Berlin, le 1^{er} avril 1909.

... Quoique l'imbroglie des Balkans, plus que médiocrement traité par la diplomatie européenne, ait été fécond en révétements et en surprises, on s'accorde néanmoins à le considérer comme *virtuellement terminé par la démarche que la Serbie a faite hier à Vienne.*

Le gouvernement serbe reconnaît que l'annexion de la Bosnie ne porte pas atteinte à ses droits; il promet de renoncer à son attitude de protestation; de mettre son armée sur pied de paix, de licencier ses volontaires et ses bandes et de s'efforcer de vivre en bonne harmonie avec l'Autriche-Hongrie. A Vienne on s'était engagé à se déclarer satisfait de cette communication dont les termes avaient été arrêtés d'accord avec le Baron d'Aehrenthal. S'il n'y avait pas eu d'arrière-pensée, on eût dû l'être aussi partout *puisque c'est sur les conseils pressants et unanimes des puissances que le gouvernement serbe s'est résigné à la démarche qu'il vient d'accomplir.*

Le *Temps*, de Paris, dont les relations avec le Quai d'Orsay sont notoires, s'exprime cependant en termes dont on pourrait

Berlin, April 1st, 1909.

... Even if the treatment of the Balkan imbroglie by European diplomacy was more than mediocre, and rich in new crises and surprises, it is nevertheless generally regarded as *virtually ended by the démarche which Serbia made yesterday in Vienna.*

The Serbian Government recognise that the annexation of Bosnia does not prejudice her rights: they promise to give up their attitude of protestation, to place the army on a peace footing, to disband the volunteers and troops, and to endeavour to live on good relations with Austria-Hungary. In Vienna they have pledged themselves to declare their satisfaction with this statement, the text of which was determined in agreement with Baron Aehrenthal. If there were no *arrière-pensée*, there might also be general satisfaction with it, *since it is on the urgent and unanimous counsels of the Powers that the Serbian Government has resigned itself to the démarche which it has just taken.*

The *Paris Temps*, whose relations to the Quai d'Orsay are generally known, expresses itself, however, in a way which enables

induire qu'il ressent une certaine *déception* de ce qu'à Saint-Pétersbourg et à Belgrade on ait trop docilement suivi les conseils français. Le *Times* marque de même sa *mauvaise humeur*; comme toujours lorsque tout ne marche pas au gré des politiques français, anglais ou russes, c'est l'Allemagne qui est le bouc émissaire.

Il n'est pas douteux, à mon avis, que la Russie et la France ne fussent animées d'un désir sincère de prévenir une conflagration européenne. La Russie n'a rien de ce qu'il faut pour faire la guerre et aussi longtemps que leurs amis anglais ne seront pas en mesure de leur venir en aide sur le continent, les Français sont loin d'avoir la certitude du succès.

Mais tout en souhaitant la paix, on eût voulu qu'elle fût garantie autrement qu'elle ne l'a été. Le projet de conférence élaboré par M. Isvolski et Sir Edward Grey, les pourparlers au sujet d'une démarche collective à faire à Vienne et tous les échanges d'idées qui ont eu lieu entre Londres, Paris et Saint-Pétersbourg tendaient invariablement à obliger l'Autriche-Hongrie à une transaction qui aurait fort ressemblé à une *humiliation* atteignant l'Allemagne tout aussi directement et aussi sensiblement que l'Autriche-Hongrie et qui aurait porté une très rude atteinte à la confiance qu'inspire à Vienne l'alliance allemande. Les manœuvres ont été déjouées par l'attitude très nette et très résolue qu'a prise l'Allemagne et dont elle n'a jamais dévié malgré les sollicitations dont elle a été harcelée. C'est l'Allemagne

the reader to infer the existence of a *certain disappointment* that in Petrograd and Belgrade the French counsels have been too readily followed. As always happens when things do not go entirely according to the wish of the French, English, and Russian politicians, the *Times* also shows its ill-temper: Germany is the scapegoat.

It is, in my opinion, beyond doubt that Russia and France were inspired by the sincere desire to avoid a general European conflagration. Russia has none of the things necessary for waging war, and so long as their English friends are not in a position to come to their assistance on the Continent, the French are far from feeling sure of success.

But however much they may have wished peace, they would rather have seen it guaranteed otherwise. The Conference-proposal elaborated by M. Isvolski and Sir Edward Grey, the negotiations for a collective *démarche* in Vienna, and the whole exchange of opinion between London, Paris, and Petrograd were also directed to force Austria-Hungary to accept a *settlement* which would have been very similar to a *humiliation*. Germany would have felt this as immediately and as keenly as Austria-Hungary, and it would have given a rude shock to the confidence which Vienna feels in the alliance with Germany. These manœuvres were frustrated by the *very unambiguous and decided attitude* of Germany, an attitude which she never abandoned, despite all the pressure to which she was subjected. *Germany alone imposed peace.*

seule qui a imposé la paix Le nouveau groupement des puissances organisé par le Roi d'Angleterre, a fait l'épreuve de ses forces contre l'union de l'Europe centrale, et s'est trouvé incapable de l'entamer. *C'est de là que vient le dépit.*

GREINDL.

The Powers in the new group organised by the King of England have measured their strength against the Union of Central European Powers, and have shown themselves unable to loosen it. Hence the feeling of dissatisfaction.

GREINDL.

We see that even this malicious reporter, whose custom it is to attach to every praiseworthy action of the Entente Government the spiteful suspicion that they only did the good because they were unable to achieve the evil—even Baron Greindl cannot avoid confirming the sincere love of peace displayed by Russia and France on the occasion of the solution of the Bosnian crisis, and making mention of the proposal for a conference elaborated in common by Isvolsky and Grey, etc. But, of course, he also cannot omit the inevitable further observation, with which we have already become acquainted in Schiemann as the regular accompaniment of all good news, that in England and France they were very much put out, disappointed, and ill-tempered as a result of the course the crisis had taken, and especially because of the pliability of Russia. The whole of this report, No. 58, is the purest and most unadulterated Schiemann; all the prescriptions of this professional and habitual poison-mixer are faithfully followed in this report, all his tricks of argumentation are faithfully imitated. We already find dished up in Greindl's report of 1909 all the phrases which are still constantly advanced in the present-day investigation of guilt, that the acceptance of a Conference would be a "humiliation" for Austria, a diminution of the prestige of the Central Powers, etc. This whole report is a masterpiece of bad logic and bad faith: Russia, England, and France desired the maintenance of peace, and for this purpose proposed a Conference. This Conference was regarded by the Central Powers as an intentional humiliation, and for this reason was refused. Instead of this, Germany struck on the table with her mailed fist, revealed her shining armour, and demanded from the other Powers the unconditional

recognition of the Austrian act of violence. To avoid drenching Europe in blood these Powers gave way, and compelled Serbia also to recognise the situation. Germany has thus the immortal merit of having on this occasion preserved peace. This is the logic of Greindl and Schiemann. Thus when the footpad, with his revolver loaded, calls to the traveller "Your purse or your life," and the terrified passenger delivers up his purse in order to save his life, the highwayman also has the indisputable merit that matters have stopped short of bloodshed.

THE ANGLO-GERMAN NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN UNDERSTANDING.

The most astonishing and longest interval in the reports is to be found between No. 61 of August 3rd, 1909, and No. 62 of November 7th, 1910, that is to say, an interval of more than fifteen months. The Paris report of August 3rd, 1909, relates to the meeting of President Fallières and the Tsar in the roadstead at Cherbourg; Greindl's report from Berlin, dated November 7th, 1910, summarises the results of the interview which had just taken place at Potsdam between the Emperor William and the Tsar Nicholas. What may be the possible explanation of this extremely long break in the reports? I can, of course, in this connection merely put forward hypotheses, but, on a survey of the events which took place in the interval, I believe that the probable, or at any rate a possible, reason for the suppression of the Belgian reports of that period is to be found in the Anglo-German negotiations for an understanding which were pending from 1909 to 1912. These negotiations for an understanding are treated in the Belgian reports, so far as they are printed in the collection, in an even more niggardly manner than the Hague Conference. They are only mentioned in a few passages in an extremely superficial manner, although, as we now know, these negotiations constituted for a number of years—from the end of the second Hague Conference down to the failure of Haldane's mission—the crucial point in Anglo-German relations, and, as can likewise be shown, the fate of Europe depended on their

issue. Had success crowned the English efforts to arrive at an agreement with Germany on the question of naval armaments—on the basis of the political agreement offered by England—we should to-day have had no European war. As I have proved elsewhere, the fact that these negotiations failed is due solely to Germany. This idea may have received expression in the reports of the Belgian Ambassadors in the years 1909 and 1910, and for this reason these reports, so far as it was possible, may have been suppressed.

In a note which, it is true, precedes the long interval, that of March 31st, 1909 (No. 57), Greindl mentions the attitude of the English and the German Governments towards the question of a restriction of naval armaments. The Belgian diplomatist naturally assumes the negative standpoint of Prince Bülow, who is known to have declared that German naval armaments were a private affair of Germany, depending exclusively on the needs of coastal defence and the protection of trade. In a significant speech in the English House of Commons, on the other hand, Sir Edward Grey emphasised that a restriction of naval armaments by treaty was urgently to be desired for *both* parties and in the interests of both, and he indicated on this occasion that England would possibly be prepared for a neutralisation of private property at sea, if an agreement were brought about between Germany and England on the subject of naval armaments. (See, regarding all these incidents, *J'accuse*, pp. 90 to 106, and *The Crime*, Vol. II., pp. 235 to 274.) The incredible narrowness of vision of the Belgian diplomatist and his restriction within the narrow horizon of the crassest Pan-Germanism are revealed in the concluding observation contained in his next printed report of March 31st, 1909.

No. 57.

Berlin, le 31 mars 1909.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Lorsque j'ai eu l'honneur de vous adresser mon rapport d'hier, vous disant que le Prince de

Berlin, March 31st, 1909.

Monsieur le Ministre,

When I had the honour to report to you yesterday that Prince Bülow in his speech on

Bülow n'avait pas parlé, dans son discours sur la politique extérieure, *de la limitation des armements maritimes*, je n'étais pas encore en possession du compte rendu du deuxième discours prononcé par le chancelier dans la séance de la veille.

Dans ce deuxième discours, le Prince de Bülow, obligé par les questions qui lui avaient été adressées au cours du débat, de s'expliquer sur la proposition ou si l'on veut sur la suggestion anglaise, l'a fait aussi brièvement que possible. Il s'est borné à reproduire la déclaration faite par M. le Baron de Schœn à la commission du budget, dont je vous ai envoyé le texte par mon rapport du 25 mars, en y ajoutant que *le programme du développement de la flotte allemande a été uniquement inspiré par les besoins de défense des côtes et de protection du commerce*; qu'il ne contient rien de secret et que le gouvernement impérial n'a nul dessein d'en accélérer l'exécution. En 1912, l'Allemagne aura treize grands navires du nouveau type dont trois croiseurs, tous les bruits contraires sont inexacts.

Le Reichstag n'a pas demandé d'informations plus explicites. Il a bien accueilli ce passage du discours de Bülow comme les autres. Quoique le chancelier compte beaucoup d'adversaires et même beaucoup d'ennemis, la politique extérieure de l'Allemagne a, sauf bien entendu les socialistes, été approuvée par tous les partis, y compris le Centre. Le Baron de Hertling, qui a pris la parole au nom de ce dernier

foreign politics did not touch on the question of the *limitation of naval armaments*, I was not yet in possession of the report of the second speech which the Chancellor delivered in the sitting of the preceding day.

In this second speech, in consequence of questions addressed to him in the course of the debate, Prince Bülow was obliged to explain his position with reference to the English proposal, or, if it is preferred, the English suggestion. He did this as briefly as possible. He restricted himself to repeating the statement which Freiherr von Schœn had given in the Budget Commission, the text of which I sent you with my report of March 25th. He merely added that *the programme for the development of the German fleet was solely inspired by the needs of the defence of the coast and of the protection of commerce*, that it contained nothing secret, and that the Imperial Government in no way intended to accelerate its execution. In 1912 Germany will possess 13 large vessels of the new type including three cruisers; all rumours to the contrary are false.

The Reichstag did not ask for more explicit information. This passage in Bülow's speech, like the rest, was *well received*. Although the Chancellor has many opponents, and even numerous enemies, nevertheless *all parties*, with the obvious exception of the Social Democrats, but including the Centre, approved Germany's foreign policy. Freiherr von Hertling, who spoke in the name of the latter group,

groupe, y a applaudi tout en déclarant que l'appui donné à la politique extérieure de l'Empire n'implique pas un vote de confiance, qu'au surplus le chancelier ne désire sans doute pas.

Par une curieuse coïncidence, au moment même où au Reichstag l'on s'efforçait de parler le moins possible de la question de la limitation des armements maritimes, le parlement anglais la soumettait à un débat approfondi. L'opposition l'avait provoqué par une proposition de blâme et le gouvernement britannique s'est prêté à la discussion par une réponse des plus explicites. *Sir Edward Grey*, tout en déclarant qu'il n'y avait pas lieu de faire un grief à l'Allemagne de n'être pas entrée dans les vues de l'Angleterre, *a exprimé les plus vifs regrets de ce que la proposition anglaise ait été repoussée.* Il a dit qu'il ajoute une foi entière aux communications que lui a faites le gouvernement allemand au sujet du programme de la flotte de guerre ; mais il a ajouté que *ces communications ne constituent pas un engagement et que de plus il s'y trouve des lacunes qui autorisent l'Angleterre à se croire menacée dans ses intérêts vitaux.*

La presse anglaise, qui n'est pas tenue aux mêmes ménagements que le gouvernement britannique, témoigne plus vivement encore sa mauvaise humeur.

L'état d'esprit qui règne en Angleterre rappelle celui où se trouvait la France de 1866 à 1870. A cette époque les Français se croyaient le droit d'empêcher l'Allemagne de reconstruire son unité, parce qu'ils y voyaient une menace pour la

assented, but in doing so he stated that the support given to the foreign policy of the Empire did not imply a vote of confidence, which no doubt the Chancellor did not in any case desire.

By a curious coincidence, at the very moment when pains were being taken in the Reichstag to touch as little as possible on the question of the restriction of naval armaments, the English Parliament was subjecting the question to a thorough debate. The Opposition had raised it by moving a vote of censure, and the English Government took up the discussion of the question and gave a detailed reply. *Sir Edward Grey* stated that there was no occasion to reproach Germany for not making the English views her own ; he expressed, however, his lively regret that the English proposal had been declined. He said that he entirely believed the communications made to him by the German Government regarding the naval programme, but added that *these communications involved no obligation.* Moreover they contained lacunæ which justified England in feeling menaced in her vital interests.

The English Press, which need not exercise the same reticence as the British Government, expresses its bad temper even more plainly.

The state of mind in England recalls that in France during the years from 1866 to 1870. Then the French regarded themselves as justified in preventing Germany from re-establishing her unity, because she saw in this a menace to the domination

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prépondérance continentale dont la France avait joui jusque-là. De même aujourd'hui à Londres on considère comme un mauvais procédé et une menace pour la paix, le refus de s'engager par traité à rester à la merci de l'Angleterre.

GREINDL.

which France had hitherto exercised on the Continent. In the same way the refusal to undertake an obligation by treaty, the refusal to remain dependent on the grace of England, is regarded to-day in London as an unfriendly act and as a menace to peace.

GREINDL.

The proposal for a mutual restriction of armaments by treaty is described by this diplomatist as the demand "to remain dependent on the grace of England." He places this English proposal on the same footing as the attitude of Napoleon III towards German efforts to achieve unity in the years from 1866 to 1870. This "statesman" has not even yet awakened to the idea which every child understands, that the adherence by treaty to a definite present relationship of strength injures neither of the two sides, and that the continued competition in armaments brings advantage to neither party. A treaty based on reciprocal obligations, preserving both sides from economic ruin, he calls "dependence on the grace of England." This is a fine Crown Witness for Bethmann's demonstration! A conference is a humiliation, an agreement as to armaments is slavery! Such are the intellects to whom the Foreign Office in Berlin appeals as "objective" and "keen-sighted" critics of European politics.

It may well be assumed that the opinions of the Belgian Ambassadors in London and Paris were somewhat different from those of the Prussian-coloured Greindl regarding these Anglo-German negotiations, in the course of which they were able to confirm at close quarters the extremely sincere will for an understanding which existed on the other side. This may be one of the reasons why the German collection deals so parsimoniously with the reports from this period.

In addition, there were other events taking place in this interval calculated to promote the peace of Europe, which presumably were discussed in the Belgian reports. In March, 1910, the Russian Government had informed the Powers that the negotiations conducted between the Petrograd and the Viennese Cabinets regarding the existing

Balkan questions had led to a complete agreement between the two Governments, and that entirely normal relations were now established between them. On May 6th, 1910, King Edward died. The accession of his successor, King George, was united everywhere with the most gratifying hopes for a *détente* in the European situation, the temporary gravity of which was frequently ascribed to the antagonism between the Royal uncle and the Imperial nephew. These and many other incidents had transformed the European picture in a way which was full of the promise of peace; they had dispersed the factitious mist which the Pan-German inciters to war had sought to produce from the most innocent of Royal and Presidential visits, from every meeting of the statesmen of the Entente Powers, from every naval or army manœuvre. The atmosphere of Europe appeared to be cleansed from many murky vapours; the alleged conspiracy of Reval appeared to be refuted by the actual events. However, this very improvement in the European situation accorded ill with the picture of the continuous "isolation and menace to Germany" which the publishers of the collection of documents had undertaken to draw; for this very reason we find just at this place the astonishing break in the reports of more than fifteen months.

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No. 62 in the collection of documents, Greindl's report of November 7th, 1910, is the first document which we meet after the long interval. It discusses the Potsdam interview, its origin, its objects and its results, and is in many directions sufficiently interesting to be reproduced here textually:

No. 62.

Berlin, le 7 novembre 1910.

Berlin, November 7th, 1910.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Monsieur le Ministre,

Vous aurez remarqué les articles inspirés par lesquels la *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* a fait connaître au public que la récente visite rendue par

You will have observed the inspired article by which the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* has informed the public that the most recent visit which the Emperor

l'Empereur de Russie à l'Empereur d'Allemagne à Potsdam, est plus qu'une simple démarche de courtoisie. La Rossija, organe du ministère des Affaires étrangères russe, écrivait en même temps que l'entrevue des deux souverains avait une haute portée politique. Le Fremdenblatt de Vienne s'exprimait dans le même sens. Les deux premiers de ces journaux officieux disaient qu'il ne s'agissait nullement d'introduire dans le système politique de l'Europe des innovations qui ne sont désirées ni en Allemagne ni en Russie. Tous les trois étaient d'accord pour exprimer l'espoir que l'échange de vues entre les souverains et leurs ministres aiderait à dissiper les malentendus qui surgissent forcément entre les Etats limitrophes qui ont des intérêts parallèles, mais conciliables et dont les rivalités sont sans influence sur la politique générale. Plus encore que par les commentaires officieux, le caractère de la visite du Czar a été marqué par le fait que Sa Majesté avait appelé en Hesse son nouveau ministre des Affaires étrangères M. Sazonow et s'était fait accompagner par lui pendant son court séjour à Potsdam. M. Sazonow a été reçu par l'Empereur et par le chancelier, ainsi que par M. de Kiderlen-Wächter. Les sujets de conversation n'ont pas dû manquer. Ce qui se passe en Perse et en extrême Orient est de nature à éveiller en Allemagne la crainte que les événements dont le côté politique pourrait laisser l'Empire indifférent, n'aient pour conséquence de fermer ces contrées au commerce allemand. En Russie le projet de chemin de

of Russia paid to the German Emperor in Potsdam is something more than a démarche prompted by motives of courtesy. The Rossija, the organ of the Russian Foreign Office, wrote at the same time that the meeting of the two Sovereigns had great political significance. The Wiener Fremdenblatt expressed itself in the same sense. The two former semi-official papers stated that it was in no way proposed to introduce into the political system of Europe innovations which were desired neither in Germany nor in Russia. All three were in agreement in giving expression to the hope that the exchange of views between the sovereigns and their Ministers would assist in dispersing misunderstandings which necessarily arise between neighbouring States whose interests run parallel, though capable of reconciliation; and whose rivalries are without influence on general politics. Even more than by the semi-official commentaries, the character of the Tsar's visit is marked by the fact that His Majesty had summoned his new Foreign Minister, M. Sazonof, to Hesse and has been accompanied by him during his short visit to Potsdam. M. Sazonof has been received by the Emperor and by the Chancellor, as well as by Herr von Kiderlen-Wächter. There can have been no absence of topics of conversation. What is happening in Persia and the Far East is calculated to awake anxiety in Germany that these events, the political aspect of which might be indifferent to the Empire, might have as a result that these countries would

fer allemand en Mésopotamie a toujours été vu de mauvais œil. Quoique l'Allemagne ait pour principe de ne pas se mêler des questions politiques de la péninsule des Balkans, il est impossible qu'on ne se préoccupe pas à Berlin comme à St-Pétersbourg de la turbulence de la Grèce, de l'impossibilité où sont les puissances protectrices de trouver la solution de la question crétoise, *des troubles de la Macédoine et des ambitions du czar des Bulgares*; mais tous ces problèmes sont bien compliqués et il n'est pas à penser qu'on soit parvenu à les résoudre dans le court espace de deux journées dont la plus grande partie a été absorbée par des cérémonies officielles et des banquets. C'est à peine le nécessaire pour échanger des assurances de bonne volonté forcément conçues en termes vagues et d'une portée pratique douteuse. Ce qui est plus important que les conversations entre les hommes d'Etat, c'est que la visite a eu lieu.

Pendant les trois premiers quarts du XIX^e siècle l'union de la Russie et de la Prusse était un facteur constant et assuré de la politique européenne. Elle était basée non seulement sur les intérêts communs de deux nations, mais aussi sur l'amitié étroite des deux familles régnautes cimentée par les liens de parenté. Il en était surtout ainsi du temps de l'empereur Nicolas I^{er}. La première atteinte a été portée à ces relations par le congrès de Berlin où le prince de Bismarck a essayé de rapprocher la Russie et l'Angleterre

be closed to German trade. In Russia the German railway project in Mesopotamia has always been viewed with envious eyes. Although Germany pursues the principle of not intervening in political questions in the Balkan peninsula, it is impossible that in Berlin, as in Petrograd, no anxiety should be felt regarding the turbulence of Greece, the fact that it has been impossible for the protecting Powers to find a solution for the Cretan question, the *unrest in Macedonia, and the ambition of the Tsar of Bulgaria*. But all these problems are very complicated, and it cannot be assumed that it has been found possible to solve them in the short space of two days, the greater part of which was taken up with official ceremonies and banquets. That is scarcely sufficient for the exchange of mutual assurances of good will, which were naturally couched in vague expressions and of which the practical significance is doubtful. More important than the conversations between the statesmen is the fact that the visit has taken place.

During the first three quarters of the nineteenth century the union of Russia and Prussia was a constant and certain factor in European politics. It rested not merely on the common interests of the two nations, but also on the close friendship between the two ruling houses which was cemented by the bonds of kinship. This was particularly the case at the time of the Tsar Nicholas I. These relations were for the first time impaired by the Congress of Berlin, where Prince Bismarck endeavoured to bring

et où il a eu le sort généralement réservé aux conciliateurs, c'est-à-dire qu'il a été accusé par chacun des deux adversaires de partialité en faveur de l'autre. Le peuple russe, se croyant frustré par la faute de l'Allemagne du fruit de ses victoires, a conçu pour sa voisine de l'ouest une haine encore avivée par l'envie qu'a suscitée le rapide développement de la puissance allemande. Dans l'union entre la Russie et la Prusse celle-ci jouait un rôle quelque peu subordonné. On a été froissé à St-Petersbourg et surtout à Moscou, lorsque Berlin est devenu le centre principal de la politique européenne. Les étapes du refroidissement progressif des relations entre les deux pays ont été marquées par l'alliance de la Russie avec la France, par l'établissement de la triple entente et en dernier lieu par l'intervention de l'Allemagne dans l'affaire de l'annexion de la Bosnie. On se défend ici d'avoir exercé une pression sur la Russie. C'est jouer sur les mots. Sans la déclaration du prince de Bülow au sujet de la solidarité de l'Allemagne et de l'Autriche-Hongrie et sans l'avertissement donné par le comte de Pourtalès à St-Petersbourg, la Russie n'aurait pas brusquement mis fin à l'agitation qu'elle entretenait dans les petits Etats slaves et surtout à Belgrade contre l'Autriche-Hongrie. La solution de la question de la Bosnie a été à la fois pour la Russie une humiliation et une déception. Elle a dû laisser entamer son prestige en retirant, sur une injonction de l'étranger, la protection qu'elle accordait aux convoitises serbes. L'expérience

Russia and England together, and where he suffered the usual fate of all mediators, that is to say, he was accused by both the opposing parties of partiality for the other side. The Russian people, which believed itself robbed of the fruits of its victory by Germany, conceived a hatred against its Western neighbour which was further increased by the envy evoked by the rapid development of German power. In the union between Russia and Prussia, the latter played a somewhat subordinate part. Annoyance was felt at Petrograd, and above all at Moscow, when Berlin became the chief centre of European politics. The stages in the increasing coolness in the relations between the two countries are represented by the alliance of Russia with France, the establishment of the Triple Entente, and finally the intervention of Germany in the question of the annexation of Bosnia. It is denied here that any pressure was exercised. This is merely playing with words. Without Prince Bülow's statement regarding the solidarity of Germany and Austria-Hungary and without the warning given by Count Pourtalès in Petrograd, Russia would not suddenly have abandoned her agitation against Austria-Hungary in the small Slav States, especially in Belgrade. The solution of the Bosnian question was a humiliation as well as a disappointment to Russia. Her prestige was bound to suffer, in abandoning on the summons of a foreign country the protection which she had extended to Serbian covetousness. The experience showed her the ineffectiveness of the coalition formed by the late

lui a montré l'inefficacité de la coalition formée par le feu roi d'Angleterre, la première fois qu'elle a été mise à l'épreuve.

Si l'antipathie des peuples russe et allemand n'a pas eu de conséquences plus graves, c'est parce que *les rapports entre les souverains*, quoique altérés, ont toujours été meilleurs qu'entre les nations et même entre les deux gouvernements. Il semble qu'il en coûtait aux deux maisons régnantes de rompre avec une *tradition séculaire et la démarche de l'empereur Nicolas paraît indiquer qu'il veut la reprendre. C'est lui qui a exprimé le désir d'une entrevue avec l'empereur d'Allemagne* accueilli au début avec assez peu d'empressement à Berlin. Le moment choisi a été aussi celui où le terrain était déblayé par la *retraite de M. Iswolski. L'inimitié personnelle de l'ancien ministre des affaires étrangères russes et du comte de Aehrenthal* a été l'un des principaux obstacles qu'il a fallu surmonter pour arriver à une solution pacifique de la question bosniaque. J'ai lieu de croire aussi, M. Iswolski n'inspirait à Berlin qu'une confiance très médiocre. *M. Sazonow a produit au contraire sur l'empereur, le chancelier et le secrétaire d'Etat des Affaires étrangères, une très bonne impression.*

La visite à Potsdam est donc un événement dont il faut se féliciter comme de nature à améliorer les relations entre les deux empires et peut-être aussi

King of England, on the first occasion on which it was put to the test.

That the antipathy between the Russian and the German peoples has had no graver consequences is to be attributed to the fact that *the relations between the Rulers*, even though they also have altered, have nevertheless always been better than those between the nations and even between the two Governments. It appears to have been hard for the two Royal Houses to break with a *tradition which has endured for centuries, and the démarche of the Emperor Nicholas appears to indicate that he is anxious to revive it. It was he who expressed a desire for a meeting with the German Emperor*, a desire which at the beginning was received with but little enthusiasm in Berlin. The moment chosen was also that in which the ground was cleared by the *retirement of M. Iswolsky. The personal hostility between the former Russian Foreign Minister and Count Aehrenthal* was one of the chief obstacles which had to be overcome in order to arrive at a peaceful solution of the Bosnian question. I have also reason to believe that M. Iswolsky inspired very little confidence in Berlin, whereas on the other hand *M. Sazonof has produced a very favourable impression on the Emperor, the Chancellor, and the Foreign Secretary.*

The visit to Potsdam is thus an event which must give cause for satisfaction as calculated to improve the relations between the two Empires, and perhaps

par contre-coup entre Vienne et St-Pétersbourg, mais c'est une exagération que de lui attribuer, comme l'a fait la *Rossija*, une haute portée politique. Les groupements des grandes puissances européennes resteront ce qu'ils étaient auparavant, et les sentiments du peuple russe pour l'Allemagne n'en deviendront pas plus cordiaux. Le langage des journaux russes le démontre déjà.

GREINDL.

in the sequel between Vienna and Petrograd; but it is an exaggeration to ascribe to it, as the *Rossija* does, great political significance. The groupings of the great European Powers will remain as they were in the past, and the feelings of the Russian people towards Germany will not for this reason become more cordial. The language of the Russian newspapers proves this already.

GREINDL.

In this report from Greindl the following points are noteworthy and, so far as the remoter antecedents are concerned, important in connection with the question of the responsibility for the war.

1. The initiative to the interview at Potsdam was taken by the Tsar Nicholas, as was also in the previous year the initiative to the meeting of the two Emperors in Baltischport (see Greindl's report of June 21st, 1909, No. 60).

2. The Court at Berlin received the Russian suggestion with but little enthusiasm.

3. The Tsar intentionally chose for the meeting the moment of the retirement of Isvolsky, his former Foreign Minister, and of the accession to office of Sazonof, the new Minister. In consequence of his personal hostility to Aehrenthal, Isvolsky formed one of the "chief obstacles" to a peaceful *rapprochement* of Russia to Germany and Austria. On the other hand, Sazonof, the new Minister whom the Tsar brought with him to Potsdam, inspired confidence in Berlin, and was very well received there.

4. The semi-official journals of the Berlin, Viennese, and Petrograd Governments agreed in attributing great political significance to the interview at Potsdam.

5. The traditional friendship of the ruling houses of Prussia and of Russia and of their peoples had been somewhat impaired by the Congress of Berlin and by Prince Bismarck's activities as an "honest broker." The coolness, however, had grown into something approaching hostility as a result of the intervention of Germany in

the question of the annexation of Bosnia. Germany had here exercised pressure—to dispute this is merely “playing with words”—and this pressure had led to a humiliation and a disappointment for Russia. The prestige of Russia was seriously damaged by the compliance forced upon her by Germany. This statement of Greindl’s is specially interesting when it is compared with his above mentioned report, dated April 1st, 1909 (No. 58), in which he cannot find sufficiently laudatory words for the “quite unambiguous and resolute attitude of Germany” in the Bosnian question, which “alone had imposed peace.” Reports Nos. 58 and 62 are in irreconcilable opposition to each other. The latter corresponds with the generally prevailing European view, the former with the narrow and arrogant view held in Berlin. In this, as in many other passages, it is possible to see in the soul of the Belgian diplomatist the conflict of two tendencies of thought: on the one hand, regard for the peace of Europe, which in the case of differences between Great Powers demands a certain measure of concessions on both sides in order that a European war may be avoided; on the other, a certain blindly superstitious enthusiasm for Prussian-German strength, which in all conflicts affecting Germany or Austria seeks to give absolute effect to the will of the two Imperial Powers by threatening, bluffing and sabre-rattling, no matter what European consequences may arise from such provocative action. There is, in fact, a European Greindl and a Berlino-Prussian Greindl. In No. 58 the latter speaks, in No. 62 the former.

6. The experience in the Bosnian crisis had—so Greindl observes—convinced the Tsar and his Government of the “ineffectiveness of the coalition formed by the late King of England” on the first occasion on which it was tested. This sentence is correct only if aims are ascribed to the Entente coalition which it never entertained, and for the existence of which no evidence has yet been produced: the aim, that is to say, of isolating, browbeating, and checkmating Germany and Austria in all conflicts between Great Powers both inside and outside Europe. Had *this* been the aim of the Entente, then certainly the course of the Bosnian crisis would have proved that the

efforts of the Entente had miserably failed. That such an aim had, however, never been entertained by the Triple Entente is obvious from the fact that it did not make use of the favourable opportunity offered by the Bosnian annexation to give effect to this aim on an occasion when all the wrong was on the side of Austria. The course of the crisis is thus not a proof of the ineffectiveness of the coalition, but, on the contrary, it is evidence of its entirely pacific tendencies, which, indeed, went so far (on Greindl's own testimony) as to demand of Russia a direct humiliation and diminution of prestige, and that with the sole object of maintaining the peace of Europe at all cost. Thus Greindl's report (No. 62), properly read, is the most glowing testimony to the policy of the Entente Powers, and a flat contradiction of all the Pan-German legends which in its helplessness the German Government have to-day admitted into their arsenal of defence—those legends which ascribe to the Triple Entente the effort to provoke the catastrophe of a European war, and which date the firm conclusion of the conspiracy to June, 1908, that is to say, two and a half years before the Potsdam interview.

7. The concluding observation in Greindl's report is entirely mean and furnishes an indication of the most one-sided partiality. This, again, is of the purest Schiemann school. The Potsdam visit is, as even Greindl cannot deny, an event which will improve the relations between Germany and Russia and perhaps also between Vienna and Petrograd. But "the feelings of the Russian people towards Germany will not for this reason become more cordial. The language of the Russian newspapers proves this already." Here again we see the infamous cloven hoof which this "neutral" diplomatist, following the Pan-German example, attaches to all political events calculated to further peace. The monarchs meet in old friendship, the leading statesmen in new sympathy. All current political questions are discussed to the satisfaction of both sides in a peaceful and sensible manner; all shadows from the past are swept away. This, however, does not suit the German war-intriguers and their docile follower, the Belgian Ambassador. At once the alleged hostile feelings of the Russian people (as if peoples ever felt

hostility against each other !), the alleged hostile language of Russian newspapers, are moved into position, so that the picture of peace may not be without some dark touches, and the desired state of tension may continue to exist. The Foreign Office in Berlin, of course, hastens to reproduce in heavy type just this base and utterly unproved concluding sentence in Greindl's report in order to obliterate immediately the impression produced by Greindl's account in favour of Russia. What is necessary, in fact, is to wipe out the peaceful Potsdam interlude—like many other "entr'actes" of a similar nature during the last decade before the outbreak of war—in order to reveal in a continuous straight line the Entente's intentions to encircle and strangle their opponents and thus to justify the war which was "forced upon" innocent Germany. Herr Professor Helmolt calls the Potsdam interview "the great lie of Potsdam." The concluding sentence of Greindl's report is also designed to further this lying invention of a lie.

* * * * *

In various other places in the collection I found astonishingly long intervals between the reports, which are obviously always attributable to the fact that in the interval nothing favourable to Germany or something favourable to the Entente Powers was reported. Why should the authorities in Berlin incriminate themselves? I find, for example, between Reports Nos. 62 and 63, both from Greindl, an interval of four months comprising the whole winter of 1910–11. M. Greindl is not again heard until March 3rd, 1911 (No. 63), when he reports regarding the nomination of Delcassé to be Marine Minister in the Monis Cabinet and is in a position to deliver a few thrusts at French policy in the person of Delcassé. The Belgian diplomatist writes as follows regarding Delcassé's return to power :

No. 63.

Berlin, le 3 mars 1911.

Berlin, March 3rd, 1911.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Monsieur le Ministre,

Comme il fallait s'y attendre on a d'autant plus mal accueilli la nomination de M. Delcassé au

As was to be expected, the nomination of M. Delcassé to be Marine Minister has been

ministère de la marine que le portefeuille de la guerre a été confié à M. Berteaux dans le nouveau cabinet péniblement formé par M. Monis. Le Gouvernement Impérial ne fera vraisemblablement pas connaître, au moins publiquement, son impression afin d'éviter toute apparence d'intervention dans les affaires intérieures de la France; mais elle ne diffère évidemment pas de celle des journaux. Ainsi que je l'ai écrit à M. le baron de Favereau, M. le baron de Richthofen m'avait dit au moment de la retraite de M. Delcassé en 1905 que l'ancien ministre des Affaires étrangères français avait depuis des années affecté de traiter l'Allemagne en quantité négligeable. On considérait ici la longue administration de M. Delcassé comme ayant créé une situation très grave. Ce n'était pas sans raison, *puisque la première fois que M. Delcassé a pris la parole après sa chute, il l'a fait pour se vanter d'avoir organisé une ligue agressive contre l'Allemagne.*

On ne prend pas toutefois très au tragique le retour au pouvoir de M. Delcassé. Ce n'est plus le ministère des Affaires étrangères qui lui est confié. Il n'a plus à côté de lui le roi Edouard VII dont il se croyait le collaborateur et dont il était l'instrument. L'entrevue de Potsdam a diminué la confiance des Français dans l'alliance russe, parce qu'à Paris et à Londres on persiste à lui attribuer une portée qu'elle n'a pas. Enfin le ministère Monis a

all the more unfavourably received here, inasmuch as the conduct of the Ministry of War in the new Cabinet which has been formed under great difficulties by M. Monis has been entrusted to M. Berteaux. The Imperial Government will presumably not let their impressions become known, at any rate publicly, in order to avoid any appearance of intervention in the internal affairs of France; obviously, however, their impressions are in no way different from those of the Press. As I wrote at the time to the Baron de Favereau, Freiherr von Richthofen said to me on the occasion of the resignation of Delcassé in 1905 that the former French Minister for Foreign Affairs had for a number of years intentionally treated Germany as a "quantity negligible." According to the view held here, M. Delcassé's long tenure of office had created a very serious position. This view was not unfounded, *seeing that Delcassé, on the first occasion on which he spoke after his fall, did so in order to boast that he had organised an aggressive league against Germany.*

Delcassé's return to power is not, however, taken too seriously. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is no longer entrusted to him. Moreover, he no longer has at his side King Edward VII, whose collaborator he believed himself to be, whose tool he really was. The meeting at Potsdam has diminished the confidence felt by the French in the Russian alliance because in Paris and London they insist on giving it an importance which it does not possess. Lastly, the

été si mal accueilli en France même qu'il n'aura probablement qu'une durée éphémère. . . .

Monis Ministry has been so badly received in France itself, that in all probability it will be allowed only a brief tenure of life. . . .

I have elsewhere fully discussed ¹ Delcassé's resignation in June 1905, and its importance in framing a judgment on French politics. I have considered the events immediately bearing on his withdrawal from office, the proceedings in the Council of Ministers under the Presidency of Rouvier, and the revelations of the *Matin* of October 7th and 8th, 1905, bearing on the subject. I have there endeavoured to prove :

1. That these very *Matin* revelations prove the entirely defensive character of the Anglo-French Entente, and

2. That the dismissal of Delcassé as Foreign Minister shows the entirely pacific tendencies of French policy in the state of tension existing at that time.

In the above sentences of his report Baron Greindl refers to the speech which Delcassé delivered in January 1908 in the French Chamber of Deputies in justification of the policy which he had pursued until 1905. At the time when it was delivered Greindl had already fully reported on this speech (on January 27th, 1908, Report No. 39). When in March 1911, that is to say, three years later, the Belgian diplomatist had again occasion to speak of Delcassé's speech in his own justification, he had already forgotten his earlier report, and gaily asserted that Delcassé had boasted at the time (1908) that he had "organised an aggressive league against Germany." In the report of January 27th, 1908 (No. 39), on the other hand, it is stated :

. . . En d'autres termes, M. Delcassé se vante d'avoir préservé la paix du monde grâce à la campagne menée par lui de concert avec le roi d'Angleterre pour isoler l'Allemagne.

M. Delcassé dit qu'il ne faut pas laisser défigurer une politique étrangère (la sienne) qui a par deux fois conservé la paix à l'Europe. . . .

. . . In other words, M. Delcassé boasts that *he has kept the peace of the world*, thanks to his policy of encirclement which he has pursued against Germany in union with the King of England.

M. Delcassé says that a foreign policy (viz. his own), which has already twice preserved the peace of Europe, must not be misrepresented. . . .

¹ See *The Crime*, Vol. II, p. 129 et seq.

This statement made by Delcassé in 1908 is, it is true, subjected in the report written at the time by Greindl to a criticism the nature of which it is possible to imagine without further description. It is, however, in any case a false assertion on the part of Greindl when in his report of 1911 he reproaches the French statesman with the fact that he himself had boasted that he had organised an aggressive league against Germany. This is directly contrary to the truth. Delcassé always maintained, and especially in his speech of January 1908, that the Entente concluded by him and Lansdowne in 1904, as well as all his further ministerial actions, aimed merely at securing a guarantee for the peace of Europe, a protection against aggression and possible bellicose intentions on the part of Germany. M. Greindl attributes to the French statesman a confession of guilt which he had never made. As a matter of course, the Berlin Foreign Office hastens to emphasise in heavy type just this lying statement in Greindl's report of 1911, which is directly contradicted by the report of 1908. It is thus that diplomatic evidence is manufactured. In other respects, also, the report of March 3rd, 1911, is full of distorted explanations of familiar diplomatic occurrences, of malicious intentions ascribed to the Entente Powers, of attempts to explain away the importance of the Potsdam interview, etc. It would take us too far to go more closely into all these matters.

* * * * *

Another lacuna which, if not very large, is at any rate very characteristic, is to be found after No. 65, Greindl's report of March 20th, 1911. This report deals in a full and fairly sympathetic manner with Grey's striking speech in the House of Commons on March 13th, 1911, on the relations between Germany and England, and on the fatal competition in naval armaments between all States, which must finally, if the system is not checked, lead to a complete collapse of civilisation. (See also *J'accuse*, p. 96). I give below the text of Greindl's report on Grey's speech :

Berlin, le 20 mars 1911.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Le discours sur la politique extérieure prononcé, il y a huit jours par Sir Edward Grey, à l'occasion de la discussion du budget de la marine, a provoqué de nombreux commentaires dans la presse anglaise et dans celle de tous les pays, à l'exception de l'Allemagne. La *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* a témoigné la satisfaction du gouvernement impérial. De la part de l'organe hautement officieux, c'était obligé. Le silence eût été à bon droit considéré à Londres comme une injure ; mais les autres journaux se sont bornés à reproduire le résumé du discours transmis par les agences télégraphiques ou n'y ont ajouté que de courtes réflexions insignifiantes. C'est ici cependant que les paroles du secrétaire d'État britannique auraient dû causer le plus de sensation et produire la plus agréable impression, si l'on avait la confiance qu'elles expriment bien toute la pensée du gouvernement anglais. Elles marqueraient un revirement notable de la politique inaugurée naguère par le cabinet unioniste et dont ses successeurs libéraux ont continué la tradition. L'évolution n'impliquerait pas un dérangement du groupement actuel des grandes puissances ; mais elle signifierait que l'Angleterre ne veut plus conserver à la triple entente le caractère agressif que lui avait imprimé son créateur le roi Edouard VII. A voir l'indifférence du public allemand, on dirait qu'il est blasé par les innombrables entrevues et

Berlin, March 20th, 1911.

Monsieur le Ministre,

The speech on foreign politics which Sir Edward Grey delivered a week ago in the debate on the Naval Estimates has evoked numerous commentaries in the English Press, as well as in the Press of all other countries except in Germany. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* gave expression to the satisfaction felt by the Imperial Government. As an organ which is in a high degree semi-official it was bound to do so. Its silence would rightly have been viewed in London as an insult ; but the other newspapers restricted themselves to reproducing a résumé of the speech, as it was transmitted by the telegraphic agencies, or merely added short and trivial observations. It was, however, more particularly here that the words of the British Secretary of State should have evoked the greatest sensation, and produced the best impression, if there had been confidence that they really quite represented the ideas of the English Government. They would imply a remarkable *revulsion* in the policy initiated in its time by the Unionist Cabinet, whose traditions the Liberal Government which followed has continued. Such a development would not be equivalent to a change in the present grouping of the Great Powers ; but it would indicate that *England no longer desires to give to the Triple Entente the aggressive character* which its creator, King Edward VII, imprinted upon it. In seeing the *indifference of the*

échanges de démonstrations courtoises qui n'ont jamais produit aucun résultat positif et qu'il veuille se mettre en garde contre de nouvelles déceptions. Cette méfiance se comprend, puisque tout récemment encore le gouvernement anglais prenait part à l'intrigue de Flessingue. Nous en avons eu la preuve, par la démarche qu'a faite auprès de vous Sir A. Hardinge pour essayer de nous y entraîner.

Toutefois, on peut se demander si le scepticisme n'est pas dans le cas présent quelque peu exagéré.

Le rapprochement avec la Russie et l'Angleterre faisait partie du programme politique tracé par M. de Kiderlen-Wächter, lorsqu'il a accepté la direction du département impérial des Affaires étrangères. La première partie de ce plan a été exécutée par l'entrevue de Potsdam. Les pourparlers entre Berlin et Saint-Pétersbourg sont interrompus depuis que M. Sazonow est malade; mais auparavant, il y a eu un échange d'idées très actif entre les deux cabinets. Aucun résultat positif n'a encore été obtenu, et peut-être n'arrivera-t-on pas à grand-chose de concret; mais les relations des deux pays sont redevenues normales. Elles n'ont plus le caractère de réserve hargneuse qu'elles avaient pris depuis l'affaire de l'annexion de la Bosnie.

Les circonstances se prêtent à la réalisation du programme du secrétaire d'Etat des Affaires étrangères. Il y a six semaines

German public, it might be believed that it has become *blasé*, as the result of countless meetings and mutual demonstrations of courtesy which, notwithstanding, have never led to any positive result, and that it is anxious to protect itself against new disillusiones. This distrust is comprehensible, since the English Government quite recently took part in the Flushing intrigue. We have evidence of this in the *démarche* which Sir A. Hardinge made to you in order to endeavour to involve us in the matter.

At the same time, it may be asked whether the scepticism in the present case is not somewhat exaggerated.

The *rapprochement* with Russia and England was part of the political programme of Herr von Kiderlen-Wächter, when he took over the conduct of the Foreign Office. The first part of this programme was realised by the meeting at Potsdam. Since Sazonof was taken ill, the discussions between Berlin and Petrograd have been interrupted; before that, however, an active exchange of ideas took place between the two Cabinets. A positive result has not yet been attained, and perhaps nothing very tangible will emerge; in any case, however, the relations between the two countries have again become normal. They have no longer the reserved and hostile character which they had assumed after the annexation of Bosnia.

Circumstances are favouring the execution of the Foreign Secretary's programme. About six weeks ago the King of England

environ, le roi d'Angleterre a écrit à l'empereur d'Allemagne pour l'inviter à assister à l'inauguration de la statue de la reine Victoria. C'est la première lettre que le roi George V adressait à Sa Majesté depuis qu'il est monté sur le trône. Elle était conçue en termes particulièrement cordiaux, qui ont produit ici la plus agréable impression. Vous vous souviendrez sans doute, Monsieur le Ministre, de ce qu'a dit, quelques jours après, le chancelier de l'Empire dans son discours au Reichstag sur les affaires étrangères au sujet de sa confiance dans la loyauté de la politique anglaise envers l'Allemagne. On peut considérer l'attitude de M. de Bethmann Hollweg comme la conséquence du message du roi d'Angleterre.

Le discours de Sir Edward Grey ne s'est pas borné à de vaines paroles comme dans des occasions antérieures. Il a été accompagné, ou plutôt précédé, d'un acte. Pendant des années, la presse anglaise a émis l'arrogante prétention de contrôler et même d'interdire l'achèvement du chemin de fer de Bagdad ; c'est-à-dire d'avoir la haute main sur une entreprise qui ne concerne que la Turquie, la compagnie concessionnaire et indirectement le gouvernement allemand, qui a appuyé celle-ci. Sir Edward Grey a replacé la question sur le terrain du droit, en reconnaissant que l'Angleterre n'a aucun titre l'autorisant à intervenir dans une affaire intérieure ottomane et en annonçant qu'elle se bornerait à garantir ses intérêts par les moyens légaux dont elle dispose. C'est une base sur laquelle on peut s'entendre.

wrote to the German Emperor inviting him to the unveiling of the memorial to Queen Victoria. This is King George's first letter to His Majesty since his accession to the throne. It was couched in particularly cordial terms and produced the most agreeable impression here. You will without doubt remember, Monsieur le Ministre, what the Chancellor said a few days later in his speech in the Reichstag on foreign politics regarding his confidence in the sincerity of English policy towards Germany. The attitude of Herr von Bethmann may be regarded as the consequence of the letter from the King of England.

Sir Edward Grey's speech was not restricted to empty words as on former occasions. It was accompanied or rather preceded by action. For years the English Press has advanced the arrogant claim to control and even to forbid the completion of the Baghdad Railway, that is to say, they wanted to lay their hand on an undertaking which concerns only Turkey, the concessionary company, and, indirectly, the German Government which supported it. Sir Edward Grey has brought this question back into the domain of law. He recognised that England possesses no title in law to intervene in an internal Ottoman affair, and announced that England would restrict herself to guarding her interests by the legal means at her disposal. On this basis it is possible to arrive at an understanding.

Personne ne niera l'existence de ces intérêts anglais et ne songera à faire au gouvernement britannique un grief de les défendre.

Enfin, le moment est propice pour une tentative d'amélioration des relations entre l'Allemagne et l'Angleterre. Il n'y a maintenant à l'ordre du jour aucune question irritante de nature à l'entraver.

Je dois vous prier de noter, Monsieur le Ministre, que le présent rapport ne signifie pas que je considère comme déjà acquis ou imminent un rapprochement entre l'Angleterre et l'Allemagne que j'appelle de tous mes vœux, parce qu'il constituerait une sensible augmentation de sécurité pour la Belgique. Tout ce que je veux dire est *qu'à mon avis les journaux allemands n'ont pas prêté une attention assez sérieuse au discours de Sir Edward Grey et qu'il faut attendre les événements pour asseoir un jugement sur sa véritable portée.* Le dépit manifesté par le journal *Le Temps* démontre qu'à Paris l'opinion publique lui en attache beaucoup plus qu'on ne l'a fait à Berlin. A la manière dont s'exprime le journal français, on dirait qu'il ne considère plus la triple entente que comme une formule vide de sens.

GREINDL.

No one will deny the existence of English interests, and no one will think of making it a reproach against the British Government that they defend these.

The moment is in any case favourable for an attempt to improve Anglo-German relations. There is at present on the order of the day no question giving rise to friction which would counteract it.

I would ask to draw your attention to the fact, Monsieur le Ministre, that the present report is not intended to give expression to the view that an Anglo-German *rapprochement* is already complete or is imminent. It is true that I would wish for this with my whole heart, since thereby the security of Belgium would be considerably increased. All that I say is merely that *in my opinion the German newspapers have not given sufficiently serious attention to Sir Edward Grey's speech, and that it is necessary to await events before it is possible to form a judgment regarding its real importance.* The disappointment of the *Temps* proves that public opinion in Paris sees much more in the speech than in Berlin. To judge from the way in which the French newspaper expressed itself, it might be thought that *it sees in the Triple Entente nothing more than an empty formula void of meaning.*

GREINDL.

This report of Greindl's is differentiated from almost all the other reports of this diplomatist in being worded in relatively objective terms and it does a certain measure of justice, unusual in Greindl, to the English King George, who had invited the Emperor to the unveiling of the

Victoria Memorial in extremely cordial terms, as well as to the English Government and their intentions with regard to an understanding. The Belgian diplomatist regards the moment as favourable for an attempt to improve Anglo-German relations. He even goes so far as to make it a charge against the German Press that they had not devoted sufficient attention to Grey's speech. He praises the attitude of the English Government in the question of the Baghdad Railway, and points to a remarkable revulsion in the policy initiated in its time by the Unionist Cabinet.

Grey's speech was answered in the Reichstag on March 30th by Herr von Bethmann, who poured cold water on the suggestions put forward. In his speech he bluntly rejected every possibility of arriving at an agreement as to armaments; he advanced the hackneyed argument of the impossibility of exercising control, and stated that agreements as to armaments were once for all excluded "so long as men are men, and States States." (See *J'accuse*, p. 97.)

This cold douche from Bethmann, a weighty link in the long chain of German shortcomings, is not so much as mentioned in the Belgian collection of documents. The Belgian Ambassador, who expresses himself at great length on the subject of the speech delivered by Grey in London, has nothing whatever to say about the speech delivered by Bethmann in Berlin. That is to say, he obviously reported on the subject, but, as may with certainty be assumed, having regard to his opinion of Grey's speech, his report was so unfavourable to Bethmann that it was omitted in printing. This is an extremely suspicious state of affairs so far as the German Government are concerned, and it furnishes a weighty consideration in proof of the dishonest and tendencious compilation of the Belgian collection of documents. This one fact in itself—apart from all other considerations—deprives the collection of any value as evidence.

No. 66, following on No. 65, also contains a report from Greindl dated April 21st, 1911, but makes no mention of the meeting of the Reichstag and of Bethmann's significant speech which had received the most pained

attention throughout the whole political world. This is the "objective diplomatic account of international politics" which is so great a merit in the German collection of documents.

HALDANE'S VISIT TO BERLIN.

Haldane's visit to Berlin is fully mentioned in the report of Count Lalaing, the London Ambassador, dated February 9th, 1912. It is there stated :

No. 88.

Londres, le 9 février 1912.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Le départ de Lord Haldane, ministre de la Guerre, pour Berlin a éveillé la curiosité ; la presse trouve diverses explications pour ce voyage, entrepris au lendemain d'un conseil de Cabinet et presque à la veille de l'ouverture des Chambres. On a suggéré que le Ministre était chargé, ou :

1° de traiter la question d'un échange de renseignements sur les armements anglo-allemands ;

2° de demander la grâce d'un espion anglais Stewart, récemment condamné en Allemagne ;

3° de travailler à une entente anglo-allemande ;

4° de s'occuper d'une rectification de frontières en Afrique ;

5° d'un partage des colonies portugaises ;

6° d'une cession de Walfisch Bay à l'Allemagne ;

7° d'une mission personnelle du roi George au kaiser.

London, February 9th, 1912.

Monsieur le Ministre.

The departure for Berlin of Lord Haldane, the Minister of War, has aroused curiosity ; the Press has the most various explanations to give of this journey which is taking place on the day after a meeting of the Cabinet and almost on the eve of the opening of Parliament. It has been suggested that the Minister has been entrusted either :

1. to negotiate on the question of an exchange of information regarding Anglo-German armaments,

2. to intercede for the pardon of an English spy, named Stewart, who was recently condemned in Germany,

3. to work with a view to the establishment of an Anglo-German Entente,

4. to negotiate on a rectification of frontier in Africa,

5. to bring about a partition of the Portuguese colonies,

6. to cede Walfisch Bay to Germany, or finally,

7. to discharge a personal mission from King George to the Emperor.

Ce qui est certain est que le but que l'on a en vue est pacifique. On voudrait à tout prix diminuer la tension existante entre les deux pays. C'est la politique actuelle du Cabinet et, de tous les ministres de la Couronne, celui de la Guerre est le plus philo-allemand. Lord Haldane a été en son temps étudiant à Heidelberg, parle bien la langue si peu familière aux Anglais, et a des amis personnels à Berlin. Le choix de l'envoyé est sous ce rapport un nouvel indice de la tendance de la mission officieuse. De toutes les hypothèses, celle d'une conversation amicale, cherchant un terrain d'entente et déplorant les dépenses imposées aux deux nations par les programmes de constructions navales semble le plus probable. L'Angleterre est disposée à ne plus contrecarrer l'Allemagne dans les questions secondaires, mais on ne doit pas lui disputer la suprématie sur mer.

Comte DE LALAING.

In a further report from the London Ambassador dated February 16th, 1912 (No. 90), Haldane's journey and in particular the English Government's endeavour to arrive at an understanding with that of Germany are mentioned with appreciation.

No. 90.

Londres, le 16 février 1912.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Le Premier Ministre, lors de la discussion de la réponse au discours du Trône, a eu l'occasion de fournir quelques éclaircissements sur le but de la récente

It is certain that the aim in view is a pacific one. It is desired to diminish at any price the tension existing between the two countries. This is the present policy of the Cabinet, and of all the Ministers of the Crown the Minister for War is the most friendly to Germany. Lord Haldane was in his time a student at Heidelberg, he has a good command of the language which is so little known to the English, and he has personal friends in Berlin. In this respect the choice of the envoy is a new indication of the tendency of the semi-official mission. Of all the hypotheses, the most probable appears to me to be that of a friendly exchange of thought, seeking a basis for an understanding and regretting the expenditure imposed on both peoples by the naval programmes. England is no longer inclined to work against Germany in less important questions, but her supremacy at sea must not be questioned.

Count DE LALAING.

London, February 16th, 1912.

Monsieur le Ministre.

During the debate on the Reply to the King's Speech the Prime Minister had an opportunity of giving certain explanations regarding the purpose of

visite du ministre de la Guerre à Berlin.

Dans mon rapport du 9 de ce mois je vous disais que de toutes les hypothèses mises en avant celle d'une conversation amicale, en vue de rechercher un *terrain d'entente et de diminuer la tension existante* était la plus vraisemblable.

Le discours de M. Asquith confirme cette impression.

Il a admis que dans les derniers mois l'*amitié traditionnelle* entre les deux nations avait subi des atteintes sérieuses, à cause de la méfiance qui existait de part et d'autre.

Le public allemand a été jusqu'à croire que la flotte britannique avait préparé *une attaque contre les escadres germaniques* pendant l'été et l'automne 1911.—C'est *une pure invention*. Les deux gouvernements ont le sincère désir d'arriver à une entente meilleure, et le cabinet de Berlin a fait comprendre à Londres que ce but commun serait peut-être plus facilement atteint si un ministre anglais se rendait en Allemagne.

C'est peut-être contraire aux usages diplomatiques, mais il en a résulté d'heureuses et franches explications de nature à *détruire l'impression que les gouvernements en cause ont des intentions agressives*. M. Asquith croit que les conversations de son collègue à Berlin pourraient avoir d'autres heureux résultats dans l'avenir, sur lesquels il ne s'est pas expliqué.

Si *les deux nations désirent voir s'établir entre elles des relations plus cordiales*, le Premier Ministre a eu soin d'ajouter qu'il ne s'agissait cependant en aucune façon de

the recent visit of the Minister for War to Berlin.

In my report of the 9th instant I wrote to you that of all the hypotheses which had been advanced the most probable was that of a friendly exchange of opinion in order to *seek a basis for an understanding and to diminish the existing tension*.

Mr. Asquith's speech confirms this impression.

He admitted that the *traditional friendship* between the two peoples had been gravely imperilled in recent months by the distrust existing on both sides.

The German public has gone so far as to believe that during the summer and the autumn of 1911 the English fleet had prepared *an attack against the German squadrons*. This is *pure invention*. Both Governments are sincerely desirous of arriving at a better understanding, and the Berlin Government have given it to be understood in London that this common aim would perhaps be realised more easily if an English Minister came to Germany.

This is, perhaps, contrary to diplomatic usage, but it has led to happy and open discussions which have *destroyed the assumption that the Governments in question had aggressive intentions*. Mr. Asquith believes that the discussions which his colleague had in Berlin might have other fortunate results in future on which he did not express himself further.

The Prime Minister was careful to add that even if *the two nations were desirous of seeing more cordial relations arise between them*, there was no question

modifier la situation spéciale dans laquelle l'Allemagne, d'une part, la Grande-Bretagne, de l'autre, se trouvaient vis-à-vis d'autres puissances, mais les deux Etats examinent en ce moment ce qu'il serait possible de faire. . . .

of modifying in any way the special relations of Germany and Great Britain *vis-à-vis* other Powers. Both sides were, however, at the moment examining what could be done. . . .

It might have been assumed that Belgium's Ambassador in Berlin, the *doyen* of Belgian diplomacy who enjoyed a position of exceptional authority in Brussels, would also have expressed himself regarding Haldane's visit to Berlin and its results. That is also, of course, what happened, but obviously he expressed himself unfavourably regarding the attitude of the German Government, and for this reason the reports written by him during this period have been suppressed. Greindl's report of December 9th, 1911 (No. 86), is not followed by a report from the same Ambassador until that of April 26th, 1912 (No. 91). This witness for the Crown is thus condemned to almost five months of silence because in these five months he obviously said much that was in the highest degree inconvenient to the German Government.

A MISSING REPORT FROM GREINDL

In this interval Greindl sent a report to Brussels (on December 23rd, 1911), which has been published in part by the German Government in another place and in another connection, but strangely it has been omitted in the collection of reports.

The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, as is well known, published on October 13th, 1914, its first revelation regarding the documents found in Brussels—a revelation which at a later date, on November 25th, 1914, was amplified by a reprint of the conversation between Barnardiston and Ducarne (1906) and that between Bridges and Jungbluth (1912). In the first article in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* extracts are given from a report from Greindl dated December 23rd, 1911, with the addition that "the publication of this in its entirety

is reserved." At that time—that is to say, immediately after the conclusion of the Kiderlen treaty regarding Morocco—there had been communicated to Baron Greindl a plan of the Belgian General Staff for the defence of their neutral country in the contingency of a Franco-German war. The presupposition of this plan was that which was realised in 1914, that is to say, it was the violation of Belgian neutrality by Germany. Greindl, as has already been remarked, was by his extraction, his education, his train of thought and his personal relations, almost more a German than a Belgian, and the contingency in question, that of a German invasion, this blindly credulous friend of Germany considered, in his incomprehensible or rather very comprehensible infatuation, to be not more probable than the other contingency, that of a French invasion, and this view he held despite all the candid accounts contained in German military literature. He therefore urgently exhorted the Belgian Government to take military precautions to meet this case also. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* prints only this latter part of Greindl's dissertations. Until the present day the complete report has been kept back, and is also missing from the collection of ambassadorial reports. In the month of December, 1911, we find here two reports from Greindl, those of December 6th and December 9th (Nos. 85 and 86), but we seek in vain for the important report of December 23rd, the later publication of which was contemplated by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*.

What can be the reason of this omission? I presume it is that the first part of the report which the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* suppresses and which deals with the contingency of a German invasion of Belgium contains, despite all the Belgian Ambassador's friendliness for Germany, certain observations on the strategic plans of the German General Staff which were compromising for the German Government. Germany cannot admit and never has admitted—though it is an historical fact apart from any such admission—that the passage through Belgium had been the basis of the strategic plan of the General Staff in the event of a Franco-German war ever since the construction of the line of fortifications on the

eastern frontier of France had been completed. The attempt has been made—and the praiseworthy endeavour is still being continued—to induce the world, and above all the German people, to believe that it was merely the fear of an intended attack in the flank by France in August 1914 that led to the decision to pass through Belgium. Presumably Greindl's report of December 23rd, 1911, upset in its first part this lying calculation. For this reason it was considered preferable to print only the second part, which reflects on France, and to postpone indefinitely the publication of the first part. Should I be mistaken in my hypothesis, it is still open to the Foreign Office to print even at this date the whole of the report. So long as this is not done, I venture to describe this incident also as a characteristic symptom of the German method of falsifying documents.

GREINDL'S SUCCESSOR, BARON BEYENS.

In June, 1912, Baron Greindl was replaced by Baron Beyens as Belgian Ambassador in Berlin. Beyens, at a later date Belgian Prime Minister, is the author of the book mentioned above, *Germany Before the War*. The reports of the new Belgian representative at once breathe an entirely different spirit from those of his predecessor. There is no longer any question of a prepossession in favour of German nationalism. On the contrary, the reader notes everywhere the endeavour and also the capacity to judge European matters objectively without coloured spectacles. From Beyens' two years' tenure of office eleven reports are given. The last report dates from July 2nd, 1914, that is to say, a few days after the outrage of Serajevo. Between the individual reports fairly long intervals occur, e.g. between No. 92 and No. 93 there are almost four months, between No. 96 and No. 102 three and a half months, between No. 103 and No. 106 seven weeks, between No. 106 and No. 111 there are as much as nine months, between No. 111 and No. 113 two months, etc. From this it would appear that the German Government has not found in Baron Greindl's successor a particularly

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favourable witness for their alleged innocent policy. This also is, broadly speaking, confirmed by the printed reports of Baron Beyens, from which it is possible to imagine what may have been contained in those not printed.

Let us hear some of his reports (in extracts): I may expressly observe that here, as elsewhere, in my extracts I have frequently reproduced such passages as are emphasised in heavy type in the German edition, and are thus regarded by the German Government as specially favourable for their defence—an evidence of impartiality on my part which can certainly not be noted in the case of the German “abridgers.”

No. 92.

Berlin, le 28 juin 1912.

Berlin, June 28th, 1912.

. . . L'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre m'a paru assez sceptique quant au succès de cette mission. Ce qui rend, m'a dit Sir Edward Goschen, le rétablissement de la bonne entente d'autrefois si difficile, c'est qu'il n'existe entre les deux nations aucun motif concret d'irritation ou d'éloignement. Nous n'avons pas eu à régler avec l'Allemagne un incident pénible comme celui de Fachoda. *La mésintelligence date de l'envoi du télégramme de l'Empereur au Président Krüger. Ça été pour nous comme un trait de lumière qui nous a montré qu'un abîme s'était creusé silencieusement, et sans que nous nous en fussions aperçus, entre nous et le peuple allemand, La question de la limitation de la flotte de guerre allemande est insoluble. Nous n'avons aucun droit de l'imposer au Gouverne-*

. . . The English Ambassador appeared to me fairly sceptical regarding the success of this mission.¹ What makes the re-establishment of the former good understanding so difficult is, in the opinion of Sir Edward Goschen, the fact that no real ground of irritation or alienation exists between the two peoples. We had no painful incident, like that of Fachoda, to regulate with Germany. *The misunderstandings date from the time of the Emperor's telegram to Krüger. That was for us a flash of light which revealed to us the abyss which had silently opened between us and the German people without our having noticed it. The question of the limitation of the German navy is insoluble. We have no right to impose it on the Imperial Government. We can only follow it on the path*

¹ The reference is to the mission of Freiherr von Marschall to London.

ment Impérial. Nous ne pouvons que le suivre dans la voie ruineuse où il s'est engagé, car le salut de l'Angleterre dépend de sa supériorité navale. L'Ambassadeur croit, comme M. Winston Churchill, que la flotte allemande, création personnelle de l'Empereur, est l'objet de ses prédilections, qu'il prend plaisir à l'augmenter et qu'il ne renoncera pas à la rendre plus redoutable que ne l'exige la protection du commerce allemand. . . .

to ruin on which it has entered, for the safety of England depends on her superiority at sea. Like Mr. Winston Churchill, the Ambassador believes that the German navy is a personal creation of the Emperor, that it is the object of his predilections, that he finds pleasure in increasing it, and that he will not renounce making it stronger than the protection of German trade demands. . . .

Baron Beyens' report of October 18th, 1912 (No. 93), which is here relevant, is quoted elsewhere.

No. 94.

Berlin, le 24 Octobre 1912.

. . . La politique de M. Sazonow est d'autant plus sage que les événements actuels ont surpris la Russie en pleine réorganisation de ses forces militaires et qu'un désastre ou un simple échec en Europe lui serait autrement funeste que ses défaites en Extrême-Orient. Il serait le signal d'une révolution sociale qui s'arme dans l'ombre et menace sourdement le Trône des Czars. A comparer le peu d'avantage personnel que la Russie retirerait d'une intervention avec les risques qu'elle encourrait, on devrait avoir confiance dans le bon sens de ses gouvernants et envisager l'avenir prochain avec assez de tranquillité, n'étaient les sentiments panslavistes et ceux qui les attisent.

BARON BEYENS.

Berlin, October 24th, 1912.

. . . The policy of M. Sazonof is all the more prudent inasmuch as the present events have surprised Russia in the middle of the reorganisation of her military forces, and a disaster or even a simple check in Europe would be much more fatal for Russia than her defeats in East Asia. It would be the signal for a social revolution which is being prepared in the dark and which is secretly menacing the throne of the Tsars. When the small personal advantage which Russia would derive from intervention is compared with the risk which it would run, one should be compelled to feel confidence in the sound sense of its statesmen and look forward to the near future with a fair measure of composure, were it not for Pan-Slav feelings and those who incite them.

BARON BEYENS.

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No. 106.

Berlin, le 26 mai 1913.

... On peut dire, tout au moins, sans risquer de se tromper que *la visite du couple royal d'Angleterre à Berlin* apparaît comme la confirmation et comme *la consécration aux yeux de l'Europe du rapprochement* qui s'est incontestablement opéré entre l'Allemagne et la Grande-Bretagne pendant *la guerre balkanique, où les deux États ont agi de concert pour la préservation de la paix européenne*. C'est un avertissement que la France ferait bien de méditer, au moment où elle se consume en efforts peut-être inutiles et destinés en tout cas à révéler à l'étranger l'état de décomposition interne de son armée, en vue de rétablir l'équilibre des forces entre elle et l'Allemagne.

Quant au voyage du Czar, il est une nouvelle preuve des *bonnes relations, inaugurées lors de l'entrevue de Potsdam et cimentées par celle de Port Baltique*, qui existent entre les Maisons régnantes des deux Empires voisins et aussi entre leurs Gouvernements. La guerre balkanique n'y a pas porté atteinte. . . .

Faut-il conclure de la visite des Souverains anglais à Berlin qu'un rapprochement anglo-allemand est en préparation, qui poursuivrait un but concret, tel que celui de l'absorption du Congo belge par l'Allemagne, un rapprochement de ce genre ne pouvant être réalisé, comme le prétend la *Post* de Berlin, que sous la forme d'une entente coloniale ? Nous sommes avertis

Berlin, May 26th, 1913.

... Without running any danger of being mistaken, it is in any case possible to say that the *visit of the English King and Queen to Berlin* appears in the eyes of Europe as the confirmation and consecration of the *rapprochement* between Germany and Great Britain which unmistakably took place *during the Balkan war, when the two States co-operated for the maintenance of peace*. France would do well to take this warning to heart, especially at this moment when she is devouring herself in efforts to re-establish the equilibrium of forces between herself and Germany, efforts which are perhaps useless, and are in any case calculated to reveal to foreign countries the state of internal decomposition of the French Army.

So far as the voyage of the Tsar is concerned, this furnishes a new proof of the *good relations* existing between the Imperial families and the two neighbouring Empires, *which were inaugurated at the meeting at Potsdam and cemented at Baltischport*. The Balkan war has in no way altered this. . . .

Is it possible to infer from the visit of the English King and Queen to Berlin that an Anglo-German *rapprochement* is in preparation which would pursue a concrete aim such as the absorption of Belgian Congo by Germany ? The *Berlin Post* maintains that this is the case, and that such a *rapprochement* could only take place in the form of a colonial agreement. The

par l'expérience de 1909 qu'un arrangement secret, conclu aux dépens du Congo par les Cabinets de Londres et de Berlin, n'aurait rien d'impossible. Mais en 1909 il ne s'agissait que d'une faible portion du territoire de la colonie belge, dont la possession nous était, d'ailleurs, contestée par l'Angleterre. *Aujourd'hui la "Post" parle, comme d'une chose toute naturelle, de la cession volontaire ou forcée de notre empire africain.* Il n'est pas admissible, quelles que soient les convoitises des coloniaux et des pangermanistes allemands, que l'Angleterre consente à introduire au cœur de l'Afrique une rivale dont la puissance expansive et économique menacerait les colonies britanniques elles-mêmes, et à lui céder le magnifique bassin du Congo, sans que l'Allemagne soit en mesure de lui offrir une compensation équivalente. . . .

experiences of 1909 have taught us that a secret agreement between the Cabinets of London and Berlin at the cost of the Congo is by no means an impossibility. But in 1909 the question at issue was merely that of a small part of the territory of the Belgian colony, the possession of which was, moreover, disputed against us by England. *To-day the "Post" speaks of the voluntary or compulsory cession of our African Empire as if it were an entirely natural matter.* Great as may be the covetousness of German colonial circles and of the Pan-Germans, it is not, however, to be assumed that England would be prepared to create in the heart of Africa a competitor whose expansive and economic power would threaten the English Colonies, and that she would cede to her the magnificent basin of the Congo, unless Germany were in a position to offer her equivalent compensation. . . .

No. 111.

Berlin, le 20 février 1914.

L'accord franco-allemand relatif à l'Asie Mineure conclu tout dernièrement à Berlin après de difficiles négociations et grâce à l'intervention personnelle du Chancelier, assure à la France une sphère d'action et d'influence considérable en Syrie. . . .

. . . La difficulté des négociations a résidé principalement dans la *délimitation précise des zones d'influences françaises et allemandes* (60 kilomètres de chaque côté de la voie ferrée), de façon à

Berlin, February 20th, 1914.

The Franco-German agreement regarding Asia Minor, which was quite recently concluded in Berlin after difficult negotiations and thanks to the personal intervention of the Chancellor, guarantees France a considerable sphere of activity and of influence in Syria. . . .

. . . The difficulty of the negotiations existed chiefly in the accurate *delimitation of the French and German zones of influence* (60 kilometres on each side of the railway) so as to

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éviter qu'elles ne se pénètrent réciproquement. La France conserve en outre les concessions de chemin de fer qu'elle a obtenues de la Turquie dans la riche région minière de l'ancienne Cappadoce, le long de la Mer Noire, et le railway très productif de Smyrne à Kassaba.

Sans doute elle est éliminée à tout jamais de la grande entreprise du Bagdadbahn, de cette ligne principale qui traversera de part en part l'Asie Mineure et drainera ses produits. . . .

prevent their interpenetration. France, moreover, keeps the railway concession which she obtained from Turkey in the rich mineral area of old Cappadocia along the coast of the Black Sea, and the very productive railway from Smyrna to Kassaba.

Without doubt she is excluded for all time from the great undertaking of the Baghdad Railway, this great line which will traverse Asia Minor from one side to the other and drain her products. . . .

No. 113.

Berlin, le 24 avril 1914.

. . . Les Allemands sont persuadés que l'Angleterre ne prendra jamais les armes, afin d'aider la France à reconquérir les provinces perdues.

M. Cambon voit encore la main de M. Isvolsky dans cette campagne inutile des journaux russes et français. M. Isvolsky est de nouveau en grande faveur à St - Pétersbourg, comme en témoigne la haute distinction, le cordon de Saint Alexandre Newski, qu'il vient de recevoir, mais à Paris il n'a pas l'oreille du Cabinet radical. Aussi l'Ambassadeur de France à Berlin espère-t-il que l'intrigant diplomate ira bientôt représenter le Czar à Londres. Il pourra s'y convaincre que l'opinion publique n'est pas disposée à voir l'Angleterre perdre sa liberté d'action par un traité formel qui lierait son sort à celui de la Russie et de la France.

Il est curieux de constater que c'est le parti radical anglais qui éprouve le plus de répugnance à

Berlin, April 24th, 1914.

. . . The Germans are convinced that England will never take up arms to help France to reconquer the lost provinces.

M. Cambon again sees the hand of M. Isvolsky in this purposeless campaign on the part of the Russian and French newspapers. M. Isvolsky is again in high favour at Petrograd, as is witnessed by the high distinction of the Order of St. Alexandre Newski which he has just received, but in Paris he does not possess the ear of the Radical Cabinet. The French Ambassador in Berlin hopes for this reason that the intriguing diplomatist will soon represent the Tsar in London. He will there be able to convince himself that public opinion is not disposed to see England lose her freedom of action by a formal treaty which would link her fate to that of Russia and France.

It is curious to note the fact that it is the English Radical party which feels most repug-

s'allier à la République. Ses tendances intransigeantes et son programme de réformes sociales devraient au contraire le rapprocher des radicaux français qui poursuivent de l'autre côté de la Manche, le même but politique. *Ses sympathies vont pourtant de préférence à l'Allemagne, malgré son gouvernement conservateur et plutôt réactionnaire. . . .*

Il semble à un observateur vivant à Berlin que *les liens de l'Entente cordiale se sont quelque peu détendus, que la pointe de cette arme défensive n'est plus tournée exclusivement contre l'Allemagne, comme elle le fut du temps du Roi Edouard, et que la Triple Entente est devenue plutôt un concert qu'une Union de Puissances, agissant ensemble dans certaines questions déterminées pour la poursuite d'intérêts communs.* Mais cette façon de voir peut être fausse ou influencée par la lecture d'écrits politiques dus à des plumes allemandes. Il serait fort intéressant pour moi de savoir ce que pensent, du caractère qu'a pris l'Entente cordiale, mes Collègues de Londres et de Paris.

BARON BEYENS.

nance against an alliance with France. Their irreconcilable tendencies and their programme of social reform ought, on the contrary, to bring them closer to the French Radicals, who are pursuing the same political ends on the other side of the Channel. *Yet their sympathies belong by preference to Germany in spite of its conservative and rather reactionary Government. . . .*

To an observer who lives in Berlin, it appears as if *the bonds of the Entente Cordiale had to some extent become looser, as if the point of this weapon of defence were no longer directed exclusively against Germany, as in the time of King Edward, as if the Triple Entente had become a concert rather than a Union of Powers* which in certain specific and closely defined questions act together in the pursuit of *common interests.* But this method of looking at things may be false or may be influenced by the perusal of political pamphlets emanating from German pens. It would be very interesting to me to know what my colleagues in London and Paris think of the character which the Entente Cordiale has assumed.

BARON BEYENS.

No. 118.

Berlin, le 12 juin 1914.

. . . *Les élections législatives en France, comme j'ai eu l'honneur de vous l'écrire le 14 mai dernier, avaient causé ici une grande satisfaction* qui s'était fait jour dans le langage de la presse, avec cette restriction cependant qu'il ne fallait pas espérer de la majorité de la nouvelle Chambre

Berlin, June 12th, 1914.

. . . As I had the honour to report to you on May 14th, the *elections for the Legislature in France have here evoked great satisfaction,* which found expression in the language of the Press, with the restriction, however, that no immediate abrogation of the law regarding three

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l'abrogation immédiate de la loi sur le service militaire de trois ans. . . .

. . . Le peuple français n'a pas montré à cette occasion l'abnégation patriotique dont il avait donné des preuves dans d'autres circonstances. Cela tient sans doute à la propagation des idées socialistes dans les classes inférieures de la nation. . . .

Il est résulté de cette agitation montrée par les Français une plus grande tension dans leurs rapports avec l'Empire voisin et l'idée, faussement répandue ou acceptée sans contrôle par les meilleurs esprits de ce pays-ci, que la guerre est inévitable dans un avenir rapproché, parce que la France la désire violemment et s'arme fébrilement pour s'y préparer. A Paris les mêmes intentions sont prêtées au Gouvernement Impérial dont plusieurs membres ont eu parfois, il faut en convenir, des paroles malheureuses; tel le Ministre de la Guerre parlant d'une "offensive foudroyante" et d'une "attaque brusquée" pour donner la victoire à l'armée allemande. Il n'y a peut-être encore aujourd'hui qu'une effroyable méprise chez l'un comme chez l'autre des deux peuples. La majorité de la nation française ne veut certainement pas d'une guerre et cette guerre ne serait pas nécessaire à l'Allemagne. . . .

years' military service was to be hoped for from the majority of the new Chamber. . . .

. . . On this occasion the French people did not show the patriotic self-sacrifice of which it has given proof on other occasions. This is without doubt to be attributed to the dissemination of socialistic ideas in the lower ranks of the nation. . . .

The result of this agitation thus manifested by the French was a greater tension in the relations to the neighbouring empire, and the growth of the idea which is falsely disseminated or uncritically accepted by the best minds in this country that war is inevitable in the near future, because France ardently desires it and is feverishly arming to prepare herself for it. In Paris the same intentions are ascribed to the Imperial Government; several of its members have certainly at times made use of unfortunate expressions; thus the Minister of War with his phrase about the "lightning offensive" and the "unexpected attack" to assure victory to the German Army. Perhaps even to-day there is nothing more than a terrible mutual misunderstanding in both the nations. The majority of the French people certainly does not want war, and Germany does not need this war. . . .

No. 119.

Berlin, le 2 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

La nouvelle que le Ministre d'Autriche-Hongrie à Belgrade avait été chargé de demander au Gouvernement serbe d'ouvrir une

Berlin, July 2nd, 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

The news that the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in Belgrade has been instructed to ask the Serbian Government

instruction contre les menées anarchistes dont l'Archiduc François-Ferdinand et la Duchesse de Hohenberg ont été les victimes et de laisser des agents de la police austro-hongroise prendre part aux recherches a excité un certain émoi dans les cercles diplomatiques de Berlin. Le fait que la résolution d'adresser cette demande au Cabinet de Belgrade a été prise à la suite d'une conférence entre le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, Comte Berchtold, le Chef de l'Etat-major général Conrad von Hötendorff, et le Ministre de la Guerre, Krobotin, grossit les commentaires que la nouvelle provoque. . . .

Mais tout de même la demande sort des règles ordinaires du droit. Quand un Etat accepte, à la suggestion d'un gouvernement étranger, de poursuivre sur son territoire des criminels, il confie les recherches à ses propres agents. La Serbie consentira-t-elle à subir le concours de policiers austro-hongrois? Si elle le refuse, comme une atteinte portée à ses droits de souveraineté, un conflit s'en suivra-t-il qui étant donnée la colère légitime des gouvernements de Vienne et de Budapest et les manifestations anti-serbes dont des villes de la monarchie sont le théâtre, pourrait dégénérer en hostilités ?

La Serbie n'en viendrait là, se dit-on à Berlin, que si elle se sentait appuyée par la Russie et le gouvernement du czar ne la soutiendrait pas, car il doit lui-même partager l'horreur et les craintes causées par le crime des régicides de Sarajewo.

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to open an inquiry into the anarchical intrigues to which the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and the Duchess of Hohenberg fell victims, and to allow the Austro-Hungarian police agents to take part in the investigations, has evoked a certain measure of uneasiness in the diplomatic circles of Berlin. The fact that the decision to address this demand to the Belgrade Cabinet was taken after a conference between Count Berchtold, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Conrad von Hötendorff, the Chief of the General Staff, and Krobotin, the Minister for War, increases the commentaries provoked by the news. . . .

But, nevertheless, the demand goes beyond the ordinary principles of law. When a State agrees, at the suggestion of a foreign Government, to proceed against criminals on its own territory, it entrusts its own officials with the investigations. Will Serbia agree to the collaboration of the Austro-Hungarian police officials? If it refuses this as an intrusion in her sovereign rights, will there then arise a conflict which might lead to hostilities, bearing in mind the justified indignation of the Governments in Vienna and Budapest and the anti-Serbian manifestations which have taken place in certain towns in the monarchy ?

It is said in Berlin that Serbia will only let matters go so far, if she feels herself supported by Russia, but the Government of the Tsar will not support her, for it must itself share the horror and the fear which the crime of the regicides of Serajevo has evoked.

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Nowhere in Beyens' reports—a point to which I shall frequently recur in later passages—do we find elaborated the theme, so beloved of Greindl, of the one-sided danger of war involved in the Entente's policy. Without concealing certain tendencies, especially in France and Russia, Greindl's successor repeatedly and with the utmost emphasis points to the dangerousness of the intransigent Balkan policy pursued by Austria with the uncritical support of Germany, to the fatal effect of Pan-German propaganda and to similar phenomena. The ascendancy of the pacific elements in France, the victory at the election of 1914 of the Radicals and Socialists who were unconditionally friendly to peace, the peaceful intentions of Russian policy conducted by Sazonof, the purely defensive tendency of the Entente Coalition, this "weapon of defence," the symptomatic significance of the German agreements with England and France regarding spheres of interest in Asia Minor, etc.—in short, all the factors which furthered peace are emphasised by the new Belgian Ambassador in an entirely impartial manner, and the disturbers of the peace on both sides are fittingly branded.

From Beyens' reports the German Government can certainly not deduce a shadow of justification for their action in ascribing to the Entente Powers any intention to attack or to strangle their opponents. The course they would have preferred would have been to silence this inconvenient diplomatist altogether, but even this would not have done. After the ambassadorial reports which had been found in the Brussels archives had been so far sifted that only those from three capitals (and of those only a very small fraction) were published, it would have been impossible to break off the Berlin reports suddenly with Greindl's departure in June 1912. This would have been too surprising and too suspicious a manipulation. In consequence, from among Beyens' reports those which were comparatively favourable were selected, but the compilers prudently stopped at the report of July 2nd, 1914, because in this report there is already to be found the sharpest attacks on the probable Austrian demands against Serbia which were at that time already being canvassed, and the later reports of the

Belgian Ambassador were certainly crushing for Austria, the battering-ram which had been pushed into the foreground, and for Germany, the real instigator of the war.

RÉSUMÉ OF THE EXTERNAL DEFECTS OF THE COLLECTION.

Thus we see that the collection of documents published by the Foreign Office cannot resist the simplest critical examination. Even the defects which are externally recognisable deprive it of any value as evidence.

I summarise these defects again as follows :

(a) The collection contains only reports from three capitals of the Great Powers, while the reports from the three other capitals are completely absent.

(b) Only a small portion even of the reports from Berlin, Paris, and London, dating from the years between 1905 and 1914, are printed, and these represent a prejudiced selection, while by far the greater portion of the reports is missing.

(c) Among the reports which are printed those of Baron Greindl, the Belgian Ambassador in Berlin, occupy a disproportionately large space. The explanation of this is to be found in the reports themselves, which taking them as a whole follow blindly and credulously in the track of Berlin politics and their journalistic abettors.

(d) The collection of reports breaks suddenly off on July 2nd, 1914, that is to say, just at the beginning of the European crisis which led to this war.

(e) The collection of reports contains a series of astonishing and suspicious lacunæ which "accidentally" almost always coincide with political events in which the German Government played a baneful rôle, giving occasion to sharp criticism.

(f) The second Hague Conference of 1907, as well as the Anglo-German negotiations for an understanding in the following years, down to 1912, are treated in an entirely inadequate manner in the printed reports.

(g) The typographical arrangement of the collection of reports produces in the reader a false picture of its contents. All the observations favourable to Germany and unfavourable to the Entente are emphasised in heavy type ; on

the other hand, everything that is unfavourable to Germany and favourable to the Entente Powers is reproduced in ordinary type.

(h) In various places where the reporting Ambassadors refer to their earlier reports, these earlier reports are not to be found in the collection.

In the eyes of the impartial investigator these externally recognisable defects in the collection of documents deprive it of all value. The material existing in the Brussels archives has been so sifted and resifted and again resifted by the German Government, that it need occasion no surprise if in the end a complete picture emerges flattering to the authorities in the Wilhelmstrasse. The officials of the Foreign Office who were entrusted with this agreeable task of sifting have thrown almost 1,400 reports into the great retort; they have allowed more than 1,200 to fall through the holes in the sieve; among the remaining 200 they have made a further careful selection, they have separated the chaff from the grain, and then in the remnant designed for publication they have typographically emphasised all that is advantageous, without sparing the printer's ink. And now they seek to persuade the world: What we are placing before you is the view of Belgian diplomacy regarding the attitude of the various Great Powers, and this view is at the same time the authentic expression of reality. Futile endeavour! The collection of the Foreign Office proves no more than all the similar attempts of the German Government, namely, the convulsive effort of the guilty to whitewash themselves, and their cunning unscrupulousness in procuring the necessary soft-soap.

THE INTERNAL DEFECTS OF THE REPORTS.

THE PERSONAL POSITION OF THE BELGIAN REPORTERS.

Even if the collection were *not* compiled in this tendencious manner, even if it were not so incomplete and defective as it really is, the views of the Belgian Ambassadors in London, Paris, and Berlin must nevertheless be accepted only *cum grano salis*.

The Belgian Ambassadors were representatives of a small neutral State, who in the nature of things were not invited to participate in the negotiations between the Great Powers. Everything that was the subject of conversation and negotiation with the Ambassadors in the cabinets of the Foreign Ministers, everything that was discussed and decided at the meetings of monarchs and the leading Ministers of the Great Powers, only reached the ears of the Belgian Ambassadors at second hand as a matter of hearsay; in the interests of their country these men may well have devoted special attention to the discussions and decisions of the great, but they were certainly not taken into the confidence of any of the leading Ministers or diplomatists. One thing is clear: on the peace of Europe depended also the weal or the woe of the small country, so unhappily hemmed in between the great States, whose territory had already so often been called upon to furnish the battlefield for the struggles of the great. For this reason the Ambassadors of Belgium may constantly have been pricking their ears so that they might observe in due time every distant storm; but this very anxiety on the subject of European hurricanes, comprehensible as it is, may often have clouded their vision, may often have conjured up before them terrifying phantoms which in reality had no existence. That feelings of anxiety easily lead to diseased imaginations and to hallucinations is a familiar fact in psychiatry.

Had the Kingdom of Belgium been entirely unconcerned in European conflicts, had its security and existence been entirely independent of such conflicts, it might be possible to recognise in the reports of the Belgian Ambassadors the quality which the introductory words of the Berlin Foreign Office attribute to them, namely, that they are an objective diplomatic account by the "representatives of a State which is only indirectly involved in great world-politics, merely as spectators, so to speak." In reality, however, as experience shows, and as every diplomatic or military expert must long ago have foreseen, Belgium was directly concerned in the highest degree in European events. According to the plans of the German

General Staff, which were everywhere known, Belgium was singled out as the whipping-boy on whose back the Great Powers would fight out their sanguinary conflicts. In these circumstances the position of the Belgian Ambassadors was a peculiarly difficult and responsible one. It was their duty to keep their Government in touch with all that was taking place between the Great Powers, to collect and report all the symptoms which pointed to tension between the Great Powers or to the danger of war; on the other hand, they were never in a position, of their own observation, to report what was occurring in the Chancelleries of the Great Powers. In the ante-chambers and corridors of all the diplomatists and statesmen directly concerned they had to fish about for news, to dance attendance, to spy and infer, and had then to submit to their Government the uncertain result of their laborious investigations as reports on the actual situation, whereas in truth they were merely personal reports of their own opinions, a hotch-potch from all possible sources, more or less turbid, seen through the spectacles of the diplomatist in question.

THE GERMAN DIPLOMATISTS' "LOVE OF TRUTH."

In many cases also the Belgian Ambassadors, the "disinterested spectators" of the world-drama, were intentionally kept in the dark by the chief actors. In this task of designedly misleading the Belgians, the German statesmen in particular showed an astonishing degree of skill; the difficult task, indeed, devolved on them, in presence of the rumours which had for years been current in Europe that Germany in the "inevitable" war with France would march upon Paris through Belgium, of calming the small neighbouring country and lulling it into a deceptive security. Particularly instructive as an example of this method is No. 12 of the first Belgian Grey Book to which I have already referred in my book (*J'accuse*, p. 278). In 1911, on the occasion of the diplomatic discussions regarding the fortifications of Flushing, these fears as to a violation of neutrality by Germany had reappeared in a particularly active form. Herr von

Bethmann was asked by the Belgian Government to dispel these fears, in the interests of the good relations between the two countries, by a public declaration in the Reichstag. What, however, was the reply of the German Chancellor? Germany had no intention of violating Belgian neutrality, but he could not make a public declaration in this sense, as thereby the military situation of Germany in regard to the French Republic might be weakened in the event of war: France, secured on the north, might concentrate all her force on the east.

A similar assurance was given by Herr von Jagow, the Foreign Secretary, in the Budget Commission of the Reichstag on April 29th, 1913, on the occasion of the discussion of the great Army Bill: he answered an inquiry on the subject made by a Social Democrat with the definite declaration that Germany was determined to respect under all circumstances the neutrality of Belgium, which was guaranteed by international treaties. Herr von Heeringen, who was then Minister for War, confirmed the statement of the Foreign Secretary (see the enclosure to No. 12 of the first Belgian Grey Book).

As no one will be so hardy as to assert that the plans of the German General Staff, presupposing the passage through Belgium, were not lying in the drawers of the General Staff in Berlin in a state of complete readiness long before the outbreak of the present war, it is possible to imagine the "love of truth" of the German diplomatists and the *sangfroid* with which the Belgian statesmen in Berlin, and possibly also those elsewhere, were deceived according to the needs of high politics. It is indeed amusing to observe these same men, Bethmann and Jagow, who had given evidence of so great a love of truth in their dealings with the Belgian diplomatists, now seeking to represent their reports, in so far as after a careful sifting they are favourable to their cause, as models of the art of writing authentic history. If the leading Ministers of the other Great Powers deceived the Belgian Ambassadors half as much as was done in the Wilhelmstrasse, it is easy to imagine how faithful must have been the picture of the European situation which was drawn by the Belgians in their reports.

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In this connection the fact is also worthy of note that the above-mentioned incidents of 1911 and 1913 are not so much as mentioned in the collection of reports, although the question of the possible march of the German armies through Belgium was one of life and death for this small country. In his reports written in 1911, so far as the Foreign Office has printed them, Baron Greindl is entirely silent regarding the inquiry addressed to Bethmann and the answer which he gave. He cannot possibly have failed to report on this pre-eminently important incident. The report was either unfavourable to the German statesmen, or else it was rightly felt in Berlin that after what actually happened in August, 1914, Bethmann's former reassuring statement was bound to appear as an obvious lie. This explains why this incident is not mentioned in the German collection of reports.

The same plan was followed with the incident of 1913. In this case, however, it is possible to prove documentarily the tactics of suppression: Grey Book I (enclosure to No. 12) gives us Baron Beyens' original report, telling us minutely of the incidents which took place in the Budget Commission. This report, however, dating from the spring of 1913, must have been found among the documents unearthed in Brussels, but it is missing in the German collection.

These two suppressions of highly important documents furnish a valuable contribution to the material on which to form a judgment on the German collection of documents.

* * * * *

Another good example of the way in which German diplomatists deceived those of Belgium is furnished by Nos. 19 and 20 of the first Grey Book. In the course of August 2nd, Davignon, the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, communicated to Herr von Below-Saleske, the German Ambassador, the statement which Klobukowski, the French Ambassador in Brussels, had given the Belgian Government on the previous day with reference to the observation of Belgian neutrality. Herr von Below expressed his thanks for the great attention, but regretted

that he had not yet received any instruction from his Government to make an official communication on the subject; his personal view as to the feeling of security with which Belgium could regard her Eastern neighbour was well known. The German Ambassador gave no further answer in reply to Davignon's observation that while he had no ground, after the innumerable previous utterances of the German Ambassador, to doubt their absolute correctness, nevertheless in the interests of his country he would attach great importance to a formal declaration by the German Government. On the other hand, at seven o'clock on the same evening, he handed to the Belgian Minister the Ultimatum (Grey Book I, No. 20) in which, with a view to avoiding military violence, the passage through Belgium was demanded as "essential for the self-defence of Germany," and it was explained by reference to the intentions to force a passage, lyingly attributed to France.

This example also shows with what love of truth Belgian diplomacy was treated by that of Germany. Let us suppose that occurrences similar to those which took place on the afternoon and the evening of August 2nd between the Belgian Minister and the German Ambassador had taken place in any other European capital between the Belgian Ambassador there and the Foreign Minister in question, that the Ambassador had sent home a separate report on each of the two incidents, but that a compiler of documents had printed the first report only, while suppressing the second;—such a hypothesis gives one some idea how a tendencious selection of documents, even without direct falsification, may distort the truth, and indeed entirely reverse it.

BELGIUM, A COMMON OBJECT OF PLUNDER.

I said above that the Belgian reports—quite apart from their tendencious compilation by the German Government—further possessed little or no value as evidence, inasmuch as the Belgian Ambassadors were informed of high politics only by hearsay, and because they were frequently directly deceived by the leading statesmen of the Great Powers,

The dishonesty of the great towards the small was also attributable in many cases to the fact that Belgium, like other small States (for example, Portugal), was considered as a common object of plunder, and its oversea possessions were viewed as objects of compensation for the settlement of the rivalries of the Great European Powers.

An interesting example of this is provided by No. 2 in the second Grey Book, the text of which, on account of its importance, I reproduce below. It relates to a report of Baron Beyens of April 2nd, 1914, regarding a confidential communication which Jules Cambon, the French Ambassador, had made to the Belgian Ambassador regarding a conversation between Cambon and Jagow :

GREY BOOK II, No. 2.

Berlin, le 2 avril 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

M. l'Ambassadeur de France m'a fait part ce matin confidentiellement d'une conversation qu'il avait eue tout dernièrement avec M. de Jagow, après un dîner intime auquel il avait été invité chez ce dernier.

Pendant une récente absence de M. Cambon, le Secrétaire d'Etat aux Colonies, rencontrant le Chargé d'affaires de France dans une soirée et, quelques jours après, l'attaché naval, leur avait dit que l'Allemagne et la France devraient bien s'entendre pour la construction et le raccordement des lignes de chemin de fer qu'elles projetaient de construire en Afrique, afin que ces lignes ne se fissent pas concurrence.

M. Cambon demanda ce que signifiaient ces ouvertures. M. de Jagow répondit que la question était encore à l'étude, mais qu'il était d'avis, comme M. Solf, qu'une entente entre les deux pays et aussi avec l'Angleterre serait des plus utiles. Dans ce cas, reprit l'Ambassadeur, il faudrait inviter la Belgique à conférer avec nous, car elle construit de nouveaux chemins de fer au Congo et, à mon sentiment, il serait préférable que la Conférence se tint à Bruxelles.

"Oh ! non," répondit le Secrétaire d'Etat, "*car c'est aux dépens de la Belgique que notre accord devrait se conclure.*—Comment cela ?—*Ne trouvez-vous pas que le Roi Léopold a placé sur les épaules de la Belgique un poids trop lourd ?* La Belgique n'est pas assez riche pour mettre en valeur ce vaste domaine. C'est une entreprise au-dessus de ses moyens financiers et de ses forces d'expansion. Elle sera obligée à y renoncer."

L'Ambassadeur trouva ce jugement tout à fait exagéré.

M. de Jagow ne se tint pas pour battu. Il développa l'opinion que *seules les grandes Puissances sont en situation de coloniser.* Il dévoila même le fond de sa pensée en soutenant que *les petits Etats ne pourraient*

plus mener, dans la transformation qui s'opérait en Europe au profit des nationalités les plus fortes, par suite du développement des forces économiques et des moyens de communication, l'existence indépendante dont ils avaient joui jusqu'à présent. Ils étaient destinés à disparaître ou à graviter dans l'orbite des grandes Puissances.

L'Ambassadeur répondit que ces vues n'étaient pas du tout celles de la France ni, autant qu'il pouvait le savoir, celles de l'Angleterre ; qu'il persistait à penser que certains accords étaient nécessaires pour la mise en valeur de l'Afrique, mais que, dans les conditions présentées par M. de Jagow, toute entente était impossible.

Sur cette réponse, M. de Jagow se hâta de dire qu'il n'avait exprimé que des idées toutes personnelles, qu'il n'avait parlé qu'à titre privé et non en Secrétaire d'Etat s'adressant à l'Ambassadeur de France.

M. Cambon n'en attache pas moins une signification très sérieuse aux vues que M. de Jagow n'a pas craint de dévoiler dans cet entretien. Il a pensé qu'il était de notre intérêt de connaître *les dispositions dont le dirigeant officiel de la politique allemande est animé à l'égard des petits Etats et de leurs colonies.*

J'ai remercié l'Ambassadeur de sa communication absolument confidentielle. Vous en apprécierez certainement toute la gravité.

BARON BEYENS.

The conversation here reproduced has, it is true, been denied by Jagow ; I have, however, no reason to attach greater importance to this *démenti* than to the statement of the Belgian Ambassador whom the Berlin Foreign Office itself cites as a Crown witness in these cases in which it believes it can deduce favourable conclusions from his reports. I have equally little reason to distrust Jules Cambon, the French Ambassador, who has always been regarded by all his colleagues as absolutely trustworthy and truth-loving—a man who was honourably mentioned even by the German semi-official Press on his departure from Berlin, whose numerous reports in the Yellow Book cannot fail to produce on every unprejudiced reader the impression of sincerity and of an earnest desire for peace.

Jagow, moreover, in no way disputed the genuineness of Beyens' report, but merely the substance of his alleged conversation with Cambon. Beyens' report is thus recognised as authentic, and it is merely the account given by Cambon, the French Ambassador, to Beyens, which is described as not being in accordance with the facts. It

would also be a difficult matter for the German Government to dispute the authenticity of Beyens' report, inasmuch as they must have found this report in the original in the Brussels archives. In fact, they print from 1914 four reports of Beyens, those of February 20th, April 24th, June 12th, and July 2nd. Between the first and second of these reports comes that of April 2nd, of which an extract or a duplicate must have remained in the hands of the Belgian Government. Why did Herr Bethmann and Herr Jagow suppress Beyens' report of April 2nd? Because it was inconvenient and compromising for them, because it was a proof of the brutal ruthlessness of the great Germany against the small Belgium, a proof of Germany's imperialistic tendencies in the direction of conquest.

The suppression of the report in question is a further symptom of the tactics of falsification pursued by the authorities in the Wilhelmstrasse. It is extremely to be regretted that the Belgian Government are apparently not in a position to fill up other gaps in the German collection in the same way as has been done by means of the report of April 2nd, 1914. From this fortuitous example it is possible to imagine how changed a picture would emerge if all the lacunæ in the German collection of reports were completed in the same way—above all if the reports from the three missing capitals were added and the collection were continued down to the outbreak of war. Since such a completion and amplification is apparently impossible—presumably because of the absence of the relevant documents—the conscientious inquirer is obliged to fasten on a few definite examples, and from these to draw his conclusions regarding the whole.

So far as Jagow's utterances are concerned, the report of April 2nd, 1914, breathes the same spirit as that which has governed and still governs the whole of Pan-German literature both before and during the war, the spirit of ruthless lust of plunder existing in the powerful great against the impotent and weak, the spirit to which Bernhardi gives expression in the principles: The time of small neutral States is past, they must either disappear or seek

support from one of the great States ; above all, they are neither justified nor fitted to possess extensive colonial territories which they are unable to exploit to the same degree as a great Power.¹ The spirit of Bernhardi and of Pan-Germany moves over the conversation between Jagow and Cambon and gives it internal probability, apart from its authentication by the French diplomatist.

* * * * *

I have already spoken of Baron Greindl's Prussian way of thinking. But Count Lalaing and Baron Guillaume, the Ambassadors in London and Paris, as members of the Clerical Conservative Government which had for years before the war been in power in Belgium, were also bound in the nature of things to feel more sympathy with the absolutist and reactionary Imperial Powers than with the democratic and progressive Western Powers. Moreover, it is not to be forgotten that the Government and the people in Belgium were anything but benevolently disposed towards the English on account of their African policy, involving, as it did, a menace to the independence of the Congo State—a policy which at times threatened to degenerate into an open conflict between Great Britain and the small neutral State. It is a well-known fact, confirmed by many political incidents, that the English had for a time a strong desire for the Belgian Congo or for a part of it in order to round off their African possessions. There was a danger that this English desire might agree with the voracious German hunger for an increase of colonial power, and that the promising African Empire of the small defenceless State might become the innocent victim of the ravenousness of the two Great Powers. How far the authorities in Berlin had gone in contemplating this common robbery of a third party is proved by the conversation between Jagow and Cambon mentioned above (Grey Book II, No. 2). The fact that England had at first cast covetous eyes on the Belgian Congo Empire, the animated campaign which developed in consequence between the Governments and the Press of the two countries, may also have been a contributory cause in disposing the Belgian Ambassadors

¹ See also, on this, *J'accuse*, p. 234.

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in advance to an attitude unfavourable to English policy.

Apart from the external and statistically demonstrable defects of the German collection of documents, there are thus also many internal grounds which show the reports of the three Belgian Ambassadors to be not an objective historical account, but much rather to be partial and subjectively influenced.

THE LEGEND OF THE ANGLO-BELGIAN OFFENSIVE ALLIANCE.

I should like here to observe this in parenthesis: In publishing the Belgian ambassadorial reports with their undeniable reflections—in places—on the policy of the Entente, and in presenting them to us as an historically faithful picture of European reality, the German Government—naturally without meaning to do so and without even thinking of it—cut away the ground from their assertion of a conspiracy between Belgium and the Entente Powers, directed against Germany. It is obvious that Belgium had, and could have, only *one* governing interest, the maintenance of the peace of Europe, which at the same time implied the maintenance of her neutrality. This appears in every sentence of the ambassadorial reports, and further it is not denied by the German Government. How, then, is it supposed that Belgium should have come to unite herself with just these Powers whose policy is repeatedly represented in the ambassadorial reports as involving a challenge to German chauvinism, and as constituting in *this* sense a danger of war? Why should she have united herself against just that Power which, according to the tendencious collection of reports, appears as the lover and maintainer of peace, as the innocent victim of the militaristic and nationalistic tendencies on the other side? Since Belgium was interested only in peace, it was after all but natural, assuming that she were in any way to emerge from her strict neutrality, that she should have united herself to that Power which ostensibly—according to Germany's assertions and certain passages in Greindl's reports—was the surest guardian of the peace of Europe.

In so far as concerns the alleged Anglo-Belgian conspiracy of Barnardiston and Ducarne in 1906—that alleged “agreement” (convention) which in truth was merely a non-committal “conversation” between military experts—we know from Greindl’s report of April 5th, 1906 (*Belgian Documents*, No. 17), that this conversation between the English Military Attaché and the Chief of the Belgian General Staff was well known to the Ambassador in Berlin. We likewise know Greindl’s sympathies for Germany and his blind confidence in Germany’s love of peace. Are we to believe that Greindl would for a moment have continued to hold his office as Ambassador in Berlin if these discussions between the English colonel and the Chief of the Belgian General Staff had had, even in the remotest degree, the character of a “convention,” a *rapprochement*, or a complicity of Belgium with England, if they had been pointed against Germany? This one consideration in itself cuts away all ground from the charge brought against Belgium of having been faithless and of having acted in violation of her neutrality.

There is nothing that so completely destroys the legend of the Anglo-Belgian offensive alliance against Germany as the German collection of reports. Either the reports speak the truth, that is to say they are not tendenciously compiled so as to produce an untrue picture, and in that case the Anglo-Belgian conspiracy is at once unmasked as an invention, or else the reports say what is not true, that is, the tendencious compilation falsifies the whole picture of Europe (which would appear entirely different if reference were made to *all* the Belgian ambassadorial reports from *all* the capitals), and in that case all the conclusions which the German Government seek to deduce from their collection collapse. Then the alleged proof, on the one hand, of “the German Emperor’s love of peace, the pacific tendencies of German policy and Germany’s great patience” is left in the air owing to the absence of the appropriate evidence, and so on the other hand is the proof of the “provocative action of England and France, Isvolsky’s rage for revenge,” etc. It is the old experience: He who wants to prove too much, proves nothing.

WHAT SHOULD THE REPORTS PROVE?

WHAT DO THEY REALLY PROVE?

So much for the general value of the collection of documents. Let us, however, assume that all the external and internal defects, inherent in this collection, did not exist; that it really gave a faithful picture of European politics in the years from 1905 to 1914, objectively presented by impartial observers, the question remains: What then do these reports really contain? What, on Germany's statement, ought they to prove? What defensive thesis of the German Government should they support? What do they prove in reality?

So far as I am aware, this investigation, which of course forms the crucial point in judging these documents, has hitherto been undertaken only by such writers as have expressly taken as their task the defence of Germany and Austria, the proof of their innocence of the war. I have already mentioned above that extracts from the Belgian ambassadorial reports form one of the favourite and most approved methods of proving Germany's innocence. If even the official extracts from the total extant material give such a one-sided picture as is presented by the collection, it is possible to imagine what emerges when biassed writers arrange extracts from the extracts, and seek to place their doubly-sifted material before us as historical truth. The dark-grey picture sketched by the German Government becomes a pitch-dark night of raven blackness, enveloping with its dark wings the guilty Entente Governments.

What railing once rose to my lip
 If any poor girl made a slip!
 My tongue hard words could scarcely frame
 Enough to brand another's shame;
 It looked so black that blacken it
 Howe'er I might they seemed unfit
 To stamp its blackness infinite.¹

These words of Gretchen at the well appear to be the guiding star of the German alarmists, who have taken upon themselves the easy and grateful task of collect-

¹ [Sir Theodore Martin's translation.]

ing from the German publication all the statements containing any reflection upon the Entente Powers, which are already emphasised in heavy black type, and with the help of these of concocting an apparently deadly poisonous drink for the disturbers of the peace, England, Russia and France.

Confronted with this method of accusation, which has hitherto been unimpeached and undisputed, it appears to me to be at last high time to inquire thoroughly into these matters, to subject the Belgian documents to a careful analysis, to determine what is the conclusion which ostensibly they are supposed to support, and to investigate whether and how far this alleged proof can be regarded as having been furnished.

What is it that the German Government propose to prove by means of their publication? When all is said their object can only be to free themselves from the guilt of the war. Such an exoneration could, however, be supported on two grounds only:

either on the ground that an attack was in fact made by the Entente Powers in the summer of 1914;

or—if the standpoint of the preventionists is assumed—on the ground of an attack which it can be demonstrated was intended to be carried out at a later date and which it was necessary to anticipate at the most favourable moment.

If the publication of the ambassadorial reports is supposed to have any meaning or purpose, it can only have for its end to justify either the German war of defence or the German war of prevention.

Does the publication achieve this object? Is it, in fact, calculated to serve this purpose?

(a) It cannot serve to justify the war of defence, if only because the collection ends on July 2nd, 1914, that is to say, three weeks before the Austrian Ultimatum. As has already been mentioned, Beyens' report of July 2nd already contains in anticipation a sharp criticism of the demands which it was foreseen Austria would address to Serbia. As a matter of course, at this early stage of the

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matter there is no question of any desire, intention, or menace of war on the part of the Entente Powers—as indeed Beyens, in contradistinction to Greindl, nowhere ascribes intentions of war to the Entente Governments. This one fact in itself—the conclusion of the collection of reports five days after the murder of Serajevo and twenty-one days before the Austrian Ultimatum—proves that the collection of documents is absolutely without significance as evidence of the war of defence, and indeed that it has nothing to do with the actual conflict which led to the war. This disposes once for all of the view that the official publication is intended to prove the thesis of the war of defence.

(b) There thus only remains the thesis of the war of prevention. To prove this thesis can alone be the object of the German publication. In so far, however, as this thesis is the object of their publication, the German Government disown their own words, and give the lie to all the Imperial, Royal, and Ministerial proclamations, speeches, and appeals, which have continued without interruption down to the present day to hold up, to the hapless victims of this butchery of the nations, the “shamefully attacked Fatherland” as a symbol of consolation. Even if it were true that the Belgian documents proved the existence in fact of all the presuppositions which, according to our earlier explanations, could justify a preventive war on the theory of the preventionists, nevertheless the German Government by the mere fact of venturing upon such a demonstration would acknowledge and confess: “We are waging no war of defence, but we were forced to a preventive war of aggression, since otherwise we would have been attacked by the other side.”

The situation is thus extremely unfavourable for the German Government. If they succeed in proving that the others wanted to attack us, with their “war of defence” they stand convicted as liars before the world and before their own people. If they do not succeed in proving this, the Belgian publication has completely failed in its purpose: the German war will not even have been justified as a war of prevention, much less then as a war of defence.

DO THE REPORTS PROVE THE EXISTENCE OF A WARLIKE
AGGRESSIVE CONSPIRACY ON THE PART OF THE ENTENTE
POWERS ?

Now I maintain :

That the collected ambassadorial reports—tendenciously as they may have been selected, assailable as they may be individually, defective as they may be taken as whole—furnish not a trace, not a semblance of support for the view that the Entente Powers had intended to undertake an armed attack upon Germany either in 1914 or at a later date.

Even the extracts from the extracts which confront us everywhere in the war literature of Germany prove no intention to attack, no offensive conspiracy, no military aggressive plans, but merely nationalistic tendencies in France, agitations inspired by jealousies in England, Pan-Slav antipathies in Russia. It would be a foolish endeavour to seek to deny the existence of these tendencies of thought in the Entente countries, which are repeatedly mentioned in the reports, as at least an expression of the opinion of the Belgian Ambassadors. I expressly admit that the Ambassadors in London, Paris, and Berlin frequently speak of a dangerous policy pursued by King Edward, of a resuscitation of chauvinistic tendencies in France, of Isvolsky's thirst for intrigue and revenge. All these passages are emphasised in heavy type in the German publication and anyone can easily find them. It is therefore unnecessary that I should print them here ; I confirm their existence and hope by doing so to be proof against the charge that my quotations are prejudiced and one-sided, that what is unfavourable to my thesis of accusation is maliciously omitted. In making this admission I must, however, again emphasise that it may be presumed that even this reflection on the Entente Powers would appear in an entirely different light, or at least would be compensated by an equal or stronger reflection on the Central Powers, if *all* the ambassadorial reports from *all* capitals had been published.

Nevertheless, I can and will readily admit that the Belgian Ambassadors, so far as their reports are before us, say much that involves a charge on the rulers and the Governments of the Entente Powers. I can all the more readily admit this, inasmuch as what they do say is of no importance whatever for the question with which we are here engaged. So far as the Belgian reports are regarded as evidence, the war of defence is, as we have already seen, excluded for reasons outside the reports. For the war of prevention it is not, however, sufficient to prove the existence on the other side of suspicious, envious, revengeful and intriguing feelings, nor even the existence of a provocative policy. The preventive war demands for its justification—if indeed it is ever to be justified, a view which in my opinion is to be rejected on principle—but even in the opinion of the preventionists it demands the definite, demonstrable intention of an attack by arms on the other side.¹

The question which we have to investigate is thus, stated simply, as follows :

Do the Belgian ambassadorial reports prove the existence of an intention on the part of the Entente Powers to carry out an attack by war on Germany or her allies ? Yes or No ?

If the answer is in the affirmative, the preventive war, at any rate according to the theories of the preventionists, is justified. If the answer is in the negative, the preventive war is without justification ; in that case the documents are, just as in the case of the war of defence, of no value for the preventive war either.

* * * * *

If the documents had contained anything that hinted at real military aggressive intentions on the part of the Entente Powers, the German Government would not have been slow to point this out with special distinctness in the introductory chapter. Any indication of this kind is wanting. Even the German Government can deduce from

¹ See on this *The Crime* Vol. II., Chap. I. The Preventive War. Chap. II. The Theory and the Practice of the Preventive War.

the Belgian reports nothing more than "accusatory material against the policy of the Entente Powers."

The English Government as the mainspring, King Edward as the standard-bearer of the efforts made by the Entente in the direction of the isolation of Germany, form a constantly recurring theme of the reports.

English presumption and the claims of England to a monopoly of world-trade and to the control of the seas, the activities of the English Press of incitement, are characterised in fitting language. The insincerity of France's Moroccan policy, the continued breaches of treaty towards Germany of which France, supported by England, was guilty in Morocco, are established. The writers point out the growth of French chauvinism and the recrudescence of Franco-German points of conflict as the result of the Entente with England.

These and the remaining phrases of the introductory chapter show in the vague and nebulous accusations brought against the other side that even the German Government are unable to infer from the Belgian reports the existence of an aggressive conspiracy. The cardinal point of the German accusation is the charge that the policy initiated by King Edward was directed to the "Isolation" of Germany, and that in this way it engendered the state of European tension which finally led to the war.

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE "ISOLATION OF GERMANY" ?

As a matter of fact the Belgian Ambassadors—and primarily, of course, Greindl—refer in many places to this English "policy of isolation," and they depict the dangers to Europe which this involved. What, however, is the meaning of isolation? Can there, indeed, be any question of isolation, when Germany had for decades been united in a Triple Alliance with her allies, Austria and Italy, and had in fact been so united at a time when an Entente had never been mentioned? Can anyone seriously maintain that the Triple Alliance had been a weaker, less influential, less imposing structure than the Triple Entente? Had not the Triple Alliance—a fact to which I have already referred in my first book—merely by virtue of the military

power of Germany so authoritative a voice in the Council of Europe that almost all the conflicts of the last decade, in which any of the members of the Triple Alliance was involved, were decided in favour of the member of the Alliance? Was not Austria able to carry through with success the Bosnian annexation, and Italy her war in Tripoli? Were not all the questions regarding the Adriatic which arose in connection with the Balkan War decided in the sense and according to the wishes of Austria and Italy? Did not the Moroccan conflict, even if it did not lead to a diplomatic victory for Germany, at any rate lead to a valuable territorial settlement? Were not the questions affecting national interests in Asia Minor disposed of immediately before the war by just treaties between Germany on the one side and England and France on the other? Is it not the case that an Anglo-German agreement with reference to certain territories in Central Africa was already drawn up on the outbreak of war, and only remained to be signed and ratified? ¹ Were not the industry and trade of Germany enjoying unhampered in every country and on every sea a period of increasingly brilliant development? What is the meaning of "isolation" as applied to a Power like Germany, which, quite apart from her own strength, had by her side two allies who were bound by treaties, whereas the other side relied merely on an alliance of two Powers and an entirely loose relationship of the nature of an Entente with England? Where, how, and when did the alleged isolation of Germany manifest itself? What damage did the German people suffer, as a result of this alleged isolation, in their culture, their trade, their industry, their power, their influence in the world? I have elsewhere proved, by reference to the writings of the German Secretary of State, Dr. Helfferich, the phenomenal development of Germany during the period of the Emperor William's reign.²

If *that* was the result of the English policy of isolation, then every country and every people might well wish to be "isolated" in this manner.

¹ See with regard to all the details of these agreements Prince Lichnowsky's Memoir, *My London Mission, 1912-1914*.

² See *J'accuse*, p. 40 *et seq.*; *The Crime*, Vol. II., p. 424 *et seq.*

In the more recent diplomatic history of Europe we have experienced the case of the isolation of one State. That State was England, before the conclusion of the Entente with France. But how did the English themselves describe this isolation? They referred to it as a "splendid isolation." They were proud to be able to play an influential part, even while standing alone in Europe, without alliances and without ententes. It was particularly the Unionist Government—far more inclined than the later Liberal Government to ideas of expansion—which had experience of this isolation and felt it to be a proud mark of their own power and greatness. As Tell says to Stauffacher, "The strong man is most powerful when alone." From an economic, political, or cultural point of view was England in a worse position then, when she was so splendidly isolated? Did Germany feel unhappy, did she in any way fall short in power, influence and industrial activity in the years before the war, when she was supposed to be isolated? Supposed to be! In reality Triple Alliance stood opposite Triple Entente, two mighty groups stood opposed to each other; there was even a considerable excess of power on the side of the group led by Germany. The course of this war, indeed, proves that Germany and Austria almost alone—supported only by the inferior strength of Bulgaria and Turkey, without the third member of the alliance, Italy, indeed, against that country and the three other Great Powers—have now for four years been able to maintain with success the Titanic struggle. Germany, all-powerful Germany, which to-day boasts that she has in alliance with one great Power and two small Powers been able to hold out against the other four Great Powers with America and all the rest of the world in addition, which boasts that she is unconquerable despite the overwhelming superiority of her enemies—it is Germany which pathetically laments that then, before the war, she was deserted and isolated—at a time when the raising of her mailed fist, the revelation of her shining armour, was sufficient to force the other Powers on their knees and make them on all occasions submissive to her will.

I ask again: What is the meaning of being "isolated"?

Is the act of "isolation" equivalent to a desire to attack, a desire to destroy? A criminal is isolated, so that he may no longer be able to injure human society. A wild beast is isolated, so that it may not kill and devour us. A madman is isolated, so as to prevent him from being dangerous to his fellow men. Does it follow from this that it is intended to destroy the criminal, the wild beast, the madman? The purpose is merely to protect those around from destruction. Germany, as none know better than the Germans, was anything but isolated: she had her own allies, her own strength, her unlimited freedom of movement in the world. What is described in Pan-German literature and by a few Belgian Ambassadors following in the train of Pan-Germanism, what above all is described by the German Government in their introductory chapter to the collection of documents as the "isolation of Germany" was nothing else than a prophylactic measure against the criminality, the predatory instincts, and the attacks of warlike insanity which were feared from the side of Pan-Germanic Germany and its exalted and serene leaders. In my book I have already described the Entente as a defensive alliance. The ground for the union of the Entente Powers was the fear of Germany, and this constantly increasing fear had arisen from the continuous growth in the power of the Pan-German movement, the continuous growth in the influence at the German Imperial Court of the war-party led by the Crown Prince—it had arisen from the policy of Bülow and Bethmann which, with its armaments by land and sea, with its openly proclaimed repudiation of the ideals of The Hague, with its ever-increasing surrender to the war-incitements of Pan-Germanism, brought the danger of a German war of aggression nearer and nearer. As against Germany, isolation meant nothing more than protection against attack; it in no way implied encirclement or strangulation in the sense of a restriction of the freedom of movement. The isolation-cell in which Germany was enclosed was the whole world; everywhere on foreign territory free competition with all nations in the pursuit of commerce stood open to her, and although Germany had come somewhat late to the partition of the world,

even her own territory beyond the seas could be constantly extended with the concurrence of her European competitors.

* * * * *

A few examples from the reports may show that the Belgian Ambassadors also—including even Greindl with his German nationalistic tendencies—viewed the alleged isolation of Germany exactly in the above sense, in the sense, that is to say, of an attempt to render Germany innocuous, not as a preparation for an armed attack.

No. 31.

Berlin, le 30 mai 1907

. . . Cette défiance est encore nourrie par le soin que met personnellement le roi d'Angleterre à conclure des ententes avec le monde entier sauf avec l'Allemagne contre laquelle il n'a aucun grief à formuler. La presse y aide en représentant chacun des succès de la politique extérieure de l'Angleterre comme tendant au but final de l'isolement de l'Allemagne. Qui oserait affirmer qu'elle se trompe sur ce point ? . . .

Berlin, May 30th, 1907.

. . . This distrust is further nourished by the personal efforts of the King of England to conclude Ententes with the whole world except with Germany, against which he has no manner of ground of complaint. The Press contributes to this by representing every success of England's foreign policy as directed to the final aim of isolating Germany. Who would dare to assert that it is mistaken on this point ? . . .

No. 32.

Berlin, le 8 juin 1907.

. . . Que restera-t-il de toutes ces démonstrations ? Probablement rien. Le rapport que vous avez bien voulu me communiquer par votre dépêche d'avant-hier me montre que mon collègue de Londres, mieux placé que je ne le suis pour juger la situation, est encore plus sceptique que moi. Comme le dit très justement M. le comte de Lalaing, le Roi d'Angleterre dirige personnellement une politique dont le but final est l'isolement de l'Allemagne. . . .

Berlin, June 8th, 1907.

. . . What will be the result of all these demonstrations ? Probably nothing. The report which you sent to me with your despatch of two days ago proves to me that my colleague in London, who is in a better position than I am to judge the situation, is even more sceptical than I. As Count Lalaing quite correctly says, the King of England is personally pursuing a policy the final aim of which is the isolation of Germany. . . .

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No. 54.

Berlin, le 13 février 1909.

. . . Déjà avant l'arrivée du Roi d'Angleterre, les journaux avaient prémuni leurs lecteurs contre la tentation d'exagérer les résultats possibles de l'entrevue. On attend, pour voir si les actes répondront aux paroles et l'on a éprouvé trop de déceptions, pour s'abandonner à la confiance.

Le Roi d'Angleterre affirme que la conservation de la paix a toujours été le but de ses efforts ; c'est ce qu'il n'a pas cessé de dire depuis le début de la campagne diplomatique qu'il a menée à bonne fin, dans le but d'isoler l'Allemagne ; mais on ne peut pas s'empêcher de remarquer, que la paix du monde n'a jamais été plus compromise que depuis que le Roi d'Angleterre se mêle de la consolider. . . .

Berlin, February 13th, 1909.

. . . Even before the arrival of the King of England, the newspapers had warned their readers against exaggerating the possible results of the meeting. People are waiting to see whether deeds will correspond with words, since there have been too many disillusionments to allow any abandonment to a spirit of confidence.

The King of England asserts that the maintenance of peace has always been the aim of his endeavours ; this is what he has always said since the beginning of the diplomatic campaign which he has successfully carried through with the object of isolating Germany ; but it is impossible not to observe that the peace of the world has never been more gravely threatened than since the King of England intervened to consolidate it. . . .

No. 84.

Londres, le 30 novembre 1911.

. . . Lord Courtney of Penwith, libéral et ami de l'Allemagne, a attaqué la politique du gouvernement parce qu'elle avait visé *l'isolement de l'Allemagne* (il est rare d'entendre cette vérité au parlement britannique) et parce qu'elle n'avait pas soutenu l'acte d'Algésiras. . . .

Un passage du discours de Lord Lansdowne est à noter. C'est celui où il a parlé des articles secrets de 1904, récemment publiés. Il a admis que, dans un cas de ce genre, la promesse de donner simplement

London, November 30th, 1911.

. . . Lord Courtney of Penwith, a Liberal and a friend of Germany, attacked the policy of the Government because it has been directed to the *isolation of Germany* (this truth is seldom heard in the English Parliament) and because it had not maintained the Act of Algeciras. . . .

One passage in the speech of Lord Lansdowne is worthy of note, namely that in which he spoke of the secret articles of the Agreement of 1904, recently published. He admitted that in a case of this kind the

un appui diplomatique à une autre puissance peut amener l'obligation de lui fournir une assistance d'un autre genre (lisez militaire et navale). Une entente cordiale amène d'étroites relations entre deux pays et ils ne peuvent rester indifférents. *Si l'un des deux se trouve dans une situation difficile sans que ce soit de sa faute, il s'attendra à être soutenu par son ami.*

Il suffit de lire entre les lignes pour voir que d'après Lord Lansdowne, un des auteurs de l'entente cordiale, celle-ci, sans être une alliance, pourrait produire, dans certaines éventualités, tous les effets d'un traité défensif entre les deux nations. . . .

promise to give to another Power merely diplomatic support might easily lead to the obligation to furnish assistance of another kind (understand military and naval assistance). An Entente Cordiale brings close relations between two countries and they cannot remain mutually indifferent. *If one of the two countries were to find itself in a difficult situation without any blame attaching to it, it will expect to be supported by its friend.*

It is only necessary to read between the lines in order to see that in the opinion of Lord Lansdowne, one of its authors, the Entente Cordiale without being an alliance may in certain contingencies produce all the effects of a defensive treaty between the two countries.

THE FEAR OF GERMANY.

The following examples from the Reports may show that the fear of Germany was the leading motive of the union of the Entente.

No. 35.

Berlin, le 22 juin 1907.

. . . *L'accord entre l'Angleterre, la France et l'Espagne* n'est pas encore publié et l'intention des puissances contractantes était de ne le faire connaître qu'au mois d'août. Une indiscretion commise à Rome l'a livré prématurément aux journaux. J'ai eu l'occasion de m'assurer que leurs renseignements sont exacts. Les trois puissances reconnaissent le *status quo* dans la Méditerranée et dans l'Atlantique et s'entendront sur les mesures

Berlin, June 22nd, 1907.

. . . *The agreement between England, France, and Spain* is not yet published and the intention of the contracting parties was that publication should not take place until August. An indiscretion which took place at Rome made it prematurely accessible to the newspapers. I have had the opportunity of assuring myself that their communications are correct. The three Powers recognise the *status quo* in the Mediterranean and the

à prendre si leurs possessions venaient à être menacées.

Il n'y a rien là-dedans qui touche aux intérêts de l'Allemagne. Le gouvernement Impérial a été tenu au courant des négociations entre la France et le Japon par les soins des gouvernements japonais et français. Les ambassadeurs d'Espagne, de France et d'Angleterre ont séparément communiqué au département Impérial des affaires étrangères, depuis plusieurs jours déjà, les notes échangées pour constater l'accord intervenu entre leurs pays. Tout a donc été *d'une correction parfaite* et il n'y a rien qui pourrait servir de base à une plainte officielle. . . .

S'ils ne contiennent aucune clause secrète, ils semblent n'avoir été conclus que pour le plaisir de laisser une fois de plus l'Allemagne en dehors du règlement des intérêts mondiaux. *Ces précautions prises contre des périls imaginaires* sont de nature à éveiller et à nourrir chez les peuples l'idée que *l'Allemagne est la puissance agressive* contre les entreprises de laquelle les autres pays sont obligés de se liguer. . . .

Atlantic Ocean and will come to an understanding regarding the measures to be taken in the event of their possessions being threatened.

There is nothing in this which could affect German interests. The Imperial Government were kept informed of the course of the negotiations between France and Japan by the Governments of the two countries mentioned. Some days ago the Ambassadors of Spain, France, and England, each acting separately, communicated to the Foreign Office the notes which were exchanged on the conclusion of the agreement. Things have thus been carried through *with complete correctness*, and there was nothing which could give occasion to an official complaint. . . .

If they contain no secret clause, it appears that they have been concluded only for the pleasure of once more leaving Germany aside in the regulation of world-affairs. *These measures of precaution taken against imaginary dangers* are calculated to awake and to foster among the nations the idea that *Germany is the aggressive Power, against whose undertakings the other Powers are obliged to unite.* . . .

No. 56.

Berlin, le 22 mars 1909.

Je n'ai pas à vous donner d'informations sur les *débats relatifs à la marine de guerre* qui ont eu lieu à la commission du budget du Reichstag en même temps qu'à la Chambre des communes anglaise. Les journaux en sont pleins et je ne pourrais rien

Berlin, March 22nd, 1909.

I may be excused from reporting to your Excellency regarding the *débates on the Navy* which took place in the Budget Commission of the Reichstag at the same time as the discussions in the English House of Commons. The papers are full of it, and I

ajouter à ce qu'ils rapportent. Je me borne à noter qu'à entendre les orateurs qui ont discuté à Londres la question de savoir ce que doivent être les forces navales de l'Angleterre *pour parer à tout danger*, il semblerait qu'en dehors de la Grande-Bretagne, l'Allemagne soit la seule puissance entretenant une marine de guerre. On n'a parlé que d'elle comme si les autres n'existaient pas ; cela se passe un mois après l'échange des toasts chaleureux prononcés à l'occasion de la visite du Roi d'Angleterre à Berlin. *Cette pré-occupation exclusive tenant de l'hypnose* en dit plus long que les courtoisies officielles obligées dont l'omission est à coup sûr un symptôme alarmant, mais dont l'accomplissement ne signifie rien du tout. Avant comme après le prétendu rapprochement ce qui domine les relations des deux pays est une *profonde défiance mutuelle*.

GREINDL.

have nothing to add to their reports. I would only observe that anyone hearing the speakers who have discussed in London how the English naval forces must be constituted *so as to be equal to any danger* might believe that Germany is the only Power which, apart from Great Britain, possesses a navy. She was spoken about as if the others did not exist, and all this took place one month after the visit of the King of England to Berlin, when such cordial speeches were exchanged. *This one-sided and indeed hypnotic fear* says more than the indispensable official courtesies, the omission of which certainly furnishes ground for uneasiness, the fulfilment of which is, however, empty of meaning. After the alleged *rapprochement*, just as before it, the relations of the two countries are governed by a *deep and mutual distrust*.

GREINDL.

No. 71.

Londres, le 22 mai 1911.

... La mort du Roi Edouard semble avoir amené une légère détente dans les relations anglo-allemandes. On dirait qu'à l'époque des "ententes" dont le défunt Souverain était si friand, la nation même avait conscience de la tentative d'encerclement à l'égard de l'Allemagne que favorisait si ouvertement le Cabinet de Londres et qui ne pouvait manquer de froisser celui de Berlin. On en craignait un peu les conséquences possibles, et, de la crainte à la haine, il n'y a qu'un

London, May 22nd, 1911.

... King Edward's death appears to have brought about a slight *détente* in the Anglo-German relations. It appears that at the time of the "Ententes" of which the late ruler was so fond, the people itself was conscious of the effort to encircle Germany, an effort which the London Cabinet favoured so openly and which was necessarily bound to annoy the Berlin Cabinet. Some fear was entertained regarding the possible consequences, and from fear to hatred is only a step ; the

pas, que la presse antigermanique n'a pas manqué de faire franchir. *La panique dont on s'est tant moqué en Allemagne, était humiliante et on en souffrait ici.* Malgré les Cassandres des milieux navals et militaires, il semble que l'on se soit un peu ressaisi et, au moment très opportun où le public commençait enfin à faire la part de l'exagération, Guillaume II a paru, délaissant l'armure étincelante pour la redingote bourgeoise et promenant à travers Londres l'Impératrice et la Princesse avec les enfants Royaux d'Angleterre. L'effet, pour momentané qu'il puisse être, a été bon. Le petit-fils de la Reine Victoria n'a pas à regretter la démarche qu'il a faite dans des circonstances propices . . .

Press, hostile to Germany, did not fail to see that this step was taken. *The panic which was the occasion of so much ridicule in Germany was humiliating, and they suffered for it here.* In spite of the Cassandras in naval and military circles, it appears that there is again more composure, and just at the very favourable moment when the public were at last beginning to think soberly, William II appeared without his shining armour and in civilian clothes, and led the Empress and the Princess, with the children of the English Royal House, through the streets of London. The effect, even if it may only have been for the moment, was good. The grandson of Queen Victoria has no occasion to regret the step which he has taken under favourable circumstances. . . .

Even in favour of King Edward personally, the "black man" of the policy of encirclement, the Belgian Ambassadors testify that he was moved not by military love of aggression, but only by the thought of the maintenance of the peace of Europe against possible aggressive desires on the part of Germany :

No. 2.

Berlin, le 18 février 1905.

. . . *On dit le Roi Edouard VII profondément pacifique ; mais un Roi d'Angleterre n'a qu'une influence très limitée sur la direction politique de son pays. Le gouvernement anglais partage jusqu'à un certain point le sentiment public ou du moins il est incapable de résister au courant, puisqu'il dépend exclusivement de la chambre des communes à laquelle le pouvoir exécutif est de plus en plus subordonné. . . .*

Berlin, February 18th, 1905.

. . . *It is said that King Edward VII is essentially pacific ; but a King of England has only very little influence on the policy of his country. To a certain degree the English Government share the opinion of the public, or are at any rate incapable of swimming against the stream, since they depend exclusively on the House of Commons, to which the executive power is more and more subordinated. . . .*

THE PACIFIC CHARACTER OF THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT.

The pacific character of the Liberal English Government, which had been in power since 1905, that is to say, during the whole period of the Reports, is proved in the following passages amongst others :

No. 69.

Londres, le 9 mai 1911.

... Bien entendu, on est loin de croire que le Gouvernement Impérial veuille la guerre ; on est persuadé que l'Empereur ne la désire pas, mais on se demande si le Cabinet de Berlin ne serait pas tenté, dans certaines éventualités, de s'affirmer par quelque réclamation, et de donner ainsi une *preuve éclatante de sa puissance qui serait humiliante pour le Gouvernement de la République, et désagréable pour l'Angleterre et la Russie.* Le Gouvernement Allemand, en affichant sa prépondérance dans les conseils de l'Europe, justifierait ainsi vis-à-vis des partis de l'opposition parlementaire allemande, l'utilité du maintien de ses énormes forces militaires et navales, dont le coût lui est constamment reproché au Reichstag.

Une occupation de Fez, qui revêtirait par exemple un aspect trop définitif, ou un manquement à l'esprit, si pas à la lettre des engagements pris à Algésiras, pourrait fournir à Berlin une occasion d'intervenir.

L'Ambassadeur de France à Londres a constamment de longs entretiens au Foreign Office où il s'efforcerait plus particulièrement d'insister sur les droits prépondérants de la France au Maroc, à côté desquels ceux de l'Espagne seraient insignifiants.

London, May 9th, 1911.

... It is, of course, far from being the case that the German Government want war. There is a conviction that the Emperor does not want it, but the question is asked whether the Berlin Cabinet might not in certain circumstances be tempted to assert themselves by some protestation, and thus give a *striking proof of their power which would be humiliating for the French Government and disagreeable to England and Russia.* In emphasising their preponderance in the Council of Europe the German Government would be able to justify, as against Parliamentary opposition, the maintenance of their enormous land and sea forces, the cost of which is constantly made a subject of attack in the Reichstag.

An occupation of Fez, which for example had too strongly the appearance of being definitive, or looked like a violation of the spirit, if not of the letter, of the obligations undertaken at Algeciras, might offer Berlin an opportunity for intervention.

The French Ambassador in London has constantly long conversations at the Foreign Office, in which he is said to take special pains to prove the preponderating rights of France in Morocco, compared with which those of Spain are insignificant.

BELGIAN AMBASSADORIAL REPORTS 99

Certains organes chauvins de la presse londonniene déclarent que la Grande-Bretagne devrait soutenir énergiquement le Cabinet français, si le Gouvernement Impérial faisait mine d'exercer une pression. *Cette attitude ne semble pas devoir être celle qu'adopterait un Gouvernement aussi pacifique que celui de M. Asquith.*

...

Certain chauvinistic organs of the London Press state that Great Britain must energetically support the French Government, should the Imperial Government show any indication of exercising pressure. *It certainly does not appear that this would correspond with the attitude of so pacific a Government as that of Mr. Asquith.* . . .

No. 85.

Berlin, le 6 décembre 1911.

... Il n'eût pas été possible sans casser les vitres de repousser les avances de M. de Bethmann Hollweg. M. Asquith et le chef de l'opposition M. Bonar Law les ont accueillies en fort bons termes. Sir E. Grey s'est efforcé aussi d'être correct, mais avec une froideur marquée. Sir E. Grey a dit à la vérité qu'il est disposé à faire tout ce qui sera en son pouvoir dans le but d'améliorer les relations de l'Allemagne avec l'Angleterre. Les amitiés actuelles de la Grande-Bretagne auxquelles il entend rester fidèle ne l'empêchent pas d'en contracter d'autres. Loin de chercher à troubler les récentes négociations entre l'Allemagne et la France, il s'est sincèrement félicité de l'accord intervenu. Il comprend le besoin d'expansion de l'Allemagne et n'a nul dessein de l'entraver. Il indique même le terrain sur lequel pourra s'exercer l'action coloniale allemande. C'est l'Afrique où l'Angleterre n'a pas le projet d'étendre ses possessions. (Est-ce des nôtres qu'il entend trafiquer suivant les principes du droit international nouveau tel qu'on

Berlin, December 6th, 1911.

... It would not have been possible to repel the advances of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg without, so to speak, "breaking the windows." Mr. Asquith and the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Bonar Law, cordially welcomed them. Sir Edward Grey also endeavoured to be correct, but displayed a marked coolness. Sir Edward Grey, it is true, said that he was ready to do everything that stood in his power to improve Anglo-German relations. The existing friendships of Great Britain, to which he intended to remain true, did not prevent him from entering into new friendships. So far from desiring to disturb the recent negotiations between Germany and France, he was, on the contrary, sincerely gratified at the understanding arrived at. He understood Germany's need for expansion, and he had no intention of placing obstacles in its way. He even indicated the territory on which Germany's colonial expansion could take place. It lies in Africa, where England has no thought of extending her possessions. (Is it by any

le pratique à Londres et malheureusement ailleurs aussi ? Le Maroc, Tripoli, la Perse.) Sir E. Grey ne croit pas, dit-il, à des plans allemands hostiles à l'Angleterre. *Celle-ci non plus n'entretient aucun dessein hostile à l'Allemagne et n'accorderait pas son appui à une puissance tierce dont l'attitude serait hostile ou provocatrice.*

C'eût été parfait si Sir E. Grey se fût arrêté là ; mais tout son discours est pénétré d'un sentiment de *défiance non déguisée envers l'Allemagne* et ses assertions amicales sont atténuées par des restrictions qui en détruisent complètement la portée. C'est ainsi qu'il met pour condition à un rapprochement avec l'Allemagne que ses amis français et russes y soient aussi compris comme s'il n'était pas notoire qu'aucun Gouvernement Français n'oserait se livrer à une tentative de ce genre qui serait réprouvée par l'opinion publique en France.

Les commentaires des journaux allemands ont presque exclusivement porté sur les restrictions. *Les déclarations d'où il faudrait déduire des aspirations conciliantes sont restées inaperçues* ou si elles ont été mentionnées, ce n'est qu'en passant et de façon à laisser entendre que les Allemands sont blasés sur les assurances de ce genre prodiguées à l'occasion de chacune des nombreuses tentatives de rapprochement entre l'Allemagne et l'Angleterre et dont l'effet a toujours été des plus éphémères. . . .

chance our possessions with which he proposes to traffic, following the principles of recent international law as it is applied in London and unfortunately in other places as well?—In Morocco, Tripoli, Persia.) As Sir Edward Grey said, he does not believe in German plans of hostility to England. *England likewise entertains no hostile intentions against Germany, and would not give its support to any third Power whose attitude was hostile or provocative.*

It would have been admirable, if Sir Edward Grey had stopped there. But his whole speech was permeated with an undisguised feeling of *distrust towards Germany*, and his friendly utterances were weakened by reservations which entirely destroyed their significance. As a condition for a *rapprochement* with Germany he demanded that his French and Russian friends should be included, as if it were not universally known that no French Government would dare to lend themselves to such an attempt, which would be repudiated by the public opinion of France.

The commentaries of the German newspapers were occupied almost exclusively with the reservations. *The statements from which it would have been possible to infer conciliatory intentions remained unobserved*, or if they were mentioned at all, it was only in passing and in such a way as to let it be understood that the Germans were become insensitive to assurances of this kind, such as have been squandered on each of the numerous attempts at *rapprochement* between Germany and England, without ever attaining more than an ephemeral success. . . .

No. 106.¹

Berlin, le 26 mai 1913.

. . . On peut dire, tout au moins, sans risquer de se tromper, que la visite du couple royal d'Angleterre à Berlin apparaît comme la consécration et comme la consécration aux yeux de l'Europe du rapprochement qui s'est incontestablement opéré entre l'Allemagne et la Grande-Bretagne pendant la guerre balkanique où les deux Etats ont agi de concert pour la préservation de la paix européenne. C'est un avertissement que la France ferait bien de méditer, au moment où elle se consume en efforts peut-être inutiles et destinés en tout cas à révéler à l'étranger l'état de décomposition interne de son armée, en vue de rétablir l'équilibre des forces entre elle et l'Allemagne. . . .

Berlin, May 26th, 1913.

. . . Without running any danger of being mistaken, it is in any case possible to say that the visit of the English King and Queen to Berlin appears in the eyes of Europe as the confirmation and consecration of the rapprochement which unmistakably took place during the Balkan War when the two States co-operated for the maintenance of peace. France would do well to take this warning to heart, especially at this moment when she is devouring herself in efforts to re-establish the equilibrium of forces between herself and Germany—efforts which are perhaps useless, and are in any case calculated to reveal to foreign countries the state of internal decomposition of the French Army. . . .

No. 108.

Londres, le 7 novembre 1913.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Sir Edward Grey a prononcé à Newcastle un speech sur les devoirs d'un Ministre des Affaires Etrangères. Il s'est renfermé dans les généralités en faisant prévoir que le Premier Ministre, au banquet du Guildhall le 10 de ce mois, ferait une allusion plus précise au programme gouvernemental en ce qui concerne les relations extérieures.

London, November 7th, 1913.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Sir Edward Grey has delivered a speech in Newcastle on the duties of a Foreign Minister. He has confined himself exclusively to generalities, and has merely indicated that the Prime Minister will go more fully into the programme of the Government in matters relating to foreign affairs at the Guildhall banquet on the 10th of this month.

¹ This, like several other of the reports, is quoted in various places of my investigation. The reference to the same documents on various occasions, and as a consequence the repeated quotation of certain passages in the reports, was inevitable, inasmuch as the same report often furnishes evidence for various arguments.

Sir Edward Grey a commencé par constater que l'Angleterre, de concert avec les autres Grandes Puissances, avait essayé, pendant les hostilités balkaniques, *d'empêcher que ce conflit ne dégénérait en guerre générale*. Le succès avait couronné ces efforts. L'opposition au Parlement britannique avait loyalement soutenu le Gouvernement dans les moments difficiles et s'était montrée patriotique.

Ensuite le Ministre a défini la tâche de son Département, qui devait avoir quatre grands buts en vue :

1° empêcher les changements ou combinaisons politiques qui, du dehors, menaceraient la sécurité de l'Empire ;

2° *ne pas augmenter les responsabilités territoriales de l'Empire, assez grandes déjà et se borner à garder et à développer ce que l'Angleterre possède ;*

3° encourager le commerce britannique, *surtout en évitant la guerre ;*

4° employer l'influence de la nation *en faveur des buts humanitaires dans le monde*.

On peut résumer pratiquement ces desiderata comme suit :

1° le Ministre est en faveur du maintien de la triple entente ;

2° il est *hostile à toute politique de conquête*, qui exciterait l'animosité des grands rivaux ;

3° il veut favoriser l'expansion économique du pays, au dehors, en éliminant l'anxiété que produit la crainte de complications internationales, c'est-à-dire *en maintenant avec l'Allemagne les meilleures relations possibles ;*

Sir Edward Grey has first of all affirmed that during the Balkan War England, in union with the Great Powers, endeavoured to *prevent that conflict degenerating into a world war*. These efforts were successful. The Opposition in the British Parliament had loyally supported the Government in these difficult moments and had shown itself to be patriotic.

Thereafter the Minister defined the task of his department, which ought to have four great aims in view :

1. All political changes or combinations were to be prevented which might menace the external security of the Empire.

2. *The territorial extent of the Empire, which is already large enough, ought not to be increased*, and their efforts should be restricted to the defence and development of England's possessions.

3. British trade ought to be promoted, above all by the avoidance of war.

4. The influence of the nation should be used to promote *humanitarian efforts in the world*.

In practice those demands may be summarised as follows :

1. The Minister is in favour of the maintenance of the Triple Entente.

2. He is *averse from any policy of conquest* which might evoke the distrust of England's great competitors.

3. He wishes to promote the economic expansion of the country abroad, by eliminating the anxiety which arises from international complications—that is to say he wishes to maintain *the best possible relations with Germany*.

4° il ne renonce pas à user vis-à-vis d'autres nations (sur-tout vraisemblablement vis-à-vis des Etats faibles) du prestige et de l'influence de l'Angleterre, pour appuyer les campagnes humanitaires.

Cette formule, dangereusement élastique, est destinée au parti philanthropique, si puissant dans ce pays, et permet des interventions souvent injustifiées et irritantes.

Cte. DE LALAING.

4. He does not renounce, as against other nations (above all probably as against weak States), the use of the prestige and the influence of England for the promotion of humanitarian efforts.

This dangerously elastic formula is intended for the philanthropic party which is so powerful in this country, and leaves the door open to interventions which are often unjustified and irritating.

COUNT DE LALAING.

No. 113.

Berlin, le 24 avril 1914.

... Les Allemands sont persuadés que l'Angleterre ne prendra jamais les armes, afin d'aider la France à reconquérir les provinces perdues. . . .

... Il pourra s'y convaincre, que l'opinion publique n'est pas disposée à voir l'Angleterre perdre sa liberté d'action par un traité formel qui lierait son sort à celui de la Russie et de la France. . . .

Berlin, April 24th, 1914.

... The Germans are convinced that England will never take up arms to help France to reconquer the lost provinces. . . .

... He will there be able to convince himself that public opinion is not disposed to see England lose her freedom of action by a formal treaty which would link her fate to that of Russia and France. . . .

No. 115.

Paris, le 8 mai 1914.

... Quelle est la nature des engagements qui lient entre eux les deux Etats? Ont-ils conclu une Convention militaire? Je l'ignore, mais je n'oublie pas que des esprits réfléchis et sérieux doutent quelque peu de l'assistance que la France trouverait chez les Anglais au jour d'une conflagration européenne. Il se trouve même des gens qui ne croient pas à un concours britannique bien sérieux sur mer. . . .

Paris, May 8th, 1914.

... What is the nature of the obligations which bind the two States? Have they concluded a military convention? I do not know, but I do not forget that thoughtful and serious minds doubt whether on the day of a European conflagration France will find support in the English. There are indeed people who do not even believe in serious support from England at sea. . . .

Je ne crois pas au désir ni de l'un ni de l'autre des deux pays de jouer l'effroyable coup de dés que serait une guerre ; mais il est toujours à craindre, avec le caractère français, qu'un incident mal présenté n'amène sa population ou pour mieux dire, les éléments les plus nerveux voire même les moins respectables de la population, à créer une situation qui rendrait la guerre inévitable. . . .

La presse est mauvaise dans les deux pays. *La campagne qui se poursuit en Allemagne au sujet de la Légion étrangère est excessivement maladroite, et le ton des journaux français ne cesse d'être acerbe et agressif. . . .*

. . . Il n'y a rien à attendre du Parlement ; le premier tour de scrutin des élections nous a déjà montré comme nous nous y attendions, que la prochaine Chambre des Députés sera à peu de chose près la même que la devancière. Les Socialistes pourront gagner quelques voix, mais dans l'ensemble, la suprématie restera au parti radical-socialiste, malgré ses fautes et ses erreurs. Quoi que l'on puisse penser des événements récents, *M. Caillaux, le seul financier que compte aujourd'hui la Chambre, semble devoir rester l'instigateur de la politique française avec un peu de fiel et de mauvaise humeur en plus.*

GUILLAUME.

I do not believe that either of the two countries desires to risk the horrible gamble of war ; but with the French national character there is always reason to fear that an incident unfortunately presented may lead the people, or rather the most nervous and indeed the basest elements of the population, to create a situation which would make war inevitable. . . .

The feeling of the Press is bad in both countries. *The campaign which is being conducted in Germany against the foreign legion is extremely maladroit and the tone of the French newspapers is continually bitter and aggressive. . . .*

. . . There is nothing to be expected from Parliament : the first electoral scrutiny has already shown, as we expected, that the next Chamber with slight modifications will be almost the same as its predecessor. The Socialists may perhaps gain a few votes, but taking everything together the Radical-Socialists, despite their mistakes and errors, will keep the upper hand. *Whatever may be thought regarding recent events, it appears that M. Caillaux, the only financier whom the Chamber can show to-day, is to remain the director of French policy with a small addition of choler and bad temper.*

GUILLAUME.

FRANCE'S LOVE OF PEACE.

Despite the existence of chauvinistic tendencies in the country, despite certain nationalistic inclinations in some of the leading personalities, those in power in France, the Presidents as well as the various successive Govern-

ments, have, according to the testimony of Belgian Ambassadors, never thought of beginning a European war for the reconquest of Alsace-Lorraine by force of arms. Certainly in France also there have been inciters to war, but since the foundation of the Republic—with the solitary exception of the short Boulangist episode—these men have never exercised authoritative influence on the resolutions of the Government or on the destiny of their country. The reader will recall the tactful restraint of the French Government in the spring of 1913—that is to say, during the Presidency of M. Poincaré, who is alleged to have been so eager for war—in connection with the incidents of Lunéville and Nancy, when the German chauvinist Press was conducting orgies of incitement to war, and could have wished even then to provoke the European war on account of these insignificant occurrences.

Let us hear how the Belgian Ambassador in Paris, Baron Guillaume, speaks regarding the incident of Nancy :

No. 104.

Paris, le 16 avril 1913.

Je viens de voir M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères avec lequel j'ai causé assez longuement de l'incident de Nancy, que les journaux vous ont rapporté.

M. Pichon se montre très désolé de l'esprit de susceptibilité chauvine dont la presse allemande donne le spectacle.

Les organes officiels du Gouvernement Impérial sont prudents mais *les pangermanistes jettent feu et flamme, et il est regrettable que l'agence Wolff s'empresse de répandre dans toute l'Allemagne de si déplorables articles. . . .*

Paris, April 16th, 1913

I have just seen the Minister for Foreign Affairs, with whom I had a fairly long conversation regarding the incident of Nancy about which you have been informed by the newspapers.

M. Pichon is very much grieved by the display of chauvinistic sensibility provided by the German Press.

The semi-official organs of the Imperial Government are careful, but *the Pan-Germans spit fire and flame, and it is regrettable that Wolff's Bureau should hasten to disseminate such deplorable articles throughout the whole of Germany. . . .*

In the Casablanca conflict as well France—notwithstanding the unspeakable incitement of the German chauvinist Press—remained calm and made it possible to arrive at

a settlement of the dispute by arbitration. I need not here return to the question of Morocco. We shall see in a later passage the judgment passed by the Belgian Ambassadors on Delcassé, alleged to be the chief scapegoat of France. I must decline to enumerate once again all the symptoms, which indicate that nothing was further from the minds of the rulers of France than the provocation of a European war on account of the question of Alsace-Lorraine. Such ideas of war were never more remote from the French than in the summer of 1914, after the elections in the spring of that year had brought a material increase in strength to the Socialist, the Radical, and Radical-Socialist parties, and had thus assured to those political tendencies which unconditionally stood for the maintenance of the peace of Europe, and if possible for an understanding with Germany, authoritative influence in the coming years. It is well known that the electoral victory of these peace-parties once again raised the question of the Three Years Law adopted in the previous year, and led to a lively agitation in the country with a view to the modification or the relaxation of this law. Without fear of contradiction, it may be asserted that France was never so pacific, never so much in need of peace, as just in the summer of 1914, when she is supposed to have fallen upon us with aviators' bombs or at least to have planned an attack, against which we were constrained to protect ourselves by preventive measures.

A CRUSHING DOCUMENT OF GUILT.

I have sufficiently shown in my books how false, and indeed how contemptible, is the charge of having willed and begun the war which since the beginning of hostilities has been brought by Germany against France both officially and semi-officially. While this work was in the press—at the beginning of March 1918—Pichon, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, disclosed a document until then unknown, which must completely open the eyes even of the blindest as to the side on which there was a preconceived intention to make war and the actual authorship of the war. The ultimatum of the German

Government (printed in the 25th Exhibit to the German White Book) which was handed to Viviani, the French Prime Minister, at 7 p.m. on July 31st, 1914, demanded from the French Government a statement, to be given within eighteen hours, "whether France will remain neutral in a Russo-German war." According to the telegram of Herr von Schön, the Imperial Ambassador in Paris, dated 1.5 p.m. on August 1st, the French Premier stated to the German Ambassador, in answer to the ultimatum of the previous evening, "that France will do what her interests require" (White Book, Exhibit 27; Yellow Book, No. 117).

Now, however, it has become known by Pichon's revelation that Bethmann's instruction to his Parisian Ambassador (White Book, Exhibit 25) contained an addition which the German Government has prudently suppressed in their White Book, and which it has only been possible to decipher after three and a half years of war as a result of the discovery of the key by the French Government.

This addition runs (according to the text printed in the *Berliner Tageblatt* of March 8th, 1918):

"If the French Government declare that they will remain neutral, your Excellency will inform them that we must demand as a guarantee for their neutrality the surrender of the fortresses of Toul and Verdun, which we would occupy and return after the conclusion of the war with Russia. The answer to the latter question must be here before 4 o'clock on Saturday afternoon."

It is quite unnecessary to waste a single word on the meaning and the intention of this instruction to the German Ambassador which has been kept so strictly secret by the German Government. Nothing can more clearly demonstrate the absolute and immovable will of the German despots to provoke a European war than this preposterous demand addressed to a great State, a demand to which there is no parallel in diplomatic history. The Napoleonic demand that the King of Prussia, after the withdrawal of the Hohenzollern candidate to the Spanish throne, should declare that for all time he

would not consent to such a candidature (a demand on the part of Napoleon III which claimed no real guarantees) was described by Bismarck in his *Gedanken und Erinnerungen* as an act of "international insolence," as an "insult and an outrage," as an "attack on the national honour and independence" of Prussia and Germany, as a "threat with the hand on the sword-hilt which made any compliance impossible for our national sense of honour." When compared with that relatively harmless *formal* demand for a guarantee on the part of Napoleon III, how are we to describe William II's *real* demand for security, the demand for the surrender of the fortresses of Toul and Verdun until the end of the Russo-German war? Elsewhere Prince Bismarck once applied the phrase "Bonapartist ruthlessness" to certain diplomatic manœuvres intended to provoke the other side to war and then lay upon him the guilt of the war. The Hohenzollern ruthlessness of July 31st, 1914, surpasses any similar action ever committed by a Bonapartist.

As a matter of course it was impossible to think for a moment of complying with the German demand for a guarantee, of concurring in the occupation of the most important French fortresses, the possession of which would have placed in the hands of the German Generals a revolver directed against the heart of France. In order to grasp the monstrosity of the demand, imagine the reverse case: suppose that France had become involved in war with Italy—for example, during the Libyan war, when there was no absence of points of difference between the two countries; suppose that the French Government had inquired of the Government in Berlin—say with a view to determining the possible obligations falling on its Russian ally—whether Germany would remain neutral in a Franco-Italian war, and that then it had subsequently demanded as a guarantee for the promised neutrality of Germany the surrender as a pledge of Metz and Strassbourg. Without doubt such outrageous impudence would have been answered not with words but with the sword, and the whole world would have pointed to France as the conscious and intentional author of the war.

It is not with a "maladroitness" on the part of Beth-

mann or Jagow that we are here concerned—as the defenders of German innocence, with the social patriot Dr. David at their head, at once endeavoured to represent the matter. No, we are here confronted with the plainly expressed will for war, not merely against Russia, but against France as well. We are confronted with the will to a European war which it was believed could at that moment be waged under the most favourable conditions, and from the toils of which there was no intention to allow the escape, in any circumstances, of their French neighbour, the possessor of the North African colonies, so long hungrily desired, as well as of other sources of wealth on her north-eastern frontier. Further, the eastern portions of Belgium, as well as Antwerp and the Flemish coast, which had long inspired Pan-German dreams as an object ardently to be desired, could only be incorporated in the German stomach, if matters proceeded so far as a war with France, which would bring with it the attack of spoliation upon Belgium.

This time it was a case of everything or nothing. The Russian war *alone* would have satisfied only a part of German ambitions. The appetite for the East would have been sated, but the hunger for the West would have remained. No, this time there had to be a “clearing up.” According to the long-prepared plans of the General Staff, the war had in the first place to be waged with lightning speed and finished on the West, in order that they might then be able to encounter with full force the Russian “steam-roller” in the East. The German hegemony on the Continent had to be achieved at one stroke and not in two stages, of which the second might be prevented by all kinds of incidents and accidents which could not be foreseen. If France remained true to her alliance with Russia—as in fact she did—the ground for war against the Republic was automatically provided. If she were untrue to her alliance with Russia, the ground for war must then be artificially created, and this end would be served by the demand for the surrender of the eastern fortresses—a demand with which it was certain in advance that there could be no compliance. This

was the celebrated "shuffling of the cards" which Bernhardt had already recommended with so much insistence in his book—the shuffling of the cards in such a way that the opponent should be challenged by the most provocative action, that he should be compelled to the refusal of unjustified demands, and indeed, if at all possible, to a declaration of war.

That is the German "war of defence" in which the hapless German people has now believed for almost four years, blind to all revelations, deaf against all evidence. That is the war which France provoked, according to Bethmann's great lying speech of August 4th, 1914. There is not a single one in Germany among those who know, from the Emperor down to the last voluntary or involuntary governmental penny-a-liner, who has ever believed in the legend of the war of defence. The Augurs smile together when conversation turns on the attack upon Germany. That is food for the people—fodder for the "cannon-fodder." "We need this war, and for this reason we made it"—that is the thesis which the initiated, when they are together, acknowledge cynically and in cold blood. A gigantic fraud has been perpetrated on the German people. When will Michel, who still slumbers, awake, pull his white linen night-cap from his ears, and put on his head the Phrygian cap?

* * * * * *

After this digression, let us hear what the Belgian Ambassadors tell us regarding France's love of peace :

No. 75.

Paris, le 8 juillet 1911.

... Nous ne tarderons sans doute pas à savoir dans quels termes le Gouvernement de la République répondra à la communication de la Chancellerie de Berlin *relative à l'intervention allemande au Maroc.*

Il ne manque pas de gens pour trouver que l'attitude du Cabinet de Paris a manqué

Paris, July 8th, 1911.

... Without doubt we shall very soon know in what form the Government of the Republic will reply to the communication of the Berlin Cabinet with regard to *German intervention in Morocco.*

There are some people who are of opinion that the attitude of the Paris Cabinet was some-

d'ampleur, et que l'insistance que l'on a mise à faire remarquer que la France ne peut prendre de décision sans consulter la Russie et l'Angleterre, *est peu digne du rôle d'une grande Puissance.*

La vérité est que le Cabinet Caillaux, à peine entré en fonctions, a été pris au dépourvu. L'inexpérience du Ministre des Affaires Etrangères et de plusieurs de ses collègues, le désarroi dans lequel se trouvent tant de rouages administratifs en France, *une sainte crainte des complications et de la guerre, ont fait naître dans les régions gouvernementales une véritable timidité.* . . .

what lacking in greatness, and that the emphasis with which it was pointed out that France could take no decision without consulting Russia and England was little worthy of the rôle of a Great Power.

The fact is that the Caillaux Cabinet, which has just taken up office, was completely taken by surprise. The inexperience of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and several of his colleagues, the disorder which is to be found in so many parts of the administrative machinery in France, *a holy horror of complications and of war, have produced a veritable timidity in governmental circles.* . . .

No. 79.

Paris, le 28 juillet 1911.

. . . La situation présente, certes, un certain caractère de gravité; des incidents peuvent surgir qui se grefferaient sur un état de choses troublé; *mais personne ne veut la guerre; on cherchera à l'éviter.* . . .

. . . La France ne veut pas et ne peut pas vouloir que les affaires se gâtent complètement. Son Gouvernement *sait que la guerre marquerait la dernière heure de la République.* . . .

. . . Or, la situation politique intérieure de l'Angleterre est aujourd'hui fort troublée et c'est le parti libéral qui est au pouvoir.

Comme je l'ai pensé, dès le premier jour, c'est à Londres qu'est le nœud de la situation. C'est là seulement qu'elle peut devenir grave. *Les Français céderont sur tous les points pour avoir la paix* Il n'en est pas de

Paris, July 28th, 1911.

. . . The present situation has certainly a grave character. Incidents may arise which, in the state of tension already existing, would find a fruitful soil. *But no one wants war; the attempt will be made to avoid it.* . . .

. . . France does not desire and cannot desire that the negotiations should completely fail. *Its Government know that war would mean the last hour of the Republic.* . . .

. . . Now the internal political situation in England is at present very confused and it is the Liberal Party who are in power.

As I assumed from the first day, the crucial point in the situation lies in London. It is there only that it may become grave. *The French will give way on every point in order to maintain peace.* It is not so in the case of

même des Anglais qui ne transigeront pas sur quelques règles et quelques prétentions. Mais on n'éprouve nul désir de les pousser à bout.

Vous trouverez, sous ce pli, un article intéressant du *Temps* et un article assez modéré du *Matin*.

GUILLAUME.

the English, who will not compromise on certain principles and demands. But there is no desire to drive them to extremes.

Enclosed is an interesting article from the *Temps* and a fairly moderate article from the *Matin*.

GUILLAUME.

No. 93.

Berlin, le 18 octobre 1912.

. . . *L'initiative prise personnellement par M. Poincaré en vue du rétablissement de la paix a reçu l'approbation et même les éloges de la presse allemande, quoiqu'elle ait trouvé qu'il était trop tôt pour parler de la réunion d'une Conférence. Enfin le *Matin* a chanté les louanges de M. de Kiderlen, si l'on peut qualifier ainsi l'article qu'il lui a consacré. . . .*

Il était, d'ailleurs, assez naturel que l'attention et les préoccupations du public des deux côtés des Vosges se détournassent des sujets habituels de discussion et de polémique pour se concentrer sur les événements balkaniques. Sans vouloir exagérer la portée de la détente que je signale, il est permis d'espérer que *la communauté de vues de l'Allemagne et de la France dans les circonstances présentes servira puissamment au rétablissement de la paix.*

Baron BEYENS.

Berlin, October 18th, 1912.

*... The initiative personally taken by M. Poincaré for the assurance of peace is approved and indeed praised by the German Press. True, it was found that it was still too early to speak of a Conference. In the end the *Matin* sang the praises of Herr von Kiderlen, if it is possible so to describe the article which it devoted to him. . . .*

It was moreover only natural that the attention of the public on both sides of the Vosges should be diverted from the usual subjects of dispute and discussion and should be concentrated on the events in the Balkans. Without desiring to exaggerate the extent of the détente to which I refer, it may be hoped that *the community of the views of Germany and France under present circumstances will materially contribute to the re-establishment of peace.*

Baron BEYENS.

No. 101.

Paris, le 3 mars 1913.

. . . On demande le vote immédiat et presque d'acclamation de toute mesure capable d'accroître la puissance défensive

Paris, March 3rd, 1913.

. . . The immediate acceptance of any measure which is calculated to increase the defensive strength of France is de-

de la France. *Les plus raisonnables soutiennent qu'il faut s'armer jusqu'aux dents pour effrayer l'adversaire et empêcher la guerre.*

C'est ce que prêchait encore récemment, au sein d'une association, M. Pichon, homme d'expérience, qui fut longtemps Ministre des Affaires Etrangères. Il disait :

"Travaillons à l'accroissement continu de nos forces, c'est là encore *une des garanties les plus efficaces de la paix.* Les efforts de notre diplomatie seraient vains si notre puissance militaire n'était pas crainte et respectée.

"Pas de déséquilibre diplomatique en Europe. Pas de déséquilibre militaire non plus *au détriment de l'une des nations qui représentent au plus haut degré l'idéal pacifique des démocraties modernes.* Qu'aucune charge reconnue nécessaire ne soit au dessus de notre patriotisme. *Ce n'est pas pour la guerre que nous nous armons ; c'est pour l'éviter, la conjurer.* Et nous ne fortifions l'armée dont nous sommes fiers, et qui est notre sauvegarde, que dans la mesure où il le faut pour prévenir toutes les surprises et *décourager toute velléité de provocation.*"

J'ai rencontré hier soir M. Pichon qui m'a répété ces mêmes paroles ; *il faut armer de plus en plus pour empêcher la guerre.*
...

manded almost with acclamation. *The most reasonable people assert that it is necessary to be armed to the teeth in order to deter the adversary and prevent war.*

This doctrine was preached quite recently at a meeting by M. Pichon, a man of experience, who was for a long time Minister for Foreign Affairs. He said :

"Let us work uninterruptedly at the increase of our forces ; therein lies *one of the most effective guarantees for peace.* The efforts of our diplomacy would be vain, if our military power were not feared and respected.

"Let there be no disturbance of the diplomatic equilibrium in Europe, and equally no disturbance of the military equilibrium to the disadvantage of one of the nations which represent in the highest measure the peace ideal of modern democracy. Let no burden that may be found necessary be too heavy for our patriotism. *It is not for war that we are arming ourselves, but to avoid and avert it.* And we are increasing the strength of our army, of which we are so proud and which is our safeguard, only in so far as it is necessary to anticipate all surprises and *stifle every desire to challenge us.*"

Yesterday evening I met M. Pichon, who repeated to me the same words: *It is necessary to arm more and more in order to prevent war.* . . .

No. 110.

Paris, le 16 janvier 1914.

. . . *M. Caillaux a voté contre la loi de trois ans : nombreux*

Paris, January 16th, 1914.

. . . *M. Caillaux has voted against the three years' law. A*

sont les hommes politiques qui le soutiennent et partagent son avis à cet égard. Le Président du Conseil poussé par les hauts personnages de la République a promis le respect loyal de la loi de trois ans ; mais il n'est pas exagéré de supposer que dans sa pensée et dans celle de ses amis, on conserve le dessein d'adoucir considérablement les rigueurs du régime actuel.

M. Caillaux, qui est le véritable Président du Conseil, est connu pour ses sentiments en faveur d'un rapprochement avec l'Allemagne ; il connaît admirablement son pays et sait qu'en dehors des états-majors politiques, des poignées de chauvins et de gens qui n'osent pas avouer leurs idées et leurs préférences, le plus grand nombre des Français, des paysans, des commerçants et des industriels subissent avec impatience le surcroît de dépenses et de charges personnelles qui leur est imposé. . . .

Mais je tenais à vous faire remarquer que nous n'avons certes pas à désirer, comme Belges, la chute de M. Caillaux. Cet homme d'Etat peut être dangereux pour les finances du pays ; il peut amener des divisions malsaines et regrettables pour la politique intérieure de la France mais j'estime que sa présence au pouvoir diminuera l'acuité des rivalités internationales et constituera une meilleure base pour les relations entre la France et l'Allemagne.

GUILLAUME.

large number of politicians support him and share his views in this respect. Under the influence of highly-placed persons in the Republic, the Prime Minister has promised that he will loyally give effect to the law regarding the period of three years' service ; but it is not too much to assume that he and his friends in their own minds are thinking of considerably softening the harshness of the existing system.

M. Caillaux, who is the real Prime Minister, is inclined, as is well known, to a rapprochement with Germany. He knows his country extremely well, and he knows that apart from the political readers, a handful of chauvinists and of people who dare not confess their thoughts and inclinations, the majority of the French people — peasants, merchants, manufacturers—are only bearing with impatience the excessive expenditure and personal burdens which are laid upon them. . . .

But I consider it important to draw your attention to the fact that we, as Belgians, certainly cannot desire the fall of Caillaux. This statesman may well be dangerous so far as the finances of his country are concerned : he may bring about unhealthy divisions, which are to be regretted in the interest of the internal politics of France, but his participation in the Government will, in my opinion, diminish international friction and constitute a better basis for Franco-German relations.

GUILLAUME..

Here also reference should be made to Beyens' report of February 20th, 1914 (No. 111), quoted above, which

tells of the conclusion of the Franco-German agreement regarding Asia Minor and adds: "Beyond doubt the majority of the French and the German people wish to live in peace."

No. 118.

Berlin, le 12 juin 1914.

Les journaux allemands consacrent depuis dix jours en première page des articles quotidiens à la crise ministérielle française. Elle accapare leur attention et celle de leurs lecteurs. La question albanaise, l'imbroglia mexicain, sont relégués au second plan. *Les élections législatives en France*, comme j'ai eu l'honneur de vous l'écrire le 14 mai dernier, *avaient causé ici une grande satisfaction* qui s'était fait jour dans le langage de la presse, avec cette restriction cependant qu'il ne fallait pas espérer de la majorité de la nouvelle Chambre *l'abrogation immédiate de la loi sur le service militaire de trois ans*. Cette loi a acquis en effet *une importance extraordinaire*, et suivant moi *quelque peu exagérée*, aux yeux des Allemands. C'est le leitmotiv, le refrain obligé de leurs appréciations sur la politique française à l'égard de l'Allemagne. C'est pour eux la preuve manifeste des desseins agressifs qu'ils prêtent à ses dirigeants.

La démission du Cabinet Doumergue, l'échec de la combinaison Viviani, le refus de MM. Deschanel, Delcassé et Jean Dupuy d'assumer la responsabilité de constituer un Ministère, avaient rendu confiance à la presse allemande dans la réali-

Berlin, June 12th, 1914.

For the last ten days the German newspapers have every day been devoting articles, appearing in the leading place, to the French Ministerial crisis. This crisis absorbs their attention as well as that of their readers. The Albanian question and the Mexican imbroglia have been consigned into the background. As I had the honour to report to you on May 14th, the *elections for the Legislature in France have here evoked great satisfaction*, which found expression in the language of the Press, with the restriction, however, that *no immediate abrogation of the law regarding three years' military service* was to be hoped for from the majority of the new Chamber. In fact this law has in the eyes of the Germans gained an extraordinary and, in my opinion, *a somewhat exaggerated importance*. It is the *leitmotiv* and the inevitable refrain of their discussions regarding the policy of France towards Germany. They see in it the manifest proof of the aggressive plans which they assume in its leaders.

The resignation of the Doumergue Cabinet, the fiasco of the Viviani combination, and the refusal of Messrs. Deschanel, Delcassé, and Jean Dupuy to accept the responsibility for the formation of a Ministry had given the German Press confi-

sation de son désir : *l'abolition du service militaire de trois ans par une majorité de radicaux socialistes*. Mais si la pensée était la même chez tous les organes de l'opinion publique allemande, l'expression en était bien différente, suivant la couleur politique du journal. *Là où la presse libérale applaudissait sans mesure au triomphe du radicalisme français, les pangermanistes ne trouvaient que matière à raillerie et à dénigrement ; on peut même dire que la plupart des journaux conservateurs n'ont observé aucune mesure dans leurs jugements*. Tous cependant sont d'accord pour voir dans l'obstination des radicaux-socialistes à ne pas faire partie d'un Ministère qui ne promettrait pas de résoudre immédiatement la question militaire, un plan de campagne ourdi contre l'Élysée, la crise ministérielle en se prolongeant devant se transformer en crise présidentielle.

... Le peuple français n'a pas montré à cette occasion l'abnégation patriotique dont il avait donné des preuves dans d'autres circonstances. Cela tient sans doute à la propagation des idées socialistes dans les classes inférieures de la nation. Quoi qu'il en soit, on doit se demander si le Cabinet Barthou et le Président de la République n'ont pas agi avec trop de précipitation ; si, mal éclairés sur les véritables intentions du Gouvernement Impérial lorsqu'il a déposé l'an dernier son projet de loi pour le renforcement de l'armée, ils ont eu raison de riposter du tac au tac par la loi sur le service de trois ans, au lieu de s'assurer que l'augmentation des effectifs allemands était

dence in the fulfilment of their wish, namely, *the repeal of the three years' period of service by a Radical-Socialist majority*. But if all the organs of German public opinion were filled with the same thought, it was nevertheless expressed in very different forms according to the political colour of the paper. *While the Liberal Press bestowed unmeasured applause on the triumph of French Radicalism, the Pan-Germans only found occasion for sneering and contemptuous judgments : it may indeed be said that the majority of the Conservative newspapers completely lacked restraint in their judgments*. All, however, see in the obstinate refusal of the Radical-Socialists to enter a Ministry which does not promise an immediate solution of the military question a plan of campaign against the Elysée, inasmuch as a lengthy Ministerial crisis is bound to change into a Presidential crisis.

... *On this occasion the French people did not show the patriotic self-sacrifice of which it has given proof on other occasions*. This is without doubt to be attributed to the dissemination of socialistic ideas in the lower ranks of the nation. However this may be, it must be asked whether the Cabinet Barthou and the President of the Republic have not acted with undue haste, whether they were not badly informed regarding the true intentions of the Imperial Government when they introduced their Bill last year for increasing the strength of the army, and whether they acted rightly in replying tit for tat with the law on the subject of three years' period of ser-

réellement une arme tournée contre la France. Je crois en définitive, comme l'a dit M. de Bethmann-Hollweg à la tribune du Reichstag, que le danger d'une confédération balkanique, qui paralyserait plus tard une grande partie des forces autrichiennes, a été la raison dominante de la loi allemande de 1913. *Quelques semaines après le dépôt de cette loi, la confédération balkanique avait cessé d'exister.* Mais le Gouvernement Impérial se trouvait en présence d'un autre danger qu'il n'avait pas prévu : le dépôt d'une loi augmentant les effectifs de combat de l'armée française, suivi d'une campagne violente de discours et d'articles de journaux dirigée contre l'Allemagne. Il est résulté de cette agitation montrée par les Français une plus grande tension dans leurs rapports avec l'Empire voisin et l'idée, *faussement répandue ou acceptée sans contrôle par les meilleurs esprits de ce pays-ci, que la guerre est inévitable dans un avenir rapproché, parce que la France la désire violemment et s'arme fébrilement pour s'y préparer.* A Paris les mêmes intentions sont prêtées au Gouvernement Impérial dont plusieurs membres ont eu parfois, il faut en convenir, des paroles malheureuses ; tel le *Ministre de la Guerre parlant d'une "offensive foudroyante" et d'une "attaque brusquée" pour donner la victoire à l'armée allemande.* Il n'y a peut-être encore aujourd'hui qu'une effroyable méprise chez l'un comme chez l'autre des deux peuples. *La majorité de la nation française ne veut certainement pas d'une guerre et cette guerre ne serait pas néces-*

vice, instead of assuring themselves whether the increase of the German effectives was in fact a weapon directed against France. I have come to the conclusion that, as Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg said in the tribune of the Reichstag, the danger of a Balkan League which might at a later date paralyse a large portion of the Austrian forces was the chief reason for the German law of 1913. *Some weeks after the introduction of this law the Balkan League had ceased to exist.* But the Imperial Government found themselves confronted by a new danger which they had not foreseen, namely, the introduction of a law regarding the increase of the strength of the French Army, which was followed by a violent campaign of speeches and newspaper articles against Germany. The result of the agitation thus manifested by the French was a greater tension in the relations with the neighbouring Empire, and the growth of the idea which is *falsely disseminated or uncritically accepted by the best minds in this country that war is inevitable in the near future, because France ardently desires it and is feverishly arming to prepare herself for it.* In Paris the same intentions are ascribed to the Imperial Government; several of their members have certainly at times made use of unfortunate expressions; thus the Minister of War with his *phrase about the "lightning offensive" and the "unexpected attack" to assure victory to the German Army.* Perhaps even to-day there is nothing more than a terrible mutual misunderstanding in both the

saire à l'Allemagne. Dans peu d'années l'équilibre des forces ne sera plus possible entre elle et sa voisine. L'Allemagne n'a qu'à prendre patience, qu'à poursuivre en paix le développement incessant de sa puissance économique et financière, qu'à attendre les effets de sa natalité prépondérante, pour dominer sans conteste et sans lutte toute l'Europe centrale. . . .

nations. The majority of the French people certainly does not want war, and Germany does not need this war. In a few years an equilibrium of forces between her and her neighbour will no longer be possible. Germany need only have patience, she need only further increase in peace her economic and financial strength, she need only await the effects of her greater number of births in order to dominate without contradiction and without struggle the whole of Central Europe. . . .

This document No. 118, dated June 12th, 1914, is the penultimate report of Baron Beyens from Berlin. It has already been mentioned elsewhere and is of quite exceptional interest. The following inferences may be drawn from it :

1. The elections to the French Chamber of 1914 evoked in general great satisfaction in Germany, since a repeal, or at any rate an alteration of the provisions, of the Three Years Law was hoped from the new majority.

2. It was only the Conservative and the Pan-German Press in Germany which vied with each other in their unmeasured tone and in the contemptuous views which they expressed regarding French conditions. Nor need this occasion any surprise : the peace tendencies on the other side made it more difficult for these intriguers to carry out their warlike intentions.

3. The temporal and causal sequence of the German Military Law and the French Three Years Law was exactly as it is shown to have been by the dates of the introduction and the acceptance of these two measures. The Military Law preceded, the Three Years Law followed. Mention is nowhere made in the Belgian reports of Schiemann's legend, involving a lying inversion of the facts, to the effect that the Three Years Law had already been promised in Petrograd in the summer of 1912 by the then Prime Minister Poincaré, that this promise was known in Berlin, and that in consequence the Military

Law was framed. Baron Beyens confirms the sequence of the two laws to be exactly as emerges from their dates.

4. The German Military Law, which forced France to the prolongation of the period of service which was so extremely burdensome and unpopular, had, as was only to be expected, let loose a violent Press campaign on the other side of the Vosges against the German provocators to armaments. The excitement was still further increased by unfortunate expressions which were used by the German War Minister. "The majority of the French people certainly does not want war. For Germany such a war would not be necessary," since in any case it will soon enjoy domination in Central Europe by virtue of its increasing population and its increasing economic power. The distinction in Beyens' diagnosis of French and German conditions deserves to be noted: France does not *want* war; Germany does not *need* war. In other words Germany would be foolish if it sought for war; the Belgian Ambassador, however, does not say that it is not being guilty or that it might not in future be guilty of this folly. The will for peace he emphasises only in the case of France, not in the case of Germany.

It would be a sufficiently interesting and attractive task to dissect many other of the Belgian reports in this way. This would, however, take us too far, and I must therefore in general leave it to the reader to draw his own conclusions from the text.

RUSSIA'S LOVE OF PEACE.

Russia's love of peace is expressly recognised in many places in the Belgian reports. Nowhere is any doubt thrown on the Tsar's will for peace, and on the occasion of the Potsdam meeting flattery and praise are bestowed by Baron Greindl, the then representative of Belgium at the Berlin Court, even on Sazonof, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who followed Isvolsky towards the end of 1910. On this the reader should refer to the report of November 7th, 1910 (No. 62), already quoted, and further, as examples, to the following passages which

prove that the Belgian diplomatists did not attribute any warlike intentions to those in authority in Russia :

No. 60.

Berlin, le 21 juin 1909.

... "Il a de plus été reconnu que les arrangements internationaux en vigueur auxquels participent la Russie et l'Allemagne n'empêchent nullement ces bonnes relations." ...

Ici, comme j'ai eu l'honneur de vous l'écrire par mon rapport du 7 juin, on ne s'est pas fait d'illusion sur l'étendue du résultat possible de l'entrevue. *L'initiative prise par la cour et le gouvernement russes* montre seulement qu'à Saint-Petersbourg de récents événements ont laissé l'impression que la *triple entente ne fournit pas à la Russie un appui suffisant pour se passer de relations au moins normales avec l'Allemagne.*

GREINDL.

Berlin, June 21st, 1909.

... "It was further recognised that the existing international arrangements, in which Russia and Germany participate, in no way prevent these good relations." ...

As I had the honour to announce to you in my report of June 7th, no illusions are here entertained regarding the possible results of this meeting. The initiative of the Russian Court and of the Russian Government shows merely that certain recent events in Petrograd have left behind the impression that the Triple Entente offers Russia no sufficient support to enable her to renounce relations with Germany which are at least normal.

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No. 94 (Greindl's report of October 24th, 1912, already quoted) speaks of the "policy of understanding with other Powers which M. Sazonof is pursuing," and states that this policy is "all the more reasonable inasmuch as present events have surprised Russia in the middle of the reorganisation of her military forces." No. 103 (Greindl's report of April 4th, 1913, which has also been quoted already) testifies in favour of M. Sazonof that he is "at heart in agreement with his colleagues who conduct the policy of the Great Powers" and sees the dangers for the peace of Europe in the Viennese Government and in the "direction which the Viennese Cabinet has given the Triple Alliance in the Balkan question." (The attitude of Austria towards Serbia and Montenegro : the harbour question, the question of Skutari, etc.)

THE PURPOSE OF THE TRIPLE ENTENTE : THE
MAINTENANCE OF PEACE.

Alongside the many testimonies to the love of peace inspiring the individual Powers belonging to the Entente, the Belgian reports also contain a considerable number of observations which attribute to the Triple Entente, as a whole, nothing else than the intention to preserve the peace of Europe. Such utterances are already reproduced in part in the reports previously quoted. I would here again refer to Greindl's report of July 18th, 1908 (No. 50), which no doubt speaks of a policy hostile to Germany pursued by the King of England, but also speaks at the same time of France's sincere love of peace and of the disinclination of Russia against the Entente Coalition being directed towards enmity against Germany. Greindl declares quite positively "that this plan (the English plan for giving the Entente such a direction, for which, however, there is no evidence whatever) had failed on the opposition of France and Russia. A month ago this was exclusively an inference on my part: to-day it is positively ascertained."

THE AGGRESSIVE CONSPIRACY OF REVAL ?

This report of Greindl, be it observed, dates from July, 1908, that is to say, a month after the meeting at Reval. Where then is the famous aggressive conspiracy of Reval, the invention of Schiemann, which now belongs to the stock in trade of German apologetic literature? The German Crown witness Greindl here confirms exactly the opposite, namely, that Russia and France had assumed an attitude of hostility towards any closer or more aggressive shape being given to the Entente.

A further confirmation of the fact that the alleged offensive conspiracy of Reval is merely a lying invention of German chauvinism is shown by the above quoted report of Greindl of June 21st, 1909 (No. 60), which relates directly to the meeting of the German Emperor and the Tsar in Baltischport.

The meeting of the two Emperors took place a year after the interview at Reval, some months after the conclusion of the crisis in connection with the annexation of Bosnia. Both Emperors were accompanied by representatives of their Foreign Offices. The Minister for Foreign Affairs in Russia was at that time still Isvolsky—that Minister who, alongside Delcassé, is always represented in the Pan-German *cliché* as the worst inciter to war. King Edward the Encircler was still alive, and still sitting comfortably in England—in the Pan-German view like a poisonous spider doing nothing else from morning to evening but spinning its web over the whole of Europe, in order to entangle and suffocate the hapless Germany therein. All these factors which were favourable to the exercise of the power of the Entente-Coalition were still in existence, though they did not exist much longer, and yet Greindl, the sworn enemy of the Entente, is forced to confess that the Coalition was beginning gravely to totter, that the “machine” no longer responded to the English King’s pressure on the button, indeed that it had refused to act on the first occasion on which it had been put to the test during the conflict regarding annexation which had just been surmounted. Russia, such is the opinion of Greindl, had no longer any real confidence in the power of the Triple Entente to furnish her with support, and therefore the Tsar and his Government had taken the initiative to the meeting in Baltischport.

What then, I again ask, becomes of the Reval conspiracy of June, 1908, in view of the account here given? If even Greindl, the apt and aping follower of Schiemann, disowns his legend about the conspiracy, what are we to regard as being true in the invention of the *Kreuzzeitung* Professor? What becomes of the whole policy of encirclement, which we are told was pursued with such clear consciousness of the end to be attained, if, according to the testimony of the Belgian Ambassador, it had already broken down a year after it had been entered upon?

Moreover Greindl, even before the meeting at Reval, had expressed himself very sceptically regarding the probable results of the discussions which took place there,

in the sense of a policy hostile to Germany. In his previous report of May 30th, 1908 (No. 47), he had already referred to Grey's speech in the House of Commons, on the occasion of the debate which took place on the imminent Russian tour of the English King. Rumours had at the time gained currency in England that this Royal tour was intended to lead to a closer union of the Entente Powers, to a kind of Triple Alliance as an equipoise to the existing Triple Alliance of the Continental Powers. By his speech Grey disposed of these rumours, denying that the Royal tour was invested with any unusual importance and representing its object as merely that of sealing the Anglo-Russian Entente on Asiatic questions which had been concluded in the previous year. Greindl also expressly mentions the aversion of the leading Press of England and France from a consolidation of the Entente to a new Triple Alliance. It is, of course, inevitable that this Belgian of German nationalistic sympathies should attach all manner of insinuations to the Reval meeting, despite the facts to the contrary reported by himself. To what a degree of blindest partiality this so "objective" reporter rises may be shown in the following paragraphs of the report which has already been mentioned elsewhere :

No. 47.

Berlin, le 30 mai 1908.

. . . La presse indépendante qui n'est pas tenue aux mêmes ménagements, ne se fait pas faute de manifester ses inquiétudes. Qu'on l'appelle alliance, entente ou comme l'on voudra, le groupement des puissances préparé personnelle-ment par le Roi d'Angleterre, existe et s'il n'est pas une menace directe et prochaine de guerre pour l'Allemagne (ce qui serait trop dire), il n'en constitue pas moins une diminution de sécurité.

Les déclarations pacifistes obligées et qui seront sans doute

Berlin, May 30th, 1908.

. . . The independent Press, which need not observe the same restraint, does not indeed fail to give expression to its uneasiness. Whether it be called an Alliance, an Entente, or by any other name, the grouping of Powers personally initiated by the King of England does exist, and even if it does not indicate a direct or an early danger of war for Germany (which would be saying too much) it nevertheless involves a diminution of security.

The customary pacifist declarations which without doubt will

répétées à Reval signifient bien peu de chose émanant de trois puissances qui comme la Russie et l'Angleterre viennent avec des succès divers d'entreprendre sans autre raison que le désir de s'agrandir et même sans prétexte plausible, les guerres de conquête de la Mandchourie et du Transvaal ou qui comme la France procède en ce moment même à l'envahissement du Maroc au mépris de promesses solennelles et sans autre titre que la cession des droits de l'Angleterre qui n'en possédait aucun. Ce sont les mêmes puissances qui en compagnie des Etats-Unis sortant à peine de la guerre de spoliation contre l'Espagne se sont montrées ultra-pacifistes à La Haye.

La triple alliance a garanti pendant trente ans la paix du monde, parce qu'elle était dirigée par l'Allemagne satisfaite du partage politique de l'Europe. Le nouveau groupement la menace parce qu'il se compose des puissances qui aspirent à une révision du *status quo*, au point d'avoir fait taire des haines séculaires pour préparer la réalisation de ce désir.

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be repeated at Reval have very little significance when uttered by three Powers which, like Russia and England, have just undertaken, though with varying success, wars of conquest in Manchuria and in the Transvaal without any other reason than the desire of self-aggrandisement and even without a plausible pretext, or which, like France, is proceeding at this very moment to the conquest of Morocco, disregarding solemn promises and without any other title than the cession of the rights of England, which possessed none. These are the same Powers which, in company with the United States, which had scarcely finished the war of spoliation against Spain appeared as ultra-pacifists at The Hague.

For thirty years the Triple Alliance has guaranteed the peace of the world because it stood under the leadership of Germany, which was satisfied with the political division of Europe. The new grouping threatens this peace, because it is composed of Powers who are striving for a revision of the *status quo* to such an extent that they have silenced feelings of hatred which have endured for centuries, in order to be able to realise this desire.

GREINDL.

Nearly every one of the sentences here reproduced is printed in heavy type in the German collection—a fact which does not prevent me from giving them here and thus again furnishing proof of the impartiality of my method of selection. In fact, this effusion of the Belgian diplomatist is one of the corner-stones on which the Berlin Foreign Office builds its proof of defence, and yet the evidence completely breaks down in the direction in which

it is intended to be effective. The Belgian reporter is observed to be making painful efforts to attach *subjectively* a warlike note to the Reval meeting, which, from all the *objective* signs, had in no way a character that imperilled peace. He sees in the Triple Entente a diminution of the security of peace; he scoffs at the "ultra-pacifists of The Hague," whom he upbraids for all manner of wars of conquest in the past (as if the Powers of the Triple Alliance had not also acquired their colonial territory by conquest!) He regards the Triple Alliance as a shield of the world's peace but on the other hand, the new grouping of Powers, which "strives for a revision of the *status quo*," as a danger to peace. What is meant by striving for a revision of the *status quo*? Does this refer to Europe? Where, when and how has such a revision ever been advanced in time of peace by one of the Entente Powers, or by all of them together as the object in view?¹ Did the thought of Alsace-Lorraine, which slumbered in many French minds, ever demonstrably form the object of positive Entente agreements? Did this idea ever develop, even in France alone, to a positive "will for action," to a positive will in the minds of the leading men of France?

¹ I have already explained fully in the third volume of *The Crime* (section, "War Aims") that the demands of a territorial nature put forward by the Entente Powers during the war must be judged from a special point of view. The criterion for the judgment of war aims is the same as for the judgment of the origin of the war: "Who is the aggressor? Who is the defender?" The aggressor who begins a war for the sake of imperialistic aims of conquest and who realises these aims during the war cannot make it a reproach against the defender if he also, in the course of his war of defence, in addition to other guarantees for protection against future attacks, strives to weaken his opponent from a territorial point of view. Such territorial acquisitions, contemplated after the outbreak of war (whether one approves of them or not, whether one regards them as an appropriate guarantee or not), are at any rate something entirely different from intentions to make conquest, entertained before the war and with a view to war; more especially they have nothing to do with the question of responsibility.

This consideration at once disposes of all the conclusions drawn from the Russian secret documents unfavourable to the Entente Powers, since all these documents, published by the Maximalist Government, so far as they are of any importance, date from the period after the outbreak of war.

Once for all I ask the question: Where is the evidence that any man in authority in France during the last fifteen years willed or prepared for the European war with a view to the reconquest of Alsace-Lorraine?

Where is the further evidence that any Russian or English ruler or statesman was ever willing to support the French with a view to such a reconquest? What, then, is meant when the Belgian observer ascribes to the Entente Powers the intention to revise the *status quo*? If this observation relates to colonial territory, to spheres of interest outside Europe, then it is, as a one-sided charge against the Entente Powers, more than ever destitute of meaning. In these domains all the Powers have constantly striven for revisions of the existing conditions, the Powers of the Triple Alliance just as much as those of the Triple Entente. In these domains such revisions have been arrived at on countless occasions by amicable agreement, some, indeed, immediately before the outbreak of the war. Such an adjustment of interests constitutes no danger of war, but on the contrary a guarantee of peace. What, then, does M. Greindl mean by the revision of the *status quo* involving a danger to peace, which he ascribes to the Entente Powers as the aim of their policy? I have intentionally dwelt somewhat longer on this report of Greindl's than it deserves: first, to meet the charge that I suppress matters which appear unfavourable to my thesis, but secondly and above all to illustrate the blind partiality of the Belgian observer, who uncritically and without any proof takes his arguments and, indeed, in part his phraseology from the arsenal of the Pan-German literature of incitement which lies ready to his hand.

It is interesting to observe how this acute observer in the next report of June 12th, 1908 (No. 48)—the meeting at Reval had meanwhile taken place—was obliged almost entirely to withdraw his unfavourable prognostications of May. Let us hear how he now expresses himself, after the meeting with regard to its results.

No. 48.

Berlin, le 12 juin 1908.

... *Malgré les dénégations postérieures il a dû exister quelque projet de resserrer les liens entre les puissances groupées par le Roi d'Angleterre dans une pensée hostile à l'Allemagne.* Le journal *Le Temps* bien placé pour être exactement informé, puisque c'est l'organe officieux du gouvernement français, paraissait si sûr qu'à Londres on aspirait à transformer l'entente cordiale en alliance qu'il y mettait déjà ses conditions. Il lui fallait une réforme de l'armée anglaise, permettant à l'Angleterre de fournir un contingent pour une guerre continentale. Cela signifiait qu'à Paris on ne se souciait pas d'être engagé dans un conflit dont l'Angleterre pourrait se retirer, après avoir détruit la marine de guerre et de commerce de l'Allemagne et annexé les colonies allemandes, hors d'état de protéger la France et d'empêcher l'Allemagne de s'indemniser aux dépens de celle-ci des désastres maritimes certains.

Mise en demeure de créer une armée de terre dont elle estime n'avoir pas besoin pour elle-même *simplement pour aider la France à la conquête de l'Alsace-Lorraine dont l'Angleterre n'a cure*, celle-ci a répondu par ses journaux à l'unisson, en déclinant l'idée suggérée par l'organe officieux français. C'est seulement alors que *Le Temps* a déclaré qu'il n'avait voulu faire que de la théorie pure. Si c'est vrai, il faut avouer que le moment

Berlin, June 12th, 1908.

... *Despite later denials, some plan must have existed to draw more closely the bonds between the Powers grouped by the King of England in a sense hostile to Germany.* The newspaper *Le Temps*, which as a semi-official organ of the French Government is in a position to be accurately informed, appeared to be so certain that the attempt was being made in London to transform the Entente Cordiale into an Alliance that it already prescribed its conditions for such a contingency. It demanded a reform of the English Army which would place England in a position to furnish a contingent for a continental war. This meant that in Paris they did not wish to be involved in a conflict from which England might withdraw after the annihilation of the German navy and mercantile shipping and the annexation of the German colonies, without being in a position to protect France and to prevent Germany from compensating herself at the cost of France for the defeat at sea which would certainly await her.

In reply to the demand to create a land army which she considers that she does not need for herself, *but solely to aid France in the reconquest of Alsace-Lorraine, to which England is indifferent*, the latter has by its Press unanimously repudiated the suggestion of the French semi-official organ: only then did *Le Temps* state that it had spoken exclusively from the theoretical point of view. If this is the case, it must be con-

était singulièrement choisi pour discuter une pareille question de doctrine.

A St-Petersbourg aussi il faut qu'on ait, malgré les déclarations de Sir Ed. Grey au parlement, *craint une proposition d'alliance* exposant la Russie à un conflit qu'elle est hors d'état de supporter. *Si ce n'est pas pour prévenir toute démarche semblable*, on ne comprend pas l'article par lequel l'officieuse *Rossija* a, à la veille de l'entrevue de Reval, insisté sur *l'amitié séculaire de l'Allemagne et de la Russie*, en termes beaucoup plus chaleureux que ne le comporte la situation véritable. *La Russie ne veut pas se laisser exploiter par l'Angleterre*, comme elle-même elle a exploité la France, en lui empruntant des milliards, *non pour la revanche* comme on l'espérait à Paris, mais pour ses entreprises en Extrême Orient. . . .

fessed that the moment for the theoretical discussion of such a question was strangely chosen.

In Petrograd also, despite the assurances of Sir Edward Grey in Parliament, there must have been some *apprehension of a proposal for an alliance* which would expose Russia to a conflict which it would not be in a position to sustain. If it did not have *the object of preventing any such step*, it would be impossible to understand the article in the semi-official *Rossija* the evening before the Reval meeting, emphasising in much more cordial words than correspond with the actual situation *the friendship between Germany and Russia which has existed for centuries. Russia will not allow herself to be exploited by England*, as she herself has exploited France, in borrowing from her milliards of francs, *not for the revanche*, as was hoped in Paris, but for her own undertakings in Eastern Asia.

It will be seen that it was anything but a Triple Alliance, much less an aggressive conspiracy, that emerged from the meeting at Reval. The French were averse from such a closer union, because England's land army promised them no sufficient support. The English had no intention of forming a new land army in order to reconquer Alsace-Lorraine for France. The Russians were apprehensive—what do you say to this word of Greindl's, Herr Schiemann?—of a proposal of an alliance from the side of England, which in fact was not made, but which they declined in advance as they were not willing to allow themselves to be exploited by England for her special purposes. This is, according to Greindl, the meagre result of the meeting at Reval which the same Greindl fourteen days before had presented to his Government as a fat piece of war news. From this meeting nothing remains, apart from the intention to "isolate" Germany. I have else-

where explained what this means and how little it is connected with the question of guilt which we have to investigate.

* * * * *

From the beginning of his tenure of office at Berlin Baron Beyens expresses himself quite differently from his predecessor Greindl regarding the aims of the Entente. He nowhere reproaches the Entente with entertaining warlike intentions or even with producing warlike effects. For him the Entente is what it always has been for every unprejudiced reader: a coalition for the protection of the peace of Europe by setting up an equivalent group of Powers over against the Triple Alliance, by the creation of a European equilibrium. In Baron Beyens' report of April 24th, 1914 (No. 113, already quoted elsewhere), we read as follows:

No. 113.

Berlin, le 24 avril 1914.

. . . Il semble à un observateur vivant à Berlin que les liens de l'Entente cordiale se sont quelque peu détendus, que *la pointe de cette arme défensive* n'est plus tournée exclusivement contre l'Allemagne, comme elle le fut du temps du Roi Edouard, et que la Triple Entente est devenue plutôt *un concert* qu'une Union de Puissances, *agissant ensemble dans certaines questions déterminées pour la poursuite d'intérêts communs*. Mais cette façon de voir peut être fautive ou influencée par la lecture d'écrits politiques dus à des plumes allemandes. Il serait fort intéressant pour moi de savoir ce que pensent du caractère qu'a pris l'Entente cordiale mes Collègues de Londres et de Paris.

Baron BEYENS.

Berlin, April 24th, 1914.

. . . To an observer who lives in Berlin, it appears as if the bonds of the Entente Cordiale had to some extent become looser, as if *the point of this weapon of defence* were no longer directed exclusively against Germany as in the time of King Edward, as if the Triple Entente had become a *Concert* rather than a Union of Powers *which in certain specific and closely defined questions act together in the pursuit of common interests*. But this method of looking at things may be false or may be influenced by the perusal of political pamphlets emanating from German pens. It would be very interesting to me to know what my colleagues in London and Paris think of the character which the Entente Cordiale has assumed.

Baron BEYENS.

In Guillaume's next report, dated April 25th, 1914 (No. 114), it is emphasised that the relations of France

and England "are favourable to the maintenance of general peace without thereby being prejudicial to other attempts at a *rapprochement* which are equally advantageous to the maintenance of European equilibrium."

* * * * *

Further commentaries on these reports are superfluous. As a result of this section it has been shown that the Entente Powers, individually or collectively, never entertained the thought of beginning a European war, nor did they prepare for its execution. The intention of "isolating" Germany is the only charge that can be extracted from these Belgian reports, if, indeed, such an "intention to isolate" is to be, or can be, described as a charge. Even this mild reproach, however, rests on a very uncertain basis, when we bear in mind the onesidedness, the defects, and the lacunæ of the German collection—qualities which rob it of any evidential force.

Assuming that this charge is sustained, the German thesis of defence runs as follows :

You wanted to isolate me, and therefore I have attacked you.

Even if all the premises are admitted, the cogency of the Belgian documents regarded as evidence, the actual isolation of Germany (ignoring, that is to say, the fact that Germany in reality was not isolated, that she had her allies by her side, that she could constantly extend her political, military and economic power, and give evidence of her strength in every international conflict)—even if all these non-existent premises are admitted, the above monstrous conclusion would still stand in accusation against Germany : that isolation means war. This conclusion in itself would justify the damning judgment passed by the whole civilised world on Germany's rulers and Government.

THE GERMAN CHAUVINISTS.

We have hitherto been concerned with the Belgian reports only in so far as they refer to the tendencies in the

Entente countries. Two-thirds of the necessary material is wanting to enable us to determine the judgment of the Belgian Ambassadors on the corresponding tendencies in the countries of the Triple Alliance. As already observed, we have the reports from Berlin only, not those from Vienna or Rome.

What do the Belgians say regarding German chauvinism, and the dangers of war which threatened from the side of Germany? Let us hear a report from the Paris Ambassador, Guillaume, dated March 4th, 1911 (No. 64), that is to say, written in the period before the outbreak of the Agadir conflict.

No. 64.

Paris, le 4 mars 1911.

. . . *L'incident de la Légion Etrangère*, dont vous aurez certes suivi les développements, dans la presse des deux pays, doit être surveillé. Le Ministre de la guerre de l'Empire s'est exprimé de façon assez nette sur ce corps de mercenaires; *des journaux allemands ont notablement accentué les reproches faits au recrutement et au traitement des légionnaires*, et la presse française s'en est émue; depuis quelques jours son langage est devenu plus acerbe; le chauvinisme s'en mêle, on interviewe des autorités militaires et d'anciens Chefs de la Légion, et la note que vient de publier la "Gazette de Cologne" n'est guère faite pour calmer l'émotion produite.

Je ne pense pas que cette émotion s'étende bien profondément en France et que l'opinion publique dans la véritable acception du mot, soit touchée; mais la presse fait du chauvinisme et peut prononcer des paroles malheureuses qui aggraveraient la situation.

Paris, March 4th, 1911.

. . . *The incident of the Foreign Legion*, of which you have certainly followed the development in the Press of both countries, must be watched. The German Minister of War has expressed himself fairly clearly regarding this body of mercenaries; *German newspapers lay special emphasis on the charges brought against the recruitment and the treatment of the mercenaries*, and the French Press became excited on the question; for some days back its language has become more bitter; chauvinism steps in, military authorities and former commanders of the Legion are interviewed, and the notice which the "Kölnische Zeitung" has just published is hardly calculated to calm the excitement which has arisen.

I do not believe that the excitement in France goes very deep, and that public opinion in the true sense of the word is affected by it; but the Press creates chauvinism, and might make use of certain unfortunate words which would render the situation more difficult.

Il est à espérer qu'il n'en sera rien, mais il n'est pas douteux que la question est susceptible de s'envenimer, et que, *si elle l'entend ainsi, l'Allemagne peut entretenir cette affaire dans un état de mi-acuité pour le jour où elle voudrait trouver une cause de brouille.*

Il me revient d'ailleurs, que l'on ne cesse de faire en Allemagne, le long de la frontière française, une véritable propagande pour amener dans l'armée Impériale des désertions au profit de la Légion Etrangère française.

GUILLAUME.

Let us hear, further, a report from Greindl, dated May 1st, 1911 (No. 68).

No. 68.

Berlin, le 1^{er} mai 1911.

Depuis que la *crise marocaine* a repassé à l'état aigu, la presse officieuse allemande s'était bornée à reproduire les informations apportées par les agences télégraphiques en s'abstenant de tout commentaire. Elle a rompu le silence hier matin par l'article inséré en tête de la *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* dont la traduction suit : . . .

Malgré les dispositions manifestées par l'article officieux, la situation reste délicate. Une maladresse quelconque peut obliger l'Allemagne à sortir de l'inaction. Beaucoup dépend aussi de la presse. Des journaux français montrent beaucoup trop ouvertement qu'il s'agit de faire du Maroc une seconde Tunisie. L'attitude des journaux allemands est en général très réservée, *mais ceux qui sont inspirés*

It is to be hoped that nothing of the kind will happen, but without doubt the question may become more acute, and *if Germany so wishes, she may leave the question open until the day on which she desires to find a pretext for a conflict.*

Moreover, as I hear, there is a regular propaganda being conducted in Germany, along the French frontier, in order to bring about desertions from the German army into the French Foreign Legion.

GUILLAUME.

Berlin, May 1st, 1911.

Since the Morocco affair has again become more acute, the German semi-official Press has restricted itself to reproducing the information provided by the telegraphic agencies and refrains from any commentary. Yesterday morning this silence was broken by the leading article which appeared at the head of the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, the translation of which follows : . . .

Notwithstanding the intentions manifested in the semi-official article, the situation remains delicate. Any maladroit action might force Germany to emerge from her inactivity. Much also depends on the Press. French newspapers show much too clearly that the question is one of making a second Tunisia out of Morocco. The German newspapers are in general very reserved ; *but the journals which*

par les pangermanistes, émettent des prétentions des plus gênantes pour la politique Impériale.

are under Pan-German influence put forward demands which are extremely inconvenient for the policy of the Imperial Government.

GREINDL.

GREINDL.

From Guillaume's report of April 17th, 1913 (No. 105) :

No. 105.

Paris, le 17 avril 1913.

On ne connaît pas encore les résultats définitifs de l'enquête que le Gouvernement a chargé un haut fonctionnaire, M. Ogier, de faire à Nancy sur les incidents franco-allemands.

Les nombreuses correspondances que publient les journaux donnent cependant l'impression que j'avais déjà l'honneur de vous communiquer hier, *que les faits n'ont pas eu une importance suffisante pour légitimer la levée de boucliers d'une partie de la presse allemande et les paroles prononcées au Parlement de Berlin par le Sous-Secrétaire d'Etat des Affaires Etrangères. . . .*

Paris, April 17th, 1913.

There is as yet no information as to the final results of the inquiry which the Government entrusted to a high official, M. Ogier, to be conducted in Nancy with regard to the Franco-German incidents.

The numerous communications published in the newspapers nevertheless produce the impression which I have already had the honour to report to you yesterday, namely, that the facts were not sufficiently important to justify the call to arms of a section of the German Press and the words of the Under Foreign Secretary in the Berlin Parliament. . . .

From Guillaume's report of May 8th, 1914 (No. 115) :

No. 115.

Paris, le 8 mai 1914.

. . . La presse est mauvaise dans les deux pays. La campagne qui se poursuit en Allemagne au sujet de la Légion étrangère est excessivement maladroite, et le ton des journaux français ne cesse d'être acerbe et agressif. Personne n'a assez d'autorité et d'indépendance pour essayer de modifier cette situation qui est cependant blâmée par beaucoup de bons esprits. . . .

Paris, May 8th, 1914.

. . . The feeling of the Press is bad in both countries. *The campaign which is being conducted in Germany against the Foreign Legion is extremely maladroit, and the tone of the French newspapers is continually bitter and aggressive. No one has sufficient authority and independence to make an attempt to alter this situation, which is nevertheless condemned by many people of understanding. . . .*

From Beyens' report of June 12th, 1914 (No. 118)

No. 118.

Berlin, le 12 juin 1914.

... La démission du Cabinet Doumergue, l'échec de la combinaison Viviani, le refus de MM. Deschanel, Delcassé et Jean Dupuy d'assumer la responsabilité de constituer un Ministère, avaient rendu confiance à la presse allemande dans la réalisation de son désir : *l'abolition du service militaire de trois ans par une majorité de radicaux socialistes*. Mais si la pensée était la même chez tous les organes de l'opinion publique allemande, l'expression en était bien différente, suivant la couleur politique du journal. Là où la presse libérale applaudissait sans mesure au triomphe du radicalisme français, *les pangermanistes ne trouvaient que matière à raillerie et à dénigrement ; on peut même dire que la plupart des journaux conservateurs n'ont observé aucune mesure dans leurs jugements*. Tous cependant sont d'accord pour voir dans l'obstination des radicaux-socialistes à ne pas faire partie d'un Ministère qui ne promettrait pas de résoudre immédiatement la question militaire, un plan de campagne ourdi contre l'Elysée, la crise ministérielle en se prolongeant devant se transformer en crise présidentielle. . . .

Berlin, June 12th, 1914.

... The resignation of the Doumergue Cabinet, the fiasco of the Viviani combination, and the refusal of Messrs. Deschanel, Delcassé and Jean Dupuy to accept the responsibility for the formation of a Ministry had given the German Press confidence in the fulfilment of their wish, namely, *the repeal of the three years period of service by a Radical-Socialist majority*. But if all the organs of German public opinion were filled with the same thought, it was nevertheless expressed in very different forms according to the political colour of the paper. While the Liberal Press bestowed unmeasured applause on the triumph of French Radicalism, *the Pan-Germans only found occasion for sneering and contemptuous judgments : it may indeed be said that the majority of the Conservative newspapers completely lacked restraint in their judgments*. All, however, see in the obstinate refusal of the Radical-Socialists to enter a Ministry which does not promise an immediate solution of the military question a plan of campaign against the Elysée, inasmuch as a lengthy Ministerial crisis is bound to change into a Presidential crisis.

. . . .

I have already referred to other similar passages in this report.

THE MOROCCO CONFLICT, 1911.

The following reports deal with the Moroccan conflict, more particularly with the attitude of the French Govern-

ment in this matter and with the absolute desire of France to maintain peace :

Guillaume's report of July 28th, 1911 (No. 79) :

No. 79.

Paris, le 28 juillet 1911.

. . . La situation présente, certes, un certain caractère de gravité ; des incidents peuvent surgir qui se grefferaient sur un état de choses troublé : *mais personne ne veut la guerre ; on cherchera à l'éviter.*

On se livre à un " bluff " international très caractérisé, un véritable marchandage que des communications officieuses de la presse présentent au public pour tâter l'opinion.

La France ne veut pas et ne peut pas vouloir que les affaires se gâtent complètement. Son Gouvernement sait que la guerre marquerait la dernière heure de la République. J'ai une très grande confiance dans les sentiments pacifiques de l'Empereur Guillaume, malgré l'exagération assez fréquente de certains de ses gestes. Il ne se laissera pas entraîner plus loin qu'il ne le voudra par le tempérament exubérant et la manière lourde de son très intelligent Ministre des Affaires Etrangères. . . .

Les Français céderont sur tous les points pour avoir la paix. Il n'en est pas de même des Anglais qui ne transigeront pas sur quelques règles et quelques prétentions. Mais on n'éprouve nul désir de les pousser à bout.

Vous trouverez, sous ce pli, un article intéressant du *Temps* et un article assez modéré du *Matin*.

GUILLAUME.

Paris, July 28th, 1911.

. . . The present situation has certainly a grave character. Incidents may arise which in the state of tension already existing would find a fruitful soil. *But no one wants war, the attempt will be made to avoid it.*

People surrender themselves to a very significant international " bluff," a veritable traffic, which semi-official communications of the Press offer to the public with a view to sounding public opinion.

France does not desire, and cannot desire, that the negotiations should completely fail. Its Government knows that war would mean the last hour of the Republic. I have great confidence in the pacific sentiments of the Emperor William in spite of the not infrequent exaggeration of certain of his actions. He will not allow himself to be carried away further than he desires by the exuberant temperament and the heavy hand of his very skilful Minister of Foreign Affairs. . . .

The French will give way on every point in order to maintain peace. It is not so in the case of the English, who will not compromise on certain principles and demands. But there is no desire to drive them to extremes.

Enclosed is an interesting article from the *Temps* and a fairly moderate article from the *Matin*.

GUILLAUME.

Greindl's report of October 12th, 1911 (No. 81) :

No. 81.

Berlin, le 12 octobre 1911.

... *J'ai lieu de penser que l'on croit ici le Gouvernement Français sincèrement désireux de tenir la parole donnée ; mais il est faible, dépendant des caprices d'une majorité mal assurée. Aura-t-il le courage et la force de résister à une poussée de l'opinion publique si celle-ci s'accroît dans le sens du refus de toute compensation territoriale ?*

Nous devons nous féliciter de ce que l'accord soit conclu sur la première moitié de l'arrangement marocain, mais le péril ne sera entièrement écarté pour la Belgique que quand le traité tout entier sera signé et approuvé par les parlements des deux pays.

GREINDL.

Berlin, October 12th, 1911.

... *I have reason to assume that the French Government are here believed to be sincerely desirous of keeping their word. But they are weak and depend on the caprices of an uncertain majority. Will they have the courage and the strength to resist the pressure of public opinion if this increasingly assumes an attitude of refusal towards any territorial compensations ?*

We may congratulate ourselves that an understanding has been reached regarding the first part of the Moroccan agreement, but the danger will not be entirely removed, so far as Belgium is concerned, until the whole treaty has been signed and approved by the Parliaments of both countries.

GREINDL.

A report from Lalaing of November 28th, 1911 (No. 83), discusses England's action in the promotion of peace during the recent Moroccan crisis :

No. 83.

Londres, le 28 novembre 1911.

... Pour le reste, Sir E. Grey a dit qu'il n'y avait plus lieu de s'alarmer, aujourd'hui il n'était pas question de guerre. Il n'existe plus aucun traité secret avec la France. *L'Angleterre ne demande qu'à vivre en bons termes avec l'Allemagne, sans sacrifier ses autres amitiés. Elle ne désire aucun accroissement territorial en Afrique.*

London, November 28th, 1911.

... For the rest, Sir E. Grey said there was no longer any ground for uneasiness : today there was no question of war. There exists no secret treaty with France. *England desires merely to live on good terms with Germany, without thereby sacrificing her other friendships. She does not wish any territorial aggrandisement in Africa.*

Le discours du Ministre à été bien reçu, et a calmé bien des appréhensions. On en a déduit que la crise est passée, que *l'entente cordiale n'est pas une alliance déguisée* et que l'Angleterre a loyalement soutenu la France (d'autant plus que c'était son intérêt), et *est disposée à se montrer conciliante pour l'Allemagne.*

Le nouveau chef de l'opposition, M. Bonar Law, a soutenu le Gouvernement et a approuvé, au nom des conservateurs, la politique de Sir E. Grey, qui n'a été attaquée que par le parti ouvrier. Le Premier Ministre a pris aussi la parole pour déclarer *que la Grande-Bretagne était pacifique, et ne refusait à aucune autre Puissance sa place au soleil. . . .*

The speech of the Minister was well received and dispelled many misgivings. It was inferred from it that the crisis is past, that *the Entente Cordiale is not a veiled alliance*, and that England has loyally supported France (all the more so because it was in her own interest), further that *she is disposed to show herself conciliatory to Germany.*

The new leader of the Opposition, Mr. Bonar Law, supported the Government, and in the name of the Conservatives approved Sir E. Grey's policy, which was attacked only by the Labour Party. The Prime Minister also spoke in order to declare *that Great Britain was pacific and did not refuse any other Power her place in the sun. . . .*

From this report regarding Grey's great speech of November 27th, 1911, it is especially to be noted that the English Foreign Secretary emphasised England's desire to live on good terms with Germany, to show herself conciliatory towards Germany, and not to grudge that Power her place in the sun. Is not the plan of the English Government as so described in correspondence with the whole of the earlier and the later action of the Liberal Cabinet? "Live and let live" was the sign manual of the foreign policy of the Liberal English Government ever since its accession to office. A happy life on both sides, however, required not only a peaceful understanding regarding all possible questions affecting their interests, but above all an understanding regarding the ruinous naval armaments which imposed the gravest sacrifices on the well-being of both countries, without altering even in the slightest degree the relative strength of the two naval Powers. We have elsewhere seen that England blocked this path to the well-being of both sides by her machiavellian conditions on the question of neutrality.¹

¹ *The Crime*, Vol. II, p. 235 et seq.

In the report of Baron Beyens of June 28th, 1912 (No. 92), reference is again made to the place in the sun which Germany in fact occupied, and also to the dangers involved in the competition in armaments with England. Beyens, it is true, does not conceal a certain "antipathy" on the part of the English, "an intelligible envy" when they see "how a European people gains ground every year in the struggle on the world-market." At the same time he is carefully speaking only of the opinions of certain interested circles in the people, never by any chance does he speak of any actual intentions or preconceived plans formed by those in authority, which might imperil the peace of Europe.

* * * * *

Even Baron Greindl cannot refrain from criticising the German Moroccan policy as false and dangerous. In his report of April 21st, 1911 (No. 66), it is stated :

No. 66.

Berlin, le 21 avril 1911.

... En s'engageant par l'arrangement du 9 février 1909 à ne pas entraver les intérêts politiques de la France au Maroc, le Gouvernement Impérial savait à n'en pouvoir douter que le Gouvernement Français interpréterait cette clause comme un encouragement à persévérer dans la même voie et regarderait la promesse de respecter l'indépendance du Maroc comme lettre morte. *Reculer serait maintenant pour la France une cruelle humiliation.*

L'Allemagne n'a nulle raison de la lui infliger et ne pourrait d'ailleurs pas, après huit ans de tolérance, changer d'attitude sans être déterminée à aller jusqu'à la guerre. C'est démesurément plus que le Maroc ne vaut.

Berlin, April 21st, 1911.

... When the Imperial Government pledged itself by the agreement of February 9th, 1909, to lay no obstacles in the way of France's political interests in Morocco, they doubtless knew that the French Government would interpret this clause as an encouragement to continue on the same path, and that they would regard the promise to respect the independence of Morocco as a dead letter. *To withdraw now would be for France a cruel humiliation.*

Germany has no reason to inflict this upon France, and, moreover, after eight years' suffering it could not change its attitude without being determined to allow matters to proceed as far as a war. This would be immeasurably more than Morocco is worth.

Enfin il ne peut pas déplaire à Berlin que la France soit engagée dans une entreprise coloniale qui pour bien longtemps l'obligera à immobiliser des forces de plus en plus considérables en Afrique et qui détourne ses regards des provinces perdues. C'était la politique du Prince de Bismarck. On s'en est écarté il y a huit ans, parce qu'il s'agissait de prouver au Roi d'Angleterre et à M. Delcassé que l'Allemagne ne se laisserait pas traiter en quantité négligeable, mais il n'y a plus maintenant de raison de n'y pas revenir. Mais il ne dépend pas uniquement du Gouvernement Impérial de pratiquer l'abstention. Il faut qu'on l'y aide de l'extérieur. Il est parfaitement exact que l'opinion publique est émue. Comme j'ai eu l'honneur de vous l'écrire par mon rapport du 11 février 1909, l'arrangement du 9 février a été critiqué par tous les journaux allemands qui n'ont pas d'attaches officielles. Depuis on a plus d'une fois reproché au Gouvernement Impérial trop de condescendance envers la France dans l'affaire marocaine. . . .

Finally, it cannot be displeasing to Berlin that France has entered upon a colonial enterprise which will for a long time compel her to detain considerable forces in Africa and which will divert her looks from the lost provinces. This was the policy of Prince Bismarck. It was departed from eight years ago, because it was necessary to prove to the King of England and to M. Delcassé that Germany would not allow herself to be treated as a "quantité négligeable," but now there is no longer any ground for not returning to it. However, the practice of restraint does not depend simply and solely on the Imperial Government. It must be helped from outside. It is perfectly true that public opinion is excited. As I had the honour to write to you in my report of February 11th, 1909, the agreement of February 9th is criticised by all German newspapers which have no semi-official relations. Since then the Imperial Government have on more than one occasion been accused of too much compliance towards France in the Moroccan affair. . . .

In this passage even so mild a critic as Greindl rightly adduces the Pan-German Press as the inciting element, which constantly accused the German Government, and above all the Emperor himself, of cowardice towards France, and which was even then seeking to find in the Moroccan question the European apple of discord.

In the same provocative way the familiar incidents of the Foreign Legion were at the time exploited in the German chauvinist Press. On this point the reader should refer to Guillaume's report of March 4th, 1911 (No. 64), quoted above, especially to the penultimate

paragraph of this report which the Foreign Office, on well-considered grounds, allows to fade away into ordinary type :

It is to be hoped that nothing of the kind will happen, but without doubt the question may become more acute, and if Germany so wishes, she may leave the question open until the day on which she desires to find a pretext for a conflict.

The Paris Ambassador here is apprehensive of counter-outbreaks of French chauvinism against the excesses of the chauvinism of Germany; but his apprehensions are not based on the fact that a danger of war might thereby come from the side of France, but that such French counter-utterances might, as a reaction, encourage the war-intriguers in Germany, and might finally on the day convenient to her provide the German Government with the pretext for a conflict.

Baron Guillaume expresses the same idea even more plainly in a report of January 16th, 1914 (No. 110), which has already been quoted in part :

No. 110.

Paris, le 16 janvier 1914.

... Il me semble certain que nous aurions plus d'intérêt à voir le succès de la politique de M. Caillaux—des radicaux et radicaux-socialistes. J'ai déjà eu l'honneur de vous dire que ce sont MM. Poincaré, Delcassé, Millerand et leurs amis qui ont inventé et poursuivi la politique nationaliste, cocardière et chauvine dont nous avons constaté la renaissance. C'est un danger pour l'Europe—et pour la Belgique. J'y vois le plus grand péril qui menace aujourd'hui la paix de l'Europe, *non pas que j'aie le droit de supposer le Gouvernement de la République disposé à la troubler de propos délibéré—je crois plutôt le contraire—mais parce que l'attitude qu'a prise le Cabinet Barthou est,*

Paris, January 16th, 1914.

It appears to me certain that it would be more to our interest to see the success of the policy of M. Caillaux, of the Radicals and Radical-Socialists. I have already had the honour to report to you that it is Messrs. Poincaré, Delcassé, Millerand and their friends who have invented and pursued the nationalistic, militaristic and chauvinistic policy, the renaissance of which we have noted. It constitutes a danger for Europe and for Belgium. In this I see the greatest danger for the peace of Europe, *not that I have any right to assume that the French Government will intentionally disturb the peace—I believe, rather, that the contrary is the case—but because the attitude of the Barthou Cabinet*

selon moi, la cause déterminante d'un surcroît de tendances militaristes en Allemagne.

Les folies belliqueuses de la Turquie et la loi de trois ans me paraissent constituer les seuls dangers à redouter pour la paix de l'Europe. Je crois pouvoir relever le péril que fait naître la législation militaire actuelle de la République. . . .

M. Caillaux a voté contre la loi de trois ans ; nombreux sont les hommes politiques qui le soutiennent et partagent son avis à cet égard. Le Président du Conseil poussé par les hauts personnages de la République a promis le respect loyal de la loi de trois ans ; mais il n'est pas exagéré de supposer que dans sa pensée et dans celle de ses amis, on conserve le dessin d'adoucir considérablement les rigueurs du régime actuel.

M. Caillaux, qui est le véritable Président du Conseil, est connu pour ses sentiments en faveur d'un rapprochement avec l'Allemagne ; il connaît admirablement son pays et sait, qu'en dehors des états-majors politiques, de poignées de chauvins et de gens qui n'osent pas avouer leurs idées et leurs préférences, le plus grand nombre des Français, des paysans, des commerçants et des industriels subissent avec impatience le surcroît de dépenses et de charges personnelles qui leur est imposé. . . .

has, in my opinion, led to an increase of militaristic tendencies in Germany.

The bellicose desires of Turkey and the law regarding the three years military service appear to me to constitute the only dangers which threaten the peace of Europe. I believe I can show the dangers involved in the present military legislation of the Republic. . . .

M. Caillaux has voted against the three years law. A large number of politicians support him and share his views in this respect. Under the influence of highly placed persons in the Republic, the Prime Minister has promised that he will loyally give effect to the law regarding the period of three years' service, but it is not too much to assume that he and his friends in their own minds are thinking of considerably softening the harshness of the existing system.

M. Caillaux, who is the real Prime Minister, is inclined, as is well known, to a rapprochement with Germany. He knows his country extremely well, and he knows that, apart from the political leaders, a handful of chauvinists, and of people who dare not confess their thoughts and inclinations, the majority of the French people—peasants, merchants, manufacturers—are only bearing with impatience the excessive expenditure and personal burdens which are laid upon them. . . .

In the foregoing extract I have, as a proof of my objectivity, reproduced no fewer than twenty-one lines which are printed in heavy type in the German publication and are obviously regarded as highly incriminating for French policy. In fact, these lines do contain almost

the strongest statement to be found in the German collection of reports against certain leading French politicians. And yet—accurately viewed—the apparent charge which is here involved against French Nationalism is rather seen to be a charge against Prussian-German militarism.

Guillaume's report, which is important and interesting from many points of view, shows :

1. That the policy of M. Caillaux, that is to say, of the Radicals and Radical-Socialists (who, later on, were in fact victorious at the elections), was constantly gaining more adherents ;

2. that, as the Caillaux group had voted against the three years law, so they now intended to carry into effect a considerable alleviation of the terms of the law ;

3. that Caillaux, although not formally, was in fact the real Prime Minister, and as such was inclined to a *rapprochement* with Germany ;

4. that the majority of the French were disposed to peace, and were only reluctantly bearing the new burdens ;

5. that, while the policy of Poincaré, Delcassé, Millerand and their friends no doubt constituted a danger for Europe, it was not in the sense that there was any possible intention to make war on the part of France, but, on the contrary, only in the sense that certain phenomena in France had led to an increase of militaristic tendencies in Germany.

That is the fundamental idea which runs through all the Belgian reports, in so far as they criticise certain tendencies in France. Their idea was that militaristic tendencies in France, even if their purpose was merely to achieve effective defence against a possible German attack, might on the other hand provide nourishment to the inciters to war in Germany and so lead to the German war of aggression. This reaction—*par ricochet*—would thus evoke against the will of France precisely what the French were anxious to prevent by means of

the further development of their military power, that is to say, the German war of aggression. This train of thought in no way supports the exoneration of Germany, but on the contrary tends to her incrimination. The desire for war and the danger of war are not on the side of France, but on the side of Germany. The position, as represented in the Belgian ambassadorial reports, is more or less analogous to that of a thoughtless boy in the zoological garden who makes the wild tiger angry by provoking and irritating him; the attendant who stands near by warns the boy: "Do not make the animal angry; he might become dangerous to you and those around." The attendant is represented by the Belgian Ambassadors. The thoughtless boys are the French Nationalists. It is, however, Germany that is the dangerous marauding beast. Only from her is a fatal attack to be feared. This explains the warning of the Belgians:

'Tis perilous to rouse the lion;
There's venom in the tiger's tooth.

It is a complete perversion of the picture on the part of the German war-writers to seek to represent the thoughtless boy as the dangerous beast of prey. The evil instincts of the beast of prey are ascribed by the Belgian observers to the Pan-German war-inciters only, and not to the French Nationalists or even the English "encirclers." Even Greindl, the strongest enemy of the Entente to be found among the Belgian diplomatists, reveals the same train of thought in most passages in his reports, and there is only one single occasion in the whole German collection where I have found a passage in which Greindl attributes offensive intentions to the Triple Entente. If now among the six Belgian representatives in the six European capitals there is only one, and he a man imprinted with German nationalist sentiment, who speaks of the offensive intentions of the Entente, and if he only does so in a single passage, this fact is sufficient to characterise the German assertion that such offensive intentions existed. It continues to be no more than a picture of the imagination left suspended in the air without any basis of proof, and in any case the Belgian reports cannot be

cited as providing evidence in support of such an assertion. When, however, this fact is determined, the justification of the present war as a war of prevention collapses as does the invention of the officially proclaimed war of defence, for which it is even truer that there is no basis in the Belgian reports.

ATTITUDE OF THE ENTENTE POWERS DURING THE BOSNIAN ANNEXATION CRISIS AND DURING THE BALKAN WAR.

Below are a few more extracts from the reports, affording valuable amplification of the picture of the peaceful intentions of the Entente Powers and of the action which they actually took in promoting peace in the European disputes of recent years. These reports have already in part been quoted in earlier passages, and therefore I only reproduce here a few sentences intended to confirm the view we are considering.

What was the attitude of the Entente Powers during the Bosnian annexation crisis and during the Balkan war ?

Light is thrown on this point, first of all by the Paris report of Leghait, dated October 8th, 1908 (No. 52), which has already been quoted above. I will here give only those sentences which speak of the Russian proposal for a conference :

No. 52.

Paris, le 8 octobre 1908.

... Il ne sera pas aisé d'arriver à réunir une conférence et on ignore quel sera l'accueil qui sera réservé à l'invitation lancée par la Russie. Cet accueil dépendra du programme et l'accord sur celui-ci sera fort laborieux à cause du fait accompli en présence duquel on se trouve et des "compensations" que l'on réclame de toute part. Toutefois on semble espérer que toutes les Puissances accepteront la conférence, car, me disait-on,

Paris, October 8th, 1908.

... It will not be easy to bring a conference together, and it is not yet known what reception will be accorded to Russia's invitation. This reception will depend on the programme, and agreement on this point will be very difficult, in view of the fact involved in the existence of a *fait accompli* and in view of the compensations which will be demanded on all sides. Nevertheless, hope appears to be entertained that all the Powers will

le désir du maintien de la paix est si unanime et si profond qu'il dominera tout.

accept the conference; for, as was said to me, *the desire to maintain peace is so unanimous and so strong that it will overcome all obstacles.*

LEGHAIT.

LEGHAIT.

At this point Greindl's report of February 17th, 1909, already quoted (No. 55), is also in point; also the report of the same Ambassador of April 1st, 1909, mentioned in an earlier passage, from which I quote here only the sentence:

... Il n'est pas douteux à mon avis que la Russie et la France ne fussent animées d'un désir sincère de prévenir une conflagration européenne. . . .

... It is in my opinion beyond doubt that *Russia and France were inspired by a sincere desire to prevent a universal European conflagration.* . . .

Baron Beyens' report of October 18th, 1912 (No. 93, already quoted in part)—the second report of the then recently appointed Berlin representative of the Kingdom of Belgium—discusses the attitude of the European Powers in the Balkan war, and confirms the will for peace as well as the action for peace which was manifested on this occasion by all the Great Powers without exception:

No. 93.

Berlin, le 18 octobre 1912.

... Le premier effet de la crise balkanique a été d'opérer un rapprochement entre le Gouvernement Impérial et celui de la République. *Egalement désireux de voir le conflit localisé dans la péninsule et d'éviter une guerre européenne, ils se sont entendus pour agir dans le même sens sur leurs alliés respectifs, la Russie et l'Autriche, et ils ont pris part en même temps aux démarches tentées, un peu tardivement, à Constantinople et dans les capitales des Balkans. L'initiative prise personnellement par M. Poincaré en vue du rétablissement de la paix a reçu l'approbation et même les éloges*

Berlin, October 18th, 1912.

... The first result of the Balkan crisis was a *rapprochement* between the Imperial Government and the French Republic. *Equally inspired by the desire to localise the conflict on the Balkan peninsula and to avoid a European war, they agreed to act in the same sense on their respective allies, Russia and Austria, and simultaneously took part in the démarches which, somewhat tardily, were undertaken in Constantinople and the capitals of the Balkan countries. The initiative personally taken by M. Poincaré for the assurance of peace is approved and indeed praised by the German Press.*

de la presse allemande, qu'elle ait trouvé qu'il était trop tôt pour parler de la réunion d'une Conférence. Enfin le *Matin* a chanté les louanges de M. de Kiderlen, si l'on peut qualifier ainsi l'article qu'il lui a consacré. . . .

. . . Il était, d'ailleurs, assez naturel que l'attention et les préoccupations du public des deux côtés des Vosges se détournassent des sujets habituels de discussion et de polémique pour se concentrer sur les événements balkaniques. Sans vouloir exagérer la portée de la détente que je signale, il est permis d'espérer que *la communauté de vues de l'Allemagne et de la France dans les circonstances présentes servira puissamment au rétablissement de la paix.*

Baron BEYENS.

True, it was found that it was still too early to speak of a Conference. In the end the *Matin* sang the praises of Herr von Kiderlen, if it is possible so to describe the article which it devoted to him. . . .

It was, moreover, only natural that the attention of the public on both sides of the Vosges should be diverted from the usual subjects of dispute and discussion and should be concentrated on the events in the Balkans. Without desiring to exaggerate the extent of the *détente* to which I refer, it may be hoped that *the community of the views of Germany and France under present circumstances will materially contribute to the re-establishment of peace.*

Baron BEYENS.

Specially noteworthy in this report is the "initiative for the re-establishment of peace personally undertaken by M. Poincaré." Poincaré, then Prime Minister, was constantly accused by the German chauvinist Press, then as to-day, of having agreed all the preparations for the later attack on Germany with the Russian rulers, down to every detail, as far back as the summer of 1912 on the occasion of his Petrograd visit. And, nevertheless, in the autumn of 1912, acting on his own initiative and with the eulogistic approval of the German Press, he did everything possible for the maintenance of peace. Clearly only for the sake of appearance, Herr Schiemann? In order to lull Germany to sleep, and attack her later with the greater security! If a Poincaré does anything good, he is, as a matter of course, a dissembler. It is only when he does what is evil, that he is sincere. . . . On the "militaristic and chauvinistic policy" which Baron Guillaume, in his already mentioned report of January 16th, 1914, lays at the door of M. Poincaré, the eulogistic recognition of the Berlin Ambassador also throws a peculiar light.

From Beyens' report of October 24th, 1912 (No. 94, already quoted in part) :

No. 94.

Berlin, le 24 octobre 1912.

. . . La politique de M. Sazonow est d'autant plus sage que les événements actuels ont surpris la Russie en pleine réorganisation de ses forces militaires et qu'un désastre ou un simple échec en Europe lui serait autrement funeste que ses défaites en Extrême-Orient. Il serait le signal d'une révolution sociale qui s'arme dans l'ombre et menace sourdement le Trône des Czars. . . .

Berlin, October 24th, 1912.

. . . The policy of M. Sazonof is all the more prudent inasmuch as the present events have surprised Russia in the middle of the reorganisation of her military forces, and a disaster or even a simple check in Europe would be much more fatal for Russia than her defeats in East Asia. It would be the signal for a social revolution, which is being prepared in the dark and which is secretly menacing the throne of the Tsars. . . .

How accurately does the Belgian Ambassador here prophesy the future! But it is precisely the accuracy of this prediction, the grounds for which must have been better known to the Russian despots than to anyone else, which confirms the thesis, advanced and proved in all my writings, that no one could have been further removed from the idea of provoking a European war than the Tsar and his Government, who in a war might lose everything but could gain nothing.

From Beyens' report of November 30th, 1912 (No. 96) :

No. 96.

Berlin, le 30 novembre 1912.

Le voyage de l'Archiduc Héritier d'Autriche en Allemagne, bien qu'il ait eu pour prétexte un déplacement de chasse motivé par une invitation de l'Empereur, a eu cette année-ci une importance particulière, étant donné la guerre balkanique et le conflit entre l'Autriche-Hongrie et la Serbie. L'Archiduc a dit à Berlin que *la Monarchie austro-*

Berlin, November 30th, 1912.

Even if the journey to Germany of the Archduke, the successor to the throne of Austria, has taken place under the pretext of a hunting-invitation from the Emperor, nevertheless it has special significance this year on account of the Balkan war and the conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. The Archduke stated in Berlin

hongroise était arrivée à la limite des concessions qu'elle pouvait faire à sa voisine. L'Empereur et ses Conseillers ne lui en ont pas moins prodigué des conseils de modération que Guillaume II, en reconduisant son hôte à la gare, a résumés avec la familiarité de langage dont il est coutumier par ces mots expressifs : "*Surtout pas de bêtises !*" Je puis, sur la foi d'Ambassadeurs qui me l'ont répété, vous garantir l'authenticité de ce conseil qui a échappé aux indiscretions des journaux. . . .

Quels que soient les projets que M. de Kiderlen-Waechter, qui a de grandes idées, porte dans sa tête pour concilier à son pays les sympathies des jeunes Puissances balkaniques, un fait absolument certain, c'est qu'il veut fermement éviter une conflagration européenne. *La politique allemande se rapproche sur ce point de celle de l'Angleterre et de la France, toutes deux résolument pacifiques*, et, si les sujets de polémique continuent d'être journaliers entre la presse de Paris et celle de Berlin, celle-ci a adopté un ton beaucoup plus conciliant à l'égard de la Grande-Bretagne et de Sir Edward Grey en particulier. Les relations entre les Gouvernements allemand et britannique sont meilleures qu'elles n'avaient été depuis longtemps et même, à ce qu'assure l'Ambassadeur de France, *une détente très favorable au maintien de la paix* se produit aussi entre les Cabinets de Berlin et de Paris. . . .

M. Sazonow s'est, paraît-il, ressaisi et il joue activement

that the *Austro-Hungarian Monarchy had reached the limit of the concessions* which it could make to its neighbour. The Emperor and his counsellors have, however, not failed in giving counsels of moderation, which William II, in conducting his guest to the railway, summed up in the familiar method of expression which is peculiar to him in the following expressive words : "*Above all, no silly mistakes.*" I can guarantee you, on the authority of Ambassadors who have repeated it to me, the authenticity of this advice, which has escaped the indiscretions of the newspapers. . . .

Whatever may be the schemes which Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter, who has large ideas, has in mind with a view to gaining for his country the sympathies of the young Balkan Powers, one thing is certain, namely, that he is firmly resolved to avoid a European conflagration. *On this point German policy coincides with that of England and France, who are both decidedly pacific*; even if subjects of dispute between the Paris and Berlin Press are no day absent, the latter has assumed a much more conciliatory tone towards England and towards Sir Edward Grey in particular. The relations between the German and the English Government are better than they have been for a long time, and according to what the French Ambassador has assured me *a détente very favourable to the maintenance of peace* is also taking place between the Cabinets of Berlin and Paris. . . .

M. Sazonof has, it appears, recovered himself, and zealously

auprès de la Cour de Belgrade le même rôle que la diplomatie allemande auprès de la Cour de Vienne. *Sous l'influence des Conseils russes l'intransigeance serbe va-t-elle se plier à un compromis dans la question du port de l'Adriatique ?* Mes Collègues à qui j'ai fait cette demande m'ont répondu affirmativement. Or c'est là le nœud de la question. . . .

Le projet d'une Conférence d'Ambassadeurs qui aurait pour but de déblayer le terrain en amenant une entente préalable entre les six grandes Puissances pour la solution de questions importantes, telles que celle des îles de la Mer Egée et celle de l'Albanie, à laquelle est fatalement liée la question d'un port serbe sur l'Adriatique, a trouvé un accueil favorable à Berlin. L'idée de Sir Edward Grey répond à une préoccupation de M. de Kiderlen-Waechter qui s'est plaint à diverses reprises de perdre un temps précieux et de n'aboutir à aucun résultat par des échanges de vues de Cabinet à Cabinet. En les concentrant dans une seule capitale et en confiant à des diplomates expérimentés, on arriverait sans doute à un accord qui rendrait plus facile la tâche du Congrès appelé plus tard à régler les questions soulevées par la guerre actuelle. Il semble tout naturel, la proposition émanant du Gouvernement britannique, que la Conférence des Ambassadeurs ait lieu à Londres. . . .

plays at the Court of Belgrade the same rôle as German diplomacy at the Court of Vienna. Under the influence of Russian counsels, will the irreconcilability of Serbia submit to a compromise in the question of the Adriatic harbour? My colleagues, to whom I put this question, answered me in the affirmative. There, however, lies the crux of the question. . . .

A friendly reception has been accorded in Berlin to the proposal for a Conference of Ambassadors which should have for its object to prepare the ground, by a previous agreement among the six Great Powers, for the solution of important questions like that of the Aegean Islands and the Albanian question, with which the question of the Serbian Adriatic harbour is necessarily linked. *Sir Edward Grey's idea corresponds with the wishes of Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter, who has on various occasions complained that valuable time is lost and no result achieved in the exchange of ideas from Cabinet to Cabinet. If negotiations were concentrated in a single capital and entrusted to experienced diplomatists, it would without doubt be possible to arrive at an understanding which would facilitate the task of the Congress which will later have to settle the questions created by the present war. Since the proposal emanates from the British Government, it appears entirely natural that the Conference of Ambassadors should take place in London. . . .*

This praise of the method of holding a conference for the settlement of difficult European questions—especially in the mouth of Herr von Kiderlen, the German Secretary

of State—is extremely piquant and throws a significant light on the attitude of Herr von Bethmann and Herr von Jagow towards the same conference-proposal in 1914. The situation of 1912 was exactly similar to that of 1914: in both cases the question at issue was that of the settlement of difficult Balkan questions; in both cases Austrian and Russian interests stood opposed to each other ready for battle; in both cases the English Secretary of State, Sir Edward Grey, proposed a London Conference of Ambassadors as the best method of securing a rapid and successful exchange of thought between the Great Powers. The difference between the two cases is merely this, that Germany in 1912 still wanted peace and consequently accepted forthwith what was the best method of securing the maintenance of peace, whereas in 1914 it was resolved on war and consequently had of necessity to refuse to follow the path which, in the light of the experiences of 1912, would have led with absolute certainty to the solution of the question in dispute, on this occasion a much simpler one. The Emperor William's warning to his friend the Archduke, who even in the autumn of 1912 could scarcely control his impatience to strike against Serbia—"Above all, no silly mistakes"—was not in the summer of 1914, after the death of the Archduke, addressed to the leading personalities in Vienna. Now the gentlemen in Berlin did not object to "silly mistakes" on the part of Austria, no matter how enormous, to headlong action against their Serbian neighbours, no matter how blind, since in the interval the change in the views of the Emperor William which had begun in 1912 had been completed, the Emperor had been definitively won over by the war party led by his son, and at the same time Germany's military preparation by land and sea had been pushed to the desired degree of perfection. This explains the refusal of the Conference which on this occasion was again proposed by Grey, and readily accepted by France, Russia and Italy. This is the reason why the Berlin Government continually pointed to the direct negotiations from Cabinet to Cabinet.

In the confusion resulting from despatches crossing each other, from discussions and measures of military

preparation taking place in six different capitals, between twenty to thirty different statesmen, six supreme heads of States, many chiefs of general staffs, army leaders and military attachés—in this telegraphic intercourse flashing by day and night from one end of Europe to the other, from one head of a State to another, from one Government to another, from all Governments to their diplomatic representatives, a dangerous confusion was inevitable—misunderstandings, delays, incomplete information were not to be avoided. In this troubled water it was comparatively easy for a malicious Government to fish out specious grounds in exoneration of their suspicious attitude, to ascribe to the other party the intentions entertained by themselves, and to carry out other similar manœuvres intended to deceive. On the one hand, the loss of time connected with intercourse from capital to capital, on the other, the fear entertained by the military party of an advantage enjoyed by their opponents, were bound to produce in all concerned such a nervous haste and excitement that a calm consideration of the decisions to be taken was scarcely any longer possible, and in any case a careful examination of the events really taking place was impossible to the outside public. This whole imbroglío provided the desired fog, under the protection of which Vienna and Berlin were able to prepare and execute their criminal action—just as the pickpocket can best develop his profitable activities in the densest throng. It was necessary that this welcome fog should not be dispersed and replaced by that clarity which would at once have been produced by an open and sincere discussion of the Ambassadors of the four disinterested Powers around the council table at London. Here all the subterfuges of Bethmann, Berchtold and Jagow would have been impossible. Here, eye to eye with the representatives of the three other Powers, the German Ambassador would have had to show his true colours; he would not have been able to escape the alternative of either accepting the proposals for an understanding put forward by the Entente Powers (of which there were any number to select from), or else on his own side making proposals for the furtherance of peace, which the other

Powers had already stated in anticipation that they were prepared to accept.

This alternative was repeatedly placed before the German and Austrian statesmen during the critical days by Grey, Viviani and Sazonof, by the Ambassadors of the Entente Powers in Berlin and Vienna, especially by Goschen, Bunsen, and Jules Cambon. By incomplete and ambiguous statements, by procrastination and untenable objections, the German and Austrian Ambassadors always avoided giving a precise answer to the questions put to them—a point with which I have elsewhere fully dealt. All these vague and ambiguous statements would have been impossible at the London Conference of Ambassadors. In these circumstances, there would have been no concealment behind the Viennese screen, behind accidental absences of Count Berchtold, who in the first critical days was wandering about in the hills at Ischl: there would have been no excuses about replies from Vienna which had not yet been received, about English or Russian proposals for an understanding which had not yet become known, etc. There it would have been necessary to play with open cards, to show openly what one wanted and what one did not want. The Conference of 1914 would have been, like that of 1912, the great Clearing House where European business would have been regulated from a central office in place of a system of complicated individual settlements. The aim of the Conference, the maintenance of the peace of Europe, must have been achieved and would have been achieved. For this reason it durst not under any conditions be allowed to come into being. This was the reason of the stubborn refusal on the part of Berlin and Vienna. This is the crucial point in the proof of guilt.

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From Beyens' report of March 18th, 1913 (No. 102) :

No. 102.

... On croit que la question de Scutari se résoudra conformément à la volonté du Cabinet de Vienne, appuyé par l'Allemagne

... It is believed that the Skutari question will be regulated, in agreement with the wish of the Viennese Cabinet which is

et l'Italie, d'annexer cette place à l'Albanie, et en dépit des tergiversations de la Russie qui ne peut se décider à abandonner le Monténégro. . . .

supported by Germany and Italy, in the sense of an annexation of this town to Albania, in spite of the prevarications of Russia, which cannot make up its mind to leave Montenegro in the lurch.

. . .

This assumption of the Belgian Ambassador was, as is known, confirmed. The Skutari question was solved entirely in accordance with the views of Austria and Italy, and here again the Entente Powers, with Russia at their head, yielded in the interests of the peace of Europe.

From Beyens' report of April 4th, 1913 (No. 103) :

No. 103.

Berlin, le 4 avril 1913.

. . . A Berlin on n'est pas, au fond, plus satisfait de la direction imprimée à la Triple-Alliance dans la question balkanique par le Cabinet de Vienne, mais on fait meilleure figure et on envisage avec sang-froid les complications qui peuvent en résulter. Dans les déclarations pleines de réserve faites hier par le Secrétaire d'Etat aux Affaires Etrangères à la Commission du budget du Reichstag, le seul point sur lequel M. de Jagow se soit exprimé avec une netteté qui ne laisse aucun doute quant aux intentions de l'Allemagne, c'est l'appui qu'elle est résolu de prêter jusqu'au bout à son alliée, l'Autriche-Hongrie.

On ne pense pas dans le monde diplomatique de Berlin, ou plutôt on n'espère plus que la démonstration navale devant Antivari empêchera la continuation du siège de Scutari et l'assaut final

Berlin, April 4th, 1913.

. . . In Berlin there is not at bottom much satisfaction regarding the direction which the Viennese Cabinet has given to the Triple Alliance in the Balkan question, but they put a good face on it and view with composure the complications which may arise. In the very restrained statements which the Foreign Secretary made yesterday in the Budget Commission of the Reichstag there was only one point on which Herr von Jagow expressed himself with a clearness which leaves no doubt as to Germany's intentions, and that is the support which the German Empire is resolved to extend to the last to her ally Austria-Hungary.

In the diplomatic world of Berlin it is not believed, or rather it is no longer hoped, that the naval demonstration before Antivari will prevent the continuation of the siege of

auquel les Monténégrins et les Serbes se préparent activement. Si la place tombe entre leurs mains, il faudra autre chose qu'un simple blocus et des sommations inutilement répétées pour les en déloger. *L'entrée des troupes autrichiennes sur un territoire balkanique, plutôt serbe que monténégrin, parce qu'en Serbie des opérations militaires seraient plus faciles qu'au Monténégro, motiverait une intervention de la Russie et déchaînerait peut-être une guerre générale.* C'est une éventualité tellement grave qu'elle ferait reculer—on l'espère du moins ici—les deux Puissances, de la décision desquelles dépend aujourd'hui la paix européenne. En d'autres termes, on croit que *la gravité du péril auquel toute décision inconsidérée exposerait l'Europe entière est la meilleure garantie que l'on ait qu'il sera évité.* . . .

Skutari and the final assault on the fortress for which the Montenegrins and the Serbians are eagerly preparing. If the place falls into their hands, something more will be needed to drive them out than a simple blockade and summonses repeated without effect. *The entrance of Austrian troops in the territory of a Balkan State—and that State Serbia, rather than Montenegro, inasmuch as military operations would be easier in Serbia than in Montenegro—would provoke an intervention on the part of Russia and perhaps be the starting point of a general war.* That would be so grave an event that—so at least it is hoped here—the two Powers on whose decision the peace of Europe depends to-day would recoil before the possibility. In other words, it is believed that *the magnitude of the danger, to which the whole of Europe is exposed by any unconsidered decision, offers the best guarantee that this danger will be avoided.* . . .

This report of the Belgian Ambassador foretells with prophetic certainty in the spring of 1913 what in fact came to pass in the summer of 1914: the entrance of Austrian troops into Serbian territory provoked the intervention of Russia and in further sequence the European war. That Russia could not look on with indifference while the small Slav State was being crushed by Austria was a fact which had already been foreseen with certainty in the diplomatic circles of Berlin in the spring of 1913, as is confirmed by the Belgian Ambassador, and indeed the memorandum in the German White Book testifies that on this point no illusions had been entertained in Berlin. Baron Beyens' report is a new document in support of the view that the proposal for a localisation of the conflict between Austria and Serbia, which was constantly advanced by the Berlin Government—ostensibly

as a path to an understanding—was from the outset void of any prospect of success, that it was a trick, which the Berlin Government, long before the outbreak of the conflict, were already convinced would come to nothing.

THE GERMAN MILITARY LAW AND THE FRENCH THREE YEARS LAW.

The following reports deal with the relations of the French Three Years Law to the German Military Law.

From Guillaume's report of February 19th, 1913 (No. 98) :

No. 98.

Paris, le 19 février 1913.

Paris, February 19th, 1913.

Je viens de voir M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères qui m'a dit que la situation internationale ne s'est guère modifiée. L'armée bulgare ne fait pas de progrès appréciables, et la Conférence des Ambassadeurs de Londres semble dans un certain marasme.

I have just seen the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who informed me that the international situation has scarcely altered. The Bulgarian army is making no appreciable progress, and the Conference of Ambassadors in London appears to be in a kind of decline.

Le Cabinet de Vienne est toujours intransigeant pour toutes les questions qui l'intéressent, et la Russie défend énergiquement la Serbie et le Monténégro. . . .

The Viennese Cabinet continue to be irreconcilable in all questions which concern them, and Russia is energetically defending Serbia and Montenegro. . . .

. . . La presse allemande se montre étonnée des mesures militaires que le Gouvernement français va prendre en réponse à l'accroissement des forces de l'Empire ; il ne pouvait en être autrement ; nous savons parfaitement bien, m'a dit le Ministre, quel avantage donne à notre voisin l'augmentation continuelle de la population ; mais nous devons faire tout ce qui nous est possible pour compenser cet avantage par une meilleure organisation de nos forces. . . .

. . . The German Press is surprised at the military measures which the French Government propose to take in answer to the increase in the strength of Germany's armies ; it could not be otherwise. We know quite well, the Minister said to me, what advantage our neighbour derives from the continual increase in their population ; but we must do our utmost to compensate for this advantage by a better organisation of our forces. . . .

From Guillaume's report of February 21st, 1913 (No.99) :

No. 99.

... L'accroissement notable des armements de l'Allemagne, qui survient au moment de l'entrée à l'Elysée de M. Poincaré, va augmenter le danger d'une orientation trop nationaliste de la politique de la France.

GUILLAUME.

... The considerable increase in Germany's armaments at the moment when M. Poincaré is entering the Elysée will increase the danger of a too nationalistic orientation of French politics. . . .

GUILLAUME.

Here again we see the thread which runs through all the Belgian reports : France wants peace, despite certain militaristic-nationalistic tendencies in the country. The German Military Law, which must compel France to new military efforts, will encourage rather than subdue nationalistic tendencies in France.

In his report of February 24th, 1913 (No. 100), the Belgian Ambassador in London discusses in the same sense the relationship of the German Military Law to the French Three Years Law :

No. 100.

Londres, le 24 février 1913.

Les milieux politiques ont été émus et l'imagination du public fortement frappée, par les vastes projets militaires de l'Allemagne et plus encore peut-être par la réponse si prompte et si ferme de la France. Les deux gouvernements sont prêts à faire des sacrifices financiers considérables et paraissent soutenus par l'opinion dans les deux pays, où seuls les socialistes font entendre une voix discordante.

La presse anglaise veut naturellement endosser à l'Allemagne la responsabilité de la nouvelle tension qui résulte de ses projets et qui peut apporter à l'Europe des sujets d'inquiétude nouveaux.

London, February 24th, 1913.

The great military plans of Germany, and even more perhaps the answer which has been given so promptly and so firmly by France, have moved political circles, and deeply stirred the imagination of the public. Both Governments are ready to make considerable financial sacrifices, and are apparently supported by the public opinion of both countries, where the Socialists alone sound a discordant note.

The English Press, of course, wishes to lay on Germany the responsibility for the new tension which arises out of its projects and may give Europe occasion for new unrest. Many newspapers

Beaucoup de journaux estiment que le Gouvernement français, en se déclarant prêt à imposer le service de trois ans, et en nommant M. Delcassé à St.-Pétersbourg, a adopté la seule attitude digne de la grande République *en présence d'une provocation allemande*. . . .

are of the opinion that the French Government, in declaring their readiness to introduce the three years' period of service and in sending M. Delcassé to Petrograd, have assumed the only attitude which, in face of a *German provocation*, is worthy of the great Republic. . . .

In his report of December 13th, 1913 (No. 109), Count Lalaing, the London Ambassador, speaks of the fall of the Barthou Cabinet, which, as is known, had passed the Three Years Law, and he portrays the impression produced by this event on the political world in England :

No. 109.

Londres, le 13 décembre 1913.

. . . On a constaté, avec une certaine amertume, *l'impopularité plus réelle qu'on ne se l'imaginait, du service de trois ans* et on a été frappé des difficultés dans lesquelles se trouve le Gouvernement de la République au sujet de l'emprunt. . . .

London, December 13th, 1913.

. . . It was noted with a certain degree of bitterness that *the three years' period of service was in fact more unpopular than had been believed*, and people were struck with the difficulties in which the French Government were situated on the subject of the loan. . . .

The report of Baron Guillaume, the Parisian Ambassador, dated April 25th, 1914 (No. 114), is connected with the visit which the King and Queen of England had paid to Paris—the first since the accession of King George to the Throne. It is there stated :

No. 114.

Paris, le 25 avril 1914.

. . . Un deuil cruel m'a empêché d'assister aux festivités et réceptions qui marquèrent la visite royale ; mais les échos en sont venus jusqu'à moi, et j'ai acquis ainsi la certitude que les trois journées qui ont marqué le séjour de leurs Majestés à Paris, gratifiées d'un temps superbe, ont pleine-

Paris, April 25th, 1914.

. . . A sad bereavement prevented me from taking part in the festivities and receptions on the occasion of the royal visit ; but their echo reached me, and I was thus assured that the three days which their Majesties spent in Paris, favoured by magnificent weather, were com-

ment réussi et soulevé des manifestations de sympathie très accentuées. Elles s'adressaient surtout au principe de "l'Entente cordiale," et trouvaient un aliment particulièrement actif dans la poussée de nationalisme — pour ne pas dire de chauvinisme — que les dirigeants de la nation ont fait naître pour faire accepter le principe si lourd de la loi de 3 ans, et de toutes ses conséquences personnelles, économiques et financières. . . .

. . . Il n'y fut naturellement pas question de la possibilité de donner à ces rapports une portée plus formelle, sous la forme d'un traité ou d'une convention. Certains journaux avaient rêvé de cette combinaison ; mais il n'en fut jamais question, et des communications quasi-officielles faites à Londres et à Paris, comme écho des conversations échangées entre M. Doumergue et Sir Edward Grey, l'établissent sans détours. La Grande-Bretagne n'aime pas les conventions formelles et les arrangements conclus entre les deux Gouvernements, tels qu'ils sont aujourd'hui établis, suffisent à la réalisation du but à atteindre, tout en respectant certaines libertés pour les contractants. . . .

La visite en France du Roi d'Angleterre était prévue, nécessaire et opportune. Il n'était pas venu à Paris depuis son accession au trône, et il devait répondre à une démarche de courtoisie faite l'année dernière par M. Poincaré.

Mais il est permis de se demander si elle est de nature à modifier sensiblement les relations relativement confiantes qui existent déjà entre les deux pays. Elles ont d'ailleurs donné, durant

plètement successful and evoked warm manifestations of sympathy. These related chiefly to the Entente Cordiale, and found special support in the nationalism—not to say chauvinism—which the leaders of the nation have kindled in order to secure the acceptance of the principle of the oppressive law regarding the three years' period of service, with all its personal, economic and financial consequences. . . .

. . . There was, of course, no question of the possibility of giving these relations a more formal character in the form of a treaty or a convention. Certain newspapers had dreamed of this possibility ; but there was never any question of it, and semi-official communications in London and in Paris, representing the echo of conversations between M. Doumergue and Sir Edward Grey, place this beyond all doubt. Great Britain does not like formal conventions, and the arrangements which exist between the two Governments suffice, as they are to-day, for the purpose for which they were intended, while leaving certain liberties to the contracting parties. . . .

The visit of the King of England to France was foreseen, necessary and opportune. He had not come to Paris since his accession to the Throne, and he was bound to return the visit of courtesy which M. Poincaré made to him last year.

But it may nevertheless be asked whether it is of such a character as to exercise a sensible influence on the comparatively confidential relations which already exist between the two

ces derniers mois, des preuves d'efficacité indiscutables et furent favorables au maintien de la paix générale, tout en permettant d'ailleurs d'autres tentatives de rapprochement également profitables au respect de l'équilibre européen.

countries. In recent months they have, moreover, given proof of indisputable efficacy and were favourable to the maintenance of universal peace, without at the same time being prejudicial to other attempts at rapprochement which are equally useful to the continuance of European equilibrium.

GUILLAUME.

GUILLAUME.

The contents of this report—from which again, to prove my objectivity, I reproduce a series of passages quoted in heavy type in the German collection—may be summarised as follows :

1. Certain nationalistic—chauvinistic tendencies in France were exclusively intended to serve the internal political aim of securing the acceptance of the extremely oppressive and unpopular Three Years Law, the necessary answer to the German Military Law. These tendencies thus signified no aggressive intentions on the part of France, but merely the effort to make acceptable to Parliament and the people the defensive preparations considered necessary. All Governments from time immemorial have been guilty of such internal political manœuvres for the purpose of giving effect to military measures, and the German Government have shown themselves special masters of the art.

2. Even at the time in question, the spring of 1914, there existed nothing between France and England which could in any way have been regarded as resembling a formal treaty of alliance ; still less was there any question of an offensive alliance.

3. The visit of the English King and his Consort was a measure of courtesy which, taking place four years after his accession to the Throne, had in it nothing extraordinary, or at any rate nothing provocative.

4. The Royal visit was solely designed to serve the cause of universal peace and, so far as the Entente Powers are concerned, it produced this effect.

The following report of Guillaume of May 8th, 1914 (No. 115, already partially quoted), expresses with even greater emphasis the foregoing train of thought :

No. 115.

Paris, le 8 mai 1914.

. . . Quelle est la nature des engagements qui lient entre eux les deux Etats ? *Ont-ils conclu une Convention militaire ? Je l'ignore, mais je n'oublie pas que des esprits réfléchis et sérieux doutent quelque peu de l'assistance que la France trouverait chez les Anglais au jour d'une conflagration européenne. Il se trouve même des gens qui ne croient pas à un concours britannique bien sérieux sur mer. . . .*

Enfin, l'Angleterre ne cesse de faire des coquetteries à l'Allemagne. Je n'ai pu savoir, ces derniers temps, ce qu'étaient devenues *les négociations germano-anglaises relativement à l'Angola et au Mozambique ; c'est un point sur lequel il serait intéressant cependant d'avoir des précisions. . . .*

Je ne crois pas au désir ni de l'un ni de l'autre des deux pays de jouer l'effroyable coup de dés que serait une guerre ; mais il est toujours à craindre, avec le caractère français, qu'un incident mal présenté n'amène sa population ou pour mieux dire, les éléments les plus nerveux voire même les moins respectables de la population, à créer une situation qui rendrait la guerre inévitable. . . .

Un des éléments les plus dangereux de la situation actuelle est le retour de la France à la loi de trois ans. . . .

La presse est mauvaise dans

Paris, May 8th, 1914.

. . . What is the nature of the obligations which bind the two States ? *Have they concluded a military convention ? I do not know, but I do not forget that thoughtful and serious minds doubt whether on the day of a European conflagration France will find support in the English. There are indeed people who do not even believe in serious support from England at sea.*

Finally, England does not cease to coquet with Germany. I have not recently been able to learn what has become of the *Anglo-German negotiations on Angola and Mozambique ; but it would be interesting to be more accurately informed on this point. . . .*

I do not believe that either of the two countries desires to risk the horrible gamble of war ; but with the French national character, there is always reason to fear that an incident unfortunately presented may lead the people, or rather the most nervous and indeed the basest elements of the population, to create a situation which would make war inevitable. . . .

One of the most dangerous elements in the present situation is the return of France to the law regarding the three years' period of service.

The feeling of the Press is bad

les deux pays. *La campagne qui se poursuit en Allemagne au sujet de la Légion étrangère est excessivement maladroite, et le ton des journaux français ne cesse d'être acerbe et agressif. Personne n'a assez d'autorité et d'indépendance pour essayer de modifier cette situation qui est cependant blâmée par beaucoup de bons esprits.*

Il n'y a rien à attendre du Parlement; le premier tour de scrutin des élections nous a déjà montré comme nous nous y attendions, que la prochaine Chambre des Députés sera à peu de chose près, la même que sa devancière. Les Socialistes pourront gagner quelques voix, mais dans l'ensemble, *la suprématie restera au parti radical-socialiste, malgré ses fautes et ses erreurs.* Quoi que l'on puisse penser des événements récents, *M. Caillaux, le seul financier que compte aujourd'hui la Chambre, semble devoir rester l'instigateur de la politique française avec un peu de fiel et de mauvaise humeur en plus.*

GUILLAUME.

in both countries. *The campaign which is being conducted in Germany against the Foreign Legion is extremely maladroit, and the tone of the French newspapers is continually bitter and aggressive. No one has sufficient authority and is sufficiently independent to make an attempt to alter this situation, which is, however, condemned by many people of understanding.*

There is nothing to be expected from Parliament: the first electoral scrutiny has already shown, as we expected, that the next Chamber with slight modification will be almost the same as its predecessor. The Socialists may perhaps gain a few votes, but taking everything together the *Radical-Socialists, despite their mistakes and errors, will keep the upper hand.* Whatever may be thought regarding recent events, it appears that *M. Caillaux, the only financier whom the Chamber can show to-day, is to remain the leader of French policy, with a small addition of choler and bad temper.*

GUILLAUME.

This report clearly shows the dangerous reaction produced by the German Military Law on the feelings of the French people. Even in Germany, people who thought calmly foresaw this effect and uttered insistent warnings regarding the consequences of this new and provocative step on the fatal path of armaments. The Army Bill was already the manifest expression of the resolution of the rulers of Germany to embark on a European war: they were no longer concerned to avoid this "inevitable" war, but only to strengthen their military situation in such a way that victory would be assured. From their point of view, which was that of being decided on war, it was a matter of indifference what military and national reactions their Army Bill evoked in France. These

reactions were in fact *welcome* to them, for they poured further oil on the fire, and promised to hasten still more the outbreak of the world-conflagration which was bound to come some day. Moreover, these results furnished the special advantage that they enabled the authorities in Germany to appeal to militaristic and nationalistic tendencies in France, and to represent the French as the party that provoked the world-war, whereas in fact they were merely the party provoked.

That neither the French nor the English were willing to risk "the horrible gamble of war," that there was not even in France any feeling of confidence in English assistance, that the actual leader of French policy, even after the results of the first electoral scrutiny of 1914, remained the absolutely pacific Caillaux—all these facts are confirmed by the Belgian Ambassador three months before the outbreak of war. This, however, is all in favour of the Entente Powers, and frees them from any suspicion of having intended or provoked war.

From Guillaume's report of June 9th, 1914 (No. 116), the following passage is specially interesting :

No. 116.

Paris, le 9 juin 1914.

. . . Est-il vrai que le Cabinet de Pétersbourg ait imposé au pays l'adoption de la loi de trois ans et pèserait aujourd'hui de tout son poids pour en obtenir le maintien ?

Je n'ai pu parvenir à obtenir des lumières sur ce point délicat, mais il serait d'autant plus grave que les hommes qui dirigent les destinées de l'Empire des Czars ne peuvent ignorer que l'effort demandé ainsi à la nation française est excessif et ne pourra se soutenir longtemps. . . .

Paris, June 9th, 1914.

. . . Is it true that the Petrograd Cabinet has pressed on the country the acceptance of the law regarding the three years' period of military service, and that it is to-day exerting its whole weight in demanding its maintenance ?

I have not been able to obtain any light on this delicate point, but it would be all the more grave inasmuch as the men who direct the destiny of Russia must know that the effort demanded of the French people is too great and cannot be long maintained. . . .

In June, 1914, the Belgian Ambassador in Paris is still without information on the delicate point whether the

Petrograd Cabinet had or had not forced her French ally to the acceptance of the Three Years Law. Herr Schiemann is wiser and better informed in this respect : he knows, in fact, that that law had already been imposed in the summer of 1912 on Poincaré, at that time Prime Minister, when he was in Petrograd. This omniscient writer, this busybody, must have had at his disposal listeners endowed with the gift of sharp hearing at all the doors of the diplomatic Cabinets in Europe, always reporting more than the initiated themselves knew.

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I have elsewhere already referred to the penultimate report of Baron Beyens, dated June 12th, 1914 (No. 118). Here it may again be pointed out that the triumph of French Radicalism and Socialism at the elections of 1914 evoked great satisfaction among the peace-loving elements in Germany also, while it produced, as a matter of course, great disappointment among the Pan-Germans.

The French Parliamentary elections in April, 1914, took place directly on the issue : For or against the three years' period of service ; for or against a policy of *rapprochement* and understanding with Germany. The united Socialists had conducted their electoral campaign by means of an effective cartoon which showed the hapless Marianne overwhelmed under the weight of artillery, painfully staggering to the abyss to which she was being driven by a General. The adherents of the three years' period of service, on the other hand, had chosen for their poster the bearers of the Prussian pickelhaube who, by the gigantic increase in their army in the preceding year, were seeking to oppress France, and could only be restrained from their criminal plans by new exertions on the part of the Republic.

The bitterest opponents of the maintenance of the Three Years Law were the Socialists under Jaurès and the Radicals under Caillaux. Both parties gained enormous successes immediately on the first electoral scrutiny on April 26th, 1914. The Socialists alone received 280,000 new votes (out of a total of 1½ million Socialist votes). Caillaux, the most hated and the most attacked opponent of the

three years' period of service, was elected at the first scrutiny by an enormous majority. The leading French pacifist, Senator D'Estournelles de Constant, had himself led the campaign on his behalf in his electoral district. According to the statements of nationalistic papers like the *Temps* and the *Matin*, which are certainly free from suspicion, out of $8\frac{1}{2}$ millions of votes which were given, only $4\frac{2}{3}$ millions were in favour of the maintenance of the Three Years Law, while the other $3\frac{2}{3}$ millions were for weakening the existing law or for the restoration of the two years' period of service.

Moreover, it cannot even be said that all the electors or candidates who advocated the maintenance of the three years' period of service intended thereby to give expression to nationalistic or anti-pacifist sentiments. There were countless leading men in France who had devoted their whole life to the support of a Franco-German understanding and to the realisation of pacifist ideas in general, who nevertheless, confronted by the continually increasing military power of Germany, confronted by the increasingly presumptuous and threatening action of Pan-Germanism, saw no other way of escape for the threatened French Republic than to deter their dangerous neighbour from an attack, by strongly arming to the utmost limit of their strength. Thus, for example, Léon Bourgeois not only voted in the French Senate for the Three Years Law, but in a manifesto to his party during the election of 1914 demanded the maintenance of this law. How firm must have been the conviction entertained by wide and authoritative circles of France on the subject of the bellicose intentions of Germany, when so eminent a pacifist as Bourgeois defended such far-reaching measures of defence.

If we deduct from the majority of votes in favour of the Three Years Law all those electors who, like Bourgeois and countless others, were absolutely in favour of a peaceful *rapprochement* with Germany, but considered, in view of the experiences of the past, that such a *rapprochement* was without any prospect of success, and considered, therefore, that a thorough preparation for a successful defence of the country was inevitable, we may

infer from the French elections of 1914 this statistically demonstrable conclusion: The great majority of the French people, the leading men of France, were unreservedly in favour of the maintenance of the peace of Europe; they abhorred war, but they wanted to be secured, as far as possible, against a hostile attack. It was only regarding the method of obtaining this security that a difference of opinion existed. Some (of the school of thought of Jaurès and Caillaux) were still sufficiently optimistic to believe in the possibility of a peaceful understanding with Germany. Others (represented by Bourgeois, Briand and Barthou) were pessimists; they knew and recognised the powerful war currents in Germany, they knew that the Emperor had for some considerable time been won over to the ideas of the war-party, and they saw that France's deliverance lay not in unprofitable attempts to reach an understanding, but only in the greatest possible perfection of its equipment for defence. The second class saw more clearly than the first. This, however, does not affect the fact that both groups were equally assiduous to serve the cause of the maintenance of peace.

The result of the elections was an explicit message of peace on the part of France, and, moreover, it promised to lead to a revision of the oppressive Three Years Law. This law was, as Baron Beyens expressly emphasises in his report of June 12th, 1914 (No. 118), France's answer which followed, "tit for tat," on the German Army Bill. If it is the case that now, as a result of the new elections, a coalition party had come into power which, regardless of the continuance of the increase in the strength of Germany's army and the effects thereby produced, was prepared to alleviate and weaken the French counter-measure, the Three Years Law, and was further in a position to do so,—surely this fact must impress on every unprejudiced mind the conviction which Baron Beyens expresses in his report in the words: "The majority of the French people certainly does not want war." The Belgian Ambassador, it is true, discusses the question whether the introduction of the Three Years Law, as a reply to the German Military Law, was or was not an expedient

measure. He regards, however, as beyond discussion "the growth of the idea which is falsely disseminated or uncritically accepted by the best minds in this country (Germany) that war is inevitable in the near future, because France ardently desires it and is feverishly arming to prepare herself for it."

No. 118 is the last descriptive report of public opinion from a Belgian pen—before the outbreak of the conflict—to be found in the German collection. The concluding number, 119, dated July 2nd, 1914, already deals exclusively with the Austro-Serbian dispute. Beyens' report of June 12th, 1914, gives, in my opinion, the *coup de grâce* to the German chauvinistic legend that French chauvinism was responsible for the war. It is German chauvinism that is denounced as the falsifier and as the poisoner of springs, the German public as the uncritical follower of that "nationalist" invention which seeks to transfer the guilt to the other side. This is the historical truth, and the German Government have by their publication unintentionally rendered this truth a priceless service.

It will here be objected: If the German Government have published material which is so unfavourable for their own purpose, how then can you accuse them of having sought out reports in a one-sided and prejudiced manner with the object of falsifying the truth? The answer is very simple. In the whole collection there is not a single report which exclusively contains material unfavourable to Germany. The unfavourable observations and statements which I have emphasised are scattered about in reports which contain a greater or less amount of matter favourable to Germany, and for this very reason have been selected for printing. The favourable passages—a point to which I have already referred—are always emphasised in heavy type, and for this reason I have taken the liberty of following the same system in my extracts, and have emphasised in italics the passages favourable to my thesis. It was impossible to risk in Berlin a direct falsification of the individual reports, and they were therefore compelled to take the unfavourable into the bargain along with what was favourable. The result is that the

collection which has been compiled for the purpose of white-washing the German statesmen contains many shadows alongside much light—shadows which, so far as I know, no one has hitherto taken the trouble to seek out and again place in their true light. I am the first to undertake this painful labour, and I believe that in doing so I have served the cause of historical truth.

THE METHOD AND THE RESULT OF MY INVESTIGATION.

In order to remove in advance any misunderstanding and any malicious charge against my “extracts from the extracts,” I define once again the method and the result of my investigation :

1. The considerations tending to incriminate the Entente Powers in the more remote antecedents of the war furnished the governing motive in making a selection from the ambassadorial reports. This collection, representing a selection merely, possesses no value as evidence, if only because of its numerically demonstrable defects and gaps. I know, and expressly confirm the fact, that the collection of reports, in the form in which it exists, contains a large number of considerations reflecting on the policy of the Entente in the period before the war. The passages in question are reproduced universally in the apologetic literature of Germany. I have no occasion to quote them once more. Anyone who is interested in the matter may read them in the literature of the war or in the original collection.

My method is thus differentiated from that of the Foreign Office in the decisive point, that I expressly admit the existence of numerous passages which are unfavourable to the Entente Powers, whereas the Berlin Foreign Office compiles its collection in a one-sided manner, as if unfavourable reports on German policy had never emanated from Belgian Ambassadors. I expressly admit that the picture contained in the printed reports has two sides, that it is neither absolutely favourable nor absolutely unfavourable to one party or the other. The German Government, on the other hand, maintain that they are able to produce an entirely favourable picture in corroboration of their

innocence, and in doing so they falsify the truth, even if it is only their own tendencious collection of documents that is consulted. My method of examination is open and honest, that of the Foreign Office is tortuous and dishonest.

2. Since what is favourable to Germany has already been extracted and published, I must be allowed to gather together here what is unfavourable to Germany and favourable to the Entente Powers, in order in this way to show the two-sided character of the picture.

I have on several occasions emphasised that in reproducing the quotations in question I have nevertheless aimed at the utmost degree of objectivity, and that I have reproduced along with the passages in the reports which are favourable to the Entente Powers many which are apparently unfavourable, and which for this reason are printed in heavy type in the German collection, and I can leave it to the reader to test the accuracy of my assertion by examining the German collection of reports. At the same time, I do not deny that the object of the extracts which I have given in the foregoing pages is in the first place to correct the one-sided picture of the contents of the Belgian reports which is given by German apologetic literature in its usual compilations, and secondly to arrive at the real contents of these reports—in so far as they are included in the German collection of documents—by considering the two opposing pictures.

According to the view expressed by the Belgian diplomatists, the real picture shows that on both sides, *intra et extra muros*, sins were committed by the groups of European Powers, and that therefore the offence on the two sides is compensated,—*at the least* compensated, unless indeed the critical and attentive reader infers from the one-sided German collection of documents itself a certain excess of guilt against Germany. For the purpose of my demonstration I am not concerned with this preponderance. In the second chapter of *J'accuse*, "The Antecedents of the Crime," and in the second volume of *The Crime*, I have myself endeavoured to prove that even the more remote antecedents of the war show a vast excess of guilt on the side of Germany

and Austria. The evidence produced by me in support of this assertion is scarcely anywhere affected by the Belgian ambassadorial reports, much less is it weakened by them. Indeed, the most important points from the more remote antecedents—the Hague Conferences, the Anglo-German negotiations for an understanding, and much else—on which I base my proof of guilt from the period before the war, are passed over in silence in the Belgian reports, so far as they are published by the German Government. The reports from three capitals are entirely absent. But even if the collection did not show these gaps and defects which in fact it does reveal, my documentary proof would not be weakened or refuted by diplomatic reports dealing with public opinion.

Therefore I say that for my thesis of accusation it is a matter of indifference whether the Belgian Ambassadors, even if all their reports were given to us unabbreviated, recognise or fail to recognise this preponderance of guilt on the part of Germany. The mere confirmation of the fact that the Belgian reports, so far as they are published, more or less balance guilt against innocence in the case of the two groups of Powers is sufficient to deprive the defenders of Germany of the right to appeal to this collection of documents as evidence of Germany's innocence.

This holds, as has been said, for the collection of documents in its present form. What would be shown by the picture furnished by the *complete* reprint of *all* the Belgian ambassadorial reports from the six European capitals during the years from 1905 to 1914, and especially of those written in the last days before the outbreak of war? Even the reports which are printed show approximately the same degree of guilt on the two sides. Would not the total contents of all the reports furnish a considerable preponderance against the Central Powers? Is it going too far to give expression to the presumption and the suspicion that for this very reason eleven-twelfths of all the reports have been omitted—that this course was adopted because they feared that in place of the present picture, which displays both light and shade, a coal-black picture would be brought to light, in which the despots

of Germany and Austria would alone figure as the "black men" of Europe?

3. I have already pointed out in the course of this investigation to what the charge against the Entente Powers contained in the Belgian reports is in essence restricted. It is not warlike intentions that the Belgian Ambassadors ascribe to them, but merely careless political actions which, *par ricochet*, might feed the bellicose tendencies existing in Germany. The Entente occasionally fed Pan-Germanism, instead of starving it and allowing it to perish for lack of sustenance. This is the underlying note of the Belgian reports: The "isolation" goaded the already dangerous beast of Pan-Germanism into barking and biting; it would therefore have been better to abandon this policy of isolation. The danger of war—in this there is unanimous agreement in the Belgian reports, apart from a few of Greindl's observations—the danger of war in no way threatened from the side of the Entente Powers, but without meaning to do so these Powers conjured up this danger in following at times a policy which might result in strengthening the bellicose elements in Germany and in finally giving them the upper hand.

When all is said, it is not easy to see how and in what direction the Belgian collection of reports is supposed to support the defence of the German Government:

It in no way contributes to the real history of the crime, the history of the critical twelve days.

While it furnishes contributions to the antecedents of the war, these prove nothing in favour of Germany and against the Entente Powers. They show at most a balance of guilt on the two sides, a charge of approximately the same gravity brought against both groups of Powers. In so far as concerns the charge against the Entente Powers, the collection of reports is, however, void of any force as evidence both on formal and substantial grounds—on formal grounds because of its tendencious compilation and because of its shortcomings and gaps; on substantial grounds because of the absence of the factor

which would alone be decisive for the guilt of the Entente Powers, namely, the intention to make an armed attack on Germany.

The German Government have thus proved nothing in either direction. The only result which remains from their publication is the fact that the authors of the great crime are once again seeking, as so often in the past, to falsify truth in their favour by the perversion and suppression of historical facts, and to transfer the guilt from themselves to others. This attempt, which here again fails, is only a new sign of their consciousness of guilt.

A STATE OF TENSION IS NOT EQUIVALENT TO WAR.

I have thus come to the end of my investigation into the ambassadorial reports published by the German Government. Even if nothing is considered apart from the one-sided selection of reports, the result of the balancing of accounts in no way reveals a balance of assets in Germany's account; it is in the most favourable event an agreement of debit and credit items, leaving for neither party a balance as debtor or as creditor.

Let us assume that the result was not what it in fact is, that the 1,237 reports which (on the most conservative estimate) are missing were also exactly similar in tenor to those which are printed, and that the sum total of all the reports showed (what the printed reports do *not* show) that the Entente Powers did in fact bear a greater responsibility than the Central Powers for the state of European tension in the period before the war. Even if we accept this conclusion (refuted though it is by all the dissertations and demonstrations in my first and second works, and though it is in contradiction with the truth), would it yield the slightest suggestion of an exculpation of Germany and Austria from the charge of having deliberately and intentionally provoked this European war which broke out in the summer of 1914?

To this question there is only one answer: No.

A state of tension is not the same thing as war. Europe has passed through countless states of tension in the last half-century, and yet, since 1870-71, no war has ever

broken out between the great States of Europe. Strained relations which threatened war repeatedly existed between France and Germany, between Austria and Russia, between England and France, between Russia and England, between Austria and Italy, etc. On every occasion it has been found possible to relieve the tension, sometimes from incident to incident, and sometimes once for all by means of international arrangements, alliances, ententes, etc. Countless disputes—in many cases even such as, in the customary language of diplomacy, are represented as “questions of life or death,” of national “prestige,” and national “honour,”—have been settled by the peaceful path of understanding, of compromise, of conciliatoriness on both sides. Even the Austro-Serbian dispute—more readily, indeed, than many which preceded—could easily have been settled peacefully and by arbitration, given the least measure of good-will, as I have shown at length in a hundred passages in my books. Even this state of tension, which was insignificant when compared with former disputes, could have been removed without trouble and in the shortest space of time, if the will for a peaceful solution had existed in Berlin and Vienna. If the great and profound conflicts of interest between England and France, between Russia and England, between Austria and Russia during the earlier Balkan imbroglios, between Austria and Italy in all the questions relating to the Adriatic; if the competing interests of Germany and France, of Germany and England, in Asia and Africa and other parts of the globe—in part even shortly before the outbreak of the present war—could be brought to a settlement by treaties based on compromise, then surely the small points of difference between the Austrian Ultimatum and the Serbian answer could have been adjusted much more easily and much more quickly—always assuming that those in authority in Vienna and Berlin were anxious for such an adjustment.

Strained relations, rivalries, conflicts of interest are no more to be extirpated from the lives of States in their relationship to each other than from the lives of private individuals within the various States. Between the citizens of a State these are adjusted by amicable agree-

ment or, if this does not succeed, by a judicial decision. It is true that between States there exists as yet no power to give such a judicial decision, but even here there are adequate means of arriving at a peaceful settlement without recourse to arms : in the first place, there is the path of direct agreement between the parties concerned ; in the second place, the mediation and the good services of disinterested Powers ; in the third place, the convocation of the Court of Arbitration at The Hague which was instituted for this purpose, and in appropriate cases the Hague Commissions of Inquiry. There is, as will be seen, no lack of pacific methods of diminishing tension between States. The party who engenders the tension does not therefore produce war. He only is guilty of war who makes a peaceful solution impossible, who makes use of the existing tension to break the peace, who instead of disentangling the Gordian knot cuts it with the sword, as was done by Germany and Austria in the summer of 1914.

It would therefore be possible to concede without concern what the German Government seeks to infer from the Belgian ambassadorial reports (but is not in fact to be found there), namely, that the Entente Powers were chiefly responsible for the state of European tension. This admission would not, however, take away one iota from the guilt of Germany and Austria, who rejected all means whereby the tension might have been peacefully removed, and thereby made it inevitable that the dispute should be decided by arms, who finally themselves brought about the catastrophe by their declarations of war.

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The begetter of a state of tension is not, I said, by any means the begetter of war. He who puts powder in a powder-barrel is not by any means to be regarded in the same way as he who applies the glowing spark. He who has filled an enclosed reservoir with water is not to be put on the same level as the man who opens the sluices and allows the destructive deluge to pour over the fields.

To take an illustration from private life, let us take the case of two neighbours in the country between whom

strained relations have arisen as a result of prolonged boundary disputes, rivalries and bickerings. In the end, the patience of one gives way : he arms his servants, provides them with torches, and falls upon his neighbour with fire and sword. He carries out this violent attack, notwithstanding that his neighbour was ready once for all to settle all disputes in an amicable manner—by a judicial decision, by arbitration, or by the mediation of impartial third parties. Has the aggressor, in excusing his action, any right to appeal to the strained relations as having occasioned his attack? No one would admit the force of such an excuse. There would be only one possible excuse for the attack : the assertion, supported by evidence, that the neighbour who had been the subject of attack was himself resolved to attack, and was indeed on the point of attacking the present aggressor. To anticipate this immediate and certainly imminent attack by a counter-attack is a right which may, in case of necessity, be conceded to the threatened private individual as the “right of self-help,” it being presupposed that it was as a matter of fact impossible for him to procure the necessary protection in a normal and lawful manner. In other words, the natural and lawful right of “defence,” which in itself only exists as against “a present attack in violation of the law,” and is therefore a defensive right, might as an exception, in entirely special circumstances, be so far extended that an immediately imminent attack in the future might also be repelled by an anticipated act of defence, that is to say by “prevention.”¹

I have elsewhere fully explained the presuppositions and limitations of such prevention (see *The Crime*, Vol. II, Chaps. I and II). They hold good for States just as much as for the private individual ; indeed in the former case they hold good in a much higher degree, since from

¹ Apart from the case of “defence,” the German Imperial Criminal Code (Section 54) states that actions are innocent when committed “in a state of unmerited necessity which cannot be avoided in any other way, with a view to obtaining deliverance from a present danger to body or life of the actor or one belonging to him.” Under the idea of a present danger to body or life may be included the immediately imminent and certain attack of another.

their preventive actions much graver consequences may ensue for whole countries, and for whole quarters of the globe. Under no circumstances, either in private or international life, is an existing state of tension recognised as an excuse for beginning preventive action. The imminently threatening attack from the other side is the sole consideration which, in case of necessity, may be advanced in exoneration of preventive action—if, indeed, preventive wars are under any circumstances to be admitted as permissible, a view which I for my part reject.

As we have seen, the Belgian ambassadorial reports in no way support the view that the German Empire was threatened with an attack from the Entente Powers. They prove nothing more than an electrically-charged state of tension in Europe, which, like so many previous conditions of a similar character, could have been overcome in all sorts of ways. Even if I were prepared to admit that the responsibility for producing this tension rested in a preponderating measure on the Entente Powers—a doctrine which I dispute on the ground of all the evidence collected in my books—there is still a complete absence of any justification for the provocation of this war by Germany and Austria. The argument, briefly stated, is this: “You have isolated me; you have diplomatically checkmated me; you are guilty of the existing tension in Europe, and for this reason I am starting this most fearful of all wars, transforming the most flourishing regions of Europe into a heap of ruins, and condemning millions and millions of men to death, mutilation, hunger and misery”; such reasoning will be approved by no European of the twentieth century who feels morally, rightly, or even only humanely. Not even in the darkest times of earliest barbarism would it have met with sympathy.

The Barbarians went out to conquer territory when they had not sufficient space on which to live, sufficient territory to provide them with the means of support, when they hoped to find in other countries better and pleasanter conditions of life. These were the motives

which once led the Huns, the Goths and the Langobards into the rich and fruitful plains of Western Europe. Lack of room, lack of the means of life, urged them to conquest. Can Germany, prosperous and powerful, enjoying until the outbreak of war a gigantic wave of development both economically and culturally, a land almost without any emigration, indeed requiring for the cultivation of her soil hundreds of thousands of foreigners year by year—can Germany put forward in defence of her policy of expansion even that excuse which was available for the barbaric nations of the early Middle Ages? Can she assert that her population had no sufficient room for development in their own country, no sufficient possibility to play their part in the world? Certainly not! What then is the meaning of this triumphant and pompous production of the Belgian ambassadorial reports, which at the worst assert merely a diplomatic isolation of Germany—and even this without truth—but which show not a trace of an economic encirclement or strangulation, of any restriction on the freedom of development, of any ligature of the vital arteries of the German people? What is the meaning of all the noise? Is William II in the twentieth century to be allowed a *casus belli* which an Attila in the fifth century would never have dared to put before his people as a ground of war? So long as the authorities in the Foreign Office fail to prove to us that Germany was to be not merely “isolated,” but subjected to an armed attack by England, Russia and France, so long will they fail to justify their own armed attack in the eyes of their contemporaries and of posterity—even if we were prepared to recognise the German theory of prevention as justified in itself.

The Belgian ambassadorial reports—even if it were their purpose to do so—would in no way alter the firmly fixed conviction of the whole civilised world, drawn from a thousand other sources, that Germany and Austria bear the chief responsibility for the state of European tension before the war. Assuming, however, that it were *not* so—assuming that the Entente Powers bore an equal or even a preponderating degree of responsibility for the electric charging of the atmosphere, nevertheless

he still remains the incendiary who cast to the wind all the methods of diminishing the tension, who by his precipitate decision brought about the conflagration. The decisive point remains the act of will which brought about the war. Only a certain and immediately imminent attack could have justified it as a case of necessity,—not, however, diplomatic occurrences of any kind whatever, whether described as encirclement, isolation, or by any other fine name.

CHAPTER II

THE BELGIAN GREY BOOKS

SINCE in Germany the Belgian Ambassadors are credited with such an absolutely authoritative and "objective" judgment on European events, their authority must be recognised, not only for the more remote antecedents of the war, but also for the history of the immediate outbreak of war. If Guillaume, Lalaing, Beyens, etc., are presented to us as classical witnesses for the diplomatic history of Europe from February, 1905, down to July 2nd, 1914, they must also be accepted as equally classical witnesses for the history of the conflict from July 23rd to August 4th, 1914.

What, however, is the judgment of the Belgian Ambassadors on the history of this conflict? Do they in this case also express themselves more or less unfavourably regarding the policy of the Entente Powers? Do they in this case also stand more or less on the side of Germany? On which of the great European Powers do they lay the responsibility for the outbreak of war?

These are the questions which we have now to investigate by reference to the two Grey Books published by the Belgian Government and to the aforementioned work of Baron Beyens. If this investigation yields an unfavourable result so far as Germany and Austria are concerned, the value of the whole collection of Belgian ambassadorial reports published by the Berlin Foreign Office will be seriously impaired. It is a matter of indifference what these reports may contain, whether they are genuine or false, whether they are complete or incomplete; it does not matter whether they make an equal apportionment

of the guilt in respect of the period before the war or assign it solely to one or the other of the groups of Powers ; if the investigation and the examination of the Belgian publications regarding the history of the critical twelve days prove that the Belgian statesmen attribute the outbreak of the war exclusively to the two Central Powers, Germany and Austria, then there will be raised up in condemnation against these Powers a series of new judges, whose verdict will serve to strengthen that of the whole neutral world. Indeed, their verdict of condemnation has even greater weight than that of other neutrals : he who, up to July, 1914, passed so favourable a verdict on Austro-German policy and so unfavourable a verdict on Anglo-Franco-Russian policy as, according to the assertion of the Foreign Office, is supposed to be furnished by the Belgian ambassadorial reports, can certainly not be said to harbour any prejudice in favour of the Entente Powers ; his verdict of guilt is doubly weighty, because it comes from the pen of a Germanophile, who until the commission of the gigantic crime had felt the utmost sympathy towards the criminal and would never have credited him with such an action. When a friend says of his friend that he is a knave and a malefactor, his judgment is more crushing than if it had been expressed by his enemy.

It is therefore of great importance to hear the views of those same Belgian Ambassadors, whom Germany produces as witnesses for the period before the war, on the real conflict out of which the war arose, and on this occasion to give a hearing to those Ambassadors also whose reports the Berlin Foreign Office completely suppresses in its publication.

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I give below a series of extracts from the two Belgian Grey Books in the original French text. In so far as I reprinted the ambassadorial reports published by the German Government, it was necessary to reproduce them in two languages, in agreement with the German publication, in the original and in the official German translation. On the other hand, in reprinting extracts

from the Belgian Grey Books, I thought it possible to dispense with the literal translation of the French original reports, which would have encumbered my book unnecessarily. In the case of most of my readers I may assume a knowledge of the French language, and moreover, after every important report I give in a compressed form a statement of the contents, the accuracy of which can be tested by reference to the French text.

In making selections, the point from which I have started has been to leave aside as far as possible the war between Belgium and Germany which arose out of the violation of Belgian neutrality, and to restrict myself essentially to the verdict of the Belgian statesmen on the guilt and responsibility for the European war. The war between Belgium and Germany was a consequence of the European war; its origin is clear to everyone; the exclusive guilt of Germany, the violator of neutrality, is indisputable, and was even admitted by Herr von Bethmann himself on August 4th, 1914. It is unnecessary that I should reproduce the views of the Belgian diplomats on the violation and devastation of their country, the destruction of their cities, the annihilation of their flourishing industries, the violent death and deportation of thousands of innocent civilians without respect to age or sex, without considering whether the hapless victims were or were not dangerous—I need not repeat their views on all these barbarities perpetrated in the innocent country, and later shamelessly denied with abuse. The crime committed against Belgium has been condemned by the whole world, and the judgment of Belgian statesmen on this matter is easily understandable.

For my investigation the only question that matters is this :

At what judgment did the Belgian Ambassadors arrive regarding the origin and the immediate authorship of the European war? To whom did they attribute the responsibility for it? Did they in this case also, as in the history of events before the war, distribute the responsibility among all the Powers, or did they point with accusing finger to certain

individual Powers as the criminals who were alone guilty ?

These are the questions which are to be answered by the following extracts.

A.

BELGIAN GREY BOOK I.

On July 24th, one day after the delivery of the Austrian Ultimatum, the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs already sees approaching the danger of a European war. Thus even at this stage he also regards the Ultimatum as a suspicious sign of the will for war on the part of Austria. On July 24th, 1914, he sends to his representatives in the great European capitals a declaration of the Belgian Government's neutrality which is to be delivered to the foreign Governments concerned at the moment when, in the opinion of the Foreign Office at Brussels, the prospect of a Franco-German war becomes more threatening.

No. 2.

Lettre adressée par M. Davignon, Ministre des Affaires étrangères, aux Ministres du Roi à Paris, Berlin, Londres, Vienne et Saint-Pétersbourg.

Bruxelles, le 24 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Le Gouvernement du Roi s'est demandé si, dans les circonstances actuelles, il n'y aurait pas lieu d'adresser aux Puissances qui ont garanti son indépendance et sa neutralité, une communication destinée à leur confirmer sa résolution de remplir les devoirs internationaux que lui imposent les traités, au cas où une guerre viendrait à éclater aux frontières de la Belgique.

Il a été amené à la conclusion qu'une telle communication serait prématurée à l'heure présente, mais que les événements pourraient se précipiter et ne point lui laisser le temps de faire parvenir, au moment voulu, les instructions opportunes à ses représentants à l'étranger.

Dans cette situation, j'ai proposé au Roi et à mes collègues du Cabinet, qui se sont ralliés à ma manière de voir, de vous donner, dès à présent, des indications précises sur la démarche que vous auriez à faire si l'éventualité d'une guerre franco-allemande devenait plus menaçante.

Vous trouverez, sous ce pli, une lettre signée, mais non datée dont vous aurez à donner lecture et à laisser copie au Ministre des Affaires étrangères si les circonstances exigent cette communication.

Je vous indiquerai par télégramme le moment d'agir.

Le télégramme vous sera adressé à l'heure où *la mobilisation de l'armée belge* sera décrétée, si, contrairement à notre sincère espoir, et aux apparences de solution pacifique, nos renseignements nous amenaient à prendre cette mesure extrême de précaution.

DAVIGNON.

A report from Beyens, the Ambassador at Berlin, dated July 27th, 1914 (No. 6), runs as follows :

No. 6.

Télégramme adressé par le Baron Beyens, Ministre du Roi à Berlin à M. Davignon, Ministre des Affaires étrangères.

Berlin, 27 juillet 1914.

D'après un télégramme du Chargé d'Affaires Britannique à Belgrade, *le Gouvernement serbe a cédé sur tous les points de la note autrichienne.* Il admet même l'immixtion de fonctionnaires autrichiens si celle-ci peut s'accorder avec les usages du droit des gens. Le Chargé d'Affaires Britannique estime que *cette réponse devrait satisfaire l'Autriche dans le cas où celle-ci ne voudrait pas la guerre.* Néanmoins, l'impression est plus favorable ici aujourd'hui, surtout parce que les hostilités contre la Serbie n'ont pas commencé. Le Gouvernement Britannique propose l'intervention de l'Angleterre, de l'Allemagne, de la France et de l'Italie à *Saint-Petersbourg et à Vienne, pour trouver un terrain de conciliation.* L'Allemagne seule n'a pas encore répondu. L'Empereur décidera.

BEYENS.

From this report of the Ambassador at Berlin the following is to be noted :

1. That the Serbian Government in their answer had agreed to all the essential demands of Austria, and even to the intervention of Austrian officials in the internal affairs of Serbia, so far as this was in conformity with international law ;

2. That Grey's Conference-proposal, which aimed at a simultaneous exercise of pressure on Vienna and Petrograd, had been accepted by the three disinterested Powers, France, Italy and England, but had not even been answered by Germany.

* * * * *

Davignon's note of July 31st, 1914 (No. 9), confirms the statement of France that no incursion of French troops into Belgium would take place, and that France would in no event incur the responsibility of being the first to violate Belgian neutrality. In this the Belgian Minister repudiates the German invention which seeks to explain the German invasion of Belgium by reference to similar intentions on the part of France. Davignon's confirmation is all the more valuable inasmuch as in the same note this Belgian Minister also expresses his full confidence that Germany will respect Belgian neutrality—a confidence which, as is known, was so bitterly deceived two days later, on the evening of August 2nd, by the delivery of the German Ultimatum.

In Note No. 11 of the same day Davignon again repeatedly expresses his equal trust in all the neighbouring Powers—a confidence which does more honour to his heart than to his understanding.

THE GERMAN ULTIMATA TO BELGIUM.

The German Ultimatum to Belgium of the evening of August 2nd (No. 20), as well as the Belgian answer of the morning of August 3rd (No. 22), are well known. In *J'accuse* I have already described the preposterous demand of Germany, in violation of international law, to be allowed to march unhindered through Belgium, and the proud answer given by the small threatened country. Every sentence of the German Ultimatum was a violation of the treaties of 1839 and 1870, which guaranteed Belgian neutrality and independence, and at the same time a violation of the Hague Convention of October 18th, 1907, signed by Germany, which,

1 forbids any belligerent Power conducting troops through the territory of a neutral Power, and,

2 describes the armed resistance of the neutral Power against such a violation of neutrality as not being a hostile action.

The German Ultimatum demanded not merely an unmolested passage, but stated further that any resistance

to such a passage would have as a consequence that Belgium would be considered as an enemy and treated accordingly. The threat against the Belgian Government which was expressed in the Ultimatum of the evening of August 2nd was modified two days later, on August 4th, in a statement to the English Government that in the event of English neutrality Germany would annex no Belgian territory, even if Belgium should offer armed resistance to the passage (*même en cas de conflit armé avec la Belgique, l'Allemagne n'annexera sous aucun prétexte le territoire belge.* Grey Book I, No. 36, also Blue Book, No. 157).

The duplicity of this diplomatic game is extremely characteristic of the whole method of action pursued by the Berlin Government. Towards the Belgians they reserved a free hand for the eventual adjustment of the relations between the two States according to the decision of arms (see Ultimatum of August 2nd, Grey Book I, No. 20). To the English, however, whom they wanted by every means to restrain from any participation in the war right down to the English declaration of war on the evening of August 4th, they promised the unconditional and unimpaired restoration of Belgian territory, whether or not Belgium resisted the German invasion.

These tricks of transformation were once again practised in the second Ultimatum addressed to Belgium on August 9th, 1914 (No. 60), after the conquest of Liège. After it had been seen that the Belgian fortresses and the Belgian army had offered a stronger resistance than had been expected in advance, the attempt was made to facilitate the further passage by more far-reaching promises for the future. Now the German Government suddenly stated that they were

ready for any compact with Belgium which can in any way be reconciled with their conflict with France. Germany gives once more her solemn assurance that she has not been animated by the intention of appropriating Belgian territory for herself, and that such an intention is far from her thoughts. Germany is still ready to evacuate Belgium as soon as the state of war will allow her to do so. (Grey Book I, Enclosure to No. 62.)

The Chancellor in his speech of August 4th also made the

famous promise: "The wrong we thereby commit (that is in the violation of the neutrality of Luxemburg and Belgium) we will try to make good as soon as our military aims have been attained." When the Chancellor gave this solemn promise—on the afternoon of August 4th—it was already clear that Belgium was offering armed resistance to the German invasion. Thus on three occasions, first of all to the English Government, then by the mouth of the Chancellor before the German Parliament and the whole world, and for the third time in the second Ultimatum to Belgium of August 9th, Germany gave a solemn promise that even in the event of a conflict with the Belgian army she would at the end of hostilities restore Belgian territory and Belgian independence unimpaired. By such an act of restoration the crime involved in the violation of neutrality in defiance of international law would not be cancelled, but at least the second crime would be avoided—the crime, that is to say, of inflicting on the neutral State the punishment of annexation and deprivation of rights for a resistance allowed by international law. It is well known that in Germany no one in the authoritative circles and parties has felt any qualms of conscience against the second breach of law, which offends not only the clear provisions of the treaties of 1839, 1870, and 1907, but also the thrice-repeated promises of the German Government.

* * * * *

Here again I should not like to omit a reference, already made cursorily in my first book, to the amusing incident enacted in the Foreign Office at Brussels during the night from August 2nd to 3rd. This was the night between the delivery of the German Ultimatum (7 o'clock on the evening of August 2nd) and the Belgian answer (7 o'clock on the morning of August 3rd). The German Ambassador, Herr von Below-Saleske, could not refrain from disturbing the night rest of Baron van der Elst, the General Secretary in the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in informing him (at 1.30 A.M.) that French dirigibles had thrown bombs and that a French cavalry patrol had crossed the frontier in violation of international law, since war was not yet declared. Baron van der Elst, who was apparently not

robbed of his composure by this nocturnal attack, quite coolly asked the German Ambassador *where* these incidents had taken place. "In Germany," replied Herr von Below. "Then why does your Excellency make this communication to me?" "Because these acts which are contrary to international law," replied the German Ambassador, "are calculated to lead to the supposition that other acts contrary to international law would be committed by France." Conclusion of the conversation! ¹

The conclusions to be inferred from this conclusion are not difficult to draw. I have already drawn them in *J'accuse*. Herr von Below had simply been commissioned by his Government to exercise pressure on the decisions of the Belgian Government by these legendary attacks, and also by the allegation of French acts of aggression to explain in advance the declaration of war against France which was to be delivered on the following evening. This explains the nocturnal encounter. As always and everywhere happened to the Berlin diplomatists, they believed that they were quite unusually cunning and showed themselves to be quite unusually simple. Long before the bombs of the Nürnberg airmen were documentarily shown to be a pure invention, I pointed out in my first book that the contradiction between the various German versions regarding France's hostile actions in itself deprived the German assertions of any credibility. The declaration of war against France speaks of aviators' bombs which had been dropped at various places in Germany; Herr von Below-Saleske speaks of dirigible airships as having been guilty of this aggressive action. He also speaks of a cavalry patrol. Finally Herr von Bethmann, in his speech of August 4th, widens the circle of lies by asserting that "aviators dropping bombs, cavalry patrols and French infantry detachments appearing on the territory of the Empire" had committed enormities, and he pathetically appeals to his credulous hearers in the Reichstag, "France thus broke the peace and actually attacked us." Thus the war of defence was constructed, and to-day the hapless German people still believe in this legend.

¹ Grey Book I, No. 21,

BELGIUM AND THE GUARANTEEING POWERS.

Davignon's Note to his foreign representatives, dated mid-day August 3rd (No. 24), reports that the French Ambassador in Brussels had offered the Belgian Government the military support of France with a view to the maintenance of neutrality "if the Belgian Government were to appeal to the French Government as one of the Powers guaranteeing their neutrality." Davignon thankfully received these offers, but remarked "that the Belgian Government were making no appeal at present to the guarantee of the Powers and that they would decide later what ought to be done." The same attitude was assumed by the Belgian Government towards that of England, which also had offered military assistance "should Belgium so desire" (No. 28).

Further, the Belgian King, in his telegram addressed to the English King on August 3rd (No. 25), merely asked the English Government for diplomatic intervention (*intervention diplomatique*) to safeguard Belgian neutrality. It was not until after the actual violation of Belgian territory on the morning of August 4th that the Belgian Government asked the guaranteeing Powers, France, Russia and England, for armed assistance against the invading enemy (Nos. 39, 40, 42, 43).

Davignon's Note of August 5th (No. 43), which contains the Belgian appeal for the assistance of the guaranteeing Powers, is also interesting in another respect, in so far as it throws light on the grounds and the presuppositions of the English declaration of war against Germany. It is there stated :

A telegram from London made it clear that this change of attitude was caused by an Ultimatum from Great Britain giving Germany a time limit of ten hours within which to evacuate Belgian territory and to respect Belgian neutrality.

Here the English Ultimatum to Germany is expressly interpreted in the sense to be deduced from Goschen's report of August 8th (Blue Book, No. 160) and in accordance with the interpretation given in the relevant sections

of my first and second book : England did not forthwith declare war against Germany because of the invasion of Belgium which took place on the morning of August 4th, but first of all—stating a definite time limit—she demanded the evacuation of Belgian territory and the respect of Belgian neutrality (*évacuer le sol belge et respecter la neutralité*). This furnishes a new witness for my assertion and my demonstration that it was nothing else than the violation of Belgian neutrality which was the ground of war in the case of England, and that this ground of war could still have been removed on the evening of August 4th by agreeing to the English demand for evacuation. This one indisputable fact in itself is alone sufficient to destroy the German lie that England wanted, prepared, and instigated the European war. If, on the evening of August 4th, instead of flatly declining the demand for evacuation through Herr von Jagow, the Chancellor had acquiesced in this demand, and if the German General Staff had issued instructions on the subject to the troops who were in Belgium, England would not have entered the war—*could* not have entered the war—since the only ground for war given by her would have been eliminated. This demonstration is supported, in addition to all other considerations, by Davignon's Note of August 5th.

THE SUSPECTED CONSIGNMENT OF CORN.

In conclusion I would further mention a slight incident out of the first Grey Book which is extremely characteristic of the underhandedness, or let us rather say of the meanness, of the methods adopted by German diplomacy. When Sir Edward Goschen, the English Ambassador, asked Herr von Jagow, on July 31st, for an answer to the English inquiry whether Germany, like France, was prepared to respect Belgian neutrality in the event of a Franco-German war, Jagow, as is well known, gave the evasive answer that he must first consult the Emperor and the Chancellor. He doubted, however, whether they were prepared to give any answer, since any reply would disclose a certain amount of the German plan of campaign.

On this occasion Herr von Jagow emphasised that

“certain hostile acts have already been committed by Belgium; as an instance of this, a consignment of corn for Germany had been placed under an embargo already” (Blue Book, No. 122). No. 79 of the Grey Book, together with four enclosures, is devoted to this incident of the embargo. From these it appears that by an error in the customs at Antwerp a cargo in transit intended for Germany had been treated as an export and was accordingly detained. On the complaint of the German Ambassador on July 31st, the cargo was at once permitted to be exported to Germany (see the letters of the Belgian Minister Davignon to the German Ambassador of August 1st and 3rd; Exhibits 2 and 3 of No. 79).

This trifling affair would have been quite harmless and undeserving of mention if Herr von Jagow had not cited it in order to prove to the English Ambassador the hostility of the Belgian Government. The extremely evil conscience of the authorities in the Wilhelmstrasse is revealed in this incident. On July 31st Jagow of course already knew that Belgium, like the tree in the forest which is marked for felling, was branded with the black cross. Even then he was labouring to open proceedings against the unfortunate country on account of infidelity and conspiracy against Germany—proceedings which, at a later date, and indeed down to the present day, have been conducted by such unclean and pettifogging methods. The Antwerp consignment of corn stands on the same level, so far as Belgium is concerned, as the Nürnberg airmen’s bombs in the case of France, and the story of the Cossack invasion in the case of Russia. The gigantic conspiracy against the innocent Germany had to be conjured up as a bugbear before the German people, and to complete this picture even the innocent consignment of corn at Antwerp was not despised.

B.

BELGIAN GREY BOOK II.

So far as concerns the judgment of the Belgian diplomats on the question of the guilt and the authorship

of the war, the second Belgian Grey Book furnishes much more ample and valuable material than the first. If not in the case of the more remote, at any rate in that of the more immediate antecedents of the war, it has the merit of filling up the lacunæ intentionally left in the German collection of ambassadorial reports—intentionally in the interests of their demonstration.

In an earlier section I have already referred to Nos. 1 and 2 of the second Grey Book, the Paris report of February 22nd, 1913, and the Berlin report of April 2nd, 1914. As there observed, these reports are omitted in the German collection of reports, and their omission characterises in the clearest manner the system which has been followed in the German compilation. With regard also to the more remote history of the war (1905–1914) it is, I again repeat, a matter of extreme regret that the Belgian Government has not more fully completed, or was unable more fully to complete, the lacunæ in the German collection. If they had only published the same number of reports (now missing) as have been published by the Berlin Foreign Office, that is to say, 119 against 119; if, in particular, they had produced the ambassadorial reports from Vienna and Petrograd which the German Government have entirely omitted, the complete picture would presumably have assumed an entirely different appearance as a result of even such a restricted publication. This presumption is strengthened by the contents of the second Belgian Grey Book, in which not merely the Ambassador at Berlin but also the Ambassadors at Petrograd and Vienna are allowed to express their views, but, unfortunately, only from the end of July, 1914. All the Belgian Ambassadors whose reports are printed in the Grey Books are in agreement in the crushing verdict which they pass on the Central Powers, so far as the immediate antecedents of the war are concerned. The fact that the German Government omitted from their collection the reports from Vienna and Petrograd—(though these reports must also have been found at Brussels)—that is to say, the reports from the capitals most concerned in the gravest conflicts before the war, arouses an insistent suspicion that more particularly the Ambassadors in these two capitals arrived at a

judgment on the policy of Germany and Austria in the more remote period before the war which was just as unfavourable as that entertained by them regarding the policy of these Powers in the period of conflict immediately preceding the war.

The Belgian Ambassadors in Berlin, Paris, and London whose views are given in the Grey Books are exactly the same as those whose reports dating from the period before the war have been published by the German Government: for Berlin, Baron Beyens; for Paris, Baron Guillaume; for London, Count Lalaing. To these are now added in the Belgian publications: for Vienna, Count Errembault de Dudzele, for Petrograd, Count Buisseret-Steenbecque de Blarenghien, and further certain Chargés d'Affaires who occasionally represented the Ambassadors.

The authority which the German Government attributes to the Belgian Ambassadors in judging the more remote period before the the war cannot be withheld from them in the case of the immediate antecedents of the war also. If the ambassadorial reports from February 7th, 1905, down to July 2nd, 1914 (the period of the German publication), are valuable documents regarded as historical evidence, then those reports coming from the same writers during the period from February 22nd, 1913, down to April 6th, 1915, the period of the second Belgian Grey Book, must be recognised as possessing equal evidential value. Since the German Government appeals to the "objective diplomatic account" of the Belgian statesmen as alleged evidence for their innocence of the state of European tension, it follows that they cannot prevent the admission of these same reporters as witnesses for their guilt of the state of European war. Whoever summons a witness before a court cannot recognise him in so far as his evidence is favourable and, on the other hand, repudiate him so far as his evidence is unfavourable. It is not possible to allow a separation of his testimony as the caprice or the advantage of the accused party may suggest. *C'est à prendre ou à laisser.* Once the witness stands before the court, whether he has been summoned by the plaintiff or by the defendant, he ceases to be a witness for either side and becomes a common witness of both sides, and both sides must allow

what he says—whether it is agreeable or disagreeable to them—to have full force for or against them in all its parts.

The Belgian Ambassadors must then be recognised as entirely credible witnesses in all their reports, or not at all credible in any of their reports. The German Government has to choose between these two alternatives. If they decide on the second alternative, they deprive themselves of the alleged evidence in their favour put forward by them. If they decide on the first alternative, then they raise up new and perhaps even weightier witnesses in their arraignment than those who have hitherto appeared against them.

How weighty, how crushing these Belgian accusations are from the point of view of the Central Powers will be shown in what follows.

BEFORE THE AUSTRIAN ULTIMATUM.

The real history of the conflict in the second Grey Book begins with a report from the Viennese Ambassador, Count Errembault de Dudzeele, dated July 22nd, 1914 (No. 3), and can be regarded as ended about August 6th with a report from Baron Guillaume, the Ambassador at Paris (No. 28). Of the copious second Belgian Grey Book, comprising in all one hundred and twenty-three numbers, there are thus about twenty-five which call for consideration in connection with the immediate history of the conflict. These, however, are extraordinarily important and significant and some of them merit textual reproduction, either completely or in extracts. The italicisation of important passages is my own.

Viennese report of Count Dudzeele of July 22nd, 1914 (No. 3):

No. 3.

*Le Ministre du Roi à Vienne à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.*

Vienne, le 22 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

J'ai l'honneur de vous faire part des renseignements que j'ai eu l'occasion de recueillir sur la question des relations de la Monarchie Austro-Hongroise avec le Royaume de Serbie.

On était au "Ballplatz," il y a une dizaine de jours, dans des dispositions fort belliqueuses, M. le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères et ses principaux conseillers tenaient un langage très agressif. On semblait décidé à donner à la démarche à faire à Belgrade un caractère très énergique et, *en prévoyant de la part du Gouvernement serbe le refus de se soumettre à toutes les conditions qu'on allait lui poser, on n'hésitait pas à admettre la nécessité d'une intervention armée. Déjà les numéros des huit corps d'armée appelés à envahir la Serbie étaient cités, et on ne parlait de rien moins que d'appliquer à ce royaume le traitement infligé naguère à la Pologne, en partageant son territoire entre les Etats voisins. Il semblait que le Comte Berchtold voulait prendre d'un seul coup sa revanche des échecs successifs que sa politique a subis pendant ces derniers temps. C'était la mise en pratique de la théorie chère à ceux qui préchent depuis longtemps "qu'il faudrait en finir une bonne fois avec la question serbe."*

Au sein du Gouvernement autrichien, il ne paraît pas y avoir eu de protestations contre de pareils projets, et s'il en avait été de même à Budapest, il n'aurait pas été impossible que l'Empereur, malgré ses dispositions pacifiques, se ralliât à des avis exprimés à l'unanimité.

C'est le Président du Conseil de Hongrie, accouru à deux reprises à Vienne, qui est venu mettre un frein à ces ardeurs belliqueuses. En homme d'Etat prudent et avisé, le Comte Tisza a fait voir le grand danger qu'il y avait à se lancer à la légère dans pareille aventure, et il a vivement insisté pour qu'on adoptât une attitude plus modérée.

En effet, il semble bien difficile à admettre qu'un conflit armé entre la Monarchie et sa voisine ne contiendrait pas tout au moins *le germe d'une conflagration européenne.* La presse austro-hongroise, qui parle journellement de la guerre avec la Serbie comme d'un événement non seulement possible, mais probable, affecte, il est vrai, de prédire que la lutte resterait localisée entre les deux Etats. "Nous serions moralement soutenus par l'Allemagne, dit-elle, l'Angleterre et la France se désintéresseront de la question, et la Russie, loin d'intervenir, conseillera au contraire à la Serbie de nous donner pleine satisfaction." Ce raisonnement est évidemment empreint d'un optimisme fort exagéré.

Je ne puis admettre un seul instant que le Gouvernement serbe et la partie éclairée du pays aient un reproche quelconque à se faire au sujet de l'assassinat de l'Archiduc François-Ferdinand et de son épouse, comme beaucoup de personnes ici le prétendent. Bien au contraire, je suis convaincu que ce malheureux événement aura causé en Serbie une impression pénible, puisqu'on y était actuellement au contraire très désireux d'entretenir de bonnes relations avec l'Autriche-Hongrie.

L'Ambassadeur de Russie à Vienne, lequel part aujourd'hui en congé, mais se dit prêt à rejoindre son poste à la moindre alerte, déclare que le Gouvernement du Czar invitera les conseillers du Roi Pierre à accepter toutes les demandes qui lui seront adressées en termes polis et qui auront un rapport direct avec l'assassinat. Il en serait de même pour la dissolution de certaines sociétés à tendances irrédén-

tistes par trop accentuées. " Mais nous ne permettrions pas, dit M. Schébéko, qu'on fasse à la Serbie, de manière générale, un procès de tendance."

J'ai tout lieu de croire que M. Pachitch suivra la première partie de ces conseils, mais qu'il se montrera très ferme dans le cas où il s'agirait de conditions qu'il ne pourrait légalement remplir ou qui heurteraient de front l'amour-propre national. Notamment en ce qui concerne la dissolution de sociétés, il est à remarquer que la Constitution serbe, très libérale, garantit le droit d'association, et d'ailleurs ce ne sont pas quelques sociétés qui ont pour programme politique d'arriver à reconstituer une " Grande Serbie," mais c'est la population tout entière du pays qui aspire à ce rêve.

De plus, le Président du Conseil à Belgrade se rend très certainement compte que tout cet ensemble jougo-slave habitant le sud de la Monarchie se compose de Serbes, Bosniaques, Slovènes et Croates favorables à sa cause. Malgré leur différence de religion, ces derniers, fort mécontents du régime auquel la Hongrie les soumet, portent, en grande majorité et quoi qu'on puisse en prétendre ici à ce sujet, toutes leurs sympathies vers la Serbie.

En dehors de l'intervention éventuelle de la Russie et du rôle incertain que pourrait jouer la Roumanie, il y a dans cet état de choses un danger très réel pour l'Autriche-Hongrie, et les paroles de modération que le Comte Tisza a fait entendre le démontrent suffisamment. Son influence prévaudra-t-elle jusqu'à la dernière heure ? Le Comte Berchtold vient d'aller à Ischl pour rendre compte à l'Empereur, et il semble que la situation présente si incertaine ne pourrait se prolonger longtemps et qu'une décision devra être prise.

Comte ERREMBULT DE DUDZEELE.

Arising out of this report, which was written the day before the delivery of the Ultimatum, the following points are to be noted :

1. Even before the Ultimatum was issued, Count Berchtold was credited in diplomatic circles with the intention of taking vengeance at a stroke for the alleged " checks " which his policy had suffered during the late Balkan crisis.

2. The action contemplated against Serbia was merely the putting into practice of the theory which had long been preached, that the Serbian question must once for all be solved by resort to force, and that if possible the neighbouring kingdom must be made to share the fate of Poland.

3. In Vienna the dangers of a European conflagration arising out of the action taken against Serbia were fully

realised ; they counted, however, on the non-intervention of Russia, which, it was thought, would not, for many reasons, venture to oppose Germany, Austria's second.

4. In the opinion of the Belgian Ambassador, it was extremely unjust to lay the crime of Serajevo at the door of the Serbian Government and the Serbian people, since, on the contrary, this event produced a highly painful impression in Serbia itself, and the only desire in that country was to maintain good relations with Austria.

5. According to the statement of Schébéko, the Russian Ambassador, the Government of the Tsar would advise the Serbian Government to comply with all the demands of Austria relative to the murder, and indeed to dissolve certain irredentist societies.

6. So far as the Belgian Ambassador could foresee, the Serbian Government would promise all possible lawful and constitutional restrictions on nationalistic agitations in their country.

7. The ferment within the Jugo-Slav elements in the southern part of the Double Monarchy was to be traced back to the common embitterment which the Serbs, the Bosnians, the Slovenes, and the Croats felt against the Hungarian *régime* of oppression.

AFTER THE AUSTRIAN ULTIMATUM.

Berlin report of Baron Beyens, dated July 24th, 1914 (No. 4), that is to say, twenty-two days after the last report from the same Ambassador (July 2nd) published in the German collection :

No. 4.

*Le Ministre du Roi à Berlin à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.*

Berlin, le 24 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

La publication de l'ultimatum adressé hier par le Cabinet de Vienne à celui de Belgrade a dépassé ce que les prévisions, dont vous entretenait mon rapport du 16 de ce mois, avaient imaginé de plus

pessimiste. Evidemment *le Comte Berchtold et le Comte Tisza, les auteurs responsables de ce coup de théâtre, ont subi l'influence du parti militaire et de l'état-major austro-hongrois*. L'effet d'un tel manque de modération et de mesure sera inévitablement de ramener à la Serbie les sympathies de la plus grande partie de l'opinion publique européenne, malgré l'horreur causée par les assassinats de Serajevo. A Berlin même, à lire les journaux libéraux, on a l'impression qu'ils trouvent *les exigences austro-hongroises excessives*. "L'Autriche-Hongrie, dit ce matin la *Gazette de Voss*, aura à justifier les graves accusations qu'elle formule contre la Serbie et son Gouvernement, en publiant les résultats de l'instruction judiciaire conduite à Serajevo."

MM. de Jagow et Zimmermann nous avaient assuré, la semaine dernière, qu'ils ne connaissaient pas les résolutions adoptées par le Cabinet de Vienne ni jusqu'où iraient ses exigences. *Comment ajouter foi aujourd'hui à cette ignorance ?* Il est peu vraisemblable que les hommes d'Etat austro-hongrois se soient décidés à une pareille démarche, le coup le plus dangereux que leur diplomatie ait jamais risqué contre un Etat balkanique, *sans avoir consulté leurs collègues de Berlin et sans avoir obtenu l'assentiment de l'Empereur Guillaume*. La crainte et l'horreur qu'il a des régicides expliquent que l'Empereur ait laissé les mains libres à ses alliés, malgré le risque à courir d'un conflit européen.

Que va faire la Serbie, se demandaient ce matin la plupart de mes collègues ? Se tourner vers la Russie, implorer télégraphiquement son appui ? Mais elle n'aura pas de réponse avant l'expiration de l'ultimatum envoyé par l'Autriche ? La Russie devra s'entendre préalablement avec la France et, dans une intention pleine d'astuce, *le Cabinet de Vienne a attendu pour faire éclater l'orage le moment où M. Poincaré et M. Viviani naviguaient entre Saint-Petersbourg et Stockholm*. Il est d'autant plus fâcheux que la note austro-hongroise ait revêtu cette forme comminatoire que l'Ambassadeur de Russie à Vienne, d'après ce que j'ai appris, avait déclaré récemment au Comte Berchtold que son Gouvernement appuierait les réclamations de l'Autriche-Hongrie auprès du Cabinet Pachitch, si ces réclamations étaient modérées.

Aujourd'hui une nouvelle crise est ouverte, qui rappelle celle de 1909, après l'annexion de la Bosnie et de l'Herzégovine. Tout ce qu'on peut espérer, c'est qu'elle ne se dénouera pas d'une façon plus tragique, malgré *les désirs belliqueux de l'état-major autrichien partagés peut-être par celui de Berlin*. Le meilleur conseil à donner à la Serbie serait d'invoquer la médiation et l'intervention des Grandes Puissances.

Baron BEYENS.

Arising out of this report, the following points are to be noted :

1. Count Berchtold and Count Tisza are the responsible authors of the theatrical coup involved in the Austrian

Ultimatum ; they acted under the influence of the Austro-Hungarian military party and of the General Staff.

2. The unbounded character of the Austrian demands will draw to the Serbs the sympathies of Europe, in spite of the horror caused by the deed of Serajevo.

3. Even the Liberal Press of Germany states that the Austrian demands are excessive.

4. The assurance of the Berlin Foreign Office, that they had had no knowledge of the Viennese decisions and demands, could not be believed : it was highly improbable that the Austro-Hungarian statesmen would ever have decided on the most dangerous step which their diplomacy had ever risked against a Balkan State, without consulting their Berlin colleagues and obtaining in advance an assurance of the Emperor William's concurrence. "The fear and the horror which the Emperor has of regicides explain why he has left his allies a free hand in spite of the risk of a European war."

5. The Viennese Cabinet with meditated cunning awaited the moment when Poincaré and Viviani were sailing between Petrograd and Stockholm in order to make it impossible for France and Russia to arrive at an understanding before the expiration of the time limit in the Ultimatum. The menacing form of the Austrian Note is all the more serious inasmuch as the Russian Ambassador in Vienna had shortly before expressed to Count Berchtold the readiness of his Government to support the Austrian demands in Belgrade, provided merely that they were not excessive.

6. The present crisis resembles the crisis in connection with the annexation of Bosnia in 1909, and it is to be hoped that it will not end more tragically than that, "in spite of the bellicose desires of the Austrian and perhaps also of the German General Staff." The best advice for Serbia is to seek the mediation of the Great Powers.

Viennese report from Count Dudzele of July 25th, 1916
(No. 5):

*Le Ministre du Roi à Vienne à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.*

Vienne, le 25 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

La situation a pris brusquement un caractère très grave. On s'attendait évidemment à une démarche prochaine de l'Autriche-Hongrie auprès de la Serbie. Mais la note remise le 23 de ce mois par le représentant de la Monarchie à Belgrade entre les mains du D^r Paccu, Ministre intérimaire des Affaires Etrangères; formule des *demandes plus étendues et pose des conditions plus dures que je ne le prévoyais.*

La presse ici est unanime à dire que les conditions posées à la Serbie ne sont pas de nature à porter atteinte à son amour-propre et à sa dignité nationale et qu'elle peut et doit par conséquent les accepter. Mais cette même presse reconnaît implicitement à quel point ces conditions sont rigoureuses puisqu'elle n'exprime qu'un très faible espoir de voir le Gouvernement du Roi Pierre s'y soumettre. Sans parler de *l'humiliante déclaration à insérer au Journal Officiel et de l'ordre du jour à l'armée*, il y a, par exemple, le paragraphe 5 qui constituerait évidemment une ingérence excessive dans les affaires du pays. Ce serait *la mise complète de la Serbie sous la tutelle de la Monarchie.*

Certes un refus pourrait avoir au point de vue international les plus graves conséquences. Il peut provoquer un conflit européen et occasionner au point de vue économique des pertes énormes. Dans peu d'heures on apprendra le sens de la réponse de la Serbie, mais il est extrêmement *peu probable qu'elle soit de nature à donner satisfaction.* D'ailleurs le Roi Pierre et son Gouvernement provoqueraient une révolution dans le pays s'ils montraient quelque velléité de faire de pareilles concessions. C'est ce dont on doit évidemment se rendre compte au Ballplatz et il semble bien aussi qu'on n'a posé des conditions aussi dures que parce qu'ainsi *on espérait qu'elles seraient refusées, parce qu'on voulait "en finir une bonne fois avec la Serbie."*

Comte ERREMBULT DE DUDZEELE.

Arising out of this report, the following points are to be noted :

1. The demands contained in the Austrian Ultimatum were of such a harsh and far-reaching character as had never been foreseen by the Belgian Ambassador. Even the Viennese Press recognises this, as it expresses only a faint hope that the Austrian demands will be accepted. The demand that a humiliating statement should be included

in the official journal and in a Royal Army Order, as well as the fifth demand in the Ultimatum, represent excessive intrusions in the internal affairs of the Serbian country, and signify that Serbia would be completely placed under the tutelage of the Monarchy.

2. The acceptance of such demands is very improbable ; it would evoke a revolution in Serbia. It appears that such harsh conditions have been put forward at the Ballplatz for the very reason that they would be rejected. They wanted "once for all to finish matters with Serbia."

Berlin report from Baron Beyens of July 25th, 1914 (No. 6):

No. 6.

*Le Ministre du Roi à Berlin à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.*

Berlin, le 25 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

La situation ne s'est pas aggravée depuis hier, ce qui ne veut pas dire qu'elle se soit améliorée.

Comme symptômes défavorables, il faut noter d'abord le langage tenu à la Wilhelmstrasse aux Membres du Corps diplomatique : le Gouvernement Impérial approuve la démarche du Gouvernement austro-hongrois à Belgrade et ne trouve pas que la forme en soit excessive. Il faut en finir avec les complots sanguinaires et les menées révolutionnaires qui s'ourdissent en Serbie. MM. de Jagow et Zimmermann ne parleraient pas ainsi s'ils n'avaient reçu à cet effet les ordres de l'Empereur, décidé dans un intérêt de confraternité dynastique à soutenir jusqu'au bout l'Autriche-Hongrie et accessible à la crainte bien légitime qu'inspirent les attentats contre les Personnes Royales.

Il est à remarquer de plus que la presse allemande, à l'exception bien entendu des journaux socialistes, paraît revenue du premier étonnement causé par la note austro-hongroise. Elle fait chorus à la presse de Vienne et de Budapest et envisage froidement l'éventualité d'une guerre, tout en exprimant l'espoir qu'elle restera localisée.

Enfin l'opinion se répand de plus en plus parmi mes collègues—et je la crois fondée—que c'est moins de désir de venger la mort de l'Archiduc héritier et de mettre un terme à la propagande panserbiste que le souci de sa réhabilitation personnelle comme homme d'Etat qui a poussé le Comte Berchtold à envoyer à Belgrade cette note incroyable et sans précédent diplomatique. Du moment que son amour-propre et sa réputation sont en jeu, il lui sera bien difficile de reculer, de temporiser et de ne pas mettre ses menaces à exécution.

Les indices favorables sont moins apparents. Cependant ils méritent d'être signalés. Sans parler de l'opinion publique européenne, qui ne comprendrait pas la nécessité d'en venir aux armes pour résoudre un conflit dont le règlement est incontestablement du domaine de la diplomatie, il paraît impossible de ne pas tenir compte du mouvement général de réaction et de réprobation qui se manifeste hors de l'Allemagne et de l'Autriche-Hongrie, contre les termes mêmes de l'ultimatum du Comte Berchtold. Le Cabinet de Vienne, qui avait raison dans le fond, a tort dans la forme. La demande de satisfactions est juste, *le procédé employé pour les obtenir est inqualifiable.*

Quoique le Comte Berchtold ait habilement choisi son moment pour agir, le Cabinet anglais étant absorbé par la question du Home Rule et de l'Ulster, le Chef de l'Etat Français et son Premier Ministre en voyage, et le Gouvernement russe obligé de lutter contre des grèves importantes, le fait que le Ministre autrichien a cru devoir envoyer aux grandes Puissances un memorandum explicatif implique pour ces grandes Puissances, dans l'espèce pour celles de la Triple Entente, le droit de répondre, c'est-à-dire de discuter, d'intervenir en faveur de la Serbie et d'engager des négociations avec le Cabinet de Vienne. Si l'on en arrive là le plus rapidement possible, un grand avantage sera obtenu en faveur du maintien de la paix européenne. Même une démonstration militaire hâtive de l'armée austro-hongroise contre Belgrade, après le refus du Gouvernement Serbe d'accepter l'ultimatum, ne serait peut-être pas un événement irrémédiable.

Enfin l'accord n'est pas parfait entre les trois membres de la Triplice dans le conflit actuel. Il n'y aurait pas lieu de s'étonner si le Gouvernement italien voulait jouer un rôle séparé et cherchait à intervenir dans l'intérêt de la paix.

Baron BEYENS.

Arising out of this report, the following points are to be noted :

1. The authorities in the Foreign Office in Berlin approve the action of the Austro-Hungarian Government, and find that the form of the Ultimatum also is not excessive. They would not speak in this strain if they had not received commands to this effect from the Emperor, who is resolved "to extend his support to Austria-Hungary to the end."

2. In the diplomatic circles of Berlin the opinion is more and more gaining ground that in the case of Count Berchtold it was less the struggle against Pan-Serbian propaganda than anxiety for his own personal rehabilitation as a statesman that was the governing motive when he dispatched to Belgrade this "incredible Note, which stands without precedent in diplomatic history." "From the moment that

his vanity and his reputation are at stake, it will be very difficult for him to draw back, to temporise, and to fail to put his threats into execution."

3. In the whole of Europe outside Germany and Austria there was manifested a general disapproval of the manner in which the Viennese Government had put forward their demands. "The demand for satisfaction is justified; the manner in which it is sought to obtain it is beyond description."

4. Count Berchtold has intentionally chosen the moment when the English Cabinet was occupied with the Home Rule question, and the Russian Government by extensive strikes, and when those in power in France were on tour. The communication of the Ultimatum with an explanatory memorandum can only imply the right of the Great Powers to answer and to initiate negotiations with the Viennese Cabinet.

5. The Belgian diplomatist already counts on a refusal of the Austrian demands by the Serbian Government and on action by the Austrian army against Belgrade; he considers, however, that even this occurrence would not constitute an irreparable step.

Petrograd report of July 24th (No. 7) signed by the Belgian Chargé d'Affaires, B. de l'Escaille, who represented the absent Belgian Ambassador. This is the Chargé d'Affaires whose report of July 30th was intercepted by the German Government in Berlin (see *German Documents on the Outbreak of War*, p. 42, and *J'accuse*, p. 255).

No. 7.

*Le Chargé d'Affaires de Belgique à Saint-Pétersbourg
à M. Davignon, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères. (Télégramme.)*

Saint-Pétersbourg, le 26 juillet 1914.

Le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères a déclaré hier que la Russie ne permettra pas que l'Autriche-Hongrie écrase la Serbie, à laquelle cependant des conseils de modération ont été envoyés l'engageant à céder sur les points de l'ultimatum ayant caractère juridique et non politique. Le Gouvernement Russe estime que la situation est très grave.

B. DE L'ESCAILLE.

The report confirms that Russia had sent counsels of moderation to Belgrade advising them to comply with all the demands of the Ultimatum of a juridical character. Russia could not in any case be an unmoved spectator of an annihilation of Serbia.

Berlin report of Baron Beyens of July 26th (No. 8):

No. 8.

*Le Ministre du Roi à Berlin à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.*

Berlin, le 26 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Ce que j'ai à vous dire au sujet de la crise est si grave que je me décide à vous faire parvenir ce rapport par un courrier spécial. Les rapports que j'ai confiés à la poste avec la crainte qu'ils ne fussent lus par le cabinet noir allemand contenaient nécessairement des appréciations beaucoup plus optimistes.

Des conversations répétées que j'ai eues hier avec l'Ambassadeur de France, les Ministres des Pays-Bas et de Grèce, le Chargé d'affaires d'Angleterre, résulte pour moi la présomption que l'ultimatum à la Serbie est un *coup préparé entre Vienne et Berlin* ou plutôt imaginé ici et exécuté à Vienne. C'est ce qui en constitue le grand danger. La vengeance à tirer de l'assassinat de l'Archiduc Héritier et de la propagande panserbiste ne servirait que de *prétexte*. Le but poursuivi, outre l'anéantissement de la Serbie et des aspirations jougoslaves, serait de *porter un coup mortel à la Russie et à la France, avec l'espoir que l'Angleterre resterait à l'écart de la lutte.*

Pour justifier ces présomptions, je dois vous rappeler l'opinion qui règne dans l'état-major allemand, à savoir qu'*une guerre avec la France et la Russie est inévitable et prochaine, opinion qu'on a réussi à faire partager à l'Empereur. Cette guerre, ardemment souhaitée par le parti militaire et pangermaniste, pourrait être entreprise aujourd'hui, estime ce parti, dans des circonstances extrêmement favorables pour l'Allemagne et qui ne se présenteront probablement plus de si tôt : "L'Allemagne a terminé ses renforcements militaires prévus par la loi de 1912 et, d'autre part, elle sent qu'elle ne peut pas poursuivre indéfiniment avec la Russie et la France une course aux armements qui finirait par la ruiner. Le Wehrbeitrag a été une déception pour le Gouvernement Impérial, auquel il a montré la limite de la richesse nationale. La Russie, avant d'avoir achevé sa réorganisation militaire, a eu le tort de faire étalage de sa force. Cette force ne sera formidable que dans quelques années ; il lui manque maintenant pour se déployer les lignes de chemins de fer nécessaires. Quant à la France, M. Charles Humbert a révélé l'insuffisance de ses canons de gros calibre ; or, c'est cette arme qui*

décidera, paraît-il, du sort des batailles. L'Angleterre enfin, que, depuis deux ans, le Gouvernement allemand cherche non sans quelque succès à détacher de la France et de la Russie, est paralysée par ses dissensions intestines et ses querelles irlandaises."

L'existence d'un plan concerté entre Berlin et Vienne est prouvée aux yeux de mes Collègues et aux miens par l'obstination qu'on met à la Wilhelmstrasse à nier qu'on ait eu connaissance avant jeudi dernier de la teneur de la note autrichienne. C'est aussi jeudi seulement qu'elle a été connue à Rome, d'où proviennent le dépit et le mécontentement montrés ici par l'Ambassadeur d'Italie. Comment admettre que cette note destinée à rendre la guerre immédiate et inévitable, tant à cause de la dureté excessive de ses conditions que du court délai laissé au Cabinet de Belgrade pour s'exécuter, ait pu être rédigée à l'insu du Gouvernement allemand et sans sa collaboration active, alors qu'elle entraînera pour lui les conséquences les plus graves ? Ce qui prouve encore le parfait accord des deux Gouvernements, c'est leur refus simultanément de prolonger le délai laissé à la Serbie. Tandis que la demande de prolongation formulée par le Chargé d'Affaires de Russie à Vienne était écartée hier au Ballplatz, ici, à la Wilhelmstrasse, M. de Jagow éludait des demandes analogues apportées par les Chargés d'Affaires russe et britannique, qui réclamaient au nom de leur gouvernement respectif l'appui du Cabinet de Berlin en vue de décider l'Autriche à laisser à la Serbie plus de répit pour répondre. Le désir d'hostilités immédiates et inéluctables était le même à Berlin et à Vienne. La paternité du plan et la suggestion des procédés employés sont attribués ici, dans le monde diplomatique, en raison de leur habileté même, dignes d'un Bismarck, à un cerveau de diplomate allemand plutôt qu'autrichien. Le secret a été bien gardé et l'exécution poursuivie avec une rapidité merveilleuse.

Notez que, si le but secret des hommes d'Etat des deux Empires n'est pas réellement de généraliser la guerre et de forcer la Russie et la France à y prendre part, mais seulement d'anéantir la puissance de la Serbie et de l'empêcher de poursuivre son travail occulte de propagande, le résultat sera le même. Il est impossible que la prévision de ce résultat ait échappé aux yeux clairvoyants des dirigeants de l'Empire allemand. Dans l'une comme dans l'autre de ces suppositions, *l'intervention de la Russie paraît inévitable* ; ils ont dû envisager froidement cette complication et se préparer à soutenir énergiquement leurs alliés. *La perspective d'une guerre européenne ne les a pas fait hésiter un instant*, si le désir de la déchaîner n'a pas été le mobile de leur conduite.

Depuis hier soir les relations diplomatiques sont rompues entre l'Autriche-Hongrie et la Serbie. Les événements vont se précipiter. On s'attend ici à ce que le Roi, le Gouvernement et l'armée serbes se retirent dans la partie du pays nouvellement annexée et laissent sans combat les troupes autrichiennes occuper Belgrade et la contrée avoisinant le Danube. Mais alors se pose la question angoissante : **Que fera la Russie ?**

Cette question troublante, nous devons aussi nous la poser et nous

tenir prêts aux pires éventualités, car *le conflit européen* dont on parlait toujours en se flattant de l'espoir qu'il n'éclaterait jamais *devient aujourd'hui une réalité menaçante.*

Le ton de la presse officieuse allemande est plus mesuré ce matin et laisse entrevoir la possibilité d'une localisation de la guerre, mais seulement au prix du désintéressement de la Russie, qui se contenterait de l'assurance que l'intégrité territoriale de la Serbie serait respectée. Ce langage n'a-t-il pas pour but de donner quelque satisfaction à l'Angleterre et aussi à l'opinion allemande qui, malgré les manifestations austrophiles d'hier soir dans les rues de Berlin, reste alarmée et pacifique ? En tout cas le dénouement, quel qu'il soit, de la crise ne semble pas devoir se faire attendre.

Baron BEYENS.

From this report the following appears :

1. The Austrian Ultimatum—in the opinion of Baron Beyens—is “a stroke agreed upon between Vienna and Berlin, or rather a stroke conceived in Berlin and executed in Vienna.” The murder of the Archduke and the repression of Pan-Serbian propaganda are only pretexts. “Apart from the annihilation of Serbia and of Jugo-Slav aspirations the aim which is being followed is to give Russia and France a mortal blow, in the hope that England will remain out of the struggle. In order to justify this supposition I must—such are the words of Beyens to his Minister—recall the prevailing view in the German General Staff, according to which a war with France and Russia is inevitable and imminent—a view which has been successfully communicated to the Emperor also. The war that is thus so ardently desired by the military party and the Pan-Germans could to-day be provoked under unusually favourable conditions for Germany, more favourable than would be likely to recur at an early date. Germany has completed the increase in her military strength provided by the law of 1912, and on the other hand she feels that she cannot indefinitely continue the competition in armaments with Russia and France without being completely ruined. The ‘Defence-contribution’ provided a disappointment for the Imperial Government, since it revealed to it the limits of national wealth. Russia committed the mistake of displaying her strength before she had completed her military reorganisation. In a few years Russia’s strength will be formidable. At the present moment she still

lacks the necessary railways for its development. As regards France, Charles Humbert has revealed the insufficiency of her guns of high calibre. It is, however, this very weapon which presumably will decide the fate of battles. Lastly, England, which the German Government have for two years been endeavouring to detach from France and Russia, not entirely without success, is paralysed by her internal disputes and her Irish difficulties." All these considerations—according to Beyens—induced the military party in Berlin to press this time for the outbreak, at last, of the European war.

2. "The existence of a plan agreed upon between Berlin and Vienna is, in my opinion and that of my colleagues, proved by the stubbornness with which any knowledge of the tenor of the Austrian Ultimatum before last Thursday (the day of its delivery) is denied in the Wilhelmstrasse. . . . How can it be believed that this Note, calculated to provoke war immediately and inevitably—because of the exceptional harshness of its conditions as well as the short time-limit given for the answer of the Belgrade Government—how can it be believed that such a Note could have been composed without the knowledge and without the active collaboration of the German Government, whom it could not fail to involve in the gravest consequences? The complete agreement between the two Governments is further proved by their simultaneous refusal to prolong the time-limit. . . . The desire to begin hostilities, immediately and inexorably, existed in Berlin and Vienna alike. The paternity of the plan and the suggestion of the procedure to be followed in detail are ascribed in the diplomatic world here, because of its cleverness which is worthy of a Bismarck, rather to the brain of a German than an Austrian diplomatist. The secret has been strictly kept, and the execution carried out with wonderful rapidity."

3. The Belgian Ambassador also considers the possibility, in which he personally at any rate does not believe, that the Berlin and Viennese Governments had not intended to provoke a general European war forthwith. But even in this case he regards them as equally guilty, since

they were with certainty bound to foresee such a war as a consequence of their action. "It is impossible that the prospect of such a result can have escaped the clear eyes of the leaders of Germany. Whichever hypothesis is accepted, the intervention of Russia appears inevitable; they (the authorities in Berlin) have certainly viewed this complication unmoved, and prepared themselves to give energetic support to their ally. The prospect of a European war did not occasion a moment's delay, even if the desire to provoke the war may not have been the motive of their action."

The supreme importance of this Note from the Berlin Ambassador is at once obvious. This Note in itself disposes of the whole documentary collection of the Berlin Foreign Office. On July 26th, that is to say two days before the outbreak of the Austro-Serbian war and long before the publication of the diplomatic correspondence, the Belgian diplomatist with unusual acumen already disentangles all the threads of the Austro-German criminal conspiracy. Events did, in fact, take place exactly in accordance with the account here given by Beyens, and all the later evidence which has appeared—as brought together in *J'accuse* and *The Crime*—has only confirmed the diagnosis of the Belgian diplomatist. Poor Herr von Bethmann and Herr von Jagow! It would have been better for you if you had not appealed to Belgian diplomatists to testify to your innocence. You would now have been spared from hearing the "objective," but for this reason all the more crushing, verdict of guilt passed on your criminal policy of war by "the representatives of a State which is only indirectly concerned with world-politics, so to speak, merely as spectators."

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Viennese report of July 26th, 1914 (No. 9) :

No. 9.

*Le Ministre du Roi à Vienne à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.*

Vienne, 26 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

La réponse du Gouvernement serbe à la note austro-hongroise a été considérée par le Représentant de la Monarchie austro-hongroise à Belgrade comme insuffisante, ainsi que je l'avais prévu. Le Général Baron de Giesl a immédiatement quitté son poste avec tout son personnel ; des deux côtés la mobilisation est ordonnée et la guerre est imminente.

Les conditions si rigoureuses de la susdite note, le refus d'entrer à leur sujet en discussion quelconque, la durée si courte du délai accordé semblent bien démontrer que le point auquel on en est arrivé est précisément celui qu'on voulait ici atteindre. Il est évident que l'action entreprise par le Gouvernement austro-hongrois a été entièrement approuvée à Berlin. Certaines personnes vont même jusqu'à prétendre que le Comte Berchtold a été encouragé et poussé dans cette voie par le Gouvernement allemand, qui ne reculerait pas devant le danger d'une conflagration générale et préférerait entrer actuellement en lutte avec la France et la Russie insuffisamment préparées, tandis que, dans trois ans, ces deux Puissances auraient achevé leurs transformations militaires.

Les journaux autrichiens ont reproduit hier un communiqué publié par l'agence télégraphique de Saint-Petersbourg disant que les événements survenus entre l'Autriche-Hongrie et la Serbie ne pouvaient pas laisser la Russie indifférente.

D'autre part, le Chargé d'Affaires de Russie a fait hier au "Ballplatz" une démarche officielle pour obtenir en faveur de la Serbie une prolongation du délai, qui lui a été poliment refusée.

Ces faits ne sont pas suffisants pour pouvoir prédire avec certitude que le Gouvernement du Czar prendra, à main armée, fait et cause pour la Serbie. Mais, d'autre part, il paraît bien difficile d'admettre que la Russie assistera impassible à un complet écrasement de cet État slave.

Or, à Belgrade, où une soumission entière aurait très probablement provoqué une révolution et mis la vie du Souverain et de ses ministres en danger, on doit avoir eu en vue de gagner du temps. Il est à supposer que la réponse apportée par M. Pachitch au Général Giesl faisait de notables concessions pour une grande partie des conditions formulées, notamment celles en relations avec l'assassinat de l'Archiduc François-Ferdinand, et il ne faudrait pas désespérer de la possibilité d'arriver à un compromis si les Puissances, animées du sincère désir de maintenir la paix, faisaient tous leurs efforts pour atteindre ce résultat. Il serait hautement désirable qu'il en fût ainsi. Mais l'attitude si décidée de l'Autriche-Hongrie et le soutien que lui prête

l'Allemagne ne laissent malheureusement sous ce rapport qu'un assez faible espoir.

Comte ERREMBAULT DE DUDZEELE.

Arising out of this report, the following points are to be noted :

1. The harshness of the Austrian demands, the refusal of any discussion, the fixing of such a short time-limit for an answer, all prove that from the outset the intention had been to arrive at a rupture in diplomatic relations.

2. " It is clear that the action undertaken by the Viennese Government was fully and completely approved in Berlin." It has, indeed, been frequently assumed that in what he did Count Berchtold was encouraged and spurred on from Berlin. The German Government would in no way shrink back from the danger of European war, indeed they would prefer to have war with France and Russia to-day, when they are insufficiently prepared, rather than in three years' time, when these Powers will have completed their military transformations.

3. The Russian request for a prolongation of the time-limit has been " politely refused " at the Ballplatz. It is scarcely possible to believe that Russia will stand quietly aside while the small Slav State is being crushed. In spite of all this, the maintenance of the peace of Europe would still be possible if " the resolute attitude of Austria-Hungary and the support which Germany gives her did not leave but a very faint hope in this direction."

Berlin report of July 27th, 1914 (No. 10).

No. 10.

*Le Ministre du Roi à Berlin à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.*

Berlin, le 27 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Au milieu des appréciations contradictoires que j'ai recueillies aujourd'hui dans mes entretiens avec mes Collègues, il m'était bien difficile de me former une opinion exacte sur la situation telle qu'elle se présente au bout de la troisième journée de crise. J'ai pensé que le plus sûr était d'en causer avec le Sous-Secrétaire d'Etat lui-même, mais je ne suis parvenu à voir M. Zimmermann qu'à 8 heures

du soir et, à peine rentré à la Légation, je vous transmets le compte rendu de notre conversation, sans avoir même le temps d'en prendre copie, car je veux que cette lettre parte par le dernier train du soir.

Voici ce que m'a dit le Sous-Secrétaire d'Etat :

“ Ce n'est pas à notre instigation et d'après notre conseil que l'Autriche a fait la démarche que vous savez auprès du cabinet de Belgrade. La réponse n'a pas été satisfaisante et aujourd'hui l'Autriche mobilise. Elle ira jusqu'au bout. Elle ne peut plus reculer sous peine de perdre tout son prestige à l'intérieur comme à l'extérieur de la Monarchie. C'est pour elle maintenant une question d'existence, d'être ou de ne pas être. Il faut qu'elle coupe court à la propagande audacieuse qui tend à sa désagrégation intérieure, à l'insurrection de toutes les provinces slaves de la vallée du Danube. Elle a enfin à venger d'une façon éclatante l'assassinat de l'Archiduc héritier. Pour cela la Serbie doit recevoir, au moyen d'une expédition militaire, une sévère et salutaire leçon. Une guerre austro-serbe est donc impossible à éviter.

“ L'Angleterre nous a demandé de nous joindre à elle, à la France et à l'Italie, pour empêcher que la lutte ne s'étende et qu'un conflit n'éclate entre l'Autriche et la Russie, ou plutôt la proposition britannique visait un règlement pacifique du conflit austro-serbe pour qu'il ne s'étendît pas à d'autres nations. Nous avons répondu que nous ne demandions pas mieux que de l'aider à circonscrire le conflit en parlant dans ce sens à Pétersbourg et à Vienne, mais que nous ne pouvions pas agir sur l'Autriche pour l'empêcher d'infliger une punition exemplaire à la Serbie. Nous avons promis à nos alliés de les y aider et de les soutenir, si une autre nation cherche à y mettre obstacle. Nous tiendrons notre promesse. Si la Russie mobilise son armée, nous mobiliserons immédiatement la nôtre et alors ce sera la guerre générale, une guerre qui embrasera toute l'Europe centrale et même la péninsule balkanique, car les Roumains, les Bulgares, les Grecs et les Turcs ne pourront pas résister à la tentation d'y prendre part les uns contre les autres.

“ J'ai dit hier à M. Boghitchewitsh (c'est l'ancien chargé d'affaires de Serbie, très apprécié à Berlin et malheureusement transféré au Caire ; il est de passage ici) que la meilleur conseil que je puisse donner à son pays, c'est de n'opposer à l'Autriche qu'un simulacre de résistance militaire et de conclure la paix au plus vite, en acceptant toutes les conditions du Cabinet de Vienne. J'ai ajouté que, si une guerre générale éclate et qu'elle tourne au profit des armées de la Triplice, la Serbie cesserait vraisemblablement d'exister comme nation ; elle sera rayée de la carte de l'Europe. Mieux vaut ne pas s'exposer à une pareille éventualité.

“ Cependant je ne veux pas finir cet entretien par une note trop pessimiste. J'ai quelque espoir qu'une conflagration générale pourra être évitée. On nous télégraphie de Saint-Pétersbourg que M. Sazonov est plus disposé à juger froidement la situation. J'espère que nous pourrons le dissuader d'intervenir en faveur de la Serbie dont l'Autriche est résolue à respecter l'intégrité territoriale et l'indépendance à venir, une fois qu'elle aura obtenu satisfaction.”

J'ai objecté à M. Zimmermann que d'après certains de mes Collègues qui avaient lu la *réponse du Cabinet de Belgrade*, celle-ci était une *capitulation complète devant les exigences autrichiennes*, auxquelles satisfaction était donnée avec des restrictions de pure forme. Le Sous-Secrétaire d'Etat m'a répondu *qu'il n'avait pas connaissance de cette réponse* et que d'ailleurs rien ne pourrait empêcher une démonstration militaire de l'Autriche-Hongrie. Telle est la situation.

BARON BEYENS.

Arising out of this report, the following is to be noted :

1. Zimmermann, who was then Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, denied to the Belgian Ambassador that the action taken by Austria was to be attributed to the instigation and the advice of Berlin.¹ For Austria—so continued the Under-Secretary of State—it was now a question of to be or not to be. She would and must give the Serbs a severe and salutary lesson. England had suggested a pacific intervention of the four disinterested Powers. While Germany wished to localise the conflict, she would not prevent Austria from inflicting punishment on Serbia. If Russia mobilised, Germany also would mobilise, and that meant a European war. In other words, Austria could mobilise and wage war to any extent she might choose ; but should Russia also mobilise as a counter-measure, then this on the Prusso-German theory of international law would be a *casus belli*.

2. The Belgian Ambassador drew the attention of the German Under-Secretary of State to the fact that the Serbian answer—according to the statements of people who had read it—amounted to a complete capitulation to the Austrian demands, only with the addition of a few purely formal limitations. Zimmermann replied—at 8 o'clock on the evening of July 27th!—that he did not yet know the Serbian answer, but that in any case he could not prevent the military action of Austria.

¹ In *J'accuse* (p. 170) and in greater detail in *The Crime* (Vol. I, p. 244) I have already inquired into the true value of this subterfuge. The revelations of Dr. W. Muehlon, the former director of Krupp's, which became known in the spring of 1918, after the completion of *The Crime*, completely confirm the fact that the diplomatic and military conspiracy of Germany and Austria had already been agreed upon in all its details at a meeting held in Berlin before the beginning of the Emperor's northern tour.

As we know, Herr von Jagow feigned ignorance on this same point in a conversation with Jules Cambon, the French Ambassador, on the same day, July 27th (Yellow Book, No. 74). The fitting answer which the Frenchman gave the German Secretary of State when he had resort to this preposterous prevarication may be read in the Yellow Book and in *J'accuse* (p. 307). On July 27th the German Secretary of State and the Under-Secretary of State maintain that they had not yet read the Serbian answer, which had been delivered to the Austrian Ambassador in Belgrade on the evening of July 25th. On this answer the fate of Europe depended. If in truth the gentlemen in Berlin were still unacquainted with it two days later, then they were guilty of an act of wanton omission for which, having regard to the portentous significance of the Serbian memorandum, there is no adequate parliamentary expression. If, however, as may with certainty be assumed, they knew the answer and merely did not want to know it, then they not only lied, but lied with stupidity; for their denial of any knowledge proves that they desired to avoid any discussion of the answer, because no honest man would recognise it as furnishing sufficient ground for the provocation of a war with Serbia in consequence, and, resulting out of this, the provocation of a European war. The denial of any knowledge of the most important message of peace—two days after its official delivery—merely amounts to the confession of the unconditional desire for war and of the agreed war-conspiracy between the two Central Empires.

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Davignon's Note of July 27th, 1914 (No. 11), addressed to the Belgian Ambassador in Vienna :

No. 11.

*M. Davignon, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères,
au Ministre du Roi à Vienne. (Télégramme.)*

Bruxelles, le 27 juillet 1914.

J'ai reçu votre rapport du 25 de ce mois. Veuillez télégraphier où en est la mobilisation et quand les hostilités pourraient commencer. Votre collègue à Berlin écrit le 26 qu'à son avis *l'Allemagne et l'Autriche-Hongrie ont prévu ensemble toutes les conséquences possibles*

de l'*ultimatum* adressé à la Serbie et sont décidées à aller à toutes extrémités. Nous devons être renseignés en vue des mesures à prendre.

DAVIGNON.

Berlin report from Baron Beyens of July 28th, 1914 (No. 12) :

*Le Ministre du Roi à Berlin à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.*

Berlin, le 28 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Les événements marchent si rapidement qu'il faut se garder d'émettre des pronostics, surtout trop favorables, de crainte qu'ils ne soient démentis par les faits. Mieux vaut chercher à démêler les causes de la crise actuelle pour tâcher d'en comprendre le développement et d'en deviner la conclusion.

C'est ce que j'ai essayé de faire dans mon rapport du 26 juillet. *L'opinion que j'émettais dans la première partie me paraît toujours la plus fondée.* Cependant je dois vous citer aujourd'hui une opinion différente, parce qu'elle émane d'un homme qui est à même de bien juger la situation, l'Ambassadeur d'Italie, avec lequel j'ai eu hier un entretien.

D'après M. Bollati, le Gouvernement allemand, d'accord en principe avec le Cabinet de Vienne sur la nécessité du coup à porter à la Serbie, ignorait la teneur de la note autrichienne, ou en tout cas n'en connaissait pas *les termes violents, inusités dans la langue diplomatique.* A Vienne comme à Berlin, on était persuadé que la Russie, malgré les assurances officielles échangées récemment entre le Czar et M. Poincaré au sujet de la préparation complète des deux armées de la Duplice, était incapable d'engager une guerre européenne et qu'elle n'oserait pas se lancer dans une si redoutable aventure : situation intérieure inquiétante, menées révolutionnaires, armement incomplet, voies de communication insuffisantes ; toutes ces raisons devaient forcer le Gouvernement russe à assister impuissant à l'exécution de la Serbie. *Même opinion méprisante en ce qui concerne non pas l'armée française, mais l'esprit qui règne en France dans le monde gouvernemental.*

L'Ambassadeur d'Italie estime qu'on se fait illusion ici sur les décisions que prendra le Gouvernement du Czar. D'après lui, il se trouvera acculé à la nécessité de faire la guerre pour ne pas perdre toute autorité et tout prestige aux yeux des Slaves. *Son inaction en présence de l'entrée en campagne de l'Autriche équivaldrait à un suicide.* M. Bollati m'a laissé comprendre qu'une guerre européenne ne serait pas populaire en Italie. Le peuple italien n'a pas d'intérêt à l'écrasement de la puissance russe, qui est l'ennemie de l'Autriche ; il aurait besoin de se recueillir en ce moment pour résoudre à loisir d'autres questions qui le préoccupent davantage.

L'impression que la Russie est incapable de faire face à une guerre européenne règne non seulement au sein du Gouvernement Impérial,

mais chez les industriels allemands qui ont la spécialité des fournitures militaires. Le plus autorisé d'entre eux pour exprimer un avis, M. Krupp von Bohlen, a assuré à un de mes Collègues que *l'artillerie russe était loin d'être bonne et complète, tandis que celle de l'armée allemande n'avait jamais été d'une qualité aussi supérieure.* Ce serait une folie, a-t-il ajouté, pour la Russie de déclarer la guerre à l'Allemagne dans ces conditions.

Le Gouvernement serbe, pris au dépourvu par la soudaineté de l'ultimatum autrichien, a cependant répondu, avant l'expiration du délai fixé, aux exigences du Cabinet de Vienne et *consenti toutes les satisfactions réclamées.* Sa réponse a été mal présentée, dans un texte trop touffu, accompagné de trop de pièces à l'appui; elle forme un gros document au lieu d'être d'une forme courte et précise. Elle n'en est pas moins, paraît-il, très concluante. Elle a été communiquée à tous les Cabinets intéressés et, hier matin, à celui de Berlin. D'où vient *qu'aucun journal allemand ne l'ait publiée, tandis que presque tous reproduisaient un télégramme autrichien déclarant que la réponse serbe était absolument insuffisante? N'y a-t-il pas là une nouvelle preuve de la volonté inébranlable, tant ici qu'à Vienne, d'aller de l'avant coûte que coûte?*

Baron BEYENS.

Arising out of this report, the following points are to be noted :

1. Beyens still adheres to his account of the whole affair as a manœuvre agreed upon between Berlin and Vienna. He is, nevertheless, sufficiently objective to mention the somewhat divergent view of Bollati, the Italian Ambassador in Berlin. The latter was of the opinion that in Vienna and Berlin they had not presupposed the possibility that matters would be allowed to go as far as war either in the case of Russia or France; in other words, that they had intended it rather as a piece of bluff than as a real provocation of war. In the case of Russia the internal unrest, the insufficient military preparation, etc., were accepted as sufficient reasons for assuming that she would remain an inactive spectator of Serbia's execution. Towards France they had "the same contemptuous view, not with regard to the French army, but with regard to the spirit prevailing in French Governmental circles." This utterance of Bollati's is very interesting; it confirms the fact that in Berlin they were convinced of the love of peace which inspired France, that same France which to-day it is sought to place in the pillory as the disturber of the peace and the author of the war.

2. In the opinion of the most eminent experts in Germany, above all that of Herr Krupp von Bohlen, the Russian artillery is absolutely insufficient, while that of Germany has never reached such a high state of perfection as at the present moment. In these circumstances, so it was calculated in Germany, it would be madness for Russia to declare war against Germany. This account of the Belgian Ambassador, which is based on utterances of the Italian Ambassador, disposes in the first place of every suspicion that Russia wanted war and provoked it ; on the other hand, it supports the hypothesis that Germany calculated either on the absolute non-intervention of Russia, or, in the event of intervention, on an absolutely certain victory.

3. The Belgian Ambassador confirms it as a characteristic fact that the Serbian answer of July 25th had not yet been published in any German newspaper on July 28th (the day of his report), whereas nearly all the papers had published an Austrian telegram according to which the Serbian answer was "entirely insufficient." "Is this not a new proof of the immovable will which existed both in Berlin and Vienna to go forward, cost what it might?"

AFTER THE OUTBREAK OF THE AUSTRO-SERBIAN WAR.

Berlin report of July 29th, 1914 (No. 14) :

No. 14.

*Le Ministre du Roi à Berlin à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.*

Berlin, 29 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Je profite d'une occasion sûre pour vous faire parvenir des impressions que je ne confierais pas à la poste.

La déclaration de guerre de l'Autriche-Hongrie à la Serbie a été jugée, de l'avis général, comme *un événement très dangereux pour le maintien de la paix européenne*. Le Cabinet de Vienne répond ainsi *aux tentatives de conciliation de Londres et de Pétersbourg* ; il coupe les ponts derrière lui pour s'interdire toute retraite. Il est à craindre que cette déclaration ne soit considérée *par le Gouvernement du Czar comme une provocation*.

Les hostilités vont donc commencer, mais elles pourraient être de courte durée si l'Allemagne consentait à user de son influence sur son alliée et si, de leur côté, les Serbes, obéissant aux conseils qu'on leur a données, battaient en retraite devant l'envahisseur, sans lui fournir l'occasion d'une effusion de sang inutile. *En occupant Belgrade sans coup férir, l'Autriche aurait à la fois une satisfaction morale et matérielle et un gage qui lui permettraient de ne pas se montrer intraitable.* Une intervention pourrait peut-être alors se produire avec quelque chance de succès.

Ce ne sont là malheureusement que des hypothèses inspirées par le désir de prévenir une catastrophe européenne. Mais voici un fait susceptible d'avoir de l'influence sur les dispositions du Cabinet de Berlin. Sir Edward Grey a déclaré avant-hier au Prince Lichnowsky que, si une guerre européenne éclatait, aucune des six grandes puissances ne pourrait y rester étrangère. En même temps les journaux allemands annonçaient la mise sur pied de guerre de la flotte britannique.

Il est certain que ces avertissements dissipèrent une illusion que tout le monde à Berlin, dans les cercles officiels comme dans la presse, se plaisait à se forger. Des articles de journaux, publiés ces jours derniers encore à l'ouverture du conflit, respiraient *la plus grande confiance dans la neutralité de l'Angleterre.* Il est hors de doute que le Gouvernement Impérial l'avait escomptée et qu'il devra modifier tous ses calculs. Comme en 1911, le Cabinet de Berlin a été trompé par ses agents mal renseignés ; aujourd'hui comme alors, il voit l'Angleterre, malgré toutes les avances, toutes les caresses diplomatiques qu'il lui a prodiguées depuis deux ans, prête à passer dans le camp de ses adversaires. C'est que les hommes d'Etat britanniques se rendent compte des périls que ferait courir à leur pays *l'hégémonie complète de l'Allemagne sur le continent européen* et qu'ils attachent un intérêt vital, non pour des motifs de sentiment, mais pour des raisons d'équilibre, à l'existence de la France comme grande puissance.

Les journaux allemands publient aujourd'hui enfin la réponse de la Serbie à la note du Gouvernement austro-hongrois avec les commentaires autrichiens. La faute de ce retard est imputable en grande partie au Chargé d'Affaires serbe qui n'avait pas fait dactylographier le document pour en remettre des copies à la presse. L'impression qu'il produira à Berlin, où l'on s'obstine à ne voir que par les yeux de l'Autriche et où on approuve jusqu'à présent tout ce qu'elle fait avec une complaisance inexplicable sera presque nulle.

Par votre télégramme du 28 de ce mois, vous me demandez de vous tenir au courant des mesures prises en vue de la mobilisation de l'armée allemande. De mobilisation proprement dite, il n'est pas encore question heureusement. Mais, comme me le disait hier soir un attaché militaire, avant de mobiliser chaque Etat prend chez lui, sans éveiller l'attention, des mesures préparatoires : rappel des officiers et des hommes en congé, achat de chevaux pour les attelages de l'artillerie et des voitures de munitions et de projectiles, etc. *Il n'est pas douteux que ces précautions n'aient été prises en Alle-*

magne. Le sang-froid n'est pas moins nécessaire que la vigilance. Il ne faut rien précipiter ; le rappel, en ce moment-ci où des efforts désespérés sont faits pour la conservation de la paix, de trois classes de notre armée paraîtrait ici prématuré et risquerait de produire une fâcheuse impression.

Baron BEYENS.

Arising out of this report, the following points are to be noted :

1. The Austrian declaration of war against Serbia which took place on the preceding day—as the Viennese Cabinet's answer to the attempts of the London and Petrograd Governments to arrive at an understanding—is a highly dangerous act for the peace of Europe, and will, there is reason to apprehend, be viewed by the Government of the Tsar as a provocative action.

2. Even yet peace could be maintained, if Austria would be content with the occupation of Belgrade and would announce her conditions after this moral and material satisfaction. This is more or less the substance of Grey's first formula of agreement, which was submitted by the English Secretary of State on the same day, July 29th, to Prince Lichnowsky (Blue Book, No. 46), and which thereafter did not again disappear from the diplomatic negotiations (it is well known that neither the German nor the Austrian Government ever made a positive statement in answer to this proposal of Grey's for mediation, as I have elsewhere proved in detail in *J'accuse* and *The Crime*).

3. In Berlin, so the Belgian Ambassador further reports—they still flattered themselves into believing that England would remain absolutely neutral, notwithstanding the assurances of Grey to Lichnowsky that in the event of a general European conflict scarcely any of the Great Powers could remain outside (Blue Book, No. 46). The complete hegemony of Germany on the Continent would be a great danger for England, and on the other hand England had a lively interest in the maintenance of France as a Great Power.

4. Despite all the concessions contained in it, the Serbian

answer, which had just been published (July 29th), will make almost no impression in Berlin, where matters are seen only through the eyes of Austria, and with an "inexplicable complaisance" approval is given to all that the Viennese Government does.

5. Preparatory military measures (recall of officers and men on leave, purchase of artillery horses, munition wagons, etc.) have without doubt already been taken in Germany, although the formal mobilisation has not been proclaimed.

Viennese report of July 30th (No. 16). In my opinion there is here a misprint; from its contents, the report appears to date from July 31st :

No. 16.

*Le Ministre du Roi à Vienne à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Étrangères.*

Vienne, le 30 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Mes rapports de ces derniers jours ont suffisamment démontré que je ne parvenais pas à me procurer des renseignements précis sur les intentions de la Russie, à l'égard de laquelle la presse austro-hongroise observe d'ailleurs par ordre un complet silence. Je me demandais si le Gouvernement du Czar ne garderait pas une attitude expectante et n'interviendrait éventuellement que si l'Autriche-Hongrie abusait, à ses yeux, des victoires qu'elle allait remporter.

Enfin hier soir je suis parvenu à recueillir de source certaine des données authentiques.

La situation est presque désespérée et l'Ambassadeur de Russie s'attendait à chaque instant à être rappelé. Il a fait une dernière tentative qui a réussi à écarter le danger immédiat. L'entretien de Son Excellence avec le comte Berchtold a été fort long et absolument amical. *L'Ambassadeur et le Ministre ont reconnu tous deux que leurs Gouvernements avaient décrété la mobilisation, mais ils se sont quittés en bons termes.*

En sortant du "Ballplatz" M. Schébéko s'est rendu chez M. Dumaine, où se trouvait également Sir Maurice de Bunsen. Cette entrevue a été très émotionnante et l'Ambassadeur de Russie a été vivement félicité par ses collègues du succès qu'il avait si habilement remporté.

La situation reste grave, mais tout au moins la possibilité de reprendre les pourparlers est donnée et il y a encore quelque espoir

que toutes les horreurs et toutes les ruines qu'une guerre européenne occasionnerait forcément pourront être évitées.

Je suis stupéfait de voir *avec quelle insouciance et en même temps avec quel égoïsme* on s'est lancé ici dans une aventure qui pourrait avoir pour toute l'Europe les plus terribles conséquences !

Je remets ce rapport à un compatriote rappelé au service militaire et je profite de cette occasion, Monsieur le Ministre, pour vous dire qu'à tort ou à raison la poste autrichienne a la réputation d'être assez indiscreète. Dans ces conditions et vu les circonstances présentes, vous voudrez bien m'excuser s'il m'arrive parfois de ne pas vous écrire aussi ouvertement que je le voudrais.

Comte ERREMBULT DE DUDZEELE.

Arising out of this report, the following points are to be noted :

1. The situation was almost desperate. It was only by a last attempt on the part of Schébéko, the Russian Ambassador in Vienna, that the immediate danger of war had been removed. In spite of mobilisation having taken place on both sides, the conversation between Count Berchtold and the Russian Ambassador has passed off in an entirely friendly manner. The French and English Ambassadors in Vienna have heartily congratulated their Russian colleague on his success.

2. "I am astonished to see the *insouciance* and also the egotism with which they have here plunged into an adventure which might have the most fearful consequences for the whole of Europe."

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Petrograd report of July 31st, 1914 (No. 17). This report is signed by the Belgian Ambassador in Petrograd, Count Buisseret-Steenbecque de Blarenghien. It is for this reason of special interest, inasmuch as it immediately follows the report of July 30th from B. de l'Escaille, the Belgian Chargé d'Affaires in Petrograd, the document intercepted in Berlin. The Belgian Ambassador, as he himself states in his report, had returned to Petrograd on the morning of July 31st, and he now describes the diplomatic situation as he found it in the Russian capital. In his account he deviates on essential points from the report of his representative written the preceding day :

No. 17.

*Le Ministre du Roi à Saint-Pétersbourg à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères,*

Saint-Pétersbourg, le 31 juillet 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

En arrivant ce matin à Saint-Pétersbourg, je suis allé voir l'Ambassadeur de France ; M. Paléologue m'a dit ce qui suit :

“ La mobilisation est générale. En ce qui concerne la France, elle ne m'a pas encore été notifiée, mais on ne peut en douter. M. Sazonow négocie encore. Il fait les efforts les plus extrêmes pour éviter la guerre et s'est montré disposé à toutes les concessions. L'Ambassadeur d'Allemagne, lui aussi, a travaillé de toutes ses forces, à titre personnel, dans le sens de la paix. Le Comte de Pourtalès est allé trouver M. Sazonow et l'a supplié d'influer sur l'Autriche. Le Ministre Impérial des Affaires Etrangères lui a répondu à plusieurs reprises : ‘ Donnez-moi un moyen : faites-moi dire un mot conciliant quelconque qui me permette d'engager la conversation avec Vienne. Dites à votre alliée de faire une concession minime, de retirer seulement les points de l'ultimatum qu'aucun pays ne saurait accepter. ’ L'Ambassadeur d'Allemagne a toujours répliqué que son pays ne pouvait plus donner de conseils de modération à l'Autriche. Il est probable qu'à Vienne on n'admet pas que l'Empire Germanique ne prête pas à son alliée un appui inconditionnel.

“ A plusieurs reprises, ” a continué M. Paléologue, “ le Ministre Impérial des Affaires Etrangères a demandé au Comte de Pourtalès : Avez-vous quelque chose à me dire de la part de votre Gouvernement ? L'Ambassadeur allemand a dû répondre chaque fois négativement, insistant derechef pour que l'initiative vienne de Saint-Pétersbourg. Finalement, M. Sazonow a demandé à parler à l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche et lui a dit qu'il acceptait tout : soit la conférence des ambassadeurs à Londres, soit la conversation ‘ à quatre ’ en s'engageant à n'y pas intervenir et en promettant de se rallier à l'opinion des autres Puissances. Rien n'y a fait, Vienne a constamment refusé de causer ; l'Autriche a mobilisé huit corps d'armée : elle a bombardé Belgrade. L'Italie paraît devoir réserver son attitude.

“ La presse patriotique russe et l'élément militaire observent l'un et l'autre un calme remarquable. Il ne semble pas que ce soit la pression sur l'Empereur de son entourage militaire qui ait décidé l'attitude du Gouvernement russe. On fait confiance à M. Sazonow. C'est l'attitude extraordinaire de l'Allemagne qui empêche les efforts de M. Sazonow d'aboutir. ”

Je viens de causer également avec l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre. Il me dit que M. Sazonow avait tenté dès le début de connaître les intentions du Gouvernement de Londres ; mais, jusqu'ici et malgré la mobilisation de la flotte anglaise, Sir George Buchanan n'a encore été chargé d'aucune communication de ce genre pour le Pont des Chantres. Les instructions de l'Ambassadeur sont d'expliquer à

Pétersbourg que si la Russie désire l'appui de la Grande-Bretagne, elle doit éviter soigneusement même l'apparence d'être agressive dans la crise actuelle.

Ce n'est un secret pour personne que les moyens de mobilisation de la Russie sont beaucoup plus lents que ceux de l'Autriche. On cite la Bukovine comme le point par lequel l'armée russe pourrait tenter de pénétrer sur le territoire autrichien.

Comte C. DE BUISSET-STEENBECQUE DE BLARENTHIEN.

Arising out of this report, the following points are to be noted :—

1. The Belgian Ambassador narrates in detail what Paléologue, the French Ambassador, had informed him : "Sazonof is still negotiating, he is making the utmost efforts to avoid war, and is showing himself prepared for all concessions." So far as his personal efforts are concerned, the German Ambassador also has worked in the sense of peace. Unfortunately, in reply to Sazonof's urgent and frequently repeated requests that Austria should make merely the smallest concession, that she should merely delete from her Ultimatum the points which no country could accept, he has constantly replied that Germany could not give any more advice in Vienna in the direction of moderation. Probably in Vienna—such is the view of the French Ambassador—what is demanded is the unconditional support of her ally.

2. Count Pourtalès has given a negative answer to the repeated inquiry of Sazonof whether he had any communication to make to him in the name of the German Government. Finally, Sazonof turned to the Austrian Ambassador and said to him that he accepted anything, whether it was a Conference of Ambassadors in London, or whether it was merely a *conversation à quatre* ; he pledged himself not to intervene and to submit to the opinion of the other Powers. It was all in vain. Vienna refused all discussion, and instead of this she declared war and bombarded Belgrade.

3. The patriotic Press and the military element in Russia are maintaining a remarkable composure ; it does not appear that the military environment of the Tsar had by any pressure influenced the attitude of the Russian Government. Confidence is felt in Sazonof. It is only the extra-

ordinary attitude of Germany which prevents the efforts of Sazonof from succeeding.

4. Until now Sazonof has been endeavouring in vain to learn the intentions of the London Cabinet. The instructions of the English Ambassador are to state to the Russian Government that if Russia desires the support of Great Britain she must with the utmost care avoid even the appearance of being aggressive in the present crisis.

This report of Count Buisseret, the Belgian Ambassador, completely disowns that of the Belgian Chargé d'Affaires of the previous day. The Ambassador, in fact, is better informed regarding the diplomatic situation than his temporary representative. The alleged assurance of English support which is supposed to have encouraged Russia to embark on aggressive action—such is the thesis which the German Government infers from the report of the Chargé d'Affaires of July 30th—this alleged assurance is not only disowned by the Ambassador's report of July 31st, but is transformed into something which is directly the reverse: if Russia wants to have England's support, she must not even assume so much as the appearance of aggressive action. The report of M. de l'Escaille is in itself a document of very doubtful value regarded as evidence. Anyone who has studied the diplomatic events of these critical days by reference to the documents feels the report of July 30th to be a clumsy, stuttering piece of guesswork on the part of a subordinate diplomatic official, who is badly informed and confused in his vision, and who, in order to be unjust to no one, eagerly blames everybody more or less at the same time. I have shown in detail in *J'accuse* (p. 255) the inconsistency between this report and the situation on July 30th as established by reference to the documents. Now we find that the subordinate is disowned, point by point, by his superior officer on the very next day. I imagine that this is sufficient to dispose finally of this evidence which is alleged to speak in favour of the exoneration of the German Government.

I am sorry for Herr Helfferich and his friends, who in this way lose an important witness for the Crown. Herr

Helfferich attaches so much value to the letter of the Belgian Chargé d'Affaires, that he further makes it serve his ends by a false translation of a decisive sentence. De l'Escaille writes: "Aujourd'hui on est fermement convaincu à St. Pétersbourg, on en a même l'assurance que l'Angleterre *soutiendra* la France." Helfferich translates the last words thus: that England will "go with her on the side of France" (auf der Seite Frankreichs mitgehen wird). Correctly translated, it is said that England will uphold, support, maintain, defend France. In Molé's Lexicon "defend" (verteidigen) is also expressly given as the meaning of "soutenir." The Belgian Chargé d'Affaires thus speaks merely of a defensive support of France by England, while the German Secretary of State transforms it into an aggressive "taking of sides" with France. The difference is obvious and important. Now, however, the whole evidence comprised in the report of the Chargé d'Affaires of July 30th collapses, in consequence of the report of the Belgian Ambassador of July 31st.

Arising out of the Viennese report of July 31st (No. 19), the fact, already well known, may be noted that neither Austria nor Russia regarded mobilisation on both sides as aggressive actions against each other or as a *casus belli*. Count Berchtold as well as his Under-Secretary, Count Forgach, stated to M. Schébéko, the Russian Ambassador, that Austria's general mobilisation of July 31st was not intended to represent any hostile action against Russia, and the Russian statesmen had also made similar declarations to the Austrians.

AFTER THE GERMAN ULTIMATA.

Berlin report of August 1st, 1914 (No. 20).

No. 20.

*Le Ministre du Roi à Berlin à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.*

Berlin, 1^{er} août 1914.

Monsieur le Ministre,

Je profite d'une occasion sûre pour vous écrire et vous donner quelques renseignements confidentiels sur les derniers événements.

A 6 heures du soir, aucune réponse n'était encore arrivée ici de Saint-Pétersbourg, à l'ultimatum du Gouvernement Impérial, M. de Jagow et M. Zimmermann se sont rendus alors chez le Chancelier et chez l'Empereur, afin d'obtenir que l'ordre de mobilisation générale ne fût pas donné aujourd'hui. Mais ils ont dû se heurter à l'*opposition irréductible du Ministre de la Guerre et des chefs de l'armée* qui auront représenté à l'Empereur les conséquences funestes d'un retard de 24 heures. L'ordre a été lancé immédiatement et porté à la connaissance du public par une édition spéciale du *Lokal Anzeiger*. Je vous l'ai télégraphié tout aussitôt.

Les journaux officieux et semi-officieux, les petits discours tenus par l'Empereur et par le Chancelier et toutes les proclamations officielles qui vont paraître chercheront à rejeter la responsabilité de la guerre sur la Russie. On ne veut pas douter encore dans les sphères dirigeantes de la bonne foi du Souverain ; mais on dit qu'il a été *convenu et amené sagement à croire qu'il avait fait le nécessaire pour le maintien de la paix*, tandis que la Russie voulait absolument la guerre.

Je vous ai écrit que l'Ambassadeur du Czar n'avait pas reçu de confirmation officielle de la mobilisation générale russe. Il l'a apprise par M. de Jagow, hier à une heure, mais ne voyant pas venir de télégramme lui communiquant la nouvelle, il l'a mise formellement en doute. M. de Pourtalès a-t-il pris pour une mobilisation totale ce qui n'était que des préparatifs de guerre ou bien cette erreur a-t-elle été commise volontairement à Berlin ? On se perd en suppositions.

Il était impossible que la Russie acceptât l'ultimatum allemand avec le *délaï trop court, presque injurieux*, qu'il comportait et l'obligation de démobiliser, c'est-à-dire de cesser tous préparatifs de guerre aussi bien sur la frontière autrichienne que sur la frontière allemande, alors que l'Autriche avait mobilisé la moitié de ses forces. Quant au Gouvernement de la République, il avait l'intention de ne faire aucune réponse à l'Allemagne, ne devant rendre compte de sa conduite qu'à ses alliés, m'a dit l'Ambassadeur de France.

Avec un peu de bonne volonté du côté de Berlin, la paix pouvait être conservée et l'irréparable empêché. Avant-hier, l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche à Saint-Pétersbourg déclarait à M. Sazonow que son Gouvernement admettait de discuter avec lui le fond de sa note à la Serbie, qu'il prenait l'engagement de respecter l'intégrité territoriale de son adversaire, qu'il n'ambitionnait même pas de reprendre le Sandjak, mais qu'il n'admettrait pas seulement qu'une autre puissance se substituât à lui vis-à-vis de la Serbie. M. Sazonow répondait que sur cette base il était possible de s'entendre, mais qu'il préférerait que les négociations fussent conduites à Londres, sous la direction impartiale du Gouvernement britannique, plutôt qu'à Saint-Pétersbourg ou à Vienne. En même temps, le Czar et l'Empereur d'Allemagne échangeaient des télégrammes amicaux. *Le Gouvernement allemand semble avoir machiné ce scénario pour aboutir à la guerre qu'il veut rendre inévitable, mais dont il cherche à rejeter la responsabilité sur la Russie.*

Baron BEYENS.

Arising out of this report, the following interesting facts are to be noted :

1. After the expiration of the time-limit specified in the Ultimatum addressed to Russia—on the afternoon of August 1st—a struggle arose in the entourage of the Emperor between his civil and his military advisers. The civil government wished a postponement of the general mobilisation; the War Minister and the army chiefs, however, insisted on immediate mobilisation, since a postponement, even if for twenty-four hours only, might have fatal consequences. They succeeded in imposing their will upon the Emperor.

2. All official and semi-official utterances, including the personal addresses of the Emperor and the Chancellor to the people, seek to transfer the responsibility for the war to Russia. The Emperor personally has, it is said, been circumvented and cunningly persuaded to believe that he has done everything necessary for the maintenance of peace, but that Russia absolutely wanted war.

3. The acceptance of the Ultimatum with the short, almost insulting, time-limit and with the summons to demobilise against Austria as well, although this latter country had herself mobilised, was impossible. "With the least trace of good-will on the part of Berlin, peace could have been preserved and the irreparable prevented." After the Austrian Government at the last hour had stated its readiness to discuss with the Petrograd Government the material substance of their Ultimatum (le fond de sa note à la Serbie), after Sazonof had accepted the discussion on this basis and had proposed its continuance in London "under the impartial leadership of the English Government," a peaceful understanding could easily have been reached, if Germany had desired such an understanding. "The German Government appears to have set this scenario in train, in order to arrive at the war which they wish to make inevitable, the responsibility of which, however, they desire to transfer to Russia."

It will be recalled that in *J'accuse* (p. 162) I considered that the contrasted action of the Berlin and the Viennese Governments from July 31st onwards permitted two possible explanations, although only one was probable. After many days of refusal, Vienna, on July 31st, expressed for the first time her readiness to enter real negotiations on the subject in dispute, and also to accept English "mediation." (Red Book, No. 50.) On the preceding day, July 30th, Count Berchtold was prepared to give to the Russian Government "explanations" and "subsequent elucidations" of his demands, but he was not prepared to "depart in any way" from the points contained in the note. (Red Book, No. 50.) The negotiations on the substantial points at issue thus finally contemplated by Vienna on July 31st were then frustrated by Berlin's action in putting forward the question of mobilisation, and by her Ultimata of the same day, and in this way Berlin made war inevitable. Did a conflict really exist between the two allies, or was their divergent action an agreed game with the parts assigned to the players? I decided for the latter alternative, and on this point the Belgian Ambassador in Berlin concurs in my view.

AFTER THE OUTBREAK OF THE EUROPEAN WAR.

From the Viennese report of August 2nd (No. 24) it is to be noted that the English Cabinet continued its efforts to arrive at an understanding until the last minute (après avoir continué jusqu'à la dernière minute ses tentatives de conciliation) and that England's further attitude will depend on the course of events.

Berlin report of August 5th (No. 25). According to the full account of the situation given by Baron Beyens on September 21st, 1914. Grey Book II, No. 51, the conversation between the Belgian Ambassador and Jagow, which in No. 25 is assigned to August 5th, appears to have taken place on Tuesday, August 4th, at 9 A.M.):

No. 25.

*Le Ministre du Roi à Berlin à M. Davignon,
Ministre des Affaires Etrangères. (Télégramme.)*

Berlin, le 5 août 1914.

J'ai été reçu ce matin à 9 heures par le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères. Il m'a dit : " Nous avons été obligés par nécessité absolue de faire à votre Gouvernement la demande que vous savez. C'est pour l'Allemagne une question de vie ou de mort. Pour n'être pas écrasée, elle doit écraser d'abord la France et se tourner ensuite contre la Russie. *Nous avons appris que l'armée française se préparait à passer par la Belgique pour attaquer notre flanc.* Nous devons la prévenir. Si l'armée belge ne fait pas sauter les ponts, nous laissons occuper Liège et se retire sous Anvers, nous promettons, non seulement de respecter l'indépendance belge, la vie et les propriétés des habitants, mais encore de vous indemniser. C'est la mort dans l'âme que l'Empereur et le Gouvernement ont dû se résoudre à cette détermination. Pour moi, c'est la plus pénible que j'ai eu à prendre de toute ma carrière."

J'ai répondu que le Gouvernement belge ne pouvait faire à cette proposition que la réponse qu'il avait faite sans hésiter. Que diriez-vous de nous, si nous cédions à une pareille menace de la France ? Que nous sommes des lâches incapables de défendre notre neutralité et de vivre indépendants. La Belgique entière approuvera son Gouvernement. *La France, contrairement à ce que vous dites, a promis de respecter notre neutralité, si vous la respectez.*

Pour reconnaître notre loyauté, vous faites de la Belgique le champ de bataille entre la France et vous. *L'Europe vous jugera et vous aurez contre vous l'Angleterre, garante de notre neutralité.* Liège n'est pas aussi facile à enlever que vous le croyez.

Le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, pressé par moi, a avoué que nous ne pouvions pas répondre à la demande allemande autrement que nous l'avons fait et qu'il comprenait notre réponse. Il a répété à plusieurs reprises son chagrin d'en être arrivé là. C'est, dit-il, une question de vie ou de mort pour l'Allemagne.

J'ai répondu qu'un peuple, comme un individu, ne peut vivre sans honneur. J'ai ensuite déclaré être prêt à quitter Berlin avec mon personnel.

M. de Jagow m'a répondu qu'il ne voulait pas rompre les relations diplomatiques avec nous.

J'ai dit : c'est donc à mon Gouvernement à prendre une décision et j'attends ses ordres pour vous réclamer mes passeports.

Baron BEYENS.

Arising out of this report, the following is to be noted :

Baron Beyens emphatically repudiates the assertion of Herr von Jagow that France was on the point of marching

through Belgium and of attacking Germany, if Germany had not anticipated this attack. On the contrary, France had promised to respect Belgian neutrality. "Europe will pass judgment on Germany and you will also have against you England as a guarantor of our neutrality." . . . Jagow himself admitted in this interview that he understood the answer of Belgium, which could not have been different.

* * * * *

From the London report of August 5th (No. 26) it appears that even on that day—after England's declaration of war against Germany—there still existed no definite views or agreements regarding the nature and the extent of England's military co-operation on the Continent. At the French Embassy in London the possibility that the English army might not co-operate on the Continent (*la non-coopération de l'armée anglaise*) was still being considered. It was only the appeal of the Belgian Government on August 5th for the military assistance of the three guaranteeing Powers that led to a definite promise of military assistance by land (No. 27).

All this contradicts in the most striking manner the aggressive conspiracy, asserted by Germany to have existed, in which Belgium is said to have been a conscious participator.

The London report of August 7th, 1914 (No. 29), in connection with Asquith's speech in the House of Commons on August 6th, expresses itself in a crushing manner regarding the "infamous proposal" which Germany had made to the English Government to the disadvantage and behind the back of Belgium. The moment the neutrality of Belgium had been violated the friends of peace in England were beaten. Even the most pacific Englishman had felt it to be his bounden duty to support the small and hapless nation which was fighting for its honour and independence. The original intention of the English Government, to offer assistance only by sea, had been repressed by public opinion, which demanded the dispatch of a land army to the Continent. The whole of England was enthusiastic for Belgium, for its King and its

people. "If King Albert appeared in London he would be borne in triumph through the streets."

The Paris report of August 8th (No. 30) makes it clear that only now were the advanced post of the French army on Belgian soil, and that not until four days had elapsed would the bulk of the French army be by the side of that of Belgium. The English also needed about four days more to be on the spot. All this is plain proof of the fact that while the German attack on Belgium had been most carefully prepared, the defence of the hapless country by the Entente Powers had only been provided for in the most defective manner. And these same Entente Powers, whose troops were not even in Belgium four days after the German invasion, are supposed long years before to have devised an Anglo-Franco-Belgian aggressive conspiracy against Germany!

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In two reports dated from England on September 21st and September 22nd, 1914 (Nos. 51 and 52), Beyens gives an interesting retrospect of the last events in which he took part before his departure from Berlin. Arising out of these reports, the following is to be noted :

In the conversation which Beyens had with Herr von Jagow on the morning of August 4th—after the entrance of German troops into Belgium—the latter repeated the familiar and purely military grounds which made the passage through Belgium "a question of life or death" for Germany. France had to be crushed as quickly as possible so that the German armies could then be turned against Russia. The Franco-German frontier was too strongly fortified to permit of its penetration; there was no other course left for the German armies but to strike through Belgium at the heart of France before Russia had completed her mobilisation.

It will be observed that here again Jagow spoke like a general and not like a statesman. Such language and such reasoning in the mouths of responsible statesmen, when responsible acts of State are in question, furnish one of the characteristic marks of Prussian-German militarism which

it is rightly proposed to curb and render innocuous for the future.

At the same time Jagow could not refrain from testifying in honour of the Belgians: "Germany has no reproach to make against Belgium, whose attitude has always been perfectly correct" (l'Allemagne n'a aucun reproche à adresser à la Belgique, dont l'attitude a toujours été très correcte). "So much the worse," retorted the Belgian diplomatist, "that in return for our loyalty you propose to make use of our country as a battlefield for your quarrel with France, as a battlefield for Europe. We know what devastation and ruin a modern war brings with it. Have you thought well of that?"

The most interesting point in the report of September 22nd (No. 52) is the conversation which Beyens had on August 5th, shortly before his departure, with Zimmermann, the Foreign Under-Secretary. This conversation among other topics touches on the important question of principle involved in "the policy of alliances which has led to this result" (the European war), and from this point of view deserves special treatment, which I have given to it elsewhere.¹ Further, on this occasion Herr Zimmermann, like his chief, Jagow, on the preceding day,—though certainly without meaning to do so—characterised Prussian militarism in a way which reveals in an appalling light the enormous dangers it involves, and its fatal power at the decisive moment. The following are the relevant passages of the report:

No. 52.

Hove (Sussex), le 22 septembre 1914.

... M. Zimmermann a répondu seulement que le Département des Affaires Etrangères était impuissant. Depuis que l'ordre de mobilisation avait été lancé par l'Empereur, tous les pouvoirs appartiennent à l'autorité militaire. C'était elle qui avait jugé que l'invasion de la Belgique était une opération de guerre indispensable. J'espère bien, a-t-il ajouté encore avec force, que cette guerre sera la dernière. Elle doit marquer aussi la fin de la politique des alliances qui a abouti à ce résultat.

¹ See my essay "League of Nations or Alliance of Nations" in the *Freie Zeitung* (Bern) of May 25th, 1918.

J'ai conservé de cet entretien l'impression que M. Zimmermann m'avait parlé avec sa sincérité habituelle, que le *Département des Affaires Étrangères*, dès l'ouverture du conflit austro-serbe, avait été partisan d'une solution pacifique et qu'il n'avait pas dépendu de lui que ses vues et ses conseils n'eussent pas prévalu. Je crois même aujourd'hui, contrairement à ce que je vous ai écrit dans le premier moment, que MM. de Jagow et Zimmermann disaient la vérité quand ils nous assuraient à mes collègues et à moi qu'ils n'avaient pas connu à l'avance le texte même de l'ultimatum adressé par l'Autriche-Hongrie à la Serbie. *Un pouvoir supérieur est intervenu pour précipiter la marche des événements.* C'est l'ultimatum de l'Allemagne à la Russie envoyé à Saint-Pétersbourg, au moment même où le Cabinet de Vienne montrait des dispositions plus conciliantes, qui a déchaîné la guerre. Quant à l'espoir exprimé par M. Zimmermann que cette guerre serait la dernière, il faut l'entendre dans le sens d'une *campagne victorieuse par l'Allemagne*. Le Sous-Secrétaire d'Etat, malgré la crainte visible que lui inspirait la coalition des ennemis de son pays, est trop Prussien pour avoir douté à ce moment-là de la victoire finale. . . .

What is here advanced in exoneration of the civil government is at the same time the gravest accusation against the military government. The confidant of the Chancellor and of the Foreign Secretary says in so many words that the civil government had sought for a peaceful solution of the conflict. However—such is the Belgian Ambassador's interpretation of Zimmermann's further utterances—"a higher power had intervened to precipitate the course of events. Germany's Ultimatum to Russia, dispatched to Petrograd at the very moment when the Viennese Government showed signs of a more conciliatory disposition, unchained the war." This train of thought in the Under-Secretary Zimmermann, which was left with Beyens as the "impression" derived from the conversation, agrees almost exactly with the account which I gave and supported in *J'accuse* as the expression of my personal views regarding the course of events. The civil powers still hesitated before the last decisive step. The military power threw its sword in the scale; by the arts of persuasion and surprise and by every kind of pressure and threats it drew the Emperor within its power; it urged him to the Ultimatum to Russia, and then, passing beyond the threat contained in the Ultimatum, forced him to the declaration of war. In the decisive hours militarism gained the victory. The military government was the originator and instigator

of the disaster ; the civil government was the guilty executive organ.

From the report of the Belgian Ambassador in Constantinople, dated October 31st, 1914 (No. 60), telling of the outbreak of war between Turkey and the Entente Powers, the following sentence is to be noted :—

The (Turkish) Press has received an Order to publish a *communiqué*, as a result of which the public are to be induced to believe that Russia began hostilities. This manœuvre has been dictated by Germany, and recalls the similar manœuvre applied on an early occasion by which an attempt was made to make France responsible for the violation of Belgian neutrality.

PRUSSIAN-GERMAN WAR LAW.

In this work I intentionally pass over the long explanations in the Belgian Grey Books which are occupied with the German accusations according to which the Belgian population, by a *franc-tireur* war waged in violation of international law, occasioned the incredible atrocities and barbarities inflicted on the civil population of a neutral country. The investigation of these questions forms a subject apart, in no way closely connected with the subject which I have discussed, viz. : “ Who is responsible for the European War ? ” The Belgian Government has published a copious, officially documented collection of papers on these matters. Apart from earlier publications, they have in the last place published a third Grey Book of 500 large pages which, relying throughout on official records, gives an unspeakably appalling picture of the wholesale murder of thousands of Belgian civilians, men, women and children. It is sufficient to read the lists of places, divided into provinces, in which civilians were murdered and the number of victims noted in each place in order to form some idea of the frenzied rage of the Germans in this neutral country which, on Jagow’s testimony, had always observed a correct attitude towards Germany. In each of the places in question all the massacred inhabitants are given with their names, rank, residence and age. In Dinant this list of names comprises no fewer than 606

persons (of whom 11 are under 5 years and 30 are over 70 years of age)—in all 535 men and 71 women. In Louvain and some smaller places there are 210 civilians mentioned by name as having been killed, including 186 men and 26 women, among these 3 children under 5 years of age, 7 men over 70, and 4 over 80. In Andenne over 100, in Aerschot 155, in Hadelin 61, in Tamines 336 civilians were killed. In my book I have already referred to Cardinal Mercier's pastoral letter dated Christmas, 1914, which cites 13 priests as having been killed in the diocese of Malines alone, and no fewer than 30 in the dioceses of Namur, Tournai, and Liège, all of whom Mercier mentions by name.

As I have said, I do not propose to enter more fully within the scope of my work into this subject of German barbarities in Belgium, and reserve for a later occasion a final investigation of this question. One point, however, I will emphasise: The barbarities committed by the German troops are in general in no way denied by the German Government; they are, on the contrary, explained and justified by reference to alleged *franc-tireur* acts on the part of the Belgian population. Should individual acts of this nature have taken place, the fact would be only too easily explicable, when we consider the plight of the unfortunate population who were suddenly confronted with the invading hordes, the devastation of their fields and woods, the destruction of their towns, the ruin of their peaceful country. Instead of understanding the state of mind and the spirit of the population who were unexpectedly attacked and innocently exposed to all the horrors of war, and instead of acting accordingly, the German army followed the rigid Prussian principle of war: If civilians offer resistance to armed force or injure it in any other way, the principle that every man can be made responsible only for his own actions, which is otherwise generally valid, at once ceases to have any force. There thus appears the monstrosity of collective responsibility according to which every individual has also to answer for the actions of all others. The lives of thousands of unhappy inhabitants of Belgium have been sacrificed to this monstrous theory of punishment and deterring,

a theory dating from the times of darkest barbarism, which appears to the conscience of the present-day civilised world as monstrous as the slaughter or the enslavement of conquered nations in antiquity. It is in contradiction not merely to the modern consciousness of right, but also to the positive prescriptions of modern international law.

Article 50 of the Hague Convention of October 18th, 1907, on the Laws and Customs of War by land, prescribes :

“No general penalty, pecuniary or otherwise, can be inflicted on the population on account of the acts of individuals, for which it cannot be regarded as collectively responsible.”

Article 46 provides :

“Family honour and rights, individual lives and private property, as well as religious convictions and liberty must be respected. Private property cannot be confiscated.”

An exception to the international provision which has prevailed for centuries, that war is waged not against the civil population in the enemy country, but only against the enemy armies, only arises when the country attacked is actually occupied, “when it is actually placed under the authority of the hostile army. The occupation applies only to the territory where such authority is established and in a position to assert itself” (Art. 42).

If the attacked country or the part of the country in question is not yet occupied, if it has not yet “actually passed into the hands of the occupant” (Art. 43), the population which “on the enemy’s approach, spontaneously take up arms to resist the invading troops” are to be regarded as belligerents,—it being pre-supposed merely that they carry arms openly and observe the laws and customs of war (Art. 2.)

From these provisions it follows that even if the Belgian population had at times seized arms against the invading Germans, their action, according to international law, would have been the legitimate defence of their native soil, and the defenders should have been treated as a belligerent

party, in the same way as enemy soldiers. The wholesale murder of men, women and children, of the grey-headed and of babies at the breast, would still have been murder in violation of international law, even if all those who had been slaughtered had been convicted of bearing arms against the invading enemy. What judgment is to be passed on the deeds of the German army in view of the fact that these deeds, openly and without shame, are justified merely by the shortcomings of individuals alleged to be guilty?

There are in existence a great number of orders and instructions from the higher command of the army which give expression to the principle of collective punishment as if it were something which is entirely a matter of course. As one example among many, I will merely print one proclamation of the Army Commander von Bülow, dated August 22nd, 1914, which I have before me in the French text only. The proclamation was affixed in Liège on the day mentioned :

Armee-Oberkommando
Abteilung II b. N° 150.

Le 22 août 1914.

*Aux Autorités communales
de la
Ville de Liège.*

Les habitants de la ville d'Andenne, après avoir protesté de leurs intentions pacifiques, ont fait une surprise traître sur nos troupes. C'est avec mon consentement que le Général en chef a fait brûler toute la localité et que cent personnes environ ont été fusillées.

Je porte ce fait à la connaissance de la Ville de Liège pour que les Liégeois se représentent le sort dont ils sont menacés, s'ils prenaient pareille attitude.

Ensuite, il a été trouvé dans un magasin d'armes à Huy des projectiles "dum-dum" dans le genre du spécimen joint à la présente lettre. Au cas que cela arrivât, on demandera rigoureusement compte chaque fois des personnes en question.

Le Général-Commandant en chef
VON BÜLOW.

Here we have the principle of collective punishment in its utter nakedness: Because inhabitants of the town are *alleged* to have made a treacherous attack on German troops, the whole town was burned down and "about" 100

persons shot (the German authorities did not, as a rule, enter upon the real, authentic determination of the facts). This is entirely in agreement with the German "Customs of War by Land," which hold as an instruction to be followed in military practice, but it is in contradiction with the simplest commands of humanity and justice and with the provisions of the Hague Convention which were signed by Germany herself.

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The three Belgian Grey Books, the above-mentioned work of Davignon, the books of Waxweiler and many other publications contain a wealth of evidence in support of the fact that the Belgian Government from the 4th of August onwards issued the strictest and most detailed instructions to the population of the country to refrain under severe penalties from any struggle, any provocation, any open meeting, any bearing of arms. The Belgian Minister of the Interior, Berryer, on August 4th, 1914, issued a circular instruction to all the governmental and communal authorities of the kingdom, which was publicly affixed in 2,700 communes and published every morning in large type on the first page of all the Belgian papers. This instruction warns the population against any hostile or provocative action towards the invading German troops, with detailed information as to what the population had to do, and what they had to omit, and with a grave reference to the serious consequences which the actions of individuals might bring upon all their fellow-citizens.

These ministerial instructions were further amplified by special instructions from the Burgomasters in the individual communities. In particular Max, the Burgomaster of Brussels,—who, as is known, has been in a German prison for years—summoned the population to surrender any arms in their hands at the police station and obtain a receipt in return—a summons which was also issued by all the other communal authorities. (See Grey Book II, No. 71, with enclosures.)

It was this very measure of precaution which gave rise to the charge preferred by the German Government that the

Belgian Government, long before the German invasion, had organised a general conflict on the part of the civil population against the invading enemy, and that wholesale depots had been found where every rifle bore the name of the possessor for whom it was intended. This refers to the private arms collected by the authorities which the individual owners had given up in exchange for a receipt, and which were designated with the name of the owners so that they might at a later date be properly restored.

It will be seen to what absurd inventions the German Government was forced in order to surround the unspeakable horrors of the German troops towards the Belgian civil population with a certain appearance of justification. The very designation of the weapons with the names of the owners proves that they were intended for *non-use* and not for use. Or is it by any chance customary in arsenals to attach to arms in advance the names of the soldiers who are to bear them in battle? In spite of this absurdity, this accusation appeared to the German Government sufficiently credible to cause it to be incorporated by the German Emperor in his telegram to President Wilson.¹ In addressing the President of the United States, the Emperor William also accuses the Belgian Government "of having openly incited the whole population to armed resistance, which had been prepared long in advance and in which even women and priests took part." All this is exactly the reverse of the truth: the official proclamations and instructions of the Belgian Government, the local authorities and the heads of the communes, which are printed in the three Belgian Grey Books and in the works of Waxweiler and Davignon, prove that a civil population was never more energetically and effectively restrained from resistance to an invading conqueror (so natural and in itself so humanly comprehensible) than was the Belgian population by the Belgian authorities.

The alleged atrocities committed by Belgian civilians towards wounded Germans, the gouged-out eyes, the dismembered members, etc., which the German Press of incitement paraded for months, have also remained legends for

¹ Printed, in part, in Davignon's *exposé* to his foreign missions of December 30th, 1914 (Grey Book II, No. 71).

which not the slightest proof has ever at any time been produced. Even official Commissions appointed in Germany to investigate such cases have been unable to find any evidence that the eyes of wounded Germans or prisoners in Belgium were gouged out even in a single case. In many hospitals unfortunate soldiers were found who had lost their eyesight in battle—in a single hospital at Frankfort-on-the-Main there were no fewer than twenty-nine blinded—but not one of these was the victim of subsequent mutilation. All had lost their sight as a result of gunshot wounds. (Grey Book II, No. 107.)

To illustrate by one example how far belief can be given to such an accusation against the Belgian population, the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* and *Vorwärts* made special inquiry into this very matter of the gouged-out eyes. In the case of both papers the result was equally negative. The semi-official *Kölnische Zeitung*, relying on the alleged report of a doctor, had put forward the assertion that unfortunate men whose eyes had been gouged out were to be found, more especially in the hospitals of Aix-la-Chapelle, as also a nurse whose breasts had been cut off. Kaufmann, a German ecclesiastic, thereupon made inquiries in all the thirty-five hospitals in Aix-la-Chapelle, and ascertained that not a single wounded man with his eyes gouged out, and no woman with her breasts cut off, was there or had ever been there. Kaufmann submitted the result of his inquiries in a letter to the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* dated from Aix-la-Chapelle, November 26th, 1914.

The inquiries of *Vorwärts* in the hospitals at Hanover and Berlin (Charité) led to the same negative result.¹

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As has already been observed, it would lead too far, and would lie outside the scope of this work, if I were to specify and investigate more fully all the accusations brought by Germany against the Belgian population, all the acts of plunder, arson and massacre which the German armies on their part committed in the hapless country. The German crimes are documentarily so clearly established that any doubt on the question can scarcely appear justified.

¹ See, for all the above, Grey Book II, No. 108, with enclosure,

They are attributable less to the excesses of individuals than to the special barbaric Prussian principle that the population must be intimidated by fear and terror and restrained in advance from any act of resistance; that the ruthless application of all means calculated to promote the security of the army is not only a right, but also a duty of every commander. In furtherance of this higher end, it is unnecessary to inquire who is guilty and who is innocent; the innocent must, in fact, pay the penalty along with the guilty—indeed, if necessary, instead of the guilty.

The Prussian-German law of war, as it is taught in the book of instructions, "Customs of War by Land," is, as a matter of course, entirely approved by the German teachers of international law and by the German intellectuals. In an article in the *Kölnische Zeitung* of February 10th, 1915, the well-known writer, Walter Bloem, expounds with true German professorial profundity and in an entirely naïve manner the psychological aims and effects of this military theory of deterring. In doing this he betrays not a trace of consciousness that he is thereby repudiating the fundamental principles of Christian morality and political justice, but that he is even outdoing Jehovah, the old God of Vengeance, who, indeed, demanded in expiation an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but not the eye and the tooth of the innocent in expiation of the crime of the guilty. According to Bloem, the innocent must suffer with the guilty, and indeed, if these latter cannot be discovered, instead of the guilty—not because a crime has been committed, but in order to prevent further crimes. It is the theory of the "warning-signal" which is so warmly defended by this German writer, in agreement with the whole of German war literature. The burning of Louvain, Dinant, Aerschot, Termonde, Battice, Andenne, etc., the massacres in these places, costing the lives of thousands of innocent people, are not for these men of feeling ends in themselves, they are not punishments for crimes which have been committed, but merely means to an end, namely, that of preventing further crimes. Brussels and Antwerp, Ghent and Ostend—so runs the argument—may well be thankful to those kind Germans for the barbarities which they committed in other towns in the first days of the

invasion. By these "warning-signals" the inhabitants of Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent and Ostend were guarded from any temptation to offer resistance, and thus their lives and property were saved.

That is the "theory of deterring" in an even crasser form than is to be found in the procedure of the criminal courts of the earliest Middle Age. It was only the severity of the punishment, the barbarity of the visitation, which would, on these mediæval views, restrain others from the commission of similar crimes. The presupposition of punishment was, however, in every case demonstrated guilt. No tribunal of the Inquisition, no torturing judge, has ever fallen upon the idea that the innocent must also be punished in order to prevent crimes in future. This theory of political punishment has been reserved for Prussian militarism and its intellectual abettors. This is the German "Kultur" with which it is proposed to bless the world.

FRANCE AND BELGIAN NEUTRALITY.

From the second Belgian Grey Book, No. 119, with its enclosure, still appears to me worthy of mention in concluding this investigation, which extends, as I have said, in its essence, not to the phenomena of the war, the individual actions of the belligerent parties, but to the origins and the authorship of the war. It contains a Note from Davignon, the Belgian Foreign Minister, addressed to his representatives abroad, directed against the German assertion that France, as was known from a sure source, was to march through Belgium along the Meuse by Givet and Namur in order to attack Germany from this side. This assertion, which was advanced in the German ultimatum of August 2nd, was repeated by the famous General von Bernhardt in the American paper *The Sun*, and was explained on military grounds. Davignon's Note of April 10th, 1915, is directed against this insinuation which is irreconcilably opposed to the formal statement of the French Government to the Belgian and English Governments (July 31st). In proof of the erroneousness of this German assertion the Belgian Minister produces an

official French communication regarding the concentration of French troops at the beginning of the war.

In this official statement of the French Government we read as follows :

ANNEXE AU N^o. 119.

La France et la neutralité de la Belgique.

LA RÉPONSE DE LA FRANCE AUX MENSONGES ALLEMANDS.

Dans un article publié par un journal américain, le général allemand von Bernhardt, revenant sur les origines de la guerre, prétend établir que la concentration française et la présence à notre aile gauche de nos forces principales démontrent la résolution arrêtée du Gouvernement français de violer, de concert avec la Grande-Bretagne, la neutralité belge.

A cette allégation du général von Bernhardt, le plan de concentration français répond péremptoirement.

I.—*Notre plan de concentration.*

La totalité des forces françaises, en vertu du plan de concentration, étaient orientées, quand la guerre a été déclarée, face au nord-est, entre Belfort et la frontière belge, savoir :

1^o armée : entre Belfort et la ligne générale Mirecourt-Lunéville ;

2^o armée : entre cette ligne et la Moselle ;

3^o armée : entre la Moselle et la ligne Verdun-Audun-le-Roman ;

5^o armée : entre cette ligne et la frontière belge ;

La 4^o armée était en réserve à l'ouest de Commercy.

Par conséquent, *la totalité des armées françaises était orientée face à l'Allemagne, et rien que face à l'Allemagne. . . .*

II.

. . . S'il y avait eu de sa part préméditation, *ce brusque déplacement* de nos troupes n'aurait pas été nécessaire et nous aurions pu arriver à temps pour interdire à l'ennemi, en Belgique, le passage de la Meuse.

Un détail peut servir d'illustration à cette argumentation péremptoire : notre corps de couverture de gauche, le deuxième, c'est-à-dire celui d'Amiens, était, en vertu du plan de concentration, non point face à la frontière belge, mais dans la région de Montmédy-Longuyon.

III.—*La concentration de l'armée anglaise.*

Quant à l'armée anglaise, *son concours ne nous a été assuré qu'à la date du 5 août, c'est-à-dire après la violation de la frontière belge par les Allemands, accomplie le 3 août (Livre Jaune, page 151).*

La concentration de l'armée britannique s'est effectuée en arrière de Maubeuge, du 14 au 21 août.

IV.—*Ordres divers concernant les intentions du Gouvernement français.*

Le 30 juillet, le Gouvernement français, malgré les mesures militaires de l'Allemagne, donne l'ordre à nos troupes de couverture de se maintenir à 10 kilomètres de la frontière.

Le 2 août, une seconde instruction prescrit à nos troupes de laisser aux Allemands l'entière responsabilité des hostilités et de se borner à repousser toute troupe assaillante pénétrant en territoire français.

Le 3 août, un nouveau télégramme prescrit d'une façon absolue d'éviter tout incident sur la frontière franco-belge. *Les troupes françaises devront s'en tenir éloignées de 2 à 3 kilomètres.*

Le même jour, 3 août, un nouvel ordre confirme et précise les instructions du 2 août.

Le 4 août, un ordre du Ministre de la Guerre porte :

“ L'Allemagne va tenter par de fausses nouvelles de nous amener à violer la neutralité belge. *Il est interdit rigoureusement et d'une manière formelle, jusqu'à ce qu'un ordre contraire soit donné, de pénétrer, même par des patrouilles ou de simples cavaliers, sur le territoire belge, ainsi qu'aux aviateurs de survoler ce territoire.*”

Le 5 août seulement, à la demande du Gouvernement belge (formulée le 4), les avions et les dirigeables français sont autorisés à survoler le territoire belge et nos reconnaissances à y pénétrer.

Arising out of this statement, the following points are to be noted :

1. At the beginning of the war the whole of the French forces was concentrated exclusively between Belfort and the Belgian frontier, that is to say, on the French eastern frontier opposite Germany.

2. After the entry of the Germans into Belgium it was necessary to carry out a rapid displacement of a part of the French troops in a northern direction. The whole plan of concentration had to be modified with this end in view.

3. It was not until after the violation of Belgian neutrality that the French Government were assured of the military support of the English army, the concentration of which was completed behind Maubeuge in the period from August 14th to August 21st.

4. On July 30th the order was issued to the French troops on the frontier to keep at a distance of ten kilometres from the German frontier. On August 3rd a similar order

was issued to remain from two to three kilometres distant from the Belgian frontier. On August 4th the Minister for War issued the strictest injunction that Belgian territory should under no circumstances be entered upon or flown over, not even by patrols. The order was based on the assumption that Germany by the dissemination of false information desired to convict the French of having been the first to violate Belgian neutrality.

5. It was not until Wednesday, August 5th, after the formal request of the Belgian Government for military assistance, that French troops were given permission to enter on Belgian territory.

These military facts, the accuracy of which is certainly better known to no one than to the German General Staff, are in exact agreement with the diplomatic occurrences; their reliability is confirmed by the course of the war in the first weeks, by the complete surprise of the French northern army, which had been hastily brought together, and by the impetuously victorious German campaign until close beneath the walls of Paris. The military facts so ascertained are not without significance for the question of guilt. Had France wanted war and intentionally provoked it—as every quill-driver in Germany from the celebrated professor of history down to the most miserable journalistic hack now maintains—the French General Staff would certainly have made arrangements during the twelve critical days for the invasion of the German armies from Belgium, the systematic preparation for which was no secret to any military expert in Europe, and they would not have exposed themselves to this dangerous surprise. In Paris they neither wanted nor—till the last moment—considered this war possible. This explains the military negligence which is expressed in the disposition of the French troops.

CHAPTER III

BARON BEYENS' BOOK : "GERMANY BEFORE THE WAR "

FOR various reasons this book deserves special interest and detailed treatment : first, because it is written by the man who, as Greindl's successor, represented the Kingdom of Belgium in Berlin during the last two years before the outbreak of the war, and who is quoted in the German collection—with eleven reports—as a reliable and credible observer of European affairs ; secondly, because the contents of the book itself reveal to us not merely an intelligent, a highly cultured, and an elegant author, but above all a shrewd and keen observer of men, one with an accurate knowledge of the conditions and tendencies in Germany ; thirdly, because the book discusses, with a complete knowledge of the subject, the more remote as well as the more immediate antecedents of the war, and thus forms a valuable amplification of the documentary material published by the German Government, which breaks off on July 2nd, 1914.

From the side of Germany it may possibly be urged against the book written by Baron Beyens, who, as is known, was later the Belgian Premier, that it did not appear until after the outbreak of the war, in 1915, and that it has inevitably been prejudiced by the fate which the author's country met at the hands of Germany. This objection is not, however, tenable. Nowhere in the book are there to be found any statements which are in direct contradiction with Baron Beyens' reports from 1912-1914 which are printed by the Foreign Office. The Belgian diplomatist nowhere disowns in his book what he had said in his reports from Berlin, even if, as was natural after the

enormous crime of the intentional provocation of war by Germany had become manifest, he brands much more sharply the tendencies in the direction of war existing at the Imperial Court, in military circles and among the authoritative parties of Germany, than he had done at the time of his residence in Berlin, when, indeed, he had recognised the dangerousness of Prussian-German militarism and chauvinism, but had not considered it possible that this incitement to war could achieve any success with the peace-loving German people.

The attitude assumed by the Belgian Ambassador towards the question of the authorship of the war from the beginning of the conflict, indeed from the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, is already apparent from the last report of July 2nd published in the German collection, which I have discussed above in the first section. In the second section I have submitted to a detailed treatment Baron Beyens' later reports down to his departure from Berlin, so far as they are published in the Belgian Grey Books. Until the contrary is proved, it may be assumed that these subsequent reports were also found by the German authorities in Brussels. That these were not published along with the others is presumably merely due to the fact that the contents of these later reports, after July 2nd, must obviously have been in terms very unfavourable to Germany.

The German Government, the publisher of these tendenciously compiled documents, is thus in no way justified in reproaching Beyens' book with having been written at a later date in a spirit of prejudice. Since it must have knowledge of all its discoveries, including those documents which were not published, it will be an easy matter for it to ascertain that the Belgian diplomatist's book is merely a connected account of the thoughts and observations contained in his reports when taken in their entirety.

DECEPTIONS AND DISILLUSIONMENTS.

For the rest, in view of untenable objections of this nature, I should like once for all to make the following observations :

1. We are familiar with the fact that Baron Greindl, Beyens' predecessor, had in general expressed himself in favourable terms regarding German policy, and on the whole had regarded it as pacific. Let us assume that Greindl had not retired from office in the spring of 1912, but had experienced as Ambassador in Berlin the development of the Austro-Serbian conflict and its extension to a European war. Would he have maintained unaltered his favourable verdict on the German Emperor, the German Government, and the authoritative classes in Germany? I am convinced that he would have fundamentally revised this judgment, he would have said *Pater peccavi*, and, assuming that he was an honest man, he would have assigned the authorship of the war to the two Central Powers, exactly as was done by all his colleagues in all the European capitals.

2. This assumption regarding the attitude which it might have been foreseen would be assumed by a man even so philo-Germanic in sympathy as Greindl, when confronted with the brutal fact involved in the provocation of war, leads us to a general consideration which is applicable to all the Belgian ambassadorial reports. How often does it happen to each of us in life that we are surprised by the action of a man whom we would never have credited with anything similar! A merchant lives for years in the most intimate relations with an agent or a cashier, to whom he gives his completest confidence, and whom he would never have considered capable of a dishonourable act. Suddenly he discovers that the man, whose absolute fidelity and trustworthiness he had never doubted, has for years been deceiving, cheating and robbing him in the most shameful manner. A husband lives in long and undisturbed harmony with his wife, of whose fidelity he has never entertained the slightest doubt. Suddenly he discovers that she has had one lover after another and that she has shamefully gambled with his honour and her own. Life is full of such disillusionments. If it is possible in the closest and most intimate private intercourse so to conceal one's true character that the most familiar comrade in life or in the workshop has no idea of the double life of his fellow-

being, how much more easily is it possible to deceive other men regarding one's true aims and intentions in the field of diplomacy, where, as is known, language serves only to conceal thoughts!

This possibility of continued deception was present in a very special degree in Berlin. In one of the last conversations which King Leopold II had before his death with Baron Beyens he advised him if he should ever go to Berlin "to beware of German civilities" (*de me défier des amabilités allemandes*). In many places in his book Beyens sketches in eloquent words the fascinating qualities which the Emperor William showed in personal intercourse; his infectious amiability, his brilliant conversation which enabled him to appear in the light of a universal genius, at home in all subjects; his dramatic capacities which enabled him, according to his particular aims, to make his hearer believe what he wished him to believe; his expansive warmth when he desired to appear warm, his cutting coldness when he desired to be withering and menacing. The reader should refer to the account given by Beyens where he relates how the Emperor William, on the occasion of his visit to Brussels in October 1910, in the company of the Empress and of Princess Victoria Louise, gained the sympathies of all by the feelings of friendship, apparently springing from his heart, which he entertained for the Belgian Royal House and the Belgian people; how, apparently without any malicious *arrière pensée* he admired the beauty and the wealth of the Belgian capital, the magnitude of Belgian industry, the splendour of the country villas that fringed the roads; how he was touched by the sympathetic reception which the population accorded him. "Jovial, affable, enthusiastic in turn, and constantly breaking into his guttural laugh, he ran up and down the whole gamut of his nature. His hearers were spellbound. How could they have failed to be convinced that the great Emperor was a benevolent Titan?"

For thirty-two years the Emperor William had not seen Belgium; he could not express sufficient enthusiasm for the splendid and brilliant impression which this prosperous country made upon him. When from the balcony of the Hotel de Ville in Brussels—the building in which the

Burgomaster Max, who was imprisoned at the beginning of the war, resided—he looked down on the famous Grande Place with its artistic façades, and the crowd closely pressed together, he could not refrain from exclaiming to the Empress: “We did not expect anything so beautiful.” Baron Beyens adds to his graphic account of the Imperial visit the ironical observation that it was somewhat rash to parade all one’s wealth so trustfully to a foreign ruler who is the master of an army of five million soldiers.

The autumn visit of 1910 was a return of the visit paid to Potsdam by the Belgian King and Queen in the spring of the same year. As the Emperor was ill on this occasion, the Crown Prince read at the Court dinner the address of welcome, which specially referred to the fact that a German Princess was Queen of Belgium, and that in this way the bonds of relationship between the two royal families and the historical memories between the two countries were still further strengthened. In his reply to the toast King Albert praised the proved love of peace of the Emperor William, who devoted all his thoughts to the well-being of his subjects and to the peaceful development of Germany. It was in this seductive light of a peace-Emperor, a Titus or a Solomon, that the fascinating personality which adorned the German Imperial throne then appeared to the Belgian King and the Belgian people. Need it cause any surprise if the Emperor William also appeared as the guardian of the peace of Europe to the Belgium diplomatists in Berlin who were constantly exposed to this personal charm?

3. To this personal influence of the Emperor, who was on his guard against showing the change which had taken place in recent years in his mind, more particularly to the Belgians, whose benevolent neutrality he hoped to gain without fail in the event of a war—to this personal impression produced by the Emperor there was further added, as a reinforcing factor, the attitude of the various Chancellors and Foreign Secretaries who, as we know, were not from the beginning adherents of the war party, but were assiduous, whenever possible, to obtain by means of diplomatic negotiations the aims of further-

ance of power and of expansion which were present to their minds also. As I have elsewhere pointed out, Prince Bülow and Bethmann-Hollweg were in no way Pan-Germans. By their political actions, however, and even more by their omissions, they constantly brought grist to the mill of the Pan-German movement; by their policy of armaments they constantly rendered more acute the state of European tension; by their refusal of any international organisation they defeated the possibilities of a peaceful understanding; at times, when it suited their purpose in connection with their proposals as to armaments, they even instigated Pan-German chauvinism through their semi-official Press, and thus, without being direct inciters to war, they were yet the abettors of these inciters. Since, however, the accredited diplomatists in Berlin had in the nature of things to deal with the statesmen of the Wilhelmstrasse, but not with the war ministers and the chiefs of the General Staff, still less with the noisy company of the Pan-German League or with the editors of the Jingo Press, it need occasion no surprise that these diplomatists received from the utterances of the leading statesmen, as well as from the personal action of the Emperor, the deceptive impression that there was no reason to apprehend a danger of war from the side of Germany. This impression is the decisive note in Greindl's reports, while Beyens, who was gifted with keener and more penetrating vision, refers in the last two years before the war to many indications of the grave growth of chauvinism with its incitement to war, and of its increasing influence on German politics.

4. The credulous error of Belgian diplomatists regarding the fundamental tendency of German politics is all the more explicable, inasmuch as these observers could rightly confirm the existence of an absolute love of peace in the great mass of the German people, from high finance down to the simple labourer. The overwhelming majority of the German people itself had even in July 1914 no idea how far the peaceful soil of Germany had already been undermined by the war-intriguers; how the Emperor himself had already been won in principle to the idea of a

war by his military environment, by the war-party led by the Crown Prince, by the forces interested in a war, Junkerdom and Agrarianism, which more than any other circles possessed his ear; how it was merely a question of waiting for the most favourable moment in order to strike with the greatest assurance of success. Of all this the great mass of the German people had still no idea a few weeks before the war. It was only the wirepullers and the initiated who knew what was to come sooner or later. How is it to be expected that the Belgian diplomatists who learned only from hearsay all the important negotiations between the Great Powers, who had little opportunity or occasion to penetrate into the secret mine-passages at the Imperial Court, who believed in the obvious love of peace of the people in all its labouring classes, and in the love of peace which was *displayed* by the rulers, the Government and the Governmental Press—how is it to be expected that these Ambassadors should have been better informed regarding the flame of war which was glowing under the ashes of peace than the German people itself, whose life and well-being were involved in the question of war or peace?

It is not surprising that it was just the Belgian Ambassadors, whose favourable judgment must have been of special importance to the German despots on account of their selfish designs on this neutral country, who fell more easily than other diplomatists into the trap so cunningly set for them, and paid to the German Emperor as well as to the German Government honourable testimony which afterwards was so grimly disowned by the event. They were, in fact, deceived, or rather they allowed themselves to be deceived; and the acknowledgment that this is the case may detract from their reputation for astuteness, but not from their honesty. To-day, like the merchant who has been robbed by an agent of many years' service, they are no doubt exclaiming: "I would never have believed it of the man." Is the deceit itself cancelled by this acknowledgment of shortsightedness, of credulousness shown towards a deceiver? On the contrary, the deed remains as it was, but its monstrousness is further accentuated by the hypocrisy, by the prolonged viola-

tion of confidence with which it was prepared and executed.

5. In their Grey Books the Belgian Government have brought together a series of facts—and Beyens also goes into this point in his book—which show the deliberate denial of any evil intention existing in the governmental circles of Germany towards the neutral country. Prince Bülow, Bethmann Hollweg, Kiderlen, Jagow, Heeringen, Flotow, Below-Saleske—Chancellors, Secretaries of State, War Ministers, German Ambassadors in Brussels, have one and all constantly given solemn and sacred assurances that Germany had no thought of touching so much as a hair of their neutral neighbour. Indeed Herr von Below-Saleske went so far as to assure Davignon, the Belgian Minister, in the course of August 2nd, that Belgium could look with full confidence to her Eastern neighbour—on that same 2nd of August on which at 7 o'clock in the evening he delivered the monstrous Ultimatum to the Belgian Minister.¹ Up to the last moment the game was unscrupulously carried on in Berlin and Brussels with concealed cards, and now they seek to present to us, as witnesses of their innocence, these men who—less clearsighted than credulous—were the victims of their deceit!

The Belgian Grey Books I and II give us the unanimous and crushing verdict of guilt on those in power in Germany and Austria, written by those same Ambassadors who, before the last crisis, had in part paid to the German and Austrian statesmen a more favourable testimony, acting under the influence of explicable error and of comprehensible shortsightedness. Beyens' book adds a new and important corner-stone to the edifice of guilt. All these Belgian publications contain this silent acknowledgment: What we said in former times in favour of German and Austrian policy is now given the lie by the later actions of their statesmen. To-day we know what then we did not know, namely, that the true disturbers of the peace did not sit in Paris, in London, or in Petrograd, but were to be found in Vienna and Berlin.

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¹ See Grey Book I, Nos. 19, 20.

OPINIONS AND VIEWS IN GERMANY.

I now consider a few interesting points from Beyens' book :

The Belgian diplomatist analyses in an exhaustive manner the opinions and views of the various social and professional classes in Germany, as he had had an opportunity of studying them during his two years' residence in Berlin. Berlin high finance was entirely—without exception—a convinced adherent of peace. "Industrious Germany wished to live on good terms with France. Peace was essential to business, and German financiers, in particular, had every interest in keeping up their profitable connection with their French colleagues." Wholesale and retail industry as well as wholesale and retail trade, working in part by means of borrowed capital, also needed quiet and credit. Any external complication was bound to involve them in difficulties and might possibly ruin them. The great freighters of Hamburg and Bremen were necessarily, as a matter of course, adherents of peace, since the first presupposition of their undertakings was peaceful intercourse at sea. Even the high aristocracy whose names are chronicled in Gotha were—by virtue of their family and social relations with the corresponding circles abroad, especially in England and France—entirely in favour of the maintenance of European peace.

It was only a small minority in Germany who were eager for war. The militarists and Pan-Germanists of the school of Treitschke and Bernhardi, the manufacturers of cannon and armour plate, above all the Prussian Junkers and Agrarians, whose only hope for an improvement in their social and economic position lay in war; certain groups among the "intellectuals" whose heads had been turned by the ascent of the new German Empire, and who believed that the Germanic race were called, during the next period of history, to rule the world with their efficiency in arms, their culture, their industrial and technical superiority—these were, as the Belgian diplomatist rightly recognised, the classes in the German people, few in number, who wanted a war, who considered it necessary for the

further ascent of Germany. The great mass of the German people were absolutely peace-loving.

When I call up the picture of this tranquil people, going steadily about its business every weekday, or comfortably seated every Sunday at the café tables and drinking the national glass of beer, I can remember nothing but those placid faces, on which violent passions, antipathy to the foreigner, and even the feverish stress of the battle for existence, had left none of those marks which I have sometimes observed elsewhere as a looker-on at the human crowd. . . .

How is it that this same nation responded as one man to the call of its Emperor and hurled itself with enthusiasm at its enemies? Because it thought it had been challenged, and that the frontiers, the welfare, the very existence of the Empire were in danger. Middle-class citizens, Socialist workmen or peasants, all were convinced that they were defending their country against the attack of Tsarism combined with warlike France and perfidious Albion; that the war had been desired, prepared, planned by the Powers of the Triple Entente impelled by an ignoble envy of a traditional hatred. The Imperial Government's master-stroke lay in showing the Austro-Serbian crisis in this light to German credulity, and in appearing itself as the blameless guardian of peace. (Beyens, pp. 185, 186.)

The Belgian diplomatist draws attention in this passage to a chronological sequence of facts which throws an interesting light on the preparation of the great lie of the attack. The Ultimatum to Russia expired on August 1st at 12 noon. The declaration of war against Russia took place on the evening of August 1st at 7.10 p.m. As early as August 3rd the German White Book, in a finished state, was deposited at the office of the Reichstag with the note: Closed on August 2nd, midday. Incomplete and defective as this book of 47 pages may be, it nevertheless appears impossible that, in the short space of time from the evening of August 1st to midday on August 2nd, such a book, with all its explanations, documents and compilations, can have been written, set up, corrected and printed. The book had, in fact, already been prepared beforehand during the last days of the crisis, presumably after the decisive Crown Council of July 29th, after the Emperor and his Counsellors had firmly decided on war, no matter what events might supervene, no matter what concessions and proposals for an understanding should be made by the Entente Powers.

AIMS OF THE GERMAN WAR OF AGGRESSION.

Beyens sees the governing motive of this German war of aggression less in economic considerations than in aims of power. In the forty-four years of peace since the Franco-German War the economic development of Germany in any case guaranteed the German Empire—even without a war—a gradual economic hegemony in Europe, which, with progressive extension at the same rate, would presumably have arisen to a world hegemony :

A prolonged era of peace was required if the vigorous development of the national resources was to continue. This is an incontestable truth which cannot be repeated too often. Moreover, a prolonged era of peace would have enabled the Germans, by virtue of their genius for organising, their methodical ways, and their capacity for hard work, to become the leading nation in almost every sphere of international competition, owning the main sources of industrial production and holding the unquestioned economic supremacy of Europe. Yet they have been mad enough to make a bid for this supremacy by a war that is utterly at variance with the progress of civilisation! (Beyens, p. 98.)

In the opinion of the Belgian diplomatist, *Weltpolitik*, but without a war, would have been the true aim of the efforts of Germany. This aim, however, did not satisfy the hunger for power, the dreams of world-conquest, of the Pan-Germans; it did not satisfy the ambitious Cæsarean plans of the Emperor William, who, with increasing age and under the increasing pressure of his environment, became more and more alienated from the peace-ideals of his first period of government, who felt more and more the call implanted within him by Providence to lead to a new and higher level of power in the world the Empire which had again been reunited by his ancestors. For Beyens this war is not an economic but a political war :

The merciless war waged against us by the Kaiser's troops is above all, in my humble opinion, a political campaign. Economic causes have been grafted upon the primary cause, but the part they have played is a subordinate one. The schemes framed in Berlin are no longer wrapped in the haze that once surrounded them, but reveal themselves to us in clear outline. What was the object of hurling two million men at France, while the Russian armies were held in

check, and the Austrians were sent to annihilate Serbia? To crush once for all the military Power that stood in the way of German imperialism; to deprive Russia of all concern in European affairs; to seize for Germany the whole coast-line of the North Sea; to make her a Mediterranean Power by annexing French Africa; to dissolve the Balkan alliances and deal the death-blow to Slav hopes; to give Austria the suzerainty of the Balkan peninsula; finally, to hold undisputed sway at Constantinople and in Asiatic Turkey as far as the Persian Gulf. . . . A few decisive battles, it was thought, would be enough to enslave Continental Europe, and to build up, on the basis of that "Mid European Confederation" of which the German intellectuals speak quite openly to-day, the political supremacy of Germany, while England would be left isolated, an easy prey to her rival in a later campaign. (Beyens, pp. 213-214.)

THE GERMAN MILITARY LAW AND THE FRENCH THREE YEARS LAW: THE FALSIFICATION OF DATES.

The last German Military Law was for Beyens merely the last preparatory measure for the long-projected European war. There is for him not the slightest doubt that this law had an aggressive character (*caractère agressif*). On March 18th, 1913, the law was deposited at the office of the Reichstag; on June 30th the financial provision was approved by the Reichstag, and the whole Law was thus made secure. The French Three Years Law was not the cause, but the consequence, of the German Military Law; its introduction did not take place until after the introduction of the German Military Law, its acceptance not until August 1913. Beyens rightly points out the deliberate falsification of dates which the German chauvinistic Press, under the leadership of Schiemann, has undertaken in the discharge of a high mission with a view to reversing the sequence in time of the two Laws and representing the German Law as the consequence of the French:

The law reviving the three years' term of military service was the immediate answer of the Republican Government to the Bill demanding such great sacrifices from the German taxpayer, in order that the crushing superiority of the Imperial Armies might be assured. When all doubts as to the passing of the French Bill were removed, Germany's first thrill of surprise at this counterblast was turned to genuine indignation. . . . In certain drawing-rooms, the revival

of the three years' service was spoken of as a challenge to Germanism ! A password went the round of the newspapers : dates were to be confused, and the French Bill was to be represented as earlier than the German. This flagrant lie was blazoned abroad by the whole Press, with the exception of the Socialist organs, as a damning accusation against France. Dr. T. Schiemann, in the *Kreuzzeitung*, went so far as to maintain that the three years' term had been forced upon M. Poincaré by the Tsar during the visit of the President (then Foreign Minister) to St. Petersburg in the previous year. . . . Whether this conscious incitement of Teuton jingoism would lead to grave results was a question that in the eyes of a foreign observer depended on the length of the simultaneous Parliamentary debates over the Bills in Paris and Berlin. (Beyens, pp. 231-232.)

Apart from the competing military measures, the atmosphere of Europe was for other reasons charged with electricity in the spring of 1913. The incidents of Nancy and Lunéville—in themselves quite insignificant trifles—were exploited to the utmost by the German Press of incitement, in order to poison the feeling existing between the two countries. In addition, there were the exuberantly patriotic festivals in commemoration of the war of liberation, which were intentionally designed to familiarise the German people more and more with the idea of a new war of liberation, which would in reality be an aggressive war.

In the Yellow Book (Enclosure to No. 2) there is printed a German secret report, dated March 19th, 1913, the genuineness of which, so far as I know, has never been disputed by the German Government. This report, written by a German official for a higher German official, contains a section on the "aims and obligations of our national policy," which gives an admirable account of the tendencies pursued in the Military Law and in everything connected with it. It is there stated :

Our new army law is only an extension of the military education of the German nation. Our ancestors of 1913 made greater sacrifices. It is our sacred duty to sharpen the sword that has been put into our hands and to hold it ready for defence as well as for offence. We must allow the idea to sink into the minds of our people that our armaments are an answer to the armaments and policy of the French. We must accustom them to think that an offensive war on our part is a necessity, in order to combat the provocations of our adversaries. We must act with prudence so as not to arouse suspicion, and to avoid the crises which might injure our economic existence. We must so manage matters that under the heavy weight of powerful

armaments, considerable sacrifices, and strained political relations an outbreak should be considered as a relief, because after it would come decades of peace and prosperity as after 1870. We must prepare for war from the financial point of view ; there is much to be done in this direction. We must not arouse the distrust of our financiers, but there are many things which cannot be concealed.

In this sense and in this style all the details of the future provocation of war were cunningly and subtly laid down in advance : even the insurrections in Egypt, Tunis, Algiers and Morocco, the manner in which they were to be precipitated and conducted, were included in the calculation. The small States, Belgium and Holland, must either follow Germany or they must be subdued (*domptés*). Switzerland is a sufficient protection in the south. In the north-west it will be necessary to advance against France through Belgium. When once war shall have broken out "we will then remember that the provinces of the ancient German Empire, the county of Burgundy and a large part of Lorraine, are still in the hands of the French ; that thousands of brother Germans in the Baltic provinces are groaning under the Slav yoke. It is a national task to restore to Germany what she once possessed."

THE WORLD-WAR FOR THE PURPOSES OF BOOTY AND CONQUEST.

This secret German report agrees, as we see, in every point with the account emanating from the Belgian Ambassador, both as regards the means for provoking the war and making it popular with the German people and as regards the war aims. Beyens calls this war in plain words a world-war for the purpose of booty and conquest (*guerre mondiale de rapines et de conquêtes*)—a war which in democratic countries like England and France would never have been planned by the Governments nor approved by the representatives of the people. Only the existence of so docile a Parliament as the German Reichstag, only the absence of any truly democratic Government controlled by Parliament, made it possible that so intelligent and peace-loving a people should have complied with the caprice, ambition, and evil policy of an autocrat and allowed

itself to be drawn into a European war. The foreign critic rightly finds the primary ground of all Germany's difficulties in the absence of democratic institutions and methods in the government of Germany. The absence of any ministerial responsibility ; the independence of the Imperial Government of the decisions of the Reichstag ; the fact that the sole decision regarding war or peace rests with the Emperor, subject to the mere concurrence (even this is in certain cases excluded) of the Bundesrat, a body which leads merely a spectral existence in view of the influence of Prussia ; the fact that the small Conservative party (only 43 among 397 representatives) really possesses, by virtue of its control of Prussia, the decisive power in the Empire as well, so that no Chancellor can hold office for any length of time against the will of the Junkers and Agrarians—all these circumstances, and many others similar in character, in the opinion of the Belgian statesman, make Prussia and Germany, despite the democratic suffrage for the Reichstag, merely a veiled autocracy. They furnish the explanation of the fact that so criminal a war of aggression could be begun by the Emperor and his Government and could be approved by the Parliament and the people.

For Beyens there is not the slightest doubt that the European war had been absolutely decided upon between the Emperor William and the Archduke Francis Ferdinand ever since the winter of 1911-12, after the Kiderlen treaty of November, 1911. It is true that the Austrian ally was more impatient than his German mentor. After the peace of Bucharest, Austria was already anxious to strike, demanded a revision of the treaty of peace in favour of Bulgaria (who even then had secretly bound herself to her Austrian neighbour), and endeavoured once more to wrest other parts of the territory which they had conquered in the war from the hated Serbs, whom she had barred by her intransigent action from the desired access to the Adriatic. At that time, in the summer of 1913, the Emperor William still exercised a moderating and restraining influence towards the Austrian demand for war. In doing so, he had a double object in view, first to regain the waning sympathies of Turkey by recognising

her possession of Thrace and Adrianople, which had been reconquered during the second Balkan War, and above all not to begin the European war until German preparations were completed down to the last ship's rivet and the last gaiter-button, until the Kiel Canal was completed and the effects of the new Army Bill had become manifest. Further, he had no desire to prejudice the position with the old King Carol of Rumania, whom the Emperor William regarded as a sure ally in the future European war. This explains his resistance to the desire of the Viennese Government to secure a revision of the situation, his intervention on behalf of the Bucharest Treaty which brought him the famous telegram from King Carol: "Thanks to you, the peace will remain a definitive one." Hence also the negative result of the Austrian inquiry in Rome which is known to us from Giolitti's revelations.¹

In the last year before the war the meetings between the German Emperor and the successor to the Austrian throne became astonishingly more frequent. The two Princes met in Berlin, in Miramare, in Konopischt; at the place last mentioned, where their last meeting took place, the Emperor was indeed accompanied by Tirpitz, the Secretary of the Navy, a fact which evoked such lively comments throughout the European chancelleries that the German Ambassador in London was instructed to give the English Foreign Secretary an assurance that the presence of the Admiral in the castle of the Bohemian Prince was void of political significance. On the occasion of one of the last visits of the Archduke to the Emperor's residence, his imperial host, as we know from the Belgian ambassadorial reports and from Beyens' books, called after him at the station, as the train was leaving, the significant words: "Above all, no silly mistakes."² Everything down to the smallest detail was prepared for the great blow. "All that was wanted was a pretext. As Dr. Schiemann had pointed out in the *Kreuzzeitung*, however, Germany could have a war with France merely by letting Austria fly at Serbia's throat."³ Oh Schiemann, thou "foreboding angel"!

¹ *J'accuse*, p. 121

² See Beyens, p. 251, and *Belgian Documents*, No. 96.

³ See Beyens, p. 269.

Here again the *Kreuzzeitung* professor appears as a sure prophet, in whose case it is true prophesying was all the more easy, inasmuch as he was one of the initiated, and had merely to foretell what had been confided to him as the future intention of the great criminal conspiracy.

Man proposes, but God disposes. Now, after the assassination of his trusty ally, the Emperor William had to carry out alone what hitherto he had thought to execute in concert with the Archduke ; it was this very assassination which was to provide him with the pretext for striking the blow—the pretext which had been so passionately awaited and which would never present itself again in so effective a form and in such a favourable moment. After the overwhelming news had been brought to him at the Kiel regatta, the Emperor William, with admirable presence of mind, at once devised the catchword with which in the sequel the common war action of Germany and Austria was pursued and on which the consent of Germany to all the steps of the Viennese Government was based—the phrase “It is a crime against Germanism.”¹ It is true that at the beginning of July he went on his usual northern tour, but, as the Belgian diplomatist assures us, he was kept informed of all the steps prepared by the Viennese Government, and indeed before its delivery the Austrian Ultimatum was telegraphically brought to his knowledge by his Viennese Ambassador, Herr von Tschirschky. “His departure for the north had been merely a snare, a device for throwing Europe and the Triple Entente off the scent, and for lulling them into a false security.”²

Beyens constantly asserts as his personal conviction that the issue of an Ultimatum so completely unacceptable—couched, moreover, in such an unprecedentedly brutal form—could not possibly have taken place on the part of the Viennese Government without previous consultation with their Berlin colleagues and without the consent of the Emperor. All the denials of the authorities in Berlin are unable to move the Belgian diplomatist from this conviction. “The key of the situation was in Berlin.” On July 26th Beyens had already sent to Brussels the report mentioned elsewhere (Grey Book II,

¹ Beyens, p. 276.

² *Ibid.*, p. 278.

No. 8) in which he explained the suspicion of a conspiracy planned in all its details between Vienna and Berlin. How much even then, in this critical moment, optimistic views regarding the love of truth and the integrity of German statesmen prevailed in the soul of the Belgian diplomatist is proved by the observation in his book (page 282) that while he contemplated a passage through certain Belgian territories on the part of the German troops, he had never thought of a thoroughgoing occupation of his hapless country, plotted a long time in advance, he had never thought of such a barbarically cruel and pitiless war waged against an innocent population. His understanding and his feelings alike revolted against such an assumption.

* * * * *

THE CROWN PRINCE.

Interesting and apt is the character sketch which the Belgian diplomatist draws of the German Crown Prince :

The Crown Prince has the soul of a fighter, or at any rate he prides himself on that quality. At an official dinner, where he sat next to the wife of an Ambassador from one of the Entente Powers, he could not think of anything more clever and gallant to say than that it was his cherished dream to make war and to lead a charge at the head of his regiment. (Beyens, p. 63.)

This anecdote is confirmed by the violent and bellicose utterances of the young heir to the throne which I have quoted in various passages in my book. Beyens passes in review all the familiar acts of the Crown Prince's *fronde* ; his open opposition to the Kiderlen treaty ; his farewell address to the Danzig Hussars ; his intervention on behalf of the military heroes of Zabern, who had gained such a glorious victory over a lame shoemaker and a few harmless civilians ; his provocative intervention in the question of the Brunswick succession which publicly offended his brother-in-law and his father alike. For the Belgian diplomatist, who had for several years the opportunity of observing events at the Imperial Court and in the Imperial family, the most outstanding trait in the character of this young man is his ambition, his desire to

make himself popular and to be talked about. So far as the Pan-German, militaristic and reactionary circles were concerned, he was, moreover, completely successful in this respect. Ever since the day when he bestowed his open applause from the tribune of the Reichstag on the philippics of Herr von Heydebrand, the "uncrowned King of Prussia," against the Moroccan policy of the Chancellor, and thus opposed the policy of his Imperial father, which was still a peaceful policy—ever since that day he had been "the hope of the reactionary party and of the military caste." I have endeavoured to explain in my books the psychological reaction produced upon the father by this constantly increasing popularity of the son in what had always been the most influential circles in the Court and society of Prussia. In the rivalry for popularity between the father and the son, in the continual playing-off of the youthful and reckless plunger against the hesitating and cautious "Peace-Emperor who always barks but never bites," I found one of the psychological motives leading to the fatal transformation of the Emperor William in the years from 1911 to 1914 and to his resolute conversion to the thought of war.¹

The Belgian diplomatist takes the gloomiest view of the future of the German Empire under the rule of a man like the present Crown Prince :

It is not difficult to imagine what would become of the Empire under the Crown Prince's rule. He too, like his father, but with less intelligence, will wish to be at the helm, and, by the sheer force of his will as monarch by divine right, to stem the rising tide of popular demands, growing ever hungrier and stormier under the sweeping blast of Socialism. . . . Thus there is a prospect of bitter struggles between a ruler of the Crown Prince's type and a Reichstag that is half or three-fourths Socialist, assuming indeed that these struggles do not begin long before he comes to the throne. (Beyens, p. 67-68.)

It appears to me that here again the view of the Belgian diplomatist is not far wrong. Woe to the German people, woe to Europe, woe to the world, should a Prince on whom rests the curse of countless millions one day be in a position to carry with him to the German Imperial Throne his ambition, his lust for war, his greed for power, to act con-

¹ See *J'accuse*, p. 125.

tinually as causes leading to new and unending shedding of blood. May a kind fate, still better, however, the insight and the strength of the re-awakened German people, protect us from such future manifestations of the "grace of God"! . . .

Even the Emperor William himself appears not to have looked forward with special confidence to the future rule of his son. As throwing a new and interesting light on the conflicts between father and son which had become known, Beyens relates a small incident which took place at a Court ball in Berlin in February 1914, that is to say, a few months before the outbreak of war. The Emperor William complained to various diplomatists, among whom was the Belgian Ambassador, on the subject of his repeated fruitless attempts to arrive at a better understanding with France: the French Press frustrated all these efforts by the unmeasured attacks daily made upon Germany. (From this observation it will again be seen how difficult it is for monarchs to recognise the truth; the Emperor William appears to have had no idea of the *German* war Press and the Press of incitement, which surpassed that of France a hundredfold in malice and above all in influence.) After this diatribe against the Paris Press the Emperor continued in a very earnest tone: "They had better take care in Paris—I shall not live for ever!" This was thus a distinct reference to his successor's love of war, although at the same time a veiled assurance of his own love of peace, which was menaced with failure only by reason of the provocations of the other side—altogether a skilful preparation for coming events, which, according to the certain conviction of the Belgian observer, had even then assumed an immovably firm shape in the soul of the Emperor.

THE TRIPLE ENTENTE A DEFENSIVE ALLIANCE.

The unconditional love of peace of the Entente Powers, the absence of any thought of war or aggression in London, Paris, or Petrograd, the efforts made by the rulers and Governments of the Entente Powers to overcome all friction

and tension within and without Europe by following the peaceful path of an understanding, and in this way to set a term to the insane competition of armaments—all these are for the Belgian statesman indisputable historical facts. For him there existed in Europe only *one* Great Power within whose borders the spirit of war had attained a dangerous influence, in which the will for war—with the object of achieving an extension of power and the foundation of a continental hegemony—had taken solid form in a decision for action. That Power was Germany. For ten years after the dismissal of the founder of the German Empire, “the Bismarckian policy of consolidation and defence had been kept up by the mediocre successors of the irascible recluse of Varzin. After this, other ambitions came into play, and the counsels of the ex-Chancellor were gradually forgotten by the new generation of politicians, diplomats, professors, writers, and soldiers who aspired to lead Germany towards loftier goals. Their successful influence upon the mind of the Sovereign became perfectly apparent at the moment when he reached the zenith of his career.”¹

The year 1913—the completion of twenty-five years of the Emperor William’s government—is for the Belgian historian the decisive point at which the Emperor William looked on the first part of his task as a ruler as having been finished. This was the ascent of Germany to an unprecedented level of economic prosperity, to a pre-eminent position of military power both on land and sea; on the completion of the first stage, he now proceeded to the second and greater part of his task, for which the first had merely been preparatory—the extension of the German sphere of power and dominion, first of all over Central Europe, and then, as against England, over the countries beyond the sea and the oceans of the world. A war impetuously begun, and brought to a conclusion with the old Prussian celerity, lasting for three or at most six months, was to be the surely effective and not too painful method of arriving at the aim of the Imperial ambition. The sacrifices in life and in property which a short and victorious war would impose upon the German people would be made good

¹ Beyens, pp. 27–28.

a hundredfold by the further extension of German prosperity, by the acquisition of enormous war-indemnities, which on this occasion would be estimated not at 5 milliards but at 50 milliards of marks.

It is only thus, only by reference to a war-plan conceived long in advance, that Beyens is able to explain the passive resistance which the Emperor and his Government opposed to all attempts to arrive at an amicable solution of the Austro-Serbian and later of the Austro-Russian conflict :

Without any hesitation, the verdict of history will make him answerable for the disasters that have overwhelmed Europe. If we carefully read and compare the documents relating to the brief negotiations carried on during the Austro-Serbian crisis, we find ample proof that it was within William II's power, up to the last moment, to say the word that would have prevented war. So far from doing this, he sent his Ultimatum to Russia, and thus let loose the deluge at the moment which he had chosen. (Beyens, p. 53.)

According to the testimony of the Belgian diplomatist, the Triple Entente, in the period before the war as well as during the last crisis, harboured "the most peaceful intentions. . . . The desire to provoke a war, therefore, can only be imputed to that Government and that nation which were arming to the teeth for battle and for conquest." Beyens in no way denies that nationalistic tendencies existed in France also, and Pan-Slav tendencies in Russia ; he constantly repeats, however, that these tendencies in the two countries were in no way directed to a European war, as was the Pan-German movement in Germany ; and further—a point in which they were also differentiated from the Pan-German movement—they possessed no manner of power or influence to give the Governments of Russia and France a bellicose direction. Beyens entirely agrees with my thesis that the Triple Entente was merely a defensive union of the three Great Powers which, judging from all the weather-signs, were bound to expect sooner or later the outbreak of the storm of war from the side of Germany.

The Belgian diplomatist in no way believes in a policy of encirclement pursued by King Edward, in the sense of a violent strangulation of German freedom of development and movement. Indeed, he does not even

assume that the German statesmen, who invented the conspiracy of encirclement and aggression with a view to explaining their policy of power and armament and who made the German public believe in this invention, were ever themselves convinced of the existence of any aggressive intentions in the Entente Powers. They made use of the spectre of encirclement for their political aims, for the continuous increase of the strength of their land and sea forces, for their refusal of any treaty agreement regarding the restriction of armaments, etc. But the Bülow and the Bethmanns never *believed* in the bogey which they constantly presented to the German people, which their followers still show on the political puppet-stage day after day to their terrified auditors. "Did Prince von Bülow," asks Beyens, "seriously believe at the time that Edward VII and M. Delcassé had devised the Machiavellian scheme of isolating Germany and encircling her with a network of alliances, in order to crush her one day under the weight of a European coalition? At all events, he succeeded in making the German public adopt this theory, and it still prevails to-day in Berlin. A very different impression is conveyed to those who have carefully followed the tortuous path of Imperial statesmanship." (Beyens, p. 224.)

THE GERMAN "REVENGE FOR AGADIR!"

The Belgian diplomatist proves his dissenting view in detail in considering the diplomatic events of the last decade, in particular the Moroccan conflict, which, in agreement with his old friend Herr von Kiderlen, he represents in no way as a failure, but rather as a success for German diplomacy. What Germany had in view in sending the "Panther" to Agadir—the attainment of territorial compensation in Africa for giving France a free hand in Morocco—what Herr von Kiderlen described in his grotesque expression in the words "If one wants to eat peaches in January one must pay for them"—this the German Government did indeed obtain in full measure in the treaty of November 4th, 1911. The "Protectorate over Morocco" was expressly conceded to the French Government by the exchange of letters between

Kiderlen and Cambon which accompanied the conclusion of the treaty. The equivalent given by France consisted in the maintenance of the full freedom of trade and equality of trading rights for all competing nations in Morocco, in the free export of minerals, and above all in the cession of those portions of the French Congo which were of great importance for the rounding-off and the exploitation of the German possessions in West Africa. Moreover, the contingent enforcement of the French right of pre-emption on the Belgian Congo which was granted to France by the Congo Act of February 26th, 1885, while it was not actually transferred to Germany, was nevertheless by Article 16 of the last Moroccan treaty so restricted, that Germany in fact obtained a kind of control over the exercise of this right of pre-emption.

Nothing, in Beyens' view, was more unjust and more unfounded than the indignation which broke out in the German chauvinistic Press, in the Defence and Navy Unions regarding the "national humiliation" involved for Germany in the Moroccan treaty. Kiderlen's skill and his love of peace had saved Germany and Europe from a war; as a reward for this, the unfortunate Secretary of State was bespattered with mud by the War and the Jingo Press. From this time onwards the calls for war, for a violent bursting asunder of the alleged encirclement, for revenge for Agadir, were heard more violently than ever. In this sense the present war might indeed be called a war of revenge. As the French after 1866—wrongly—exclaimed "Revanche pour Sadowa!"—as after 1870 they—rightly—exclaimed "Revanche pour l'Alsace-Lorraine!"—so, after 1911, the war intriguers lustily shouted "Revanche pour Agadir," and they continued shouting until their cries reached the Imperial Throne, until the ears of the German people tingled and their tortured brains in the end really believed that they must have vengeance for a wrong which no one had done them.

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM HIS OWN CHANCELLOR.

Beyens considers that there was no possibility that the French Republic would ever have begun a war for the

reconquest of Alsace-Lorraine. In his well-founded conviction all the military preparations of France were merely protective measures against the powerful neighbour by whom they were constantly menaced. In the brain of the German Emperor, however, there had become firmly fixed the idea to which he gave expression on all possible occasions—the idea that all Frenchmen were haunted with the idea of a war of revenge.

The recovery of Alsace-Lorraine, an achievement which most sons of France had banished to the limbo of their patriotic dreams, and only saw now and then as a distant mirage, seemed to him, in his obstinate self-deception, the secret aim towards which most French statesmen were striving. The sanguine and gullible pacifism of the French Radicals and Socialists in their opposition to the three years' term of military service was entirely left out of his calculations. (Beyens, p. 39.)

The Belgian Ambassador considers it difficult to believe in the sincerity of a view which is so violently opposed to the truth. He puts it forward as a question on which doubt may be entertained whether the Emperor was really so badly informed regarding the tendencies in France, or whether it merely suited him to put in the foreground these alleged hostile and bellicose tendencies in order in this way to prepare a pretext for his later attack.

That the Emperor William was very badly informed regarding the tendencies in foreign countries is for the Belgian observer an indisputable fact. It is attributable to the capricious choice, resting on personal fancy or sympathy, with which the Emperor filled the most important diplomatic posts. "Positions of the highest importance have accordingly been given to men of very little experience." Apart from defects in diplomatic capacity and experience which are frequently to be found, Beyens also accuses a section of the German representatives abroad of being deficient in independence and character. The "high-born" men, who owed their brilliant positions to the personal good-will of William II, naturally sought to show themselves worthy of this good-will by making the Emperor's train of thought as far as possible their own, and by reshaping their real impressions in conformity with the preconceived ideas of their master. The Emperor was in

fact, to his own and his country's undoing, faithful to the saying which he uttered after Bismarck's withdrawal—he was “his own Chancellor,” and above all he was his own Minister for Foreign Affairs. To combine this difficult and responsible function with all the other political and courtly burdens which rest on the shoulders of a German Emperor, a King of Prussia, the head of a numerous family of princes, etc., far exceeded the strength of one individual, even if he were equipped with high intelligence and force of will. *Qui trop embrasse mal etreint.*

The consequences of this excessive strain on his own capacities are to be found in the grave errors committed all along the line with regard to the attitude of the European Powers towards a German war of aggression. Belgium's compliance, the neutrality of England, of Italy and of Rumania were counted upon, and everywhere the calculation was false. The Emperor William was properly informed neither with regard to the views of the Governments nor those of the peoples. His miscalculation, based on incorrect considerations, has brought him and his country into the terrible and unforeseen position of having to wage, not a six months' victorious campaign which was confidently reckoned upon, but a prolonged war of exhaustion against four European Great States and several smaller States with Japan and America as well—a war which, despite all military “victories,” will yet end with a gigantic material and above all a gigantic moral deficit for Germany. All these miscalculations the Belgian diplomatist sets down directly to the personal account of the Emperor. He who has taken the helm in hand is responsible if the ship takes a fatal course.

The only praise which Beyens bestows upon Prince Bülow is that he secured, at any rate for some years until his withdrawal from office in July 1909, a greater degree of restraint in the Imperial mania for speaking and writing, following on the famous scandal of the *Daily Telegraph* interview of November 1908, which evoked even in moderate circles in Germany a storm of indignation against the everlasting personal interventions of the Emperor in foreign policy. After the departure of Prince Bülow, it is true that there was no longer the wholesome counterpoise of

the Chancellor against the dangerous impulses of the Emperor, but there was at any rate still in office a Foreign Secretary, Herr von Kiderlen,—once an intimate friend of Bismarck's family and a gifted pupil of the Bismarck-Holstein school of diplomacy—who did not allow interference with his work from above, and with his inborn South German roughness was able to ward off from his department any direct imperial interference. After Kiderlen's death (at the end of 1912) this barrier also was removed, and the floods of Imperial eloquence and officiousness could again pour themselves freer than ever over the country and over the world, unhampered and unprevented by the weakest and most characterless of all Chancellors who have ever occupied the palace in the Wilhelmstrasse and by the most incompetent and helpless of all the Secretaries of State who have ever held this responsible office.

BETHMANN AND JAGOW.

Herr von Bethmann and Herr von Jagow naturally came very badly off in the picture gallery of the authoritative personalities in Prussia and Germany drawn by the Belgian diplomatist :

The rise of Herr von Bethmann Hollweg to the position of Chancellor of the Empire has been a triumph for the bureaucracy. In looking for shoulders strong enough to bear the massive heritage of Bismarck, the Emperor, after applying in turn to the army, to the higher aristocracy, and to diplomacy, was bound to fall back upon the Prussian official caste. . . . Herr von Bethmann is first and foremost the Emperor's right-hand man, or rather the Emperor's proxy ; for the real Chancellor, although the fact is disguised by constitutional fictions, is the sovereign himself. Caprivi, with his independent nature, and Bülow, with his keen desire to maintain his personal prestige, had disappointed William II. From Bethmann Hollweg, it would seem, there is nothing of the sort to fear. He will always attempt to shield the Emperor's actions with his own constitutional responsibility. He would cheerfully go to the stake and become a burnt-offering to public opinion, if such a sacrifice were needed for the saving of his master's reputation. In Berlin he is known as the philosopher of Hohen-Finow, this being the name of his estate. . . . Above all a philosopher in his indifference or want of resolution where ethics and politics are concerned. His readiness to bow to the fiat of the Imperial will might more properly earn him the name of courtier-philosopher. For the matter of that, they are all courtiers in Berlin

—all, that is to say, who on any rung of the ladder seek to be honoured with the favour or the confidence of the sovereign. (Beyens, pp. 80–82.)

Beyens does not regard Herr von Bethmann as an unconditional desirer of war and inciter to it. "His personal preferences made him lean towards a peaceful solution, but this weak man let his hand be forced by the war party, and bowed, as usual, to the will of the Emperor." England's intervention in the war was, for the Chancellor, a terrible disillusionment. All his efforts, before and during the crisis, had been directed to keeping England neutral, without, however, thereby imposing any restrictions on Germany's freedom of action. These hopes collapsed on August 4th, and now "the Philosopher of Hohen-Finow was transformed into an irascible Teuton; all the Prussian violence that ran in his veins, mingled with his Frankfort blood, suddenly came to the surface, and the professional calm of the statesman, accustomed to control his nerves, gave place to a dramatic outburst of anger."

* * * * *

How far the Belgian diplomatists could be deceived and were in fact deceived in the judgment formed by them regarding the leading men in Berlin, down to the moment when the true character of the actors appeared in the actions themselves, is proved, *inter alia*, by the painful surprise which Baron Beyens experienced as a result of the attitude of Herr von Bethmann in the question of Belgian neutrality.

It was a sad disillusion for those who, thinking that they knew Bethmann Hollweg, would never have regarded him as an unscrupulous politician. If he could not be a great Minister, he might at least have endorsed Prussia's signature and guarded the honour of the young German Empire. A mere nod from the Emperor was enough to make him the zealous vindicator of a crime. His language in this tragic crisis was that of a Court sycophant without courage or conscience, not that of a statesman. In spite of his philosophy, he resigned himself to an act that disgraced Germany, and thus played the part, not of a patriotic and independent thinker, but of a courtier-philosopher. (Beyens, p. 87.)

Herr von Jagow, the Foreign Secretary, fares slightly better than his superior, the responsible Chancellor in the judgment passed upon him by the Belgian diplomatist.

It is, not entirely without reason, allowed in his favour that, in accordance with the Constitution of the German Empire, he is not a responsible Minister, but merely the executive organ of the Chancellor with whom alone rests responsibility, and that essentially, having regard to his whole intellectual and moral structure, he did not have it in him to resist the double pressure of the Emperor on the Chancellor, and of the Chancellor on the Secretary of State. Jagow's feeble *début* on the occasion of the debate in the Reichstag on the incident at Nancy—his attitude of bravado towards the French Government, obviously assumed on instructions from above (an attitude which appeared entirely out of place in view of the conciliatory demeanour of the Minister Barthou, and was, moreover, in almost ridiculous contrast to the eloquent maladroitness of the new Secretary of State)—this unfortunate *début* in itself revealed to the impartial observer that German diplomacy was still on the downward grade. The tendency of the Imperial leader of foreign policy, in the interests of his own authority and independence, to look less for talent and character in the selection of his executive organs than for docility and compliance with the higher will, became constantly more marked after Kiderlen's death and Jagow's succession to office.

There was only one point on which Herr von Jagow resembled his skilful and energetic predecessor; this was in his supercilious contempt for the small States and for their representatives at the Berlin Court. The regular weekly receptions at the Berlin Foreign Office, to which in former times the envoys of smaller States were also graciously admitted, were in more recent times discontinued. It was left to these Ambassadors to communicate by telephone or by letter if they had any urgent matter to discuss. The treatment of their countries was in agreement with that of their persons: the spirit of Bernhardt and of his comrades in thought hovered over the waters of the Wilhelmstrasse: the time of small States, the time of neutralities, is past; any of the small States refusing to adhere to one or other of the Great Powers will be pitilessly crushed in the struggle between European rivals; the ambition in a European small State to possess great colonies outside

Europe is no longer justified and is no longer practicable ; only the great have the right to become still greater ; the small must submit to this compulsion of fate.

This train of thought, which swayed the whole Pan-German Press, also governed the authorities in the Wilhelmstrasse and led them to those compromising indiscretions of which we are informed in Baron Beyens' report of April 2nd, 1914 (Grey Book II, No. 2). Despite all this, the Belgian diplomatist ascribes no direct intentions towards war even to the German Secretary of State: according to the wishes of this statesman, the imperialistic expansion of Germany was, wherever possible, to take place along the path of peaceful delimitation of spheres of interest, not along the path of blood and violence. The charge to which Herr von Jagow, the subordinate, and Herr von Bethmann, his superior, are alike exposed is merely this, that they submissively acquiesced in the method of war in place of the method of peace, as soon as their impatient master, under the pressure of his military entourage, considered that the time had come to attain at a stroke what would otherwise have required a long and laborious process of development. Lack of will and character in one of the most critical moments of the history of the world—that is the inexpiable and heavy crime with which the Belgian "objective" critic rightly charges the German statesmen.

WAR INTRIGUERS IN GERMANY.

The real seat of the war party was not in the Foreign Office in the Wilhelmstrasse, but in the building of the General Staff at the Königsplatz, in the Ministry of War in the Leipzigerstrasse, in the military cabinet of the Emperor in the Imperial castle. These three military courts formed the headquarters, the central point of all the efforts for war which were constantly being nourished and promoted by the Pan-German Union and its associated organs throughout the whole country. In these three military courts all the threads of the preparation for war were brought together ; they formed the connecting link between the irresponsible intriguers in the country and the

highest responsible authorities whose task it was to speak the decisive word at the appropriate moment, to give the signal for striking the blow.

The Belgian observer summarises the thoughts and aims of the Prusso-German war party, which, though not formally organised as a party, was yet more powerful than any constituted party, in the following fitting *résumé* :

Soon after the opening of the twentieth century there began to appear, chiefly in Prussia, a steady drift of opinion in favour of fresh European conflicts. The adherents of this creed were known abroad under the comprehensive name of "war party." They were drawn, in the first place, from the Field-M Marshals and "Colonel-Generals" (*Generalobersten*), the Generals on the active list, the Aides-de-Camp of the Emperor, the hotheads of the Staff, and the more ambitious officers of all grades. To these must be added the retired army men, reactionary squireens who lived on their estates, and saw the ever-growing taxation accompanied by a rise in the national wealth, in the standard of comfort and luxury, while their own incomes could not show a corresponding advance. These malcontents held that a little blood-letting would be of great service in purifying and strengthening the social body, and in restoring to the patrician caste that preponderance which was its due, and which seemed likely to be usurped by the self-made plutocrats of industry and commerce. (Beyens, pp. 111, 112.)

It would not be possible to describe better than is here done by the Belgian diplomatist the central and starting point of the prolonged subterranean war movement in Germany, the seat of the evil, the destructive bacillus. The instigators of the crime are the military and Junker circles here described. For the deed itself the Emperor William and his Government are responsible. The other *strata* of the population, drawn from the "bürgerlich" and intellectual circles who followed the car of war and occasionally helped to push it on, are to be claimed as the abettors and instigators of those who really perpetrated the deed ; as such they also have a sufficiently heavy burden of guilt to bear before their people and before the world. With a few honourable exceptions, the whole German people is however guilty of having failed to recognise in time the dangers which menaced it in constantly increasing measure from the military ambition of its Emperor, from the supineness of its Government, from the criminal incitement of a small but powerful minority. He who is born blind is to be

pitied. But he who allows himself to be blinded and deceived, instead of opening his eyes and penetrating the hellish work of deception, is to be condemned; he himself bears a large part of the responsibility for his own fate. When will the German people recognise its true enemies, when will it raise its voice of accusation and its sword of judgment against those who have so shamefully deceived it and who have led it to destruction?

THE BOSNIAN ANNEXATION CRISIS.

To the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina—that inconsidered and entirely superfluous act of violence on the part of Count Aehrenthal—Baron Beyens rightly ascribes enormous importance, as an event which not only evoked an urgent danger of a European war at the time, in the winter of 1908-9, but also engendered an enduring state of tension between the Great Powers, which contributed in no small degree to the outbreak of the present war. Despite the enforced assent of the Serbian Government, the antagonism between Austria and Serbia was rendered more acute by the challenge to the Pan-Serbian national movement. The powerful empire of the Tsars, whose historical interest in Balkan questions, whose close relations to the small Serbian Slav State, could not be obliterated by a stroke of the pen on the part of the authorities in the Ballplatz, was bound to feel as a humiliation the necessity of surrendering before the ruthless threats of the German Government, who placed themselves unconditionally behind their Austrian ally.

Count Pourtalès, the German Ambassador in Petrograd, was even then called upon to play the *rôle* which later on fell to him in the summer of 1914, the *rôle* of the man with the mailed fist, whose duty it was to confront Isvolsky, the Foreign Minister, with the alternatives: "Either you give way, or else there will be a European war." Russia, as is known, chose the first alternative, inasmuch as neither then nor later did she want a European war. She recognised the annexation of Bosnia, but the successful pressure exercised by the German Government left behind a wound which, thanks to the marked love of peace of the

Tsar Nicholas, remained without dangerous influence on the relations between Germany and Russia.

Baron Beyens' narrative also confirms the account which I have elsewhere given of the diplomatic incidents during the Bosnian crisis. At that time Austria and Germany did all in their power to kindle to a new conflagration the dangerous Eastern Question, which had been laboriously settled at the Congress of Berlin by the masterly hands of a Bismarck, a Beaconsfield, and an Andrassy—to a conflagration which threatened to set the whole of Europe in flames. It was only the sincere love of peace existing in England and France and the almost humiliating compliance of Russia which then preserved the peace. The version to the contrary which is now disseminated by the German Government—as if it were Germany who was then the preserver of peace, and the Entente Powers who, at any rate in intention, were the disturbers of the peace—is only one of those numberless lies with which the Berlin Government seek to excuse or cloak their crime.

The attempt at intimidation which succeeded so well against Russia in the winter of 1908-9 may have been present to the minds of the authorities in the Berlin Foreign Office as a model to be followed in the summer of 1914, when they instructed Count Pourtalès, exactly in the same way and almost in the same words as six years before, to place before the Minister Sazonof the alternatives: "Either you agree to the 'localisation' of the conflict, in other words, you will look on with indifference while Serbia is being crushed by the Austrian Army, or else we mobilise—and in our case mobilisation is the same thing as war." Remembering the incidents of 1908-9, the Chancellor and his Secretary of State up to a certain point may have believed in the success of this game of bluff, and in any case they hoped that it would succeed. They counted, however, without their host. The annexation at that time of two provinces which had been in the possession of Austria for thirty years, though contrary to law, was still a peaceful annexation, and Russia could, if need were, approve it; but the present design to crush by the exercise of military force an independent country which, without any reason or proof, was held responsible for the murderous action of

two youthful fanatics, a country, moreover, which had offered the Viennese Government the most extreme satisfaction and humiliation, was an act of war so frivolous and brutal in its nature that it could not be looked upon in silence by a Great Power which, like Russia, was directly concerned. For this reason the manœuvre of intimidation which had proved effective in the past was bound to fail.

But on other points also the Chancellor and his subordinates miscalculated, if it be the case that they hoped for a peaceful issue of their diplomacy. Their calculations were false for the simple reason that the military circles in the environment of the Emperor, and in the end the Emperor himself—at any rate after the Crown Council of July 29th—neither hoped nor desired that German diplomacy should have a peaceful issue, that is to say that Russia should give way. On this occasion the military and the militarists at the German Imperial Court wanted war at all costs, and they would have experienced the greatest disappointment had Sazonof and his Imperial master yielded to Count Pourtalès' attempts at intimidation. A desire for peace in Berlin, if it is at all possible to speak of it anywhere, may have existed in the Wilhelmstrasse, but not in the Imperial castle, not in the building of the General Staff, not in the War Ministry. These authorities were, however, the only ones that mattered in the absolutist and militaristically governed Prussian-Germany.

COUNT BERCHTOLD.

The Belgian Ambassador deals extremely severely—justifiably severely—with his Austrian colleague, Count Berchtold. In his view Bollati, the Italian Ambassador in Berlin, also agrees. Count Berchtold was less concerned with revenge for the murder of the Archduke and the security of his country against Pan-Serbian dangers than with obtaining personal satisfaction for the rebuffs which, in his opinion, he had suffered in his Balkan policy. The satisfaction of almost all the Austrian demands in the Turkish-Balkan treaty of peace of May 30th, 1913, did not satisfy this statesman, who was as vain as he was incompetent. He considered that the moment had come to

crush Serbia completely and thus by an imposing stroke transform into eulogies the criticisms to which he was exposed on many sides in Austria :

The Viennese populace was beside itself with joy at the announcement of an expedition against Serbia, which, it felt sure, would be a mere military parade. Not for a single night were Count Berchtold's slumbers disturbed by the vision of the Russian peril. He is, indeed, at all times a buoyant soul, who can happily mingle the distractions of a life of pleasure with the heavy responsibilities of power. His unvarying confidence was shared by the German Ambassador, his most trusted mentor. We can hardly suppose that the Austrian Minister shut his eyes altogether to the possibility of a struggle with the Slav world. Having Germany as his partner, however, he determined, with the self-possession of a fearless gambler, to proceed with the game. (Beyens, pp. 285-286.)

The utter reprehensibility and the extreme dangerousness of secret diplomacy appear in these observations of the Belgian Ambassador ; the levity, the vanity, the desire for revenge of a diplomatic gambler, these miserably human—all too human—motives are sufficient to lead to the first fatal steps to the enkindlement of a world conflagration, if the counterbalancing weight of public control, of Parliamentary co-operation, of approval by the people, is absent.

The Belgian diplomatist cannot regard seriously the attempt of the German Government to localise the Austro-Serbian conflict. "This claim amounted to depriving Russia of her historic rôle in the Balkans."

Austria's promise to respect the territorial integrity and the future of Serbia as an independent State is regarded by Beyens as utterly insufficient, in view of the demands comprised in the Ultimatum, which already contained the gravest intrusions on the sovereignty of the small State, and above all in view of the opening of war, the special aims of which, regarded as a "punitive expedition," were left completely in the dark. The degradation of Serbia into the position of a vassal State, the re-establishment of a situation similar to that which existed under King Milan of unhappy memory, appear to him to have been the unacknowledged aims of the Austrian punitive expedition.

THE "WEEK OF TRAGEDY."

I need not here enter more fully into the narrative of the events of the "week of tragedy," as Beyens calls the twelve critical days. His narrative agrees on all points with the explanations given in my first and second books. I should only like to emphasise a few points from Beyens' book which are of interest for the question of responsibility.

I

On the sudden return of the Emperor from his Northern tour, Zimmermann, the Under-Secretary of State, could not refrain from expressing his regret at this step. In the view of the Belgian statesman, the Imperial Government, represented at this moment by the Chancellor and the Foreign Secretary, probably still desired the maintenance of peace. The sudden return of the Emperor appeared to be attributable to the persuasion of his military entourage and to the direct and baneful influence of Tschirschky, the Viennese Ambassador. Even at this moment expression was given to the antagonism between the responsible Civil Government and the irresponsible Military Government, which at a later date, on July 29th, led at Potsdam to a victory of the military party and to the shameful submission of the Civil Government. Bethmann's bid for neutrality made to Goschen on the night of July 29th, immediately after the return of the Chancellor from Potsdam, is interpreted by Beyens exactly as I have interpreted it, as an indication of the definitive decision for war in accordance with the conclusions arrived at in the Crown Council. In this Crown Council military considerations had overcome and checkmated all others. This was expressly admitted next day by Herr von Jagow to Jules Cambon, the French Ambassador: "The army chiefs insisted, for any delay is a loss of strength for the German army" (Yellow Book, No. 109).

In agreement with his military advisers, the Emperor William desired to avail himself of circumstances which he had awaited very impatiently "and which fickle fortune

might never again offer to his ambition." Apart from the moral aspect of the conflict, which enabled the Emperor to pose as the judge and avenger of a fearful crime, these favourable circumstances were, in the opinion of Baron Beyens, the existing military inferiority of Russia and France. The reorganisation of the army in Russia, the perfection of her artillery, the completion of new strategic railways in the West, all these, so it was calculated, would be finished at the earliest in 1917. The French Three Years Law also would not begin to exercise its influence until about that date. England would presumably remain neutral, especially as her hands were bound by the confusion in Ireland, which was just hastening to a civil war. Thus it was a case of "Now or never!" That was the watchword which in the Potsdam Crown Council of July 29th led the military party to victory, and the Emperor to his decision for war.

II

The information which Beyens gives regarding the situation on July 30th, as it was that day represented to him at the Foreign Office, is both interesting and new.

Austria will reply to Russia's partial mobilisation with a general mobilisation of her army. It is to be feared that Russia will then mobilise her entire forces, which will compel Germany to do the same. (Beyens, p. 302.)

This intimation from the Foreign Office is confirmed by the communications, in almost the same terms, which Herr von Jagow made to the French Ambassador on the same day (Yellow Book, No. 109). This is important evidence in support of the demonstration given by me elsewhere regarding the sequence of the mobilisations¹: Russia's partial mobilisation, which was a consequence of the Austrian partial mobilisation and of the Austro-Serbian war, was followed, in the night from July 30th to July 31st, by the Austrian general mobilisation. This was followed on July 31st by the Russian general mobilisation, and this latter was followed on the same day by the proclamation

¹ See *The Crime*, Vol. I. p. 337 *et seq.*

of the "danger of war," and on the next day by the general mobilisation in Germany.

This sequence of the mobilisations, which was documentarily proved by me and which we now find confirmed by the Belgian Ambassador and intimated in advance by the authorities in the Wilhelmstrasse in the presence of several witnesses, cuts away the last prop, as I have already shown elsewhere, from the German legend of the Russian attack, and consequently from the Russian authorship of the war. Even if a *casus belli* is regarded as being given by a general mobilisation, a measure of security which can be combined with the most intensive peace efforts, and in this case was in fact so combined, Austria, by her previous general mobilisation, had given this *casus belli*, and not Russia, which merely answered the Austrian mobilisation.¹ Even if, as is done by many German writers, the Austrian and the Russian general mobilisations are referred to the same point in time, and accepting at the same time the Prussian militaristic theory that mobilisation is equivalent to war without regard to the diplomatic action taken by the States which are mobilising, then, even proceeding from these premises, which are untenable in fact and in law, it would still be inadmissible to draw from the simultaneous mobilisation of Austria and Russia conclusions disadvantageous to the latter State. Beyens also rightly draws attention to the earlier Balkan crisis, during which Austria and Russia had stood opposed to each other for months, armed and ready for war, without mobilisation being regarded by either of the sides as a ground for war, and without war, in fact, arising. Beyens saw also, in the resumption of direct negotiations between Vienna and Petrograd on July 31st, a ray of hope for the maintenance of peace—a ray of hope which again was clouded solely by the absolute will for war of the Emperor William and his military counsellors :

We had reckoned without our host. The German Emperor willed otherwise. Suddenly, at the instance of the General Staff, and after a meeting of the Federal Council, as prescribed by the

¹ See, with regard to all the details connected with the Russian mobilisation, my pamphlet which appeared in January, 1918, "The Revelations of the Process Suchomlinov" (Trösch, Olten).

Constitution, he issued the decree of *Kriegsgefahrzustand* (Imminence of War). This is the first phase of a general mobilisation. (Beyens, p. 303.)

The faithful *Lokal-Anzeiger*, which on the previous day, July 30th, had prematurely gossiped about the decisions of the Potsdam Crown Council and had announced the general mobilisation of the army and the navy, and for this reason had been confiscated¹ (at that time they were still interested in keeping information as to the true position secret)—the *Lokal-Anzeiger* on the afternoon of July 31st now scattered abroad in a special edition the news, which flew like wildfire through the town, that “Russia wants war. In Petrograd, the general mobilisation of the army and the navy has been ordered. For this reason the Emperor William has proclaimed the ‘threatening danger of war,’ in answer to the challenge which Russia has directed against Germany.”

I have already spoken elsewhere of the vain endeavours of Jagow and Zimmermann to postpone the German general mobilisation, which as we know was decreed at 5 o'clock on the afternoon of August 1st, and of the unbending resistance which the War Minister and the Army chiefs offered to any postponement.

From this last act of the tragedy note should be made of the well-merited eulogy which Beyens bestows on the attitude of the French Ambassador during the whole crisis. “The attitude of M. Cambon was admirable. Throughout these terrible days, nothing has been able to affect his coolness, his presence of mind and his insight.” In this praise of their colleague Beyens and Goschen, who left Berlin together, were entirely at one.

III

The speeches of the German Emperor and of the Chancellor to the people of Berlin on the evening of July 31st are described as misleading and the publications of the German Government as wily, their object being to kindle a patriotism rather slow to take fire. . . . That the mass of the German people, unaware of Russia's peaceful intentions, should

¹ See Orange Book, No. 62.

have been easily deluded is no matter for astonishment. The upper classes, however, those of more enlightened intellect, cannot have been duped by the official falsehoods. They knew as well as we do that it was greatly to the advantage of the Tsar's Government not to provoke a conflict. In fact, this question is hardly worth discussing. Once more we must repeat that, in the plans of William II and his generals, the Serbian affair was a snare spread for the Northern Empire before the growth of its military power should have made it an invincible foe. (Beyens, p. 308.)

IV

Beyens also considers the much-discussed question whether the action of England in immediately taking up a position on the side of the Entente Powers—a course which, as we know, was from the beginning urged on the English Government by Russia and France—would have been likely to deter Germany from her warlike undertaking. The Belgian diplomatist is inclined to the view that Grey's tactics, in promising neither his support to one side nor his neutrality to the other, was the more correct. The assumption by England from the outset of an attitude against Germany and Austria—that is to say, as a party to the dispute, and not as a sincere mediator of peace—would more than ever have aroused the *furor teutonicus*, of Agadir memory, and would have urged the Emperor, in the interests of his prestige and his popularity, to an even speedier opening of the war. Apart from this point of view of external politics, Beyens also recognises the difficulties with which the English Government were confronted in their own country, in public opinion, in Parliament, and even among their own colleagues in the Ministry. The assumption by Great Britain of an attitude in favour of the Entente Powers, so long as the conflict still bore the character of a Balkan conflict, would never have received the acquiescence of public opinion and of the Parliament in England. Only when European war had broken out, when the interests of all Great Powers, including Great Britain, were at stake, when the existence of France as a Great Power was threatened and the neutrality of Belgium violated—only then could the English Government be sure of the almost unanimous concurrence of the whole country when they

declared war against the frivolous author of the war and the violator of neutrality.

The whole of the Belgian diplomatist's discussion of Grey's policy, be it observed, is based on the obvious conviction that no one desired and strove more earnestly and insistently for the maintenance of peace than did the English Government. The discussion turns solely round the expediency of the means which were designed to lead to this end. The Belgian diplomatist denounces in the most scathing terms the attempt of the German statesmen and of their Press to accuse England of warlike intentions and of having been parties to a conspiracy to make war against Germany. "The events leading up to the present war have revealed to us the honesty and scrupulousness of British diplomacy, side by side with the bad faith of German diplomacy; and they have thrown ample light upon the loyalty of Great Britain and her Ministers, as contrasted with the double-dealing of Germany and her Imperial functionaries."

BELGIAN NEUTRALITY.

As is to be expected, the Belgian statesman deals fully with the question of Belgian neutrality, its violation by Germany, and the alleged grounds which are supposed to justify this violation. From this part of the book also I may restrict myself to emphasising a few noteworthy points, since I have elsewhere discussed all these questions exhaustively.

BELGIUM, A COUNTRY SUBJECT TO PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT.

The lying invention that Belgium had years ago forged with England or France a conspiracy against Germany is refuted by Beyens by means of the same arguments as those which I have used in the corresponding chapters of my books. He draws; however, special attention to the fact that Belgium is a country strictly governed on Parliamentary principles, in which every governmental act of

the Monarch requires for its validity the counter-signature of the Ministry (according to Article 64 of the Constitution), and every Ministry is again responsible to Parliament for its actions. Even if King Leopold or King Albert had been willing to conclude so dishonourable a treaty with England or with France in violation of all their interests, "neither would have found a Minister to countersign such a secret convention." Belgium had entertained the same friendly and trustful spirit (*esprit amical et confiant*) towards all the Powers, and even a military convention permitted by international law—concluded solely with the object of defending the neutral country against frivolous attack—would never have received the assent of a Belgian Minister or Parliament.

An interesting fact, hitherto unknown, is mentioned by Beyens in refuting the German charge of conspiracy, so far as this relates to the conversation between the English Military Attaché Bridges and the Belgian General Jungbluth. Jungbluth had received an invitation to attend the English manœuvres which took place in the course of 1912 after the conversation in question; he declined this invitation, however, in order to avoid any unfavourable interpretation which might be placed on the presence of a Belgian General at the English manœuvres.

BELGIUM'S "FAITHLESSNESS."

On August 4th, 1914, Herr von Bethmann plainly admitted, without any qualifications, the wrong done to Belgium. Later on, when they had rummaged about with some success in the archives at Brussels, he modified his utterances of August 4th, which in spite of all their brutality were at least honest, in the sense that even then he had possessed indications of Belgian perfidy, but that now only had he found proof.

Beyens rightly points out the incredibility of the account thus given by Bethmann. Had the Chancellor on August 4th possessed even the slightest and weakest indications of Belgian faithlessness, he would certainly not have omitted to produce it in exoneration of Germany's action. In the

same way, Herr von Jagow, on the morning of August 4th, when Beyens called him to account for the invasion of Belgium (Grey Book II, No. 51), would certainly not have been content to appeal merely to the strategic necessity of the German invasion; he would certainly not have approved as a "private individual" Belgium's answer refusing the German Ultimatum, if he had known of any actions of the Belgian Government which could have served to justify or excuse the action of Germany. No, the appeal to all these documentary discoveries and their perverted interpretation merely represent a further stage on the pathway of lies upon which the German rulers and governors entered, destitute of scruple and of conscience, on July 31st, 1914, the day of birth of the most recent German "war of liberation":

Once Herr von Bethmann Hollweg had entered boldly on the track of falsehood, in order to salvage the shipwrecked honour of his country, he soon made remarkable progress. He had the audacity to tell some American pressmen, who had come to Berlin in order to find out the truth about the horrors of this war, that after the first encounters Belgian girls amused themselves by gouging out the eyes of wounded German soldiers. Did he fully grasp the infamy of these unsupported charges? All the private honesty of the Hohen-Finow philosopher will not atone for his public calumnies. (Beyens, pp. 321-322.)

THE BELGIAN MILITARY LAW.

In May 1913 the Belgian Parliament accepted the law which introduced universal military service and effected in consequence a considerable increase in the peace and war strength. In a secret sitting of the Chamber of Deputies, de Broqueville, who was then Minister for War, had referred to the plans of the German General Staff—known to all the General Staffs—which anticipated a passage through Belgium in the event of an attack on France. Beyens, who had then been Ambassador in Berlin for about a year, reports the unfavourable impression which this increase in Belgium's military forces produced in the circles of German officers. If the German General Staff had not even at that date firmly intended to overrun the neutral country, either in kindness or by violence, if Germany's only concern had really been merely to secure defence

against France from the north-west, then the extension of Belgium's protective measures could not have failed to be a source of gratification in Berlin. On the occasion of his visit to Switzerland in the autumn of 1912, the Emperor William had himself complained of the defective protection of his Empire on the north-west, whereas he considered as absolutely secure the protection afforded in the south by the Swiss Confederation. If, notwithstanding this, the increase in the strength of the Belgian army was looked at askance in German military circles, the reason was merely that it was not protection against France for which they were looking, but a passage through Belgium, with as little resistance as possible, leading to the destruction of France. By kindness, by means of flattering words, by personal amiability on the part of the Imperial "charmeur," in the end even by a threatening reference on the part of the German General Staff¹ to the irresistible German *élan*, the attempt was made to render the Belgians gradually "ripe for slaughter," to accustom them gradually to the idea that it would be better and more prudent to subject themselves to the irresistible German Colossus than to offer unavailing resistance. On the failure of all these calculations and attempts to exert influence, the disillusion they had suffered were avenged on the unfortunate victim which was robbed not merely of its soil, its freedom and its independence, but was also persecuted to death with countless tortures and martyrdoms.

THE BARGAINING ON THE SUBJECT OF BELGIUM.

The various stages of the bargaining with England which Herr von Bethmann initiated on the subject of Belgian neutrality are conscientiously described by Beyens, and he rightly emphasises the infamy involved in the fact that all these negotiations on the part of Germany were carried on behind the back of the chosen victim and without the knowledge of the Belgian Government, who were only informed of the incidents and duly warned by England.

¹ See Yellow Book, No. 6; Report from Cambon of November 22nd, 1913, regarding King Albert's visit to the Imperial German Court.

(a) On the occasion of Bethmann's first offer on July 29th (Blue Book, No. 85) Belgium's "integrity" after the end of the war was guaranteed, "if she had not sided against Germany."

(b) In the Ultimatum of August 2nd (Grey Book I, No. 20) Belgium's "possessions and independence" are guaranteed "in full," in the event of her maintaining an attitude of "friendly neutrality." On the other hand, her treatment "as an enemy" is contemplated should she "oppose the German troops."

(c) In Jagow's Note to Lichnowsky of August 4th (Blue Book, No. 157) the German assurances are again modified to the effect that "even in the case of armed conflict with Belgium, Germany will under no pretence whatever annex Belgian territory."

(d) In the Chancellor's speech on the afternoon of August 4th, when Belgium's military resistance had already become a fact, the assurance was nevertheless given that they would "make good the wrong" they had committed, and if England would remain neutral, they would "not violate the territorial integrity and independence of Belgium."

I have already considered elsewhere this series of changing offers and assurances. Even if these assurances had not emanated from Germany, the violator of treaties, they would appear devoid of value, if only because of their chameleon-like change of colours. They have in the interval been shown to be entirely without value. According to the plain meaning and the text of Jagow's despatch to Lichnowsky mentioned above, any idea of an annexation of Belgian territory under any pretence whatever was excluded on the side of Germany. Jagow's assurance was in no way made dependent on England's remaining neutral. Nevertheless, the decisive authorities in Germany to-day regard the guarantee of integrity given on August 4th, 1914, like the treaty of neutrality of 1839, as a scrap of paper, and they have not the remotest idea of being hindered by such a promise in giving effect to their intentions as to annexation.

THE MENACE TO HOLLAND.

The reference to Holland contained in Jagow's despatch appears to me to be important and specially worthy of mention. So far as I know, this point has not yet been emphasised in the literature of the war with the clearness which it deserves—not even in the Dutch Press, although Holland's future is most sensitively affected by this question.

Jagow explains the sincerity of his assurances with regard to the non-annexation of Belgian territories as follows :

Sincerity of this declaration is borne out by fact that we solemnly pledged our word to Holland strictly to respect her neutrality. It is obvious that we could not profitably annex Belgian territory without making at the same time territorial acquisitions at the expense of Holland. (Blue Book, No. 157.)

This explanation, in itself entirely logical, opens extremely gloomy prospects for the future of Holland. As I have elsewhere proved,¹ the annexation of Belgium in whole or in part, in some more or less veiled form, has long been a settled question among those authorities in Germany whose voice is decisive: the only question is whether, and, if so, how far, the military course of the war will afford them the possibility of giving effect to their dark plans against Belgium. If they succeed in doing so, it appears—in accordance with the explanation contained in the Note of August 4th—that the independence and the inviolability of Holland are also gravely imperilled.

The first wrong would presumably in the issue lead to a second wrong. Following Jagow's example, the German annexationists would say: "What good is Belgium to us if we do not get Holland as well?"

It is astonishing that in this most imperilled of all neutral countries, in the kingdom of Holland, there are still people who do not recognise or do not want to recognise the dangers with which a German victory menaces their country. *J'accuse* had a great success in Holland; in a few weeks over 40,000 copies of the Dutch edition were

¹ See *The Crime*, Vol. III.

sold. Nevertheless, there have been even there blindly credulous people, chiefly among the intellectuals, who have refused to recognise the truth of my book, and have launched out against the author with the heaviest artillery, and at times even with the bitterest insults. One of the most purblind among these opponents, a doctor in Amsterdam, has denied that I am a "truth-loving German" and has called me a "degenerate subject." I pass over all these attacks with contempt, in the sure consciousness that I have not merely subjectively sought for the truth, but also that I have objectively found and proclaimed it. I lament, however, those unhappy subjects of a free and democratic community, which for the present has still been spared by Pan-Germanism and Prussianism, who do not know better how to protect and cherish their independence acquired in the bitter struggles of past centuries, who even now, with Belgium's case before their eyes, refuse to see from what side the gravest dangers threaten their country—who (like the German people, *as if they were already Germans*) have been taken in by the lie of the German war of defence, Belgian faithlessness, etc. They will, I fear, observe their error only when the knife is at their own throat, when the axe is laid at the root of their independence and freedom. Jagow's unconscious confession of August 4th ought to open the eyes of these blind and confiding men.

* * * * *

It is a fact familiar to all that the German annexationists had long ago—even before this war—directed their attentions not merely to Belgium, but also to Holland. Had Belgium complied with the demand contained in the German Ultimatum, had she offered no resistance to the German passage, had she observed the benevolent neutrality demanded of her, the thanks for her submissiveness would in all probability have been that, after a victorious termination of the war, the Belgians, in a manner as friendly as insistent, would have been invited to enter the German Empire first of all as part of the German Zollverein, and then later, with progressive Germanisation, to sacrifice on the altar of the great neighbouring German Empire her

military and political independence as well as her economic independence. The heavy burden of the Congo, which, on the familiar theory of Bernhardi and Jagow, was too oppressive for the shoulders of so small a neutral State, would at once, out of friendliness, have been transferred to the robuster shoulders of the German Atlas. It is now proposed to shorten this wearisome process of strangulation (that is to say, if they can), now that Belgium has offered resistance and has defended her honour and her independence with her arms in her hand, and at one stroke to bar the Anglo-French "door of invasion" and incorporate in the German territory what had been the "deploying grounds" of the Entente armies. In the event of a German victory, the Dutch, however, will in all probability—it is not, indeed, necessary to be a prophet to predict this future—be subjected to the slow process of strangulation which would have been applied against a compliant Belgium.

It is an old demand of Pan-Germany that the mouths of the Rhine, the outlet of the greatest German river, must by law and nature be in German hands. The North Sea coast, which would, as a result, pass into the possession of the German Empire, is a necessary completion and continuation of our insufficient access to the seas of the world. The old German Emperors also regarded the Netherlands as one of their peculiarly valuable domains. Will so favourable an opportunity of realising the Pan-German dreams ever recur as that now presented after a victorious war, which will make us masters of the Antwerp Harbour and of the Belgian North Sea coast? That this is no fantastic dream, but very real thoughts and intentions, was clearly enough given to be understood by Zimmermann, the Under Foreign Secretary, later the Foreign Secretary, on the occasion of a conversation with Troelstra, the Dutch Socialist. Probably Zimmermann himself regretted his indiscretion as soon as his words had passed his lips; apart from this there is, however, sufficient circumstantial evidence that authoritative circles entertain the thought and the hope of politely inviting the kingdom of Holland, after the end of a victorious war, to enter first of all the German Zollverein, whereafter all

the rest would follow—as indicated in the programme for an understanding with Belgium which is outlined above.

As has already been remarked, Pan-German literature, in the period before the war, always represented the idea of a gradual association of Holland as an essential point in the programme for the “Greater Germany” which was the object of their efforts. During this war, it is true, the Pan-Germans have in this respect become more prudent than many occupying official positions, as, for example, King Ludwig of Bavaria, who here again, as on so many other points, chattered so compromisingly out of school. King Ludwig, the *enfant terrible* among German Princes, the immortal discoverer of the fact that France and Russia declared war against *us*, has openly and publicly put it forward as a German war aim that we must obtain possession of the mouths of the Rhine. The Netherlands can only be saved from becoming vassals to the Germans if the Pickelhaube is prevented from emerging victorious from the war.

A LETTER OF KING ALBERT.

One further fact hitherto unknown, reported by Beyens, deserves to be mentioned. Three days before the Ultimatum King Albert addressed a personal letter to the Emperor William, in which he appealed to the Emperor's many assurances of friendship and testimonies of favour towards his person and his country, and gave expression to his confidence that the neutrality of Belgium would be respected by Germany. To this letter no direct answer was sent. The answer was given by the Ultimatum and the invasion of the neutral country.

BELGIUM DIES, BUT DOES NOT SURRENDER.

Beyens believes that, as in so many other matters, the German Government were mistaken in their judgment of the probable Belgian attitude towards a German Ultimatum. They reckoned with something approaching certainty on a submission of the weak to the strong. A heroism, a sense of honour, a craving for freedom and independence,

such as was manifested in the actual behaviour of Belgium and expressed in the proud refusal of the infamous demand contained in the Ultimatum—such idealism in a people true to its treaties and devoted to its honour was not included as a factor in the German calculation.

The supposition of the Belgian diplomatist appears to be not unfounded. The most recent German psychology—this bastard offspring of Mother Germania, descended from Prussian militarism, Teutonic insolence and economic pride—the most recent German psychology, which recognises its own pursuit of power as the only justified idealism, while it has nothing but a contemptuous shrug of the shoulders for the rights and the freedom of others, could not imagine that a small and feeble people—like the Spartans against the Persians, like the Dutch against the Spaniards—would seize their arms in defence of their honour and independence and exclaim to the overwhelming intruder: “Belgium dies, but does not surrender!” The same struggle for freedom which, when waged by the Prussians a hundred years ago against the Imperial French, is rightly a glorious page in the history of the Prussian people, which in song and story is rightly held up to the young as a shining example of patriotism—this same struggle for freedom becomes a crime, an outrage worthy of death, when it is waged by the Belgian people against the German invader. It is not merely the Belgian army, but also the citizens of Belgium, their possessions, their dwellings and their towns, that must pay for this misdeed. Murder and arson, plunder and deportation, are the proper punishments for these offences. This is the new German Idealism, as it has been inoculated into the brave German people by fifty years’ domination of Prussianism and Hohenzollernism . . .

The German statesmen and military authorities did not believe in the true idealism as it was made manifest in the Belgian defence of the Fatherland. They were so little prepared for this, that on the occasion of the attack on Liège they did not even have in position the heavy artillery needed for the destruction of the strong forts, and in the absence of these it was necessary to order three army corps of the advance guards to the murderous work

of carrying it by storm. According to Beyens, this terrible mistake involved the sacrifice of 36,000 dead. After Liège was stormed in blood, ten days were needed in order to reorganise the decimated besieging army and to continue the advance with the artillery which had been brought up in the interval. These interesting facts are reported to us by Beyens. He does not, however, mention the gratifying fact that, with the sacrifice of 36,000 human lives, General Emmich gained the title of the "Conqueror of Liège," the Iron Cross of the First Class, and a special eulogy from the mouth of the Emperor.

THE CHIEF ACTORS IN THE DRAMA.

The Belgian diplomatist ends his book with a fine psychological analysis of the persons and groups representing the chief actors in this awe-inspiring drama.

Let us hear how he describes the Emperor :

A Sovereign, coming at an early age to the most conspicuous throne in Europe, already too sure of his own talents, fretting with impatience to rule without restraint or guardianship, pacific both by instinct and by reason, but of a helmeted and mail-clad pacifism, which loved to vent itself in needless threats. The same Prince, twenty-five years later, puffed up with pride over the marvellous expansion of his country (in which he had certainly borne his share by keeping the peace), but gradually won over to the schemes of conquest and of domination whispered into his ear ; ill-informed, for want of accurate reports and of personal discernment, as to the state of public feeling among his neighbours, and as to their capacity for resistance ; ready, without any qualms, to seize the first opportunity of starting a war in which victory seemed to him certain and the risks hardly worth counting ; the responsible author, since he wields a despotic sway, of all the horrors and disasters around us, bred by the relentless militarism and the boundless ambition of a dynasty that deems itself called upon to govern the world. (Beyens, p. 355.)

The state of mind of the German people, which allowed itself to be driven into this war by skilful and unscrupulous intriguers, is described by the Belgian diplomatist in terms as appropriate as those applied to those whom he describes as the seducers of the people :

A disciplined, credulous, and hard-working nation, concerned above all with earning its daily bread, pacific for the most part, or rather indifferent to foreign affairs, until the day when, on the strength of official assurances, it believed itself to be attacked, and in peril of losing its work, its national honour, its very existence. A lying vision, yet hard to banish from its gaze; an erroneous belief, which will drive it, until the bitter end, to face the most dire suffering and to endure the most cruel sacrifices. The future will teach us whether it will not demand later on a heavy reckoning from those who have played it false. (Beyens, pp. 356-7.)

The small minority who had supplied the spiritual material for the plans of the Emperor and his military environment, who had provided the intellectual foundation for their edifice of power, and are still ardently seeking every day to "explore" anew the deeper national-psychological, ethnographical and economic causes of this brutal absolutist, militaristic and dynastic outburst of violence—this minority of German intellectual leaders, who in their doctrinaire vanity cannot see the surface for sheer depth, cannot see the wood for the trees, who of all the classes of the German people have played the most ludicrous rôle, and to the tragedy of the hour have added the comic interlude of their professorial antics—into their origin also the Belgian observer conscientiously inquires. He explains their connection with the Prussian historical school of Treitschke, Sybel, Droysen, etc., and summarises his apt description in the following *résumé* :

A minority drawn from the intellectual and governing castes, dreaming of victory and aggrandisement, with a passionate desire to see the colossal fabric of German supremacy towering to the heavens, steeped in a limitless hatred or disdain for those who have not the honour to be Germans. From the very opening of hostilities, the morbid conceit of the scholars and men of science was unveiled in clear outlines through those amazing manifestoes on the rights that the superior science, organisation, strength, and culture of Germany empower her to claim. In my opinion, however [so Beyens adds], it would be a mistake to look upon this select band as typical of the nation, just as it would be wrong to make all Germany answerable for the misdeeds of her brutal soldiery, and for the frightful war waged by the military and naval chiefs. (Beyens, p. 357.)

* * * * *

The book of the Belgian statesman concludes with highly pessimistic views regarding the future of Germany, which

will not so quickly awake from its tragic dream of triumph and world dominion. With all the greater joy and confidence does the patriot look forward to the future lot of his own country. No Belgian, whether he has been forced to take the road of exile or has led a pitiable existence under the domination of the oppressor, need lose courage.

From the bells of the town-houses and of the churches the hour of freedom will one day be proclaimed, even if its coming be late. The iron monster which has trampled the unfortunate country will be beaten down, and with greater fervour than ever before the common mother will press to her heart her misused and scattered sons. To each one his country will merely become all the dearer the more it has suffered, and the more bravely it has overcome all its tribulations.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

I MAY summarise in the following sentences the result of my investigation into the Belgian documents :

1. The collection of Belgian documents published by the Berlin Foreign Office is tendenciously compiled and full of lacunæ : it contains only reports from the three capitals Berlin, Paris and London, and not a single report from Petrograd, Vienna or Rome. Further, the reports from the three first-mentioned capitals are not complete : they have been chosen exclusively with a view to making public everything favourable to Germany, and suppressing everything that is unfavourable. So far as unfavourable matter was included in the reports, it was because it could not be suppressed, since, though it was possible capriciously to omit reports, it was not possible arbitrarily to suppress portions of the reports which were printed.

2. Even this tendenciously compiled and entirely defective collection of reports does not give the slightest support to the view that the Entente Powers, either individually or collectively, had entertained or evinced bellicose offensive intentions against the Central Powers. Even if the collection of reports, as it exists, is accepted as expressing the views of Belgian diplomacy, the object involved in the union of the Entente Powers was in no way to crush Germany in an economic, a political, or a military sense ; it was merely the creation of a diplomatic and military counter-weight against aggression and against dangers which, in the view of the Entente Governments, and as

was apprehended by them, threatened the peace and the equilibrium of Europe from the side of Germany. The purpose and the aim of the Triple Entente were not the establishment of a preponderance of the Entente Powers, but the maintenance of equilibrium among the European Great Powers ; the object was not to suppress or strangle Germany, but to bring back this overweening Power to the ground of equal rights and of equal respect for the interests of all.

3. Since the Belgian ambassadorial reports come to an end long before the Austrian Ultimatum, they furnish no information and no judgment regarding the crisis which led to the present European war. They cannot therefore be applied as a basis for the assertion that Germany was attacked and is waging a defensive war. But further they do not serve even to explain a preventive war, since this has as a necessary presupposition the existence on the other side of an intention to attack. Such an intention to attack has, however, nowhere been asserted or even suggested by the Belgian Ambassadors.

4. The only result that emerges from the reports is that a state of tension is shown to have existed for years between the Great Powers and that this state of tension was constantly increasing. In many passages in their reports the Belgian Ambassadors inevitably ask the question: Who is responsible for this state of tension? Who is more, who is less responsible? Even if these questions were answered against the Entente Powers and in favour of Germany and Austria, such an answer would not furnish Germany with any justification for her action in relieving the diplomatic tension by resort to war, and in cutting through the Gordian knot instead of disentangling it. The answer given by the Belgian diplomatists to these questions is, however, by no means in the sense which I have assumed as a hypothesis. My collection of extracts, the one-sided tendency of which I openly admit, which I have expressly contrasted with the equally one-sided tendency of the German collection of reports—my extracts show that it is possible, even from the defective German collection of documents, to find at least as much

pointing to the European tension being attributable to the Central Powers as there is for the view that the Entente Powers were responsible.

Even if we considered only the 119 ambassadorial reports published by the German Government, passing over all the proved objections which can be urged against the German collection of documents, we should nevertheless, even in the most unfavourable case, arrive at the following result: For the state of European tension existing in the years before the outbreak of war all the Great Powers, those of the Triple Alliance as well as those of the Triple Entente, would more or less bear an equal measure of responsibility. For the outbreak of the European war, on the other hand, the Central Powers would, as before, continue to be the parties solely responsible. The guilt derived from the more remote antecedents of the war would be compensated; the guilt from the immediate antecedents would leave a debit balance standing exclusively against the Central Powers.

This is the conclusion—exonerating for the Central Powers only so far as the more remote period before the war is concerned—at which we arrive if we accept as evidence the German collection of reports in its present form, and nothing else. If, however, we inquire into the history of Europe in recent years in the light of all the material at our disposal, we arrive, even in the case of the more remote antecedents, at a result which is in all respects unfavourable to Germany and Austria.

In the long chapters in my two books of accusation on the "Antecedents of the Crime"¹ I have proved that Germany and Austria, in addition to the exclusive guilt for the outbreak of this war, also bear by far the preponderating share of the responsibility for the state of tension which prepared the ground for this war and made its outbreak possible. That this preponderance of responsibility did in fact rest on the side of the Central Powers would in all probability have been apparent from the Belgian ambassadorial reports as well, had these reports been published in their entirety from all the capitals

¹ See *J'accuse*, pp. 26-134; *The Crime*, Vol. II.

and without a prejudiced selection. Given such a complete and unfalsified picture, there would in all probability have emerged, even in the case of the more remote antecedents of the war, an enormous debit balance against Germany and Austria in place of the present apparent balancing of various accounts.

5. It is inadmissible to divide the evidence, according as it is favourable or unfavourable to one party or the other. Once the witness stands before the Court, he becomes a common witness for both parties, irrespective of which of the two parties has summoned him before the Court. The prosecution as well as the defence must allow all his depositions—subject to criticism in detail—to have force against them. This general principle of procedure holds also in the case of the great criminal pleas in which the guilt of the present war is to be determined. The party which produces the reports of Belgian Ambassadors, as selected by himself, as exonerating evidence in his own favour, must also allow other reports of the same Ambassadors which implicate him to be valid evidence against him. The notes printed in the first and second Belgian Grey Books, so far as the three capitals Berlin, London and Paris are concerned, are written by the same men as the reports contained in the German collection. The German Government must at once allow the reports in the Grey Books written by their own witnesses to be produced against them. But the reports from the other Ambassadors in the other capitals—which the German collection leaves entirely aside—must also be recognised by the German Government as credible testimony, since they cannot possibly describe one group of Belgian Ambassadors as giving an “objective diplomatic account of international politics” and refuse this description to the other group.

While the German collection of documents is exclusively occupied with the more remote antecedents of the war, and scarcely touches on the acute crisis of the summer of 1914 in its first beginnings (the last report dates from July 2nd, 1914), the Belgian Grey Books deal almost exclusively with the essential history of the conflict which begins with the Austrian Ultimatum of July 23rd, 1914, and ends with the invasion of Belgium on August 4th.

The German collection of documents deals with what I call in my books the "Antecedents of the Crime"; the Belgian Grey Books deal with what I describe as "The Crime." Whoever is a credible witness for the antecedents of the Crime must also be so for the history of the Crime. In order to give a complete picture of the views of Belgian diplomacy on this war and its antecedents, it was therefore necessary to amplify the German collection of reports by reference to the Belgian Grey Books and the book written by Baron Beyens, the last Belgian Ambassador, who was later Prime Minister.

What, however, is proved by these Grey Books and by Beyens' work ?

They furnish against Germany and Austria a plain and unconditional answer in the affirmative to the question of guilt and an absolute acquittal of England, Russia and France. There is no hesitation, no indulgent distribution of light and shade, no compensating charges against both sides, there is no *non liquet*. No, like a sure and certain blow of a hammer, the unanimous verdict of all the Belgian Ambassadors is :

Germany and Austria are alone and exclusively guilty of having deliberately and intentionally provoked the European War.

* * * * *

The result of my investigation into the Belgian documents must be a bitter disappointment to the authorities of the Foreign Office who burrowed about among the archives at Brussels for exonerating evidence in support of Germany's innocence. The "fat morsel" with which it was hoped to stop the mouth of public opinion throughout the world has turned into a pitiful and lean war-ration. The expected exoneration has become a new and annihilating incrimination. To the already too numerous accusers from foreign and neutral countries there have been added new and even more inexorable accusers. If the men like Beyens, Lalaing and Guillaume, whom the German Government themselves summoned as witnesses for the defence, now appear in a solid phalanx with their other colleagues

at the bar of the World's Court of Justice as witnesses for the prosecution against Germany, the accused who so inconsiderately selected their compurgators have only themselves to blame. With Goethe's "Zauberlehrling," who insolently conjured up the evil water-spirits and could not again exorcise them, the criminals who threaten to drown in the flood of the evidence of their guilt will exclaim with wailing and with wringing of the hands :

The need, Lord, is great !
The spirits I summoned
I cannot allay.

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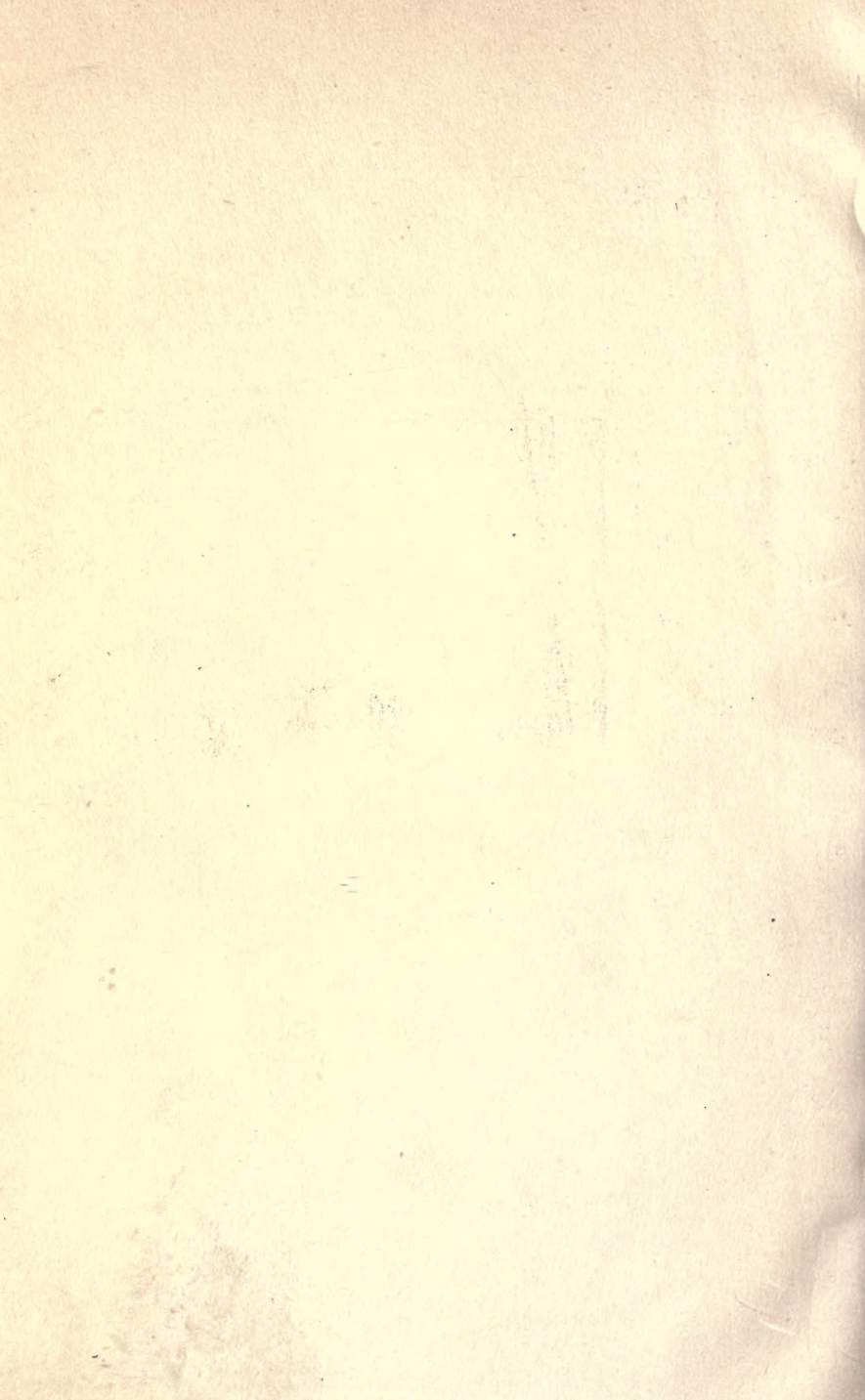
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