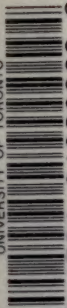


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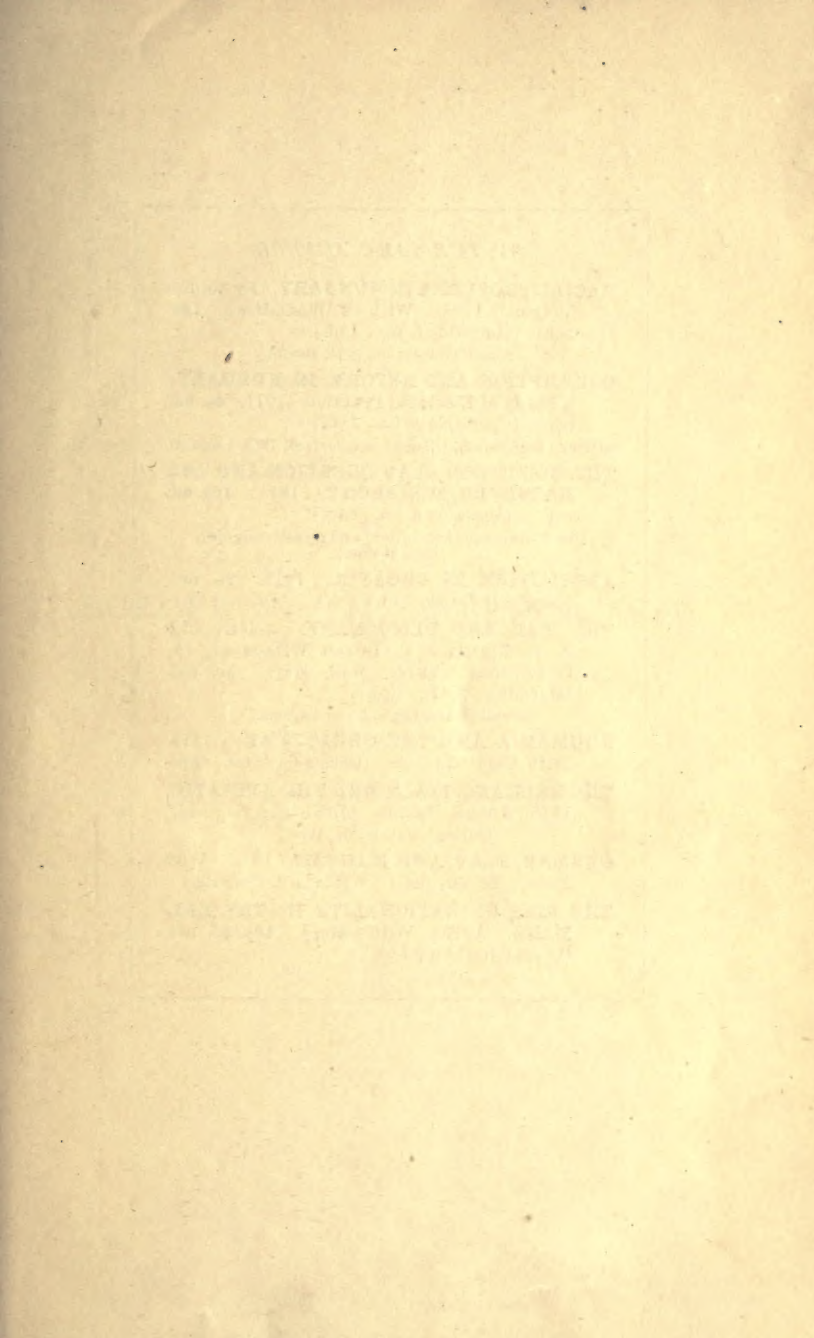


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EUROPE IN THE MELTING-POT

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PREFACE

FOR the ten years preceding the war I had devoted myself to the study of Central European history and politics, especially the problems centring round Austria-Hungary and the Balkans: and my work acquired added zest from the fact that so far as the English language was concerned, I was only too often digging in almost virgin soil. It may be that I was also led on by the altogether exaggerated significance assigned to my work by public opinion in the countries concerned, which was quite unaware of the contrast between its own interest and the profound indifference of the British public towards all such problems. That during these years my views had to undergo repeated and very radical modification is not a fact for which I need apologise; for few countries have ever been more fatal to preconceived notions than the now vanished Habsburg Monarchy, and a writer who after ten years of study still adhered to his original views, would thereby stand self-condemned. My first little essay, "The Future of Austria-Hungary" (1907), was designed to show the superficiality of the thesis "that the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy will collapse at the death of Francis Joseph." How far the world has travelled since those days may be judged from the chorus of approval which greeted my arguments against the union of German-Austria with Germany (as likely to

endanger the *latter* !) and in favour of an amicable Adriatic and Balkan understanding between Austria-Hungary and Italy !

It was only gradually that I came to realise the full bearing of the Austrian problem upon the peace of Europe. "Racial Problems in Hungary" (1908), which was devoted to a detailed historical exposure of Magyar racial policy, ended with the warning that "the fate of the Near East" depends above all on "the course of events in Agram, Budapest, and Vienna," that "the historic mission of the House of Habsburg is the vindication of equal rights and liberties for all the races committed to its charge," and that "the abandonment of this mission would leave Russia supreme in the Balkans, and would endanger the very existence of a Great Power upon the Middle Danube."

Magyar misrule in Croatia had already forced itself upon my attention, but it was not until Count Aehrenthal's annexation of Bosnia in October 1908 provoked a long and acute international crisis, that I began to realise fully the dangerous possibilities of the Southern Slav Question for the general peace of Europe. Being in close contact with certain political circles in Austria which were genuinely well disposed towards the Croats, I continued for some time to overestimate the prospects of Vienna initiating serious reforms in defiance of Magyar opposition. Thus it was still possible for me in 1911 to dedicate "To that Austrian statesman who shall possess the genius and the courage necessary to solve the Southern Slav Question" a book ("The Southern Slav Question and the Habsburg Monarchy") which was already an extremely outspoken criticism of the whole Balkan policy of Austria-Hungary. In my concluding chapter I argued that Austria's "future as a great Power depends" upon a solution of this problem,

and that "the whole Eastern coast of the Adriatic still remains an unsolved equation in the arithmetic of Europe." "Croato-Serb Unity must and will come. It rests with Austria to delay its attainment for another generation and reap the disastrous fruits of such a policy, or by resolutely encouraging Southern Slav aspirations, to establish Austrian influence in the Northern Balkans by lasting bonds of sympathy and interest. Upon Austria's choice of alternative depends the future of the Habsburg Monarchy." "Corruption and Reform in Hungary," published earlier in the same year, was devoted to a detailed exposure of the methods by which the Magyar oligarchy maintained its monopoly at home and thus found itself free to give an anti-Slav direction to the Habsburg Monarchy's foreign policy.

When early in 1912 the situation was still further compromised by the suspension of the Croatian constitution, I sounded a warning note in a small booklet, entitled "Absolutism in Croatia," which, of course, passed unheeded. Events took their course. The Balkan Wars, and above all the victories of Serbia, transformed and infinitely complicated the Southern Slav problem and made the perfidious and ineffective policy of Vienna and Budapest more and more apparent. By this time I was under no illusions as to the growing danger of war, and concentrated all my efforts towards arousing the *German*-reading public, alike in Austria-Hungary and in Germany itself, to a sense of the grave issues involved. It was with this object that I rewrote in German, and greatly expanded in the process, my last two books, which appeared in 1912 and 1913 in Leipzig and Berlin under the titles "Ungarische Wahlen" and "Die südslavische Frage." Any one who takes the trouble to compare the English and German editions of the latter

will see that I was already like a drowning man clutching desperately at any straw. The dedication already quoted now ran as follows: "The English edition of this book was dedicated to that Austrian statesman who shall have the genius and courage to solve the Southern Slav Question. At the twelfth hour this dedication is repeated. 20 July 1911-20 April 1913." In my preface I referred to "the radically mistaken policy of the Monarchy towards the Serbs and Croats," and argued that a further delay in solving the problem "might be fatal for Austria." "The Balkan upheaval forces Austria-Hungary to hasten her easy-going pace and to work at full pressure, to make good the omissions of the past. The immediate future will prove whether Austria possesses the moral strength to solve the problem of Croato-Serb Unity and to force Hungary to a radical revision of its racial policy, or whether, false to her historical mission, she thinks of abdicating in favour of the Serbian, Bulgarian, and Roumanian national states. This alternative specially concerns Germany, who might easily find herself in the position of paying the political debts of Austria."

During the year which followed I was reluctantly driven to admit that good faith and serious intentions were alike lacking at headquarters in Vienna: and the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand—who with all his faults represented a real driving force and was bent upon a solution of the racial problem—removed the only man at all capable of guiding events or holding back the machine of state from the abyss.

So long as war could be by any means averted, it would have been nothing short of criminal to work for so radical a solution as the disruption of the Hapsburg Monarchy: and I lived in the slowly vanishing-hope that a catastrophe

would be averted by internal reforms, such as would replace the fatal Dual System by federalism on a basis of nationality. But when at last Francis Joseph and his entourage, egged on by Berlin, plunged Europe into war upon an issue which owed its acuteness to their own incompetence and bad faith, then it was obvious that the time for advocating half-measures was at an end, and that it lay in the general interest — indeed, in the very logic of things — that as radical a solution as possible should be found for questions which had so long kept Central and South-Eastern Europe in a ferment. The causes to which I had devoted nearly ten years of study were henceforth, for good or for ill, bound up and identified with the fate of my own country : and for me all the great issues of right and wrong in the West were reinforced and strengthened by other more distant appeals that cried aloud to Heaven.

During the first two years of war I devoted my whole time to explaining by means of books, pamphlets, lectures, and articles the significance of the war in its East European aspects, which British public opinion was still only too apt to dismiss as secondary. My main theses—which, I venture to maintain, have been amply justified by events—were :

(1) That the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary and Turkey were the natural and inevitable consequences of the programme of Nationality officially proclaimed by the Entente : nay more, that without this dismemberment, the complete victory of the Entente was definitely impossible.

(2) That the future of the Southern Slavs, owing to their geographical position as an obstacle upon Germany's land-route to the East and as holders of the eastern Adriatic coast, was a problem of far more than local importance,

and vitally concerned the whole Entente and the British Empire in particular.

(3) That the Macedonian front was of vital importance to us, not merely because of the political consequences which its abandonment would have involved, and because of our commitments of honour towards Serbia, but also from the strategic point of view, as a means of shortening and winning the war, isolating our weakest enemies and providing a means of access to Austria-Hungary, the Achilles' heel of the Central Powers.

✓ From the first it seemed to me obvious that the Pan-german plan, summed up in the two catchwords of "Mitteleuropa" and "Berlin-Bagdad," could never be defeated by a mere policy of negation, but was a challenge to the Western democracies, alike on grounds of abstract justice and political expediency, to produce a rival programme. To my mind the territorial issues, though merely the means to an end, not the end itself, took precedence in order of time; and these issues seemed to me to centre in the creation of a New Europe upon a mainly racial basis—the reduction of Germany to her national boundaries, the restoration of Polish and Bohemian independence, the completion of Italian, Roumanian, Jugoslav, and Greek national unity, the ejection of the Turks from Europe. Such a programme was very slow to "catch on" at a time when our statesmen were careful to avoid any lead in foreign policy: and I found myself often regarded as a dangerous agitator, bent upon what was disastrously impossible and could only prolong the war and all its miseries. Only very slowly did it dawn upon the public mind that such a programme, so far from prolonging the war, was the sole road to victory, to the overthrow of the old order and to the establishment of a League of Nations.

It was because the small group to which I belonged realised with growing alarm the *désorientation* of public opinion and even of the press on all these problems—and, it is necessary to add, the abysmal ignorance of our responsible statesmen—that in the autumn of 1916 I decided to found a weekly review, which under the name of *The New Europe* should champion the cause of “Integral Victory,” the Single Front and the Single Command, and still closer economic and intellectual intercourse among the Allies, with a League of Nations, and drastic all-round disarmament as the final goal. As confirmed Slavophiles, we supported an advanced democratic programme in Russia, a federal solution for the border nations, and agrarian reform throughout Eastern and Southern Europe. At home, while avoiding party politics, we advocated diplomatic, consular, and Foreign Office reform, demanded the establishment of parliamentary control over foreign policy, and urged the invalidity of secret engagements or treaties concluded behind the back of Parliament. We never ceased to warn against a repetition of the methods of previous European Peace Congresses, to claim equality of treatment for big and small nations, to insist upon the incompatibility of such doctrines as “Non-Interference” and “Absolute State Sovereignty” with the idea of a League of Nations. Above all we pled the cause of the future League, not merely on its merits as an abstract proposition, but as the only practical alternative to universal bankruptcy and social upheaval. It was just our profound belief in the need for such a League that led us to advocate the full territorial programme of European reconstruction; for we held that as the horse must precede the cart, so is satisfied nationalism the first essential preliminary to a new international order.

Though the contents of the present volume were written at intervals during the war, the reader will, I hope, discover in them a certain continuity of political thought which connects them with an earlier and uniform volume, "The War and Democracy" (December 1914), written in conjunction with four friends—Professor A. E. Zimmern, Mr. J. Dover Wilson, Lord Eustace Percy, and Mr. A. Greenwood. This latter was dedicated to the Workers' Educational Association, and it is to their members that I would fain offer its successor, if they will accept it from me.

One of my main hopes for the future is that the working classes of this country will take an increasingly active and intelligent interest in foreign politics. They already possess the necessary political power, and on the day when they have acquired the knowledge which will enable them to use that power, they will exercise a decisive control over foreign policy. Such a development seems to me both possible and eminently desirable. The war has cured me of any lingering illusions regarding "the Old diplomacy," and has shown me that the supreme illusion of all is to imagine that the class which at present controls foreign policy is either efficient or informed. On the contrary, their ignorance of the very elements of most foreign problems has revealed itself time after time during this war and has indeed most assuredly prolonged its course, while to-day their renewed blunders are perpetuating chaos in Russia, Hungary, and elsewhere.

The only cure for the present situation is the growth of knowledge about foreign countries, and of the consciousness that foreign policy is not a monopoly of the few, but the direct and vital concern of every man and woman in these islands. For upon it depends the issue of peace and war, and millions have died in battle since 1914,

because the last generation refused to interest itself in international politics and hugged itself in the fancied security conferred by a strip of narrow sea. It is in this direction that the W.E.A. can do invaluable work for the future; and if this book can but contribute towards widening their field of studies, it will not have appeared in vain.

I cannot close this preface without expressing the immense debt which I owe to the four friends with whom I acted in closest co-operation in all my literary work during the past four years—Mr. H. Wickham Steed (now editor of *The Times*), whose unrivalled knowledge of international politics helped us at every turn: Mr. A. F. Whyte, who, by taking up the editorship of *The New Europe* at a few days' notice and replacing me throughout my period of military service, saved the paper from certain extinction: Mr. R. M. Burrows (Principal of King's College), whose settled policy it has been to provide a university centre for the study of intellectual and political movements on the Continent: and Professor T. G. Masaryk (now President of the Czecho-Slovak Republic), without whose constant incentive and encouragement *The New Europe* might never have come into being, and who, even at the most discouraging period of his London exile, never lost faith in the full programme of reconstruction. I am also most grateful to my friend, Mr. George Glasgow, sub-editor of *The New Europe*, who during my absence abroad saw the proofs of the present volume through the press.

R. W. SETON-WATSON.

25th July 1919.



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THE AUSTRO-SERBIAN DISPUTE¹

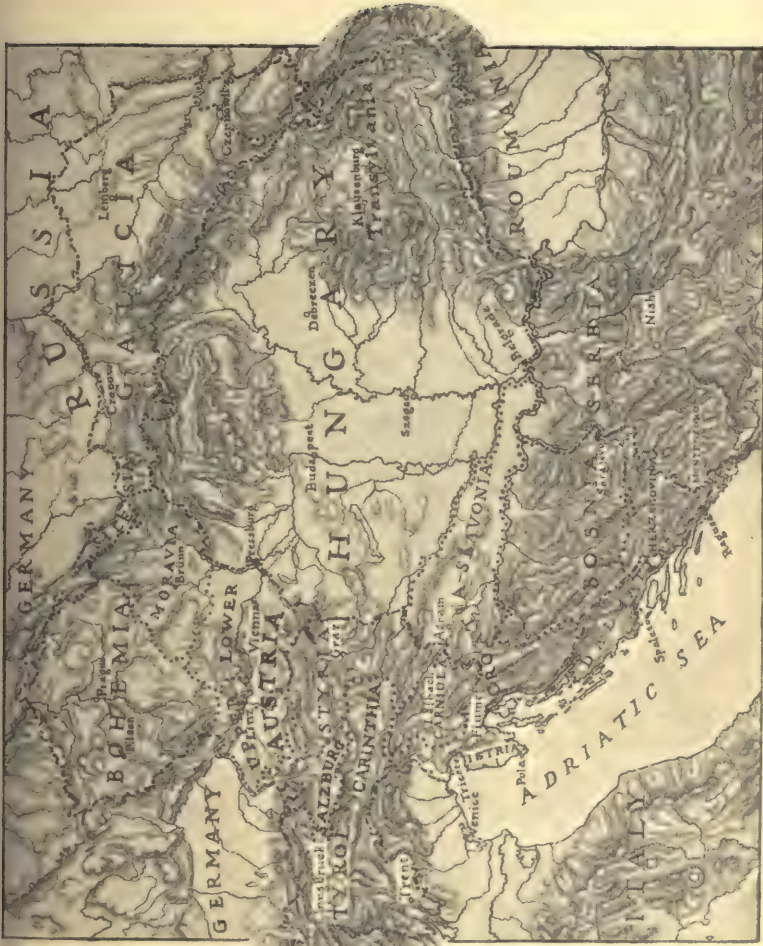
I. THE ASSASSINATION OF THE ARCHDUKE

THE actual event which gave the first impetus to the greatest war of history was the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, but it is obvious that the causes lie far deeper than that mysterious crime. Before considering them, however, it is necessary to inquire what the murder meant for Austria-Hungary. Quite apart from its effects upon foreign policy, his death exercised an infinitely greater influence upon the internal development of the Habsburg Monarchy than the tragic fate of Crown Prince Rudolf twenty-five years earlier. For Francis Ferdinand was one of the outstanding personalities in Europe—with the possible exception of William II., the most masterful member of any reigning house. As his uncle grew older, Francis Ferdinand had come more and more to represent in his own person a great political programme—the overthrow of the effete Dual System, which originally rested on the dominance of two races, the German and the Magyar, over the remaining eight, but which had ceased to “work” since the virtual collapse of the former in all save foreign policy; the regeneration of the Monarchy as a centralist state, on a wide if modified federalist basis;

¹ From *The Round Table*, No. 16, September 1914.

the vindication of the rights of the subject races of Hungary ; a policy of internal administrative and linguistic reform ; the solution of the Southern Slav question by unifying the Serbo-Croat race under Habsburg rule ; and the consequent extension of Austrian influence and prestige in the Balkans. He thus incorporated the " Great Austrian " idea in its most ambitious form. Neither German nor Slav nor Latin, but merely " Habsburg " in feeling, he was, both by descent and by temperament, a typical blend of Habsburg and Bourbon. Though not in any sense a pacifist, he was also not an irresponsible militarist. We have the authority of Dr. Danev, the Bulgarian ex-Premier, for the assertion that Francis Ferdinand used his influence during the first Balkan War strongly in favour of peace with Serbia ; and from another highly reliable source the present writer learnt the remark of the Archduke, dating from the same period : " An Emperor can risk an unsuccessful war, but a Crown Prince cannot." In short, Francis Ferdinand's policy was dynastic and imperialist, and yet in many respects democratic ; at the least its fulfilment would have involved a vast step towards democratic ideals. It must be borne in mind that, despite many shortcomings Austria has made great progress politically in recent years. The real obstacle has always lain in Hungary, where the Magyar oligarchy, aided by its Jewish parasites in the commercial and journalistic world, has monopolised all political power and exploited it in favour of a narrow racial hegemony.

The Sarajevo murder is, and may remain, a hideous mystery. In a country so infested by secret police as Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Croatia—where for years past treason-hunts have been the order of the day, and indeed treasonable propaganda has often been artificially created



AUSTRIA-HUNGARY : PHYSICAL.

to order—it is difficult to understand how so elaborate a plot could have eluded the vigilance of the authorities. It is an open secret that no precautions were taken for the protection of the Archduke and his wife, and without endorsing the widespread assertion that the two murderers, Čabrinović and Princip, were Austrian *agents provocateurs*, we are at least entitled to suspect that they were left free to ply the trade of assassin. This is borne out by the well-authenticated remark made by the Archduke to his suite after the explosion of the bomb—"The fellow will get the Golden Cross of Merit for this"—a phrase which merely confirms equally authentic and significant remarks made by him on other occasions. Not less suspicious are the shameful anti-Serb excesses which followed the murder. No one who knows anything of Bosnia will pretend that the police and the military were alike powerless to prevent the wholesale sacking of houses and hotels on two successive days by the scum of the bazaar population. *Cui prodest?* Until the great war is over further investigation will be impossible, and it may be that meanwhile all traces of the real truth will be effaced. For the moment it is enough to point out that despite the widespread horror excited by the outrage, the removal of Francis Ferdinand evoked in many influential circles in Vienna and Budapest feelings of thinly veiled relief. It is only fair to add that while some were influenced by fears for their political monopoly, others were persuaded that his accession to the throne might prove a grave embarrassment to the dynasty, owing to the serious and incurable disease with which he was threatened and which filled both himself and his wife with gloomy forebodings.

The immediate effect of the crime was to remove the one man capable of controlling a difficult situation and to bring

the irresponsible elements to the front. The grief of the Army, the Clericals, and even of certain sections of the Slav population, who each in their own way had looked to Francis Ferdinand as their leader and saviour in the near future, was now skilfully exploited by the very people who secretly rejoiced at his disappearance from the scene. The Magyar oligarchy, which already had its back against the wall, realised that the moment for action had come. Its reactionary ideas of racial dominance found a leader—fanatical, iron-handed, personally equally brave and honest, but politically quite immune from all scruples—in Count Stephen Tisza, the Hungarian Premier.

The murder provided a splendid pretext for aggression. The psychological effect of so dastardly a deed was to unite many discordant elements in anger and revenge, and was well calculated to destroy Serbia's reviving reputation in Europe. Nor must one personal factor of the highest importance be overlooked—the effect of such a crime upon the German Emperor. The loss of an intimate and valued friend, the deadly blow struck at a closely allied Power, the peculiar infamy of an outrage upon one of the sacred royal caste, all contributed to make him impervious to argument on the subject, and it is probable that the friction which arose between the Courts of Berlin and Vienna in connection with the Archduke's funeral made William II. all the more anxious to show what he regarded as unquestioning loyalty to his ally's cause. To this extent he may be said to have become the cat's-paw of Viennese intrigue, even if there are grounds for believing that other considerations had their effect on his decision.

Vienna and Budapest were at one in attempting to fix the whole blame upon Serbia. The methods employed to convince Europe were the same as those of the Bosnian

and Balkan crises of 1908 and 1912, and it is essential to recur briefly to those events.

II. THE CRISES OF 1908 AND 1912

When, as a result of the Young Turkish revolution, Aehrenthal decided upon the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a case had to be made out to prove its necessity. In the summer of 1908, therefore—as a result of connivance between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Vienna and the Hungarian Coalition Cabinet and its nominee Baron Rauch, as Ban of Croatia—wholesale arrests were made in Croatia, on charges of treasonable Pan-Serb propaganda; and in March 1909, while the international crisis was at its height, the notorious High Treason Trial opened at Agram. Three weeks later the Austrian historian, Dr. Friedjung, published an article in the *Neue Freie Presse*, in which, on the basis of documents supplied to him by the Foreign Office, he formally accused a number of prominent politicians of the Serbo-Croat Coalition of being in the pay of Belgrade. It is an open secret that if war with Serbia had resulted, these leaders would have been summarily shot, and with them would probably have perished all evidence of the perfidious conspiracy directed against them. The crisis passed, and in due course the libel action brought by the Serbo-Croat leaders against Dr. Friedjung came up before a Viennese jury and developed into one of the most sensational political trials of modern times. It was conclusively proved that the “documents” supplied to Dr. Friedjung were impudent forgeries, deliberately concocted to ruin the movement for unity and the political parties which advocated it; and the methods of Count Aehrenthal and the officials of the Ballplatz were gravely compromised.

Further inquiries, due mainly to the energy of the Czech philosopher and politician, Professor Masaryk, elicited the fact that the forgeries originated in the Austro-Hungarian Legation at Belgrade, which thus was exposed as the centre of the plot to discredit Serbia in the interests of Vienna. When Masaryk, in a scathing speech in the Austrian Delegation, openly denounced Count Forgách, the Minister in Belgrade, as "Count Azev,"¹ attempts were made to save the latter's reputation at the expense of subordinate members of the Legation; but his moral responsibility for the forgeries was finally established by the tactical errors of Aehrenthal and his official press.²

These shameful methods, in every way worthy of the worst police-state traditions of Napoleon or Metternich, not only aroused the bitterest feeling throughout Southern Slav lands, but rendered friendly relations between Austria-Hungary and Serbia almost impossible. When Count Berchtold succeeded Count Aehrenthal as Foreign Minister, there seemed to be some prospect of improvement, but though personally beyond reproach he was far too indolent and superficial to attempt any reform of the system which lay like a canker at the heart of Austrian foreign policy. Not merely did the old bureaucratic gang remain, but ere very long Forgách, who had in the meantime been transferred from Belgrade to the less electric atmosphere of Dresden, was actually summoned to the Ballplatz as one of the chief directors of Balkan policy. The anti-Serbian campaign, hitherto in the hands of the two under-secretaries, Kania and Macchio, thus passed under the control

¹ An allusion to the notorious Russian *agent provocateur*, who was at once a member of the secret police and of the revolutionary organisation.

² See a detailed account of this incident in my "Southern Slav Question," chap. xii.

of a still more pronounced enemy of the Southern Slavs. That there was no provocation on the part of Serbia it would be idle to assert. Indeed, it may be admitted that the authorities in Belgrade did little or nothing to repress those anarchic and unruly elements which are so much in evidence in all the Balkan capitals and which are systematically encouraged by a noisy gutter press. But such inaction is partly explained by the notorious part played in Belgrade by the secret agents of Vienna and Budapest. Nor should it be forgotten that all overtures from Belgrade were consistently and almost contemptuously rejected by the Ballplatz. At the height of the Balkan crisis three prominent Austrian politicians visited Belgrade with the definite object of promoting an understanding, though without any formal authorisation from Vienna; and one of them, who enjoys the confidence of almost all Southern Slavs,¹ was empowered by the Serbian Premier, Mr. Pašić, to put forward such far-reaching proposals on the part of the Serbian Government as would have revolutionised the whole relations of the Monarchy with its Balkan neighbours. This offer contained the promise not only of railway, road, and bridge concessions throughout the new Serbian territories to Austrian capitalists, but even the pledge of the "most favoured nation" clause in the next commercial treaty. Count Berchtold's attitude towards these advances, combined with the scandals of the Prochaska affair² at

¹ This was Professor Masaryk, now President of the Czecho-Slovak Republic. At the time of writing it did not seem advisable to mention him by name. Shortly after (in October 1914) I went to Rotterdam to meet Professor Masaryk, who came from Prague by secret arrangement in order to get into touch with his friends in the West.

² The occupation of Prizren by the Serbian army and the consequent isolation of Mr. Prochaska, the Austro-Hungarian Consul in that town, from his Government, provided the latter with a con-

the same time, forced Pašić to the conclusion that friendship with Austria was impossible, and greatly strengthened the influence of that arch intriguer, Mr. Hartwig, the Russian Minister in Belgrade. The hostile attitude of the Monarchy towards Serbia during the first war was still further accentuated in the second war, when Bulgaria received large material aid from Vienna and was publicly encouraged in her aggressive attitude by a famous speech of the Hungarian Premier, Count Tisza. The keen hostility towards Serbia which inspired Count Forgách, Baron Macchio,¹ and their colleagues in the Ballplatz, must be regarded as a very important factor in the situation, nor should their relations with the German Ambassador in Vienna—an active enemy of all Slav movements, whether in Russia or in Austria—be overlooked.

It is well, then, to realise the determining factors in Austria-Hungary after the removal of the "strong man." The old Emperor, peace-loving and possessed of unrivalled experience, but entirely devoid of all initiative and no longer able to check or hold back the forces working around him. The Court clique, consisting of his Chamberlain, Prince Montenuovo, his aide-de-camp, Count Paar—both open enemies of the late Duchess of Hohenberg—and certain female influences, ringing him round as by a Chinese

venient pretext for inaugurating an anti-Serb campaign and inflaming public opinion. For a fortnight the entire population of Vienna firmly believed that Prochaska had been shamefully mutilated by the Serb troops, and it was only when he arrived unhurt in Vienna that the legend fell to the ground. At the same time similar libels against Serbia were propagated in Vienna—notably a circumstantial account of how General Živković had with his own hand murdered the Albanian leader Isa Boljetinac! In reality they never met.

¹ It is worth noting that after Italy's declaration of neutrality Macchio was despatched as ambassador to Rome, in a last despairing effort to drag Italy into active support of the Triple Alliance and incidentally to poison the minds of Italian statesmen against Serbia.

wall of preconceived ideas. Konrad von Hoetzendorf, an able soldier, but a man without a trace of judgment, balance or statesmanship, ready to stake all on a gambler's throw. The Foreign Office clique, with its sinister record, utterly shortsighted and uninspired. The German Ambassador, Tschirschky, with all the supporters he could muster in the financial and journalistic world. Count Stürgkh, the Austrian Premier, whose complete insignificance rendered the task of the extremists easier. Count Tisza, the Hungarian Premier, a Calvinist fanatic ready to die in the last ditch for an ideal as perverted and anachronous as that which inspired Paul Krüger.

III. THE RACE ISSUE

What is it, then, that has rendered friendship between Austria-Hungary and Serbia impossible? The obstacle is at once economic and national. Let us deal with the former issue first. Serbia, as an inland country, found her economic independence hampered and threatened at every turn by her powerful neighbour, while on the other hand the provinces of Dalmatia and Bosnia, which form geographically the seaboard of Serbia and are inhabited by men of her own race, are in alien hands. Her efforts at economic emancipation under King Peter led to the so-called "Pig War" against the Monarchy; but though unexpectedly successful in finding new markets, the Serb peasants felt the pinch of such a struggle and repaid it in an increased hatred of Austria-Hungary. At this point came the Young Turkish Revolution and the consequent annexation of Bosnia by Aehrenthal. Of course it had long been obvious to external observers that in 1878 Austria-Hungary had come to stay, and that her effective administration would

never again be superseded by the phantom Turkish suzerainty. Yet that act, though only technically a breach of international law, touched the whole Serb race to the quick and led to violent outbursts of impotent fury. For some months it seemed as though Serbia and Montenegro were bent upon staking their very existence upon war with the Monarchy. Aehrenthal, of course, adhered stubbornly to the policy of annexation. Russia, after encouraging the sister States in their diplomatic resistance, abandoned them to their fate when Germany stepped forth in "shining armour" to support her ally. Nothing was left for them but a humiliating submission, embodied in the document which Viennese diplomacy has made a convenient point of departure for the Austrian Note to Serbia.¹

This reverse had a chastening effect upon Serbia and restored her to a sense of hard realities. From that day dates the rapid renaissance of her national spirit, and of its most practical form of expression, the Serbian Army. No one who visited Belgrade in 1908-9 and returned in 1912-1913 could fail to wonder at the transformation. The two Balkan wars revealed Serbia to the outside world as a real military power, revealed, too, the latent possibilities of the Serb race. Expansion on natural lines to the west having been artificially prevented, Serbia now had to look for other exits, and the first result of her victories over the Turks was her occupation of Northern Albania and of the very inferior but tolerable ports of Durazzo and Medua. Berchtold was too shortsighted to realise that for reasons of physical geography these harbours could never become naval bases, that their mountainous hinterland was likely to be a source of weakness to the conquerors, and that the moment had arrived for finally tempting the Serbs into the

¹ See White Paper, No. 4.

Austrian sphere of influence by the bait of generous commercial concessions through Bosnia and Dalmatia. Turning a deaf ear to those who urged such a policy upon him, he imposed an absolute veto upon Serbian expansion on the Adriatic and devoted himself to causing friction among the allies. Serbia thus had no alternative save to seek her economic outlet down the valley of the Vardar, and in so doing she came into violent conflict with Bulgarian aspirations in Macedonia. To the Ballplatz a war between the allies was the first condition to that Austrian advance on Salonica which still remained the ideal of an influential section of Austrian and Hungarian opinion.

But the issues involved lie far deeper than the quarrel between Belgrade and Vienna or Budapest. The unity of a race of eleven millions is at stake—the future of all the wide lands that lie between Villach and Monastir, between Neusatz and Cattaro. The subjoined table shows existing political subdivisions and gives some idea of the untenable situation of the Southern Slavs.

	Croat.	Serb.	Slovene.	Serbo-Croat-Moslem.
I. 1. Under Austria—				
(a) Dalmatia . . .	600,000	100,000	..	..
(b) Istria . . .	200,000	..	100,000	..
(c) Carniola } Carinthia j . . .	..	..	1,200,000	..
2. Under Hungary—				
(a) Croatia-Slavonia	1,750,000	650,000	..	..
(b) Banat, and W. Counties . . .	200,000	450,000	100,000	..
3. Under Austria-Hun- gary jointly—				
Bosnia-Herzegovina	450,000	850,000	..	600,000
II. 4. Independent Serbia	..	3,250,000	..	..
5. Independent Monte- negro . . . . .	..	350,000	..	..
	3,200,000	5,650,000	1,400,000	600,000
United total . . .	10,850,000			

While Serbia, released by the hideous tragedy of 1903 from the corrupt and irresponsible yoke of the Obrenovitch, entered upon a new era under a rival dynasty, a movement of almost equal importance was taking place among her kinsmen across the Save and Drina. In 1905 the scattered opposition parties of Croatia combined into the so-called Croato-Serb Coalition, and at the conferences of Fiume and Zara adopted a programme of constructive reform as the basis of joint political action on the part of both races. The immediate result was that the party which for the previous twenty years had ruled Croatia in the interests of Budapest by the aid of every imaginable corruption and violence, at once lost its majority and collapsed. After a brief reconciliation with the Magyars, the Croato-Serb Coalition was driven once more into opposition: but nothing could now check the growing perception that Croat and Serb are one race, divided only by differences which the modern world no longer regards as the excuse for a family feud. To check this movement for unity, Vienna and Budapest resorted to the systematic persecution of the Serbs of Croatia. Wholesale arrests and charges of treason led up to the monster trial at Agram, which dragged on for seven months amid scandals worthy of the days of Judge Jeffreys. The Diet ceased to meet, the constitution of Croatia was in abeyance, the elections were characterised by corruption and violence such as eclipsed even the infamous Hungarian elections of 1910; the press and the political leaders were singled out for special acts of persecution and intimidation. These tactics seemed to have reached their height in the Friedjung trial (December 1909), to which reference has been made above, and its scandals led to the fall of Baron Rauch, who, as Ban of Croatia, had been responsible for many of the worst abuses.

But there was merely a change of person, not a change of system, and ere long the friction between Magyar and Southern Slav was as acute as ever. Serbo-Croat unity was only cemented by persecution, and the movement soon extended to the kindred Slovenes and struck root even among the most confirmed Clericals. In the spring of 1912 the conflict between Agram and Budapest culminated in the abolition of the Croatian constitution, in the appointment of an unscrupulous official as dictator, and a few months later in the suspension of the charter of the Serb Orthodox Church. From an Austrian point of view nothing could have been more unfortunate. For close on the heels of these crying illegalities and the lively demonstrations and unrest which they evoked, came the Balkan war, the crushing victories of the allies over Turkey, the resurrection of the lost Serbian empire, the long-deferred revenge for the defeat of Kosovo. The Southern Slav provinces of the Monarchy were carried off their feet by a wave of almost ecstatic enthusiasm for the Balkan League, and an almost impossible situation was reached when the Austro-Hungarian Government placed itself in violent conflict with Serbia, vetoed her expansion to the Adriatic, insisted upon the creation of an independent Albania and mobilised to enforce her openly Serbophobe policy. Even during Cuvaj's régime in Croatia, in other words in the spring preceding the war, the movement of national protest had spread far beyond the classes which usually control such movements. Its infection had spread to the schools, and on one occasion practically every boy and girl above the age of fourteen in the schools of Croatia, Bosnia, and Dalmatia had indulged in a spontaneous and well-organised political strike! On such soil the Balkan war struck deep root, and in one short year the Southern Slav youth was

irretrievably lost for Austria. The moderate politicians lost all hold upon the younger generation: the students simply ignored them and went their own way. Many dreamt of revolution, all alike looked to Serbia as the day-star of national liberty. Such was the *milieu* out of which came the group of youthful fanatics whose act of terrorism has set Europe in a blaze. Those whose sympathy for the Italian Risorgimento is not damped by the methods of the Carbonari or of Mazzini's disciples, who do not despair of Russian freedom because its cause has been stained by acts of terrorism, will not condemn a whole nation for the crimes of a few raw and unbalanced striplings. The hideous irony of it all is that Francis Ferdinand was the one man capable of righting the desperate internal situation; the one man in high quarters who was resolutely opposed to Magyar policy towards the Hungarian nationalities and toward Croatia and resolved to attempt some drastic solution of the Southern Slav problem, as soon as fate should grant him the opportunity.

To sum up, it cannot be too strongly affirmed that the incentive to the crime came from within the Monarchy, from the intolerable misrule of the Magyars, aggravated by Viennese connivance. While it is true to say that the existence of an independent Serbia kindled the imagination of the Serbs and Croats within the Monarchy and rendered them restless under galling political conditions, and that Belgrade, like all other Balkan capitals, contains anarchical and revolutionary elements eager to make mischief across the frontiers, there are, on the other hand, no grounds whatever for supposing that official Serbia had any connection with the crime. Everything points to the opposite conclusion, for the murder occurred at a moment when Serbia was specially in need of peace. The Concordat with

the Vatican had only been signed a week before; the negotiations regarding the Orient railway had reached a critical stage; above all, the customs and military union between Serbia and Montenegro was on the point of being proclaimed and there was even a prospect of a final arrangement regarding the mutual relations of the Karageorgevitch and Petrovitch dynasties. In other words, in the absence of proof the presumption would be in favour of aggression from Vienna to prevent Serbian consolidation, rather than from Belgrade in favour of a criminal provocation of the Habsburg Monarchy.

The one mistake made by Serbia was her omission to offer a thorough inquiry, without waiting for any such suggestion from Vienna; and there is reason to believe that this step was prevented by Mr. Hartwig, whose whole policy had been devoted to embittering still further the relations of Serbia and the Monarchy. His sudden death within a fortnight of the murder, during an official call upon his Austro-Hungarian colleague, seemed to many observers a signal example of retributory justice. In this connection, however, it is right to point out that as in Teheran so in Belgrade Mr. Hartwig often far outran the instructions or intentions of his Government, and that the appointment of Prince Gregory Trubetzkoi, the gifted exponent of Russian foreign policy,¹ as his successor at the Russian Legation in Belgrade, was a markedly conciliatory act on the part of St. Petersburg.

IV. THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN ULTIMATUM

The Austro-Hungarian Note to Serbia is susceptible of only one interpretation; it was deliberately couched in

¹ See his "Russland als Grossmacht," trans. by Josef Melnik, Stuttgart, 1913.

such terms as to be unacceptable. No possible loophole was left by which Serbia could save her self-respect or prestige. And yet the impossible happened, and Serbia accepted the most galling of the demands made upon her, merely making certain reservations upon two out of the ten chief points, without expressly rejecting even them. Not content with this humiliating submission, the Serbian Government three days later, through the medium of its representative in Rome, informed the Italian Foreign Minister that it was actually prepared to accept the whole Note, if only "some explanation were given regarding the mode in which Austrian agents would require to intervene," and even went so far as to offer to accept these explanations from a third party, if Austria-Hungary was not disposed to give them to Serbia direct.¹ The best proof, however, of Serbia's conciliatory attitude lies in her offer to submit any points not fully met by her reply to the decision of the Hague Tribunal, where there would obviously have been little sympathy for terrorist conspiracies, or to that of the Powers who had dictated the terms of her surrender to Austria-Hungary in March 1909.²

That Austria-Hungary was not satisfied with so abject a surrender, shows that war had been resolved upon from the first. The best proof of this is the inclusion of a time limit of forty-eight hours, a step which paralysed all efforts towards peace and was directly responsible for the catastrophe which has overtaken Europe. It is almost impossible to resist the conclusion that Berlin shares with Vienna the responsibility for this time limit; and this is further strengthened by the frank admission of the *German White Paper*, that Germany "gave Austria an entirely free hand

¹ White Paper, No. 64.

² White Paper, No. 39.

against Serbia.”¹ The German contention that Austria-Hungary could not be summoned before a European tribunal was probably put forward in perfect good faith by Berlin : but it shows a failure to reckon with the facts of the situation, since on the one hand it ignored the all-important precedent of the Dogger Bank,² and on the other gave in effect a free hand to Count Forgách and his methods. The Agram and Friedjung trials³ and the scandals connected with the names of Nastić, Vasić, and Forgách provide the real explanation why Austria-Hungary was disinclined to go to the Hague, and when the war is over, other still weightier reasons will probably transpire. The dossier appended to the Note and submitted as its justification to the representatives of the Great Powers, was, to say the least, suspect, since it rested upon a one-sided and secret investigation conducted in the prison of Sarajevo. The attitude of the outside world could not have been better summed up than by Sir Edward Grey in the opening document of his memorable White Paper, in which he assumed that the Austrian Government “ would not do anything until they had first disclosed to the public

¹ The German White Paper was not, like the English one, a complete collection of the dispatches which passed during the negotiations, but a statement of German policy with a few supporting documents. It was laid before the Reichstag on August 4.

² It will be remembered that the Russian Baltic Fleet fired on some British trawlers in the North Sea at the outset of its voyage to the Far East during the Russo-Japanese war. The incident brought the two countries to the verge of war, but was satisfactorily disposed by the agreement of the two Powers to submit their differences to the Hague Tribunal.

³ At the Friedjung trial Dr. Spalajković, in the name of the Serbian Government, formally offered to submit the whole case to the Hague Tribunal. The anxiety and disfavour with which this proposal was greeted in Vienna was very marked, and betrayed itself especially in the attitude of the presiding judge and of the semi-official inspired press.

their case against Serbia, founded presumably upon what they had discovered *at the trial*." There has been no trial, and there probably never will be. In other words, the dossier, even if it had not passed through the office of Count Forgách, was not evidence in any Western sense of the word.

The ostensible aim of Austria-Hungary is a "punitive expedition" against a turbulent and unprincipled little neighbour, and to those ignorant of her internal racial conditions this explanation may seem plausible enough. But the real issues at stake are the continuance of the effete Dual System, which has so long blocked the path of every real reform in the Monarchy; the maintenance of the Magyar racial hegemony over the non-Magyar races of Hungary, the perpetuation of the political and economic bondage of the Southern Slavs. This attempt on the part of a narrow and reactionary clique to bolster up an impossible *status quo* and hold back the clock of history, can only end in moral and political bankruptcy, but its authors seem determined to drag down Europe in their fall. More than any one in Europe—more even than the rival war parties in Berlin, Petersburg, and Vienna—the Magyar oligarchy is directly responsible for this war; for it is their oppressive treatment of the nationalities and above all their misgovernment of Croatia, reacting upon Bosnia and Dalmatia, which has kept the Southern Slav question as an open sore on the face of Europe and permanently embroiled the Monarchy with the independent Serb states. Just as the German people's perfectly comprehensible dread of Russia is being exploited by the Prussian military chiefs, so the unhappy peoples of Austria-Hungary are being exploited in favour of a system which runs directly counter to the interests and aspirations of the majority among them.

For a moment it seemed as though Austro-Russian

complications might be averted by the assurances given by Austria-Hungary in Paris, that the integrity of Serbia would be respected.¹ But to those who knew enough to look below the surface it was obvious that such a pledge, even if given in all honesty, was almost worthless. The Serbians were prepared to fight to the last man in defence of their independence, and Austrian success would have found the sister kingdoms in a condition in which the victors would have had no choice but annexation. Count Mensdorff's eager assurance (No. 137) that Austria-Hungary had no idea of re-occupying the Sandjak was either naïve or perfidious; for our Foreign Office can hardly have been ignorant of the notorious facts that the Austrian General Staff had long ago decided that the Sandjak, as a line of strategic advance, was worthless by comparison with the Morava valley, and that any fresh advance into the Sandjak would infringe the Balkan understanding between Austria-Hungary and Italy. There are many indications that the real Austrian objective was Salonica.²

In time of peace there was always some hope, despite the ever-recurring errors of Viennese and Magyar diplomacy, that the Southern Slav question might be solved peacefully within the Habsburg Monarchy. But with the death of the Archduke that hope also died. The question immediately assumed European importance, just as it had already

¹ A prime reason of the evacuation of the Sandjak in 1908 was Italy's contention that the annexation of Bosnia altered the Balkan *status quo* to her disadvantage. When during the first Balkan war Italy's attitude in the Albanian question was regarded by Serbia as unfriendly, the Italian Minister in Belgrade made repeated efforts to convince the Serbian Government that Italy's action with regard to the Sandjak had been inspired by friendly consideration for Serbia and Montenegro.

² See White Paper, No. 19 (Sir R. Rodd's dispatch of July 25) and No. 82 (Mr. Beaumont's of July 29).

done in 1908 and in 1912. Unfortunately the statesmen of Vienna, Budapest, and Berlin, while basing their case upon the Serbian Note of March 1909 (acknowledging the situation of Bosnia to be no concern of hers), ignored the fact that this note was extracted from Serbia, and its phraseology determined by joint action on the part of the Powers, and persistently argued that the same question in its new form was a matter which concerned no one in Europe save Serbia and Austria-Hungary. This fatal attitude, based on a complete misreading of past history and on a failure to comprehend the point of view of ally and opponent alike, was adhered to despite repeated warnings from St. Petersburg, London, and other capitals.¹ The result is universal war.

On July 16 Count Tisza affirmed in the Hungarian Parliament that the relations of the Monarchy with Serbia must be "cleared up," and subsequent events have revealed the drift of his ideas. To-day Britain may well adopt his phrase and insist that among many other results of this horrible war, the Southern Slav question shall be definitely cleared up, but in accordance with the wishes, not of the Magyar oligarchy, but of the Serbo-Croat race.²

¹ Cf. White Paper, Nos. 3, 10, 17, 48, 101, etc.

² In its original form this article ended with the following sentence: "The action of the allied French and British fleets upon the Adriatic, and their co-operation with the Montenegrin and Serbian armies, should ere long place us in a position to assure such a solution." Unhappily this ended in a complete fiasco. The French occupied Lissa, but very soon withdrew. Some of the outer forts of Cattaro were silenced, and big guns were mounted on Mount Lovćen, from whence they dominated the Bocche and might have rendered the Austrian position untenable. Incredible as it may seem, however, they were served with black powder, and the Austrians were able to locate and silence them. Had the expedition against Cattaro been pushed home, the Austro-German conquest of Serbia might never have taken place, and the whole Balkan and Austrian situation might have developed much more rapidly.

RACE PROBLEMS IN AUSTRIA- HUNGARY AND TURKEY ¹

IN the Habsburg dominions, officially known to-day as Austria-Hungary, the problem of nationality has always presented a peculiar aspect of its own. Germany, despite its political dismemberment, has been for centuries a racial unit, in the sense that its members have rarely lived under foreign rule, and the crowd of petty States, of which the empire consisted a hundred years ago, were at least German in character, language, and traditions. Some of its outlying provinces, it is true, have gradually been lost to it and have developed a separate national identity and culture of their own, until to-day even the Pangerman extremists find it difficult to enforce the argument that Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland are really sections of the German race. But till late in the eighteenth century it is true to say that Germany was a racial unit ; it is only since then that the mistaken policy of Prussia has introduced foreign elements, by the Polish Partition and the wars of 1864 and 1870. Austria-Hungary, on the other hand, has always been a polyglot State, built up by the persistent dynastic policy of a single family, on a basis of geography, round the great river system of the Danube, but with an almost complete disregard of ethnographic considerations. The result is a

¹ From *The Round Table*, No. 17, December 1914.

vast mosaic of races, whose future development presents an equally difficult and complicated problem, whether we regard it from a political, a social, an economic, or a purely ethnic point of view. These races fall into five main groups—Teutonic (Germans), Slavonic (Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Ruthenes, Croats, Serbs, Slovenes), Latin (Italians and Roumanians), Ural-Altai (Magyars), and Semitic (Jews). Thus, leaving aside altogether certain minor groups, there are twelve principal nationalities and ten principal languages, exclusive of dialects,¹ in Austria-Hungary; and the problem of government, in addition to the linguistic difficulty, is complicated still further by the fact that these races are still in very varying stages of civilisation, some of them being as highly developed and as well organised in matters of education or industry as many Western nations, while among others illiteracy and superstition are rampant.

The House of Habsburg, despite many shortcomings, has never altogether lost sight of one definite historic aim—the attempt to create a political nationality which would transcend the national feeling of individual races and unite them in a common patriotism to the State. This ideal, described sometimes as Imperialist, sometimes as Centralist, and in late years as “Great Austrian,” rested on a thoroughly sound instinct and deserved to succeed. Unhappily, the methods employed were often calculated to defeat its object. The history of Austrian policy, both internal and external, for the last two centuries, has been a long series of wasted opportunities, of hesitation between alternatives. The double-headed eagle in the Austrian arms has been typical of this attitude. Just as in foreign policy it stands for the

¹ The difference in number is accounted for by the fact that Croat and Serb is one and the same language, and that the language of the Jews is German or a debased Yiddish dialect of German, Hebrew being only the language of the Synagogue.

rival tendencies to gravitate westwards into Germany and eastwards into the Balkans, so in home policy it represents the fatal indecision which has led Austrian statesmen to dabble alternately in centripetal and centrifugal tendencies, to foster or to repress individual national movements according to the political constellation of the moment, to play fast and loose with the two conflicting Habsburg mottoes "Viribus Unitis" and "Divide et Impera." Never has the tendency to rest content with half measures been so marked as during the long reign of Francis Joseph; and at last, by a hideous chain of circumstances, Austria has got into the position of the famous ass of the mediaeval Schoolmen—the ass which could not make up its mind as to the respective merits of two tempting bundles of hay. The original ass of the parable died of starvation, and Austria is already exposed to the serious danger that her rival policies may both pass into other hands.

There can be no doubt that the international character of the mediaeval Church, the conception of Christendom as a commonwealth, the world outside which was scarcely known to exist, and the use of Latin as the common language of culture, all told against the growth of nationality in the modern sense of the word; and as all three influences lingered in Austria later than elsewhere, the rise of the new force was still scarcely realised by the ruling classes of Austria even as late as the second half of the eighteenth century. The ideal of a strong centralist State, in which the monarch held the position of a benevolent parent towards his people, underlay the whole policy of Maria Theresa.

Her son, Joseph II., tried to adapt this idea to the doctrines of Voltaire and the Encyclopaedists. Inspired by eighteenth-century theories of "enlightenment" and

absolutism, he virtually ignored national feeling altogether. "All provinces of the Monarchy must form a single whole, and in all, the forces of the people must be directed towards a common aim—the power of Austria"—in these words, Joseph summarised his programme of reforms, on his accession; and the foremost instrument towards their achievement was the introduction of German as the universal language of State throughout his dominions.

His clumsy and rigid methods jeopardised all that had been won by the tact of his mother, and roused from their slumbers all the latent forces of nationalism. The chief opposition came from the Magyars, whose nobility was driven into the national movement by Joseph's rash onslaughts upon two of their strictest preserves, Hungarian local government and serfdom. The first signs of a national revival, both in Hungary and in Bohemia, were academic, almost pedantic. Strange as it may seem to Western students, the archaeologist played a very vital part in these movements, the poet built upon the foundations which he had laid, and finally the politician took up the work of both and popularised the ideas for which they had lived. The linguistic and literary revival among the Magyars rapidly undid the work of Joseph, and prepared the way for a long series of constitutional and linguistic reforms, culminating in the Hungarian upheaval of 1848. The Magyars owed the rapid lead which they established over their neighbours to a more favourable geographical situation and to the political and economic strength of their nobility. The Czechs were delayed by the fact that their national nobility had been almost exterminated during the Thirty Years' War, and that its successors were altogether German in feeling.

But it would be a mistake to suppose that the other races

were slower than the Magyars to feel the promptings of nationality. The famous *Supplex Libellus Valachorum* presented by the Roumanians of Transylvania to Joseph II., the publication of a Slovak newspaper as early as 1783, the lively opposition of the Croats in 1790 to schemes for introducing the Magyar language, the Serb demand in the same year for the autonomy of the Banat—these instances could be multiplied to show that nationality was stirring everywhere in Hungary. Unhappily, the Magyars, having outdistanced the others, set themselves deliberately to retard their progress and to establish a monopoly.

The Napoleonic wars sowed the seeds of nationalism broadcast over Europe, and left them to germinate slowly in the exhausted soil. At the Congress of Vienna, conservative and reactionary ideas again triumphed. The diplomats did lip-service to the idea of nationality, and made the paper concession of "national institutions" for the Poles. But otherwise the whole settlement was flagrantly anti-national; Europe was cut up according to dynastic and personal inclinations, and the history of the hundred years which followed is a succession of violent attempts to upset its unnatural decisions.

In Bohemia, the national movement was at first confined to a tiny group of patriots, of whom one of their number remarked during an informal supper party, that, if the ceiling of the room where they were sitting were to fall in upon them, there would be an end of Czech nationalism! At first the movement was "Bohemian" in the true historical sense, German-Bohemians like Meissner showing equal enthusiasm. The cleavage came in 1848, when Prague became the centre of a Slav Congress, and thus the rival of Frankfurt. Henceforth, the two races in Bohemia fell more and more apart, and their quarrel has done more than

anything else to paralyse the political development of Austria in recent years.

- Meanwhile in Hungary Magyar nationalism steadily gathered force, under the inspiration of brilliant political leaders and of a remarkable literary revival. Unhappily it was soon captured by a peculiarly violent form of jingoism which bitterly resented the national claims of almost all the neighbouring races, and began to propagate the idea of an exclusively Magyar national State.

The Magyarisation of Hungary was openly proclaimed as equivalent to "the victory of reason, liberty, and intelligence," and the bare idea that Slovak, German, or Roumanian culture could coexist with that of the "ruling nation" (*az uralkodó nemzet*, as it is often called), was scouted as treason to the State.¹ The violent passions aroused on all sides by this frenzied propaganda were directly responsible for the way in which the revolution of 1848 developed in Hungary into a fierce racial war, ringing the Magyars round by hostile nationalities in arms. Count Széchenyi, known to his own countrymen as "the greatest of the Magyars," roundly accused Louis Kossuth of "goading" the non-Magyars "into madness against the Magyar nation" by his intolerant policy.

In 1848 the Magyars represented the cause of constitutional liberty and progress, but their folly in seeking to restrict its privileges to their own race rallied all their neighbours, the other nationalities of Hungary—Slovaks, Roumanians, Saxons, Croats, Serbs, and Ruthenes alike—on the side of the dynasty, and so, as the issue proved, of political reaction. Strange as it may seem, it is no exaggeration to assert that "the defeat of Kossuth's Magyars,

¹ See Count Zay's address to the Lutheran General Assembly (1840), *cit.* "Racial Problems in Hungary," p. 66.

in the eyes of Europe martyrs of liberty, was greeted by their subject races as the end of a detested tyranny."¹ But, as a witty Magyar remarked, "the other races received as reward what the Magyars received as punishment." Indeed, the system of blended centralism and Germanisation applied to the whole Habsburg Monarchy during the period of Bach and Schmerling, was not unfairly summed up by another Magyar politician as "the equal right of all races—to become Germans!" The experiment failed no less decisively than preceding efforts, but on this occasion its failure was very largely due to the interaction of nationality and economics, as accentuated by the emancipation of the peasantry, which from a national point of view entirely changed the face both of Austria and Hungary. "It is through it that the struggle of nationalities has become a war of masses, instead of a duel of privileged persons. The peasants enslaved, oppressed, miserable, did not count as factors in this struggle; but the peasants, liberated, raised in their personal dignity and in their material condition, have been able henceforth to render effective aid to the cause of their nationality. Delivered from the yoke which weighed heavily upon them, they have become capable of enthusiasm for an ideal and of sacrifices in aid of its attainment."²

The failure of the revolution was followed by ten years of black reaction (1849–1859) and seven years more of continual constitutional experiments. It was the two wars of 1859 and 1866—which by finally expelling Austria both from Italy and from Germany led to the achievement of Italian and German unity—that rendered internal political reform in the Monarchy inevitable, and the Magyars were

¹ Auerbach, "Les Nationalités en Autriche-Hongrie," p. 239.

² Louis Eisenmann, "Le Compromis Austro-Hongrois," p. 146.

fortunate in possessing a small group of able statesmen—Deák, Andrásy, and Eötvös—who utterly outclassed the third-rate politicians of Vienna, Prague, or Agram, and who enjoyed the favour and confidence of the Court. The Compromise or *Ausgleich* of 1867 marks a new point of departure in the history of the Habsburg Monarchy—Austria-Hungary as it is henceforth officially styled. “The real motive force which underlies the Dual System is a league between the two strongest races, the Germans and the Magyars, who divided the Monarchy between them, and by the grant of autonomy to the two next strongest races, the Poles and the Croats, made them their accomplices in holding down the remaining eight.”¹

In effect, Dualism enlisted the support of Austria, and all its resources as a Great Power, in favour of “the idea of the Magyar State” (*a magyar állam eszme*), that “unitary national State” by which every Hungarian statesman for three generations past has aspired to replace the old polyglot State of history.

During the forty-seven years which have elapsed since the *Ausgleich*, there has been a marked difference in the development of Austria and of Hungary, which has been still further accentuated in the new century. In Austria, the German hegemony only lasted for a decade; the German parties, relying partly on the bureaucratic and military traditions, sought to identify that hegemony with the Austrian State itself, but the attempt became hopeless from the moment when the Czechs abandoned their foolish policy of abstention from parliamentary life. The constitution was made, and its functions were distributed between the Central Parliament or Reichsrat and the seventeen provincial Diets, which enjoy very varied powers. There was

¹ *Racial Problems in Hungary*, p. 157.

no official language of State, and the very equality which the law secured in theory to every one of the recognised races and languages¹ served to increase the confusion. The violent racial brawls of which Parliament was the scene undermined its prestige, increased the indifference of the masses to its proceedings, and rendered reform and even ordinary legislation increasingly difficult. Hence a situation of recurring crises, in which bouts of parliamentary obstruction correspond to the rise in temperature of a fever patient. Till the close of the century, racial and linguistic disputes—above all, the perennial struggle of German and Czech for the mastery in Bohemia—paralysed the whole internal policy of the State, which virtually owed its continued existence to the joint efforts of the dynasty and the bureaucracy. “It is because it is only sustained by these two forces that the Cis-leithan State (*i.e.* Austria) has been reduced in the Dual System to the rôle of a simple appendix of Hungary,” wrote M. Eisenmann in 1904 with perfect justice. The system was contrived as a just balance between two equals, but this was completely deranged by the breaches made in the German hegemony in Austria, and with every decade it became more and more clear that the machine would only work when one scale was high in the air. For a whole generation Hungary not merely controlled the whole foreign policy of the Monarchy—notably under the great Andrassy and under Kálnoky and even the indolent Goluchowski—but also directly interfered from time to time with the internal constitutional arrangements of her partner.

¹ Section 19 of the Austrian Constitution runs as follows: “All races of the State enjoy equal rights (*sind gleichberechtigt*) and every race has an inviolable right to assert its nationality and to cultivate its language. The equal rights of all languages of the country (*landesübliche Sprachen*) in school, office, and public life are recognised by the State.”

This leadership of the Magyars has rested upon a racial monopoly of the most thoroughgoing and oppressive kind, which has been rendered possible by a concentration of all political, social, and agrarian power in the hands of the Magyar nobility and the so-called "gentry" (a word which since its introduction into Hungary has acquired a peculiar indigenous flavour) and by their economic alliance with the Jews. Hungary, too, has its "Law of Equal Rights of the Nationalities" (XLIV., 1868), which lays down many admirable linguistic privileges in school, church, law court, and administration. But its whole tenor is vitiated by the simple fact that the Magyar language employs one and the same word (*magyar*) for two essentially different conceptions—Hungarian, the wide geographical term embracing the whole State, and Magyar, the narrow racial term, applicable only to one out of the many nationalities of the country. The preamble insists that all citizens of Hungary "form, from a political point of view, one nation, *the indivisible unitary Magyar nation*, of which every citizen is a member, no matter to what nationality he belongs," and it further qualifies all subsequent concessions by a vague reference to "the unity of the country and the practical possibility of government and administration." The law thus deliberately confuses the political and ethnical conceptions of the "nation," and denies from the outset the existence of the non-Magyar nationalities as a political factor. Moreover, it is this section of the law which has always been emphasised in the years that followed, while its many linguistic and racial concessions have almost without exception remained a dead letter. Indeed, most of the leading Magyar statesmen of the last forty years, while declaiming about the liberty enjoyed by the non-Magyar races of Hungary, have almost in the same breath

admitted that the Law of Nationalities has not merely not been enforced, but is incapable of fulfilment.

The intolerable nature of Magyar tyranny may be summed up in the following words, written at the height of the coalition régime in Hungary (1906-1909) :

Primary and secondary education, instead of resting upon the principle of instruction in the mother tongue, has been for a generation past enlisted in the cause of Magyarisation ; the State never erects non-Magyar Schools and only grants subsidies to those already existing in order thereby to enforce a stricter control. The local administration is in the hands of a narrow and powerful caste, which by means of an illiberal franchise is able to hold the non-Magyars in a permanent minority, and to exclude them from the control of their local affairs ; the officials treat the Nationalities as foreign interlopers, and show little or no consideration for their languages and national customs. A far-reaching system of electoral corruption and gerrymandering, backed by a complicated and unequal franchise, makes it impossible for one-half of the population to gain more than twenty-five seats in Parliament,¹ and concentrates all political power into the hands of a small clique of influential nobles and ecclesiastics, professional politicians and Jewish financiers. The dependence of the judicature upon the executive renders the non-Magyar leaders liable to continual vexation at the hands of the law ; judges, prosecutors, and juries are all alike recruited from the ranks of their bitterest enemies, and a hostile verdict is thus only too often a foregone conclusion. The persecution of the non-Magyar Press is carried on with the deliberate purpose of reducing it to a state of bankruptcy or subservience. The absence of any rights of association and assembly places the Nationalities at the mercy of the authorities and renders infinitely more difficult the task of organisation ; while the petty annoyances and restrictions imposed upon those Slavs and Roumanians who remain loyal to the language and traditions of their ancestors, embitter their lives and aggravate racial differences.²

¹ In 1910 these 25 were reduced by sheer corruption and violence to 8 !

² Seton-Watson, "Racial Problems in Hungary," pp. 392-3.

The Slovak, Roumanian, Serb, German, and Ruthene nationalists have long been political pariahs in Hungary ; but persecution has not tamed them. No single incident throws more light upon their stubborn attitude and at the same time upon the intolerable claims put forward by official Hungary, than the notorious "Memorandum Trial" of 1894. Two years before, the Committee of the Roumanian National Party in Hungary had petitioned the Monarch in a Memorandum recounting the many grievances of their race, and when the Hungarian Cabinet barred their access to the throne, had published the Memorandum in pamphlet form. This action was treated by the Government as "incitement against the Magyar nationality," and the members of the Committee were tried before a Magyar jury and sentenced to terms of imprisonment amounting to a total of twenty-nine years. Dr. Ratziu, the party president, declined to recognise the Court's jurisdiction, and appealed to the public opinion of the civilised world. "We have acted," they declared, "solely as mandataries of the Roumanian people, and an entire people cannot be brought to justice. . . . You have yourselves realised that it is not a question of law but merely of force, and the world will learn with astonishment that a court has been found to judge men who were deprived of the possibility of having defenders. . . . By your spirit of mediaeval intolerance, by a racial fanaticism which has not its equal in Europe, you will, if you condemn us, simply succeed in proving to the world that the Magyars are a discordant note in the concert of European nations."¹ A month after the trial the Hungarian Government eclipsed its previous record by formally dissolving the Roumanian national party as a disloyal institution. Since then the party has been tacitly

¹ See "Racial Problems in Hungary," p. 473.

allowed to revive, but official recognition of its existence has been steadily withheld, and, indeed, when put forward as a claim during the negotiations between Count Tisza and the Roumanian leaders last winter, formed one of the many stumbling-blocks in the way of an understanding. The Magyars have remained calmly oblivious of the fact that to deny a nation the two elementary rights of petition and political organisation is to challenge it to choose between suicide and revolution.

Enough has been said to show that the development of Austria and Hungary has flowed in exactly opposite directions. While in Hungary the waves of Chauvinism beat higher and higher, Austria has made steady progress towards the ideal of racial toleration. There is still plenty of friction, but even the most backward of her nationalities has come to enjoy a freedom of movement and possibilities of culture, which cannot even remotely be compared to the bondage of their neighbours in Hungary. Austrian political institutions have been hampered at every turn by racial quarrels, but despite all the criticism which their barrenness evokes, they have broadened and deepened in recent years. Except in two border provinces—Galicia and Dalmatia, where special conditions prevail—Austria is far freer in 1914 than in 1900. Above all, a whole school of political theory has grown up on the vexed question of racial minorities and their representation, and though opinions differed widely as to the true solution of such problems, there was a growing inclination to make Austria the centre of experiments which, if successful, might have transformed the whole problem of nationalism in Europe, but which have been brutally exploded by the present war. Politically, of course, the difference between the two States is typified by the contrast between Austria's

rapid adoption of universal suffrage in 1906, and the desperate and successful efforts of the Magyar oligarchy, at first to prevent, and then, worse still, to undermine and falsify its introduction in Hungary.

An Austro-Hungarian bank-note sums up the rival ideals. One side bears an inscription in every language of Austria, on the other the Magyar language is in solitary grandeur. It thus stands for Equality *versus* Hegemony, and at the same time for the rival habit of confessing and of concealing the true facts of the situation. In Austria there is room for Polish, Czech, Roumanian national feeling, though of course within limits which ardent nationalists would fain shake off. In Hungary, in the words of a recent writer, "our nationalities can never substitute any other culture for the Magyar, for a special Serb, Roumanian, or Slovak culture does not and cannot exist."¹ Once more the hapless word "culture," which has become the nightmare of this war! The Magyar conception of the State, then, resolves itself into a monstrous vampire which battens on the renegades of other races. To this the non-Magyar races long opposed the modest claim for equal linguistic rights and the fulfilment of the Law of Nationalities. But they have been driven steadily in a separatist direction, and Magyar tyranny has embroiled not only Hungary but the whole Monarchy with the neighbouring Balkan States. Even before the war, which their evil policy has done so much to evoke, the Magyars had become a liability rather than an asset of the Dual Monarchy.²

The last chapter contained a summary of the national movement among the Southern Slavs, uniting in a common

¹ E. Baloghy, "Magyar Culture and the Nationalities," p. 210 (in Magyar).

² H. W. Steed, "The Hapsburg Monarchy," p. 284.

sentiment the Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes of the Dual Monarchy and the Serbs of the two independent kingdoms, Serbia and Montenegro. This movement and Austria-Hungary's fatal policy of thwarting Southern Slav development, have been the real underlying causes of that Austro-Serbian dispute, upon which the murder of the Archduke acted as the spark in a powder magazine. To-day we are witnessing the baptism of fire of a new nation in the commonwealth of Europe. Gallant Serbia has assumed the same task which Piedmont successfully accomplished over fifty years ago. The same applies to the Roumanian question, which, as the result of the two Balkan wars, had begun to develop on parallel lines with the Southern Slav question. To every patriotic Roumanian on both sides of the frontier the deliverance of Transylvania and the adjacent counties of Hungary from the Magyar yoke, and even the complete realisation of Roumanian unity, have long been cherished as the chief hope of the future. To-day the significant speech of the new King to a deputation of Roumanian professors—to the effect that no responsible person in Roumania could be suspected of opposing the realisation of national unity—shows the direction in which the wind is blowing. His words are but a faint echo of a phrase used five years ago by one of the most distinguished living Roumanian politicians. "If I thought," he said, "that Transylvania could ever conceivably become Magyarised, I should give up politics, for it would no longer be worth while for us Roumanians of the kingdom to go on living."

Until the outbreak of war it had always been admissible to hope that Austria would show sufficient energy and statesmanship to solve these two problems in a "Habsburg" sense, though the events of the Balkan wars had reduced this hope to vanishing point and compelled

the friends of Austria to revise many of their conclusions. If to-day the dissolution of the Dual Monarchy is being seriously discussed throughout Europe, that is at least partly due to the pessimism which led its own leading statesmen and politicians to reckon openly with such a possibility even a year ago. It is right to point out for the last time that the blame for failure falls far more heavily upon Hungary than upon Austria, and that large sections of opinion in Vienna—including the late Heir Apparent himself—were openly friendly to the Roumanians and favoured very considerable concessions to the Southern Slavs. But their platonic good intentions did little or nothing to redeem a situation which grew monthly more critical. Austria to-day cannot separate herself from the doom of the Magyars. She is being judged, not by the unrealised dreams of the Archduke, or by the tolerant views of her political theorists,¹ but by the inexorable laws of fate. Her statesmen have had due warning, but have persisted in the old paths. Their false conceptions of nationalism have but strengthened its disintegrating force. So far as Austria-Hungary is concerned, this war is in itself a proof that the policy of racial dominance and forcible assimilation is morally bankrupt; but only the future can show whether those nations which are rising phoenix-like from the funeral pyre of a vanishing era will prove themselves worthy of the great task which history has assigned to them—the reconciliation of the ideal of national unity with that of full liberty for racial minorities.

¹ See the works of Baron Eötvös, Fischhof, "Rudolf Springer" (Dr. Carl Renner)—now State Chancellor and head of the Austrian Peace Delegation,—Aurel Popovici, and Otto Bauer.

BALKAN NATIONALITY AND TURKISH OPPRESSION

In the Balkan Peninsula the problem of nationality has been complicated by religion. During the Middle Ages every Balkan race took its Christianity from Byzantium, and indeed the first great Slav apostles, Cyril and Methodius, came from Macedonia. The Turks in the great days of their dominion were a caste, half feudal, half military, which owed many of its best recruits to the human tribute levied from its subject population. To avoid all danger of assistance for the conquered Christians from the Catholic West, they wisely constituted the Patriarch of Constantinople the intermediary of all their relations with their Orthodox subjects, and thus gave free play for four centuries to the Hellenising tendencies of the Eastern Church. Such was the foundation of that corrupt Phanariot¹ régime, which reduced the national and religious life of the peninsula to such utter stagnation and has left its corroding mark upon the politics of every Balkan nation. Under the double influence of the Turkish conqueror and the Greek confessor, nationality long lay dormant, though it should be added that, despite its ignorance and sloth, the Orthodox clergy, wherever it had not been denationalised, did more than any other force to keep the flickering torch from being altogether quenched. The Turkish conquest varied in completeness. In Serbia the entire nobility was literally exterminated, while in Bosnia it accepted Islam in order to save its lands. Among the Serbs and Bulgars a "rayah" who neglected to dismount on meeting one of the conquering race was risking death on the spot; while in Wallachia the Turkish

¹ So called from the Phanar, or lighthouse quarter of Stambul, where the Patriarch resides.

suzerainty was of so loose a character that the building of a mosque in Bucarest was never tolerated.

So long as the Janissary system flourished in full vigour, risings were wellnigh impossible ; but its decay during the eighteenth century had the double effect of weakening the Turkish military system and of strengthening the Christian population which had hitherto suffered from this constant drain. With the close of the century came the first mutterings of the storm. The long rivalry of Austria and Russia for influence in the Balkans, the French Revolution and the propagation of its doctrines throughout Europe, were the stimulants of the nationalist movement which the new century heralded. Since then Balkan history is an unbroken succession of waves, in which first the Serbs, then the Greeks and Roumanians, and last of all the Bulgarians, shook off the Turkish yoke and laid the foundations of the national States of to-day.

Sympathy is sometimes expressed for the Turk in the long chain of disasters which has gradually robbed him of his former heritage in Europe, and his apologists are fond of extolling the dignity and virtues of the individual Turkish peasant and contrasting them with the unlovely qualities of the enslaved rayah. But no efforts can conceal the supremely negative nature of the Turkish character, its utter incapacity for constructive work, its periodical lapses into ungovernable savagery. Above all else, the Turk has shown himself ignorant of the very elements of the art of government. "For forms of government let fools contest, that which is best administered is best"; and if we apply the poet's test, there is no country where the verdict will be so annihilating as in Turkey. The final and unanswerable condemnation of Turkish rule consists not in recounting the periodic massacres and

outbreaks which its discontented subjects have provoked, but in contrasting the material and moral condition of the various provinces before and after the conquest, and still more their condition a generation before and a generation after the expulsion of the Turks. Every province which they have held has become a desert under their blighting influence and has only blossomed again when the blight has been removed. The rose garden replaces the dunghill, and flourishing modern cities the foul and mouldering hamlets of a century ago. Whether it be Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Greece, Roumania, Bosnia, or Bulgaria, the story is invariably the same. The proverb which declares that grass does not grow where the Ottoman hoofs have trod, merely gives poetic expression to a fact which is as indisputable as the law of gravity. The Turk has never understood any principle save that of physical force; by the sword he built up his empire, and by the sword he is losing it.

For a brief period the Young Turkish revolution of 1908 was acclaimed as upsetting all such theories and as inaugurating the dawn of freedom for all the races of Turkey. But it speedily became apparent that the chamber which the Young Turks had so noisily swept and garnished was to become the haunt of seven devils worse than the first. On the one hand, the lavish phrases of liberty and fraternity which ushered in the new régime were soon replaced by an open policy of Turkification, which employed all the most approved methods of Magyar corruption and added the practices of organised conspiracy and assassination. On the other hand, the revolution threatened the national aspirations of the Slav and Greek populations, since a regeneration of Turkey would have postponed indefinitely the hope of reunion with their kinsmen in the independent

Balkan States. Events have forced these facts upon an unwilling public opinion, but what is not yet fully realised is the essentially un-Turkish and un-Moslem character of the Committee of Union and Progress, which has been the soul—the *âme damnée*—of the whole movement. Among its leaders there is hardly a single pure-blooded Turk. Enver, the murderer of his generalissimo, is of Polish origin: Djavid belongs to the curious Salonican sect of the Donmeh: Carasso is a Jew: Talaat is an Islamised Bulgarian gipsy: Achmet Riza, one of the group's temporary figureheads, is half Circassian and half Magyar, and a positivist of the school of Comte. And it is such a committee which presumes to dictate to the Khalif of Islam, in German interests, a Holy War against the leading Mohammedan power in the world!

Despite the inherent defects of the Young Turkish organisation, it, however, is only right to admit that the task of introducing real reforms might have proved too great even for much more liberal and enlightened statesmen. The legacy left to them by previous generations, and above all by the long Hamidian despotism, had paralysed all the tendencies that could be described even remotely as "liberal." The abstract ideal of reform on Western lines was in itself a noble one, but could not be infused into a State whose very essence was a blend of theocracy and militarism. It will always remain a matter of deep regret that the healthier sections of "Young Turkey" lost their original leadership and thus failed to confer the benefits of a progressive régime upon the many component races of the Ottoman Empire.

Instead of this, the internal policy of the Young Turks only too soon came to rest upon forcible Turkification, emphasised by the removal of its political opponents. The

long list of its victims was opened by Shemshi Pasha and a number of "Liberal" journalists and minor politicians, and culminated in Nazim Pasha and Mahmud Shevket Pasha. The names of the Khedive and of Noel and Charles Buxton are on the shorter list of unsuccessful attempts; while certain mysterious incidents connected with the royal murders of Salonica and Sarajevo have opened up hitherto unsuspected vistas of intrigue and crime.

The art of assassination is merely a refinement of political craft. The same methods, employed *en gros* in Macedonia, provoked the Albanian risings of 1911 and 1912 and produced a coalition of the Balkan States against Turkey. In the war that followed, Turkish rule was finally expelled from Macedonia—leaving behind it, it is true, an unhappy legacy of hatred between the Christian races. But the old methods had become ingrained in the Turkish system, and since the recovery of Adrianople as a result of the second Balkan war, the Bulgarian element in Northern Thrace has been almost literally extirpated, and the success of this policy has encouraged the Committee to pursue scarcely less drastic methods of "elimination" against the Greeks of Thrace and Asia Minor. It must, of course, be admitted that massacre and expropriation are much the most effective means of solving the problem of nationality; and there is every prospect that they will be applied this winter to what is left of the Armenian population of Asia Minor. We can only hope that the Russian offensive will triumph over the enormous physical obstacles of the Caucasian frontier, before the Kurds and Lazes have worked their will upon Armenia.

There is yet another national question which awaits solution at the hands of the Turks, but which can no longer be solved by the sword. The Arab nationalist movement

is already a factor of permanent importance, with serious possibilities in the not distant future ; and it is by no means improbable that the Arabs—who, unlike the Turks, have in their past history developed a great civilisation and shown themselves to be a constructive, not a mere destructive force—may wrest the Khalifate from the hands of a dynasty which they never loved and of a parasitic and alien clique which is in no way representative of Islam. Nor can we afford to ignore the possible effects of such an Arab movement upon the fate of Palestine and the future of the healthy Jewish nationalism which is at length striking root in its original home.

In accepting the rôle of Germany's vassal, Turkey has been hurled to her doom by a tiny camarilla ; for the victory of either group in the present struggle is likely to prove fatal to her empire. Germany has long regarded Turkey as one of her most effective instruments against Britain and would fain exploit Islam in a campaign for world-dominion. The folly of such a dream can best be expressed in the words of a well-known German Socialist, written under the impression of Turkey's defeat in 1912. "German world-policy has lost its sense and aim. On the battlefields of Macedonia and Thrace German Imperialism was beaten side by side with the Turkish army. If Germany were a democratic country then her government, which had known so little of the working forces of the Orient, which for the second time had been surprised and befooled by an Oriental upheaval, which had staked so much German money, so much German strength, so much German prestige upon a lost cause, and which had misled the whole policy of the nation for two decades—this government would have been swept away by the wrath of the nation. But in Junker-ridden Great-Prussia the barren incapacity

of a diplomacy which is not responsible to the nation is free to pose still further as statesmanlike wisdom. The German *bourgeoisie* has itself renounced the supervision and control of the policy which is intended to serve its interests." ¹

Is it mere folly to express the hope that a time will come when the German people will repudiate the arrogant claims put forward by its ruling class and, reverting to the ideals of its greatest poets and thinkers, will realise that nationality and culture are not mere gross material things, to be imposed on others by the violence of the "mailed fist," but spiritual graces which owe their triumph and their inspiration to the inward vision? The statesmen of Europe will have built in vain if from the wreckage of this war there does not rise a new and higher conception of the idea of Nationality.

¹ Otto Bauer, "Der Balkankrieg und die deutsche Weltpolitik," p. 47. Otto Bauer, who was for two years a prisoner in Russia, and was set free by the Revolution of 1917, returned to Vienna in time to succeed Victor Adler as Foreign Secretary of the new German-Austrian Republic. He is best known for his brilliant treatise, "Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie."

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY AND THE FEDERAL SOLUTION¹

“THE problem of converting a league forcibly created under the stress of military necessity into a free civil community is still unsolved. It was this problem which kindled the world-war.” So writes the German author of a remarkable series of articles on “Austria-Hungary and the Racial Struggle,” which have been recently appearing in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*; and he goes on to quote with approval an equally illuminating passage from the speech of a German deputy in the Austrian Parliament. “The Austrian problem is to-day no longer an Austrian, but a European problem, and indeed the world problem. It is certain that all foreign policy tends more and more to revolve round this Austrian problem which always stands in the centre of all peace conditions, proposals, and discussions.”

The units of what we now know as “Austria” could never have been pieced together save under the stress of a common Turkish danger. But the Habsburg mission against the Crescent has long since ended, and a new justification, a new *raison d'être* is needed. Before the war it had seemed to many—among them the present writer—that this lay “in the vindication of equal rights

¹ From *The Contemporary Review*, No. 627, March 1918.






and liberties for all the races committed to its charge." When in 1908 I wrote that "the abandonment of this mission would endanger the very existence of a great Power upon the middle Danube," I could not as yet foresee how lamentably complete would be the abandonment, or what relentless forces it would bring into play.

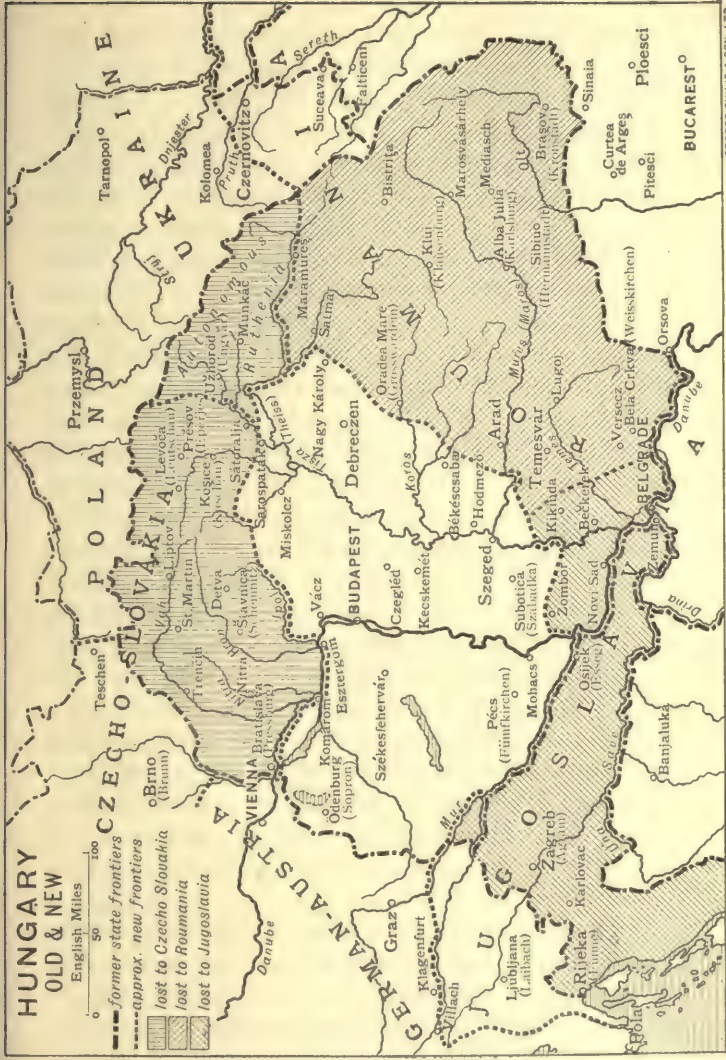
Despite the regrettable tendency of Western diplomatists and publicists both before and during the war to treat the various political problems of the Continent as forming so many watertight compartments, the events of the past four years have forced upon us a recognition of their intimate interconnection. This is especially the case in Austria-Hungary, where, if we attempt to analyse the situation more closely, there is what Austrian public opinion itself now quite openly describes as a "State crisis," centring round the question whether the very existence of the State is possible in its present form: the problem of Dualism, centring round the relations between Vienna and Budapest: and a whole series of national questions, each of which dovetails into the other, and reacts upon the Dual System, and no one of which can be solved without raising the others and disturbing the balance of forces between them. Moreover, each of these sub-problems—Poland, Bohemia, Jugoslavia, the Ukraine, Italia Irredenta, and Transylvania—is inextricably bound up with one or more problems whose international character not even the veriest stickler for diplomatic tradition could deny. If Austria-Hungary were an island in the Pacific, isolated from the outer world, it would be possible for us to regard with profound sympathy the task of statesmen confronted with problems of so complex and unparalleled a nature, and to watch the success or failure of their experiments with the calm of a remote Martian. As matters stand, however, Austria-

HUNGARY OLD & NEW

English Miles

0 50 100

-  former state frontiers
-  approx. new frontiers
-  lost to Czecho-Slovakia
-  lost to Roumania
-  lost to Jugoslavia



Hungary is, to the general misfortune, a central and essential part of the machinery upon which the life of the European community depends. That it is clogged and out of gear, gravely affects the efficiency of the whole machine, and the general interest demands its reparation or remodelling. This fact would have been recognised long ago but for the fatal English tendency to ignore Europe and to concentrate attention upon any or every other portion of the globe. Under the stress of war our population has been engaged in acquiring a European mind and outlook: and the true test of success in this attempt is applied by the attitude adopted towards Russia on the one hand and Austria-Hungary on the other. Both States are to-day in a process of dissolution, though owing to fundamental differences of geography, climate, historic development, social structure and, not least, temperament and psychology, the two processes do not keep absolute pace with each other. Moreover, the accidents of war have pressed more heavily upon the one than upon the other and made it in the one case infinitely more easy for the outsider to read the writing upon the wall. But it is little short of an accident that Russia in the one belligerent group has collapsed earlier than Austria-Hungary in the other, and it was only the marvellous military efficiency of Germany, exploiting to the full the advantages conferred by unity of command and interior lines, that saved the Dual Monarchy from disaster on no less than six separate occasions.

Austria-Hungary is a Great Power numbering 52,000,000 inhabitants, and yet, though we have been at war with her for three and a half years, she is still the subject of the most profound and amazing misconceptions. "Austria is not a State," said Prince Gortchakov more than a generation

ago, "it is only a Government." "Austria is not a State, but a Family," said the still wiser Italians in days when they had bitter cause to understand. Most of the great States of Europe have owed their internal consolidation in large measure to the directing force of some famous dynasty : but while in France or in England the Capets and the Plantagenets merely gave a direction of their own to irresistible natural forces, "Austria"—the name Austria-Hungary only dates from 1867—is essentially the creation of the House of Habsburg. It is true that but for the imminence of the Turkish danger even the Habsburgs might have failed to rally round them so many discordant elements ; but in any case it cannot be contested that the Habsburg Monarchy as we know it to-day is the product of five centuries of dynastic policy, untiringly pursued by the parallel methods of conquest, marriage, purchase, and exchange. Throughout their history the connecting link between the motley array of provinces and races has been the Imperial House : its interests have always been the paramount consideration, and its control of foreign policy has been virtually unrestrained. Galicia was annexed as a counterweight to the Polish acquisitions of Prussia and Russia : Salzburg, Trent, and Brixen were a Catholic monarch's spoils when the ecclesiastical domains were in the melting-pot : the Bukovina was the fruit of a bargain with the Porte : Dalmatia, Lombardy, and Venetia were a consolation for the loss of the Netherlands : Bosnia, and the Balkan ambitions which it involved, were in their turn an atonement for losses in Italy and Germany : and so to-day the young Emperor is playing for the Crown of Poland and perhaps even of the Ukraine, just as his late uncle was credited with the design of carving out a West Balkan Kingdom for young Max of Hohenberg. Those

who judge foreign countries by Western standards will be impressed by the twenty-three legislative bodies of the Habsburg Monarchy; but those who look beneath the surface will realise that policy has always evaded their control and that their mushroom growth, while it may have obscured, has not availed to alter the outlines of dynastic statecraft. President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George have made more than one uncomplimentary reference to the Congress of Vienna: but the general public does not yet seem to have realised that it was in Vienna that the Congress sat, that it is in Vienna that its traditions survive in their most robust form, and that the atmosphere which generates such traditions is perhaps the foremost obstacle to a new order in Europe.

In the pursuit of its policy the Habsburg dynasty relies upon four main factors—the aristocracy, the army, the Church, and the bureaucracy. The aristocracy: which in Austria—with certain notable exceptions—is essentially “Habsburgian” rather than “Austrian” in composition,¹ and which in Hungary is fully conscious that it owes its social and racial hegemony to the tolerance of the Crown. The army: whose officers form a peculiar class apart—not a mere arrogant aristocratic caste like their Prussian colleagues, but no less effectually dissevered from every tie and every tradition save that of devotion to the ruling House. The Church: which for centuries past has accepted without a murmur from the Habsburgs those very restrictions whose assertion brought Henry IV. to Canossa, but which owes to them its inordinate riches and the privileges which it short-sightedly prefers to the inspiring position

¹ Such names as Taaffe, Clam, Montecuccoli, Odescalchi, Nugent, Loudon, Mercy, may serve as reminders that the House of Habsburg has recruited its nobles from every nation in Europe.

that open championship of national aspirations might any day assure to it. The bureaucracy : easy-going, inefficient, and endlessly obstructive—which successive rulers have built up on the model described by Francis I. as “ Patriots for me,” and which has become sufficiently detached from the life of the nations among whom it lives to accept the name of “ Austria ” which the majority of them so heartily repudiate. In the words of Treitschke, “ all the foundations of this State belong to a time which is no more.” It is a relic of the Middle Ages, and those who are labouring for its preservation are inspired, consciously or unconsciously, by the same ideas of legitimacy and authority which stood behind the police-State of Metternich, the rule of Radetzky in Lombardy, of Khuen and Cuvaj in Croatia, and which involved Aehrenthal and his incompetent successors in a Balkan policy which has set Europe ablaze.

In other countries there is an appeal from the Crown to the nation : but there is no such thing as an Austro-Hungarian nation ; and even an “ Austrian ” nation exists solely in the imagination of a few thousand a-national bureaucrats such as Dr. von Seidler and his colleagues ; while in Hungary the political “ nation ” as yet consists of the dominant Magyars, to the strict exclusion of the non-Magyar majority. If, as historians are fond of asserting, there is a natural tendency for the conceptions of nation and State to coincide, then there are few countries where the development is so abnormal as in Austria-Hungary, where for a whole generation past the national consciousness of Czech and Southern Slav, of Italian and Roumanian, of Pole and Ukrainian has measured itself more and more resolutely with that of the dominant Germans and Magyars, while the sense of common citizenship has dwindled almost to vanishing point.

Moreover, constitutional forms have acted upon Austria as a dissolvent, since they inevitably strengthened the corroding forces of nationality. "Dualism, the foundation of the present structure" (we quote once more from a German writer), "rested on the assumption that in the Austrian half the Germans, in the Hungarian half the Magyars would permanently be able to rule." During the fifty years which Dualism has lasted, the parity which it established on paper has been purely fictitious. The system has only proved workable when one or other of the two scales was tilted high in air, and in practice the balance has always been weighted down in favour of Hungary. The Crown not only found its interest to lie in allying itself with one against the other, but was soon confronted with the impossibility of governing in any other way, and was quick to perceive the increased influence which accrued to it from the fact. That it was the Magyars rather than the Germans whom Francis Joseph almost invariably selected for this tacit understanding lay in the contrast between the political, racial, and social situation in Austria and in Hungary. While in Hungary the Magyars found in the Ausgleich an instrument for pressing their monopoly of power at the expense of the non-Magyar majority, in Austria the Germans slowly lost ground against the non-German nations, partly as a result of dissensions within their own ranks, partly because there was not the same disparity in social, economic, and intellectual progress between German and non-German as between Magyar and non-Magyar. Moreover, the impotence into which racial strife plunged the Austrian Parliament made the Magyars all the more firmly resolved to exclude their subject races from all share in political power. Thus the Magyars, inspired in all national questions by firm will and

unity of purpose, stood as a solid phalanx against the confused medley of warring groups which rendered government in Austria so hopeless.

The most interesting result of this has been in the sphere of foreign policy. There has never been any question of a real constitutional control of policy, but rather of periodic collusion between Budapest and the Hofburg. The Delegations are cumbersome and ineffectual, and at moments of crisis are often placed before an accomplished fact. Since their creation there have been four great international crises in which the Monarchy was directly concerned: the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-8, the Bosnian annexation crisis of 1908, the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, and the fatal month of July 1914. In the first and third of these the Delegations revealed their utter impotence; in the second they only met many months after all decisions had been taken; while in the last case they were ignored for over three years of a world-war and one year of a new reign. In them, even when they do meet, the representative principle has been so filtered down as to render their decisions wellnigh valueless as an index of public opinion. At best they offer a platform for a few firework speeches of criticism: but their rôle has rarely been other than negative, and though their attitude may sometimes weaken a Foreign Minister's position, it has never even remotely affected his selection. In a word, they are merely a convenient "blind" for the personal policy of the Crown in foreign affairs. Ever since 1867, behind all the seeming divergence of view on burning internal problems, the policy of the State as a whole has been determined by a steady understanding between the Crown and the Magyar oligarchy, who have always secured a free hand at home by supporting the dynasty abroad. It was Magyar influence that vetoed intervention

on the French side in 1870 ; that upset the federal experiment of Hohenwart in 1871 ; that laid the foundation of the Central Alliance with Bismarck and determined the Berlin settlement of 1878 ; that influenced the Monarchy's Balkan attitude throughout the 'eighties. Above all, it was Magyar influence that decided the Dual Monarchy's anti-Slav policy during the past decade, introduced naked absolutism in Croatia, and repression throughout the Yugoslav countries, and thus rendered a conflict with Serbia and Russia inevitable. In a word, under Andrassy and Kálnoky Austro-Hungarian policy was constructively Magyar ; under the negative Goluchowski it avoided all that could offend or alarm Magyar sentiment ; under Aehrenthal it was once more definitely anti-Slav. Under the feeble Berchtold the Slavophobe tendency was fanned into flame by the joint efforts of Berlin and Budapest, and his successor Burián was simply the nominee and faithful henchman of Count Tisza, who as Hungarian Premier (1913-17) was one of the main fomenters of the Great War, and who even to-day, out of office, remains the dominant factor in Hungarian politics. Nothing illustrates more clearly the realism and energy of Hungarian statesmen than the skill with which they hedged round and inveigled their former enemy, Count Czernin, until he became the foremost champion of the internal *status quo* and the Alliance with Germany upon which it rests.

Francis Joseph during his long reign was frequently influenced by personal motives in his methods of selection and rejection ; but though always following the line of least resistance and often hesitating and lacking in moral courage, he at least had acquired vast experience and knew his own inner mind. In his successor sudden impulse cannot make up for profound political ignorance and

inexperience, and his very devotion to dynastic interests renders him all the more dependent upon a tiny Court camarilla.

From time to time voices were heard suggesting that we might "detach," or negotiate with, Austria-Hungary, and on this point, as on so many others, extreme reactionaries whose secret aim is to preserve the Middle Ages in the twentieth century, and well-meaning but muddle-headed Liberals who actually allow themselves to be deceived by an ultra-Conservative aristocrat's comparison between Czernin and Trotski, join hands in defence of "Felix Austria." It has been my object in the preceding pages to indicate briefly the real factors with whom they would have to deal and for whose salvation they are consciously or unconsciously working. Two facts may serve to illustrate the complete divorce between these ruling factors and the broad masses of the population. When in December 1917 the Czech, Yugoslav, and Ukrainian Deputies in the Reichsrat unanimously put forward the demand that elected representatives of the various nations in the Monarchy should take part in the peace negotiations at Brest, such a claim was expressly repudiated not only by the Joint Foreign Minister, but also by the Austrian Premier, who treated it as contrary to the constitutional spirit. The watchword of self-determination, which has bulked so largely both at Brest and in the rival programmes of belligerent statesmen, was defined by Count Czernin and his colleagues as only applicable to *states* with their existing boundaries, and under no circumstances to the *nations* which form such states' component parts. Lest there should be any misapprehension with regard to his meaning, Count Czernin insisted not only on the doctrine of non-interference in its most uncompromising form, and upon

the absolute territorial integrity of the Dual Monarchy, but also upon the inviolable nature of the Dual System. Successive Hungarian and Austrian Premiers invoked the authority of the Crown for their adherence to this policy, thus recklessly dragging it into the political arena. Indeed, Dr. von Seidler was very explicit on the subject, and committed his Government to maintaining the existing boundaries of the seventeen provinces or "Crowlands" of Austria. Needless to say, this rendered utterly impossible even the beginnings of regroupment on a racial basis inside the Monarchy. Thus after the mountains had given forth portentous rumours of constitutional reform and racial autonomy in a "New Austria," there appeared the ridiculous mouse of national autonomy in seventeen water-tight compartments.

Thus insistence upon Dualism amounted to an emphatic repudiation, by all the determining factors in the State, of the federal solution for Austria-Hungary. In particular it was an answer to the programmes put forward on May 30, 1917, by the four Slav groups — programmes which demanded, without a single dissentient voice, unity and independence for Poles, Czecho-Slovaks, Southern Slavs, and Ukrainians alike, and which based their claim upon the right of every people to determine its own way of allegiance. During the winter of 1917-18 the conflict of ideas was still further accentuated. On January 6 the Czechs held what was virtually a Constituent Assembly at Prague, at which all their deputies and leaders without exception were present, and which, while reaffirming Czecho-Slovak independence as their aim, declared that they no longer recognised the Reichsrat as the supreme political authority. Not long after a congress of 1,100 delegates of the Slovene People's Party—a party which

has the open backing of the Prince-Bishop of Laibach and the whole of the Slovene higher clergy — unanimously adopted resolutions in favour of the full union of all Jugoslavs (Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes) in a single state.

On the morrow of the great Austrian strike the Premier sought to gain favour with the German Nationalists by denouncing the Czech programme as hostile to the State and the dynasty and as one which every Government will resist with all its strength. This open declaration of war upon the Czechs—with whom the Jugoslavs were in the fullest accord—assumed a still more serious complexion in view of the arrangements concluded between the Central Powers and the Ukrainian Rada. As a result of the assignment of Polish territory to the half-fledged Republic of Kiev, the Austrian Poles, who for many months previously had observed a strict neutrality towards the Czecho-German dispute, were thrown into fierce hostility towards Vienna, and thus deprived Dr. von Seidler of his last chance of a working majority in Parliament.

Thus by the early spring of 1918 political disintegration, accentuated tenfold by the desperate economic situation, was visible on all sides, and little or no attempt was made to conceal the fact that Austria, in the words of the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, was confronted by a "State crisis," instead of the perennial political crises of the past. "The burning question," wrote Herr Hugo Ganz, in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, "is, under what conditions Austria is still at all possible as a state." "For Government and State only the German *bourgeoisie* still stand up"—so runs a later comment—"and there is a danger lest the Germans may lose their interest in the State," and find it under existing conditions simply uninhabitable.

Here we come up against one of the fundamental facts

of the Austrian situation, which seems to have been completely ignored in this country save in the writings of Mr. Wickham Steed. The Germans of Austria, true to the advice of Bismarck, have been content to promote Greater German interests by remaining in Austria so long as anything material was left of their political hegemony. But while among each of the Slav groups national feeling triumphed over party and class distinctions, and led, in each case, to concentration for a common aim, the rift between Social Democracy and the *bourgeoisie* split the Germans into two irreconcilable camps, while, to complete the disaster, the *bourgeoisie* fell into a number of brawling groups. The result was that the Germans were definitely forced on to the defensive in Parliament, and could only hope to preserve their hegemony by a defiance of the Constitution and a more or less open resort to absolutism. Their uncompromising refusal to discuss the bare idea of federalism placed the Seidler Government—for which it was increasingly difficult to find any substitute—in a serious *impasse*. It was no longer a question of party tactics or even of inter-racial manœuvres. Early in 1918 a situation had been reached where one of the two dominant races, the Germans of Austria, finding that the machine of State had broken down, and that the only alternatives to the present situation were federalism or disruption, saw themselves driven to the conclusion that, even from its own selfish point of view, the latter was preferable, since it would unite them to the German Empire and rescue them from the position of a minority in a mainly Slav State. The same calculation weighed more and more with the Magyars, who, rather than submit to a definite collapse of the German hegemony in Austria, would prefer complete severance between Austria and Hungary, in the calculation

that in an independent Hungary the Magyars could still hold their own by means of a close alliance with the German Empire.

The young Emperor might play with the idea of a federal solution, but there was no real basis for such a game: and indeed long before the final collapse it was obvious to close students of political forces in the Dual Monarchy that none of the factors upon which its existence has hitherto rested could be relied upon to support him in such a policy.

WHAT IS AT STAKE IN THE WAR (1915)¹

SINCE August 1914 much has been written about "the war which is to end war," and even those who are too strongly imbued with the reality of things to believe in so sudden and radical a change in human nature, earnestly hope that when once the hurricane which is still devastating Europe has spent itself, it will at least be followed by a long period of calm and recuperation. The Napoleonic Wars ushered in a generation of peace, and it is safe to assert that the present war before it is over will have crowded as much carnage, destruction, and human misery into a relatively brief period as the twenty years of upheaval to which the French Revolution gave birth. The millions who return from the field will have no desire to renew their experience of modern armaments or to extend the study of cultured savagery. They are likely to hold to strict account those responsible for their sufferings, to insist that the struggle shall not have been in vain, and that the settlement shall give some concrete expression to their ideals.

Never in history will the statesmen, in whose hands the control of Foreign Policy lies, have been faced by so great a responsibility as in those months of negotiation which must inevitably separate the conclusion of hostilities and the final establishment of peace. It is already obvious

¹ *Papers for War Time*, Third Series, No. 35 (Milford, 1915).

that no single Power will obtain the maximum of its desires and that disappointment is in store for all extremists. But this need not cause excessive regret; indeed it may even be regarded as indispensable to the attainment of that *juste milieu* which will assure safety and satisfaction to the victors without kindling in the vanquished that intolerable sense of wrong which goads men to fresh violence.

The new Europe must be built on deep and broad foundations—but on lines of atonement, not of vengeance. We must make it possible for our enemies to emerge from the mood of exaltation and arrogance into which their rulers have plunged them and to join in the necessary work of reconstruction. But this involves as an essential preliminary the overthrow of those hidebound diplomatic traditions which have so long been the bane of international relations and which are above all responsible for the present war. The Congress of Vienna (1815) remapped Europe in accordance with the interests of her dynasties; the Congress of Berlin (1878) settled the Near East on a basis of governmental interests, as conceived by the Great Powers. The coming Congress of 1916 or 1917 must give preference to the interests of the nations themselves. No fair-minded student of modern history can resist the conclusion that it was the neglect of national aspirations and of the economic problems which are so inextricably bound up with them, that has been directly responsible for most of the great wars and revolutionary outbreaks of the past century, and above all for the failures which attended more than one diplomatic settlement.

Hence all who have the peace of Europe at heart are bound to insist in season and out of season that the chancelleries of the Entente shall not be allowed, whether by the corroding influence of the censorship or by the



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momentary exigencies of the military situation, to betray that principle of Nationality to which they stand irrevocably committed. It was a true instinct which nailed the colours of nationality to the mast; but rust and rough usage are already loosening the hold of the nails. Those who control our foreign policy are thoroughly honest and well-meaning: but unless they receive firm backing from a keen and well-informed public opinion, they run grave risk of succumbing to the forces of reaction which are so steadily being brought to bear upon them from the most unexpected quarters both at home and abroad. Unless such a body of opinion can be created—and it cannot as yet be said to exist—it is utterly futile to indulge in vague invective against “secret diplomacy.” All sensible democrats are in favour of democratic control of Foreign Policy, but the foremost obstacle to that control has been not so much the existence of an aristocratic caste or its alleged aversion to intruders from another class, as the boundless and dispiriting indifference of the masses in this country to the problems which inevitably give to that policy its direction. As an able critic has recently remarked, “there can be no *revolutionary* change in foreign politics until the Peoples have learnt more.” People who neither know nor care about the difference between Sofia and Bucarest, between Poles and Czechs, between Trieste and Valbna, between Tangier and Tripoli, are obviously incapable of forming any just views upon the future of the Balkans, upon Russo-German rivalry, or upon British naval policy in the Mediterranean. The war has revealed the abyss of ignorance beside which the nation had so contentedly reposed for years, and we are now faced by a unique opportunity for making good the omissions of the past. But in spite of many gallant efforts we are still some way from that concentration of expert

opinion and practical experience which is the only sound basis for a constructive, as opposed to a merely negative, policy.

What, then, is our policy to-day? Its main principles were brilliantly summed up by the Prime Minister in his memorable speech of September 19. They were, he said, "firstly, to vindicate the sanctity of treaty obligations and what is properly called the public law of Europe; secondly, to assert and to enforce the independence of free states, relatively small and weak, against the encroachments and violence of the strong; and thirdly, to withstand, as we believe in the best interests not only of our own Empire, but of civilisation at large, the arrogant claim of a single Power to dominate the development of the destinies of Europe." Yet clear and admirable as this summary is, it is meaningless unless we attempt to translate its phrases into the hard facts of the political world.

One fact has already become abundantly clear since those words were uttered—that whereas the victory of the Central Powers means an absolute German hegemony over enemies and allies alike, the victory of the Entente will be the joint work of an ever-expanding group of Powers. While Germany, if she wins, will justly regard herself as having saved Austria-Hungary from destruction, not one of her rivals, in the event of the triumph of the Entente, will be able to claim a monopoly of the credit. Each will have contributed to the common cause, but in each case that contribution will have been an indispensable part of the total effort. Here at least it is possible to find some consolation. The victory of William II. would be a victory for the spirit which inspired Louis XIV. or the first Napoleon, a reversion to the vanishing era of insolent conquest and plunder. The victory of the Allies will be a victory for

Europe and the European system. What might have been a mere war for French or British or Russian Imperialism has thus become a conflict in which all good "Europeans," to say nothing of Americans, are ranged against a single renegade foe.

The creed of the Allies is a creed of diversity, that of the Germans is a creed of uniformity. The openly avowed aim of their political and academic thinkers is the imposition of a single form of "culture"—the German—upon a world which has blindly failed to appreciate its merits. Hence their victory would mean the subjection of Europe to a new doctrine of Infallibility as demoralising for its inventor as it would be intolerable for its victims. The victory of the Allies, on the other hand, will be the joint work of widely different ideals and traditions, and will vindicate the right of every people to preserve and develop its own national individuality. As a writer in the *Nation* has well said, the Allied nations oppose to Germany's senseless worship of the "Will-to-Power" an invincible faith in the "Right-to-Live" of small and great nations alike.

Let us turn from theory to practice, and consider briefly what the victory of the Allies involves in the language of hard political facts. We are fighting three enemies of widely differing character, quality, and strength—Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey. In any consideration of our policy towards them it is advisable to treat them in the inverse order to their importance, for reasons which will soon become obvious. In peace time all save the extremists favoured palliatives. To-day only the most drastic measures will meet the case. Hence the victory of the Allies means the dismemberment of Turkey and Austria-Hungary—first because only thus can we hope to isolate

and bring Germany to her knees, and secondly because only on their ruins can we erect the new Europe of our dreams. Of these two organisms, the one is rotten to the core, the other has unhappily shown itself incapable of internal regeneration, and both have made themselves the voluntary tools of a stronger and more unscrupulous Power.

In Turkey to-day the issue is clear. The art of government has always been a sealed book to the Turk, and for generations past there has been a blight upon everything that he has touched. As we have endeavoured to show in the previous chapter, the Turk has never understood any principle save that of physical force: by the sword he built up his empire, and by the sword he is losing it. When the discord of his former vassals, aggravated by the intrigues of the Great Powers, enabled him two years ago to recover the last wreck of his European dominions, he became a mere tool of the state which had always shown a complete and consistent disregard for the fate and interests of the Balkan Christians. "The Turkish Empire," said Mr. Asquith, "has committed suicide and dug with its own hand its grave," and all British parties are to-day united in accepting the Gladstonian policy of driving the Turks "bag and baggage" out of Europe. The delicate problem of Constantinople and the Straits, so long evaded and postponed, must at last be definitely solved; and we are faced by the alternative of bolstering up for a fresh period the unstable and iniquitous rule of the Sultan, or freely offering the city to Russia, thus satisfying the yearning of centuries for St. Sofia and for the open sea. The creation of a small international state, composed of the countries bordering upon the Sea of Marmora, is an attractive idea, so long as it is merely considered theoretically; any attempt

to put it into practice would conjure up the very gravest difficulties and dangers. The Cross of St. Andrew is the only possible substitute for the Crescent of Islam, and it can hardly be doubted that Constantinople will profit as fully and as rapidly by the change as did Batum or Baku a few decades ago.¹ To Russia the question is one of sentiment, of strategy, and of economics, and these three needs once satisfied, the Western Powers in their turn would be entitled to demand that Constantinople shall remain a free port for the commerce of all nations, and that special guarantees of free access to the Mediterranean shall be offered to Roumania, to whom the question of the Straits is a matter of life and death, and who has all the more claim to be considered in view of her peculiar position as the guardian of the Danubian delta and that great river's trade with Central Europe. Bulgaria already has a direct access to the Aegean, which may perhaps be extended as the result of a friendly agreement with her neighbours; but Roumania will always remain dependent upon the Bosphorus, and no solution of the Eastern Question which ignores her interests and claims can be either just or permanent.

The problem presented by Austria-Hungary is infinitely more complicated. With its twelve principal races and ten chief languages, with its seven religions and twenty-three legislative bodies, it provides at every turn pitfalls for the

¹ This passage I leave as I wrote it four years ago. To-day it is obviously impossible to assign Constantinople to Russia; and yet the day may be nearer at hand than is generally recognised, when such a solution will once more become practical politics, and when a free Russia, no longer imperialistic and once more Christian, will assume the guardianship of the Straits. In any case no serious proposal has as yet been put forward as an alternative. Indeed, the Peace Conference's failure to grapple with the Turkish problem during the six months following the Turkish armistice is likely to form one of the main counts in a very grave indictment.

unwary or superficial student: and the bare idea of its collapse has filled with terror every advocate of the *status quo*. Small wonder that Palacky's famous phrase, "If there were no Austria, it would be necessary to create one," should have been re-echoed as a parrot cry for the last sixty years. A true instinct made even the most ignorant feel that the continued existence of the Habsburg Monarchy was essential if a European cataclysm was to be avoided. And yet M. Sorel was unquestionably right when he declared that "on the day when the Eastern Question appears to have been solved, Europe will inevitably be confronted by the Austrian Question." The troubles which precipitated the great struggle were due to the interaction of Balkan and Austrian racial problems—the jetsam of the receding Turkish tide. During the long reign of Francis Joseph, Austria-Hungary has made marked progress in many directions—politically as well as materially; but the attitude of her governing classes has always been a fatal drag upon the wheel. Her statesmen, far from realising that so conglomerate a state could not rest upon a negative basis, openly proclaimed and acted upon a policy of "jogging along" (the famous "Fortwursteln" of Count Taaffe), of half measures alike in internal and in external affairs. The House of Habsburg, with all its faults and shortcomings, has earned the gratitude of Europe as the champion, for three centuries, of Christendom against the Turks. But with the disappearance of all danger from that quarter a fresh policy was needed, in order to weld into a single whole the medley of peoples whom the dynasty had gradually gathered round it. The necessity for a strong lead in this direction became more and more urgent with every decade, as national feeling gathered force; and yet Francis Joseph has consistently refrained from giving such

a lead. At last, when the approaching dissolution of the Dual Monarchy was already the theme alike of superficial observers outside and acute thinkers within, there appeared in the person of the late Archduke Francis Ferdinand a man who seemed to possess the energy, knowledge, and gifts of leadership without which so herculean a task as the regeneration and reconstruction of the state would have been foredoomed to failure. His shortcomings were obvious, but his honesty of purpose and his belief in the mission of his house could not be gainsaid. It is the fashion to regard his uncle as the victim of some elemental Oedipodean tragedy ; but surely the fate of the nephew is infinitely more tragic. At the moment when he awaited with growing impatience the supreme moment of opportunity, confident that he would rally round him in his effort all the best brains of the Monarchy—at that moment he was struck down by the hand of an assassin, and his place was filled by a thoughtless and inexperienced youth better versed in light opera than in even the simplest problems of the political world.

His death removed the one man capable of restoring order to an internal situation which—for lack of any positive action—was rapidly becoming desperate. It removed, too, the chief restraining influence in the councils of the Monarchy and left the war parties supreme in Central Europe. The reactionaries of Berlin and the reactionaries of Budapest joined hands over the inanimate body of Austria. German and Magyar are inspired by a common resolve to maintain their domination over the Slav, to prevent the rising democracies of Western Slavdom from coming to their own. To-day we see Germany mercilessly draining the resources of Austria-Hungary in a quarrel which is altogether hateful to a majority among the latter's population ; we see the exploitation of close upon thirty

million people by their traditional enemies. If the menace of German military hegemony is to be removed from Europe, the first and most obvious task of the Allies must be the emancipation of the Slav and Latin races of Austria-Hungary, the vindication of their right to a free national development.

Before the war much was heard of the alleged attempt to "ring round" Germany by a superior combination of hostile Powers. The events of the last nine months have effectually exploded the theory of the Entente's menace. Germany has not only proved herself a match for her three great rivals, despite the secession of one member of her own group, but has even succeeded in galvanising her remaining ally into fresh life. But this is the last spasmodic effort of a system which belongs to the age of feudalism rather than to modern times. The great war is a hideous proof that the policy of racial dominance and forcible assimilation is morally bankrupt, but through its long-drawn-out horrors we believe that more than one dream of national unity and liberation will be realised, and that those racial minorities whose separate existence reasons of geography and economics render impossible, will attain guarantees of full linguistic and cultural liberty.

The moment is still far distant when we can attempt to define the new frontiers of Europe; but in view of the complicated issues involved it is already necessary to weigh very carefully the various alternatives. The dissolution of Austria-Hungary—an event which is only conceivable if Germany should be completely defeated—would involve a complete re-grouping of Central and South-eastern Europe. The chief features of the new situation would be (1) the union of Polish Galicia with the new Poland; (2) of Ruthene Galicia with the Russian Ukraine; (3) of the

Trentino, Trieste and Western Istria with the Kingdom of Italy; (4) the creation of an independent Bohemia—including not merely the Czechs, but their Slovak kinsmen in Northern Hungary; (5) of a Greater Roumania—including the Roumanian populations of Hungary and the Bukovina; (6) of a new Southern Slav state, composed of the present Kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro, the ancient but dormant Triune Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia-Dalmatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Eastern Istria and perhaps the Slovene districts of Austria, and finally (7) of an independent Hungary, a national state shorn of the races whom she has so long and so grossly misgoverned, and herself set free for a new era of democratic development. In some cases it may prove difficult to reconcile the rival claims of ethnography and strategic necessity, but by accepting nationality as the guiding principle of any settlement, and insisting that no race shall be handed over to an alien rule without being previously consulted, a great step will have been made towards placing Europe upon a new and surer foundation.

But even with the establishment of free and vigorous national states upon the ruins of the old order, there must inevitably remain the difficult problem of racial minorities, whose interests are of secondary but none the less of vital importance. And just as every effort must be made to ensure the survival of the smaller nations, as the surest bulwarks of true culture and tolerance, as the guardians of racial individuality and diversity of type, so also they in their turn must be induced to offer the fullest political and intellectual liberty to all racial minorities within their boundaries. A guarantee of linguistic rights in schools, churches, local bodies, and cultural institutions must be a *sine qua non* in the settlement of every problem. Thus the

Germans of Bohemia and Southern Hungary must enjoy the same privileges as the Magyars in the new Roumania, the Slovenes in Italy, and the tiny group of Italians in the new Jugoslavia. Those who see their monopoly threatened by such an arrangement will describe it as Utopian, but it is certainly attainable on a basis of careful study and good intentions.

If Nationality is to be the dominant factor in the future settlement of Europe, two other vital factors—economics and religion—must on no account be neglected, unless we are to court disaster. The geographical configuration of the Continent and the distribution of the various races render some international arrangement of a commercial nature an almost essential postulate of future peace. The free navigation of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus is in a special category of its own, and lies in the interests of every nation in Europe without exception. If Italy should succeed in establishing her claim to Trieste, she must, alike in her own interests and in those of European peace, convert the city into a free port for all commerce. Its inclusion in the Italian tariff system would rapidly reduce a flourishing port to ruin and create an intolerable situation for its entire *hinterland*, besides acting as a direct challenge to Germany to upset the settlement at the earliest possible date; whereas its proclamation as a free port would give full scope to every legitimate aspiration of German commerce in the eastern Mediterranean. In the same way, if Fiume should become the port of the new Serbo-Croat state, some satisfactory arrangement must be made for the free access of Hungarian and Bohemian commerce to the sea. From such an arrangement each of the three states would derive great benefits, and its triangular nature would be its most effective guarantee. A similar

experiment has already been successfully tried at the harbour of Salonica, where Serbia possesses a special zone of her own, exempt from Greek customs dues. It is to be hoped that Greece will voluntarily cede Kavala in return for valuable territorial expansion elsewhere; but failing that, a free port and special tariff concessions for the future Struma valley railway ought to be assured to Bulgaria.

Finally, in the north of Europe similar adjustments would be necessary. If, as all but a few reactionaries hope and believe, this war should bring at least a partial atonement for that greatest of political crimes, the partition of Poland, then the river system of the Vistula will resume its old importance as a geographical unit, and the new Poland must inevitably obtain its outlet to the sea. The only possible way of ending the secular feud of Pole and German is to reunite the broken fragments of the Polish race and to restore the port of Danzig to its natural position as a free port. Here is obviously a point at which wise and far-sighted commercial provisions can do much to modify acute racial antagonisms.

There is indeed much to be said for some special international arrangement, on the lines of the Danube Commission, for regulating the commerce of all the riparian states with each other and with the outer world. In such cases as the Seine, the Po, or the Volga only a single state is concerned, and the problem must be regarded as one of internal policy. But Germany has as great an interest as Holland in the mouth of the Rhine, Belgium is no less interested than Holland in the mouth of the Scheldt; on the Elbe and the Moldau depends much of Bohemia's prosperity; the Danube is likely to assume for Hungary an even greater importance in the future than in the past; while the Vistula supplies the key to the Polish problem.

There remains the religious problem, and nothing is more remarkable (in a war which has pitted Protestant against Protestant and Catholic against Catholic and thus appears to many scoffers as the bankruptcy of the Christian ideal) than the silence which our public opinion has hitherto preserved on one of its most vital aspects. In the very forefront of the vast problems raised by this war is the emancipation and regeneration of the democratic and progressive Slav nations of Central Europe. Of these, five out of seven—the Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, and Slovenes—are overwhelmingly Catholic; the sixth, the Ruthenes, so far as they inhabit Austria-Hungary, belong to the Uniate Church; while only the seventh, the Serbs, are Orthodox, and on them religion sits lightly, as on all Balkan peoples. This bald statement of fact should suffice to show the utter hopelessness of any attempt to solve these Slav problems on an Orthodox basis. The baneful influence of a tiny clique of reactionaries in Petrograd is being exercised in that direction; but the overwhelming mass of the Russian people, while clinging firmly to the Orthodox faith as a living expression of their innermost soul, will fiercely resent and repudiate any attempt to sow discord between Catholic and Orthodox. The Panslav ideal can only be attained by the enforcement of a religious truce; those who would like to identify Panslavism with Orthodoxy are in reality Panmuscovites, and must inevitably rely upon a policy of Russification. Such ideas are a reversion to the evil tendencies of the Middle Ages, to the very traditions by which German and Magyar policy is inspired, and will fail to arouse even the faintest echo among the Western and Southern Slavs, who are all deeply imbued with Western thought and culture.

A classic example of the new spirit is provided by the

fraternal example of the Croats and Slovenes, whose fervent Catholicism does not hinder them from ardently desiring union with their Orthodox Serb brethren, and whose tolerant attitude is more than reciprocated by the Serbian Government and public opinion in Serbia. The Concordat arranged in 1914 between Serbia and the Vatican is almost unprecedented in modern ecclesiastical history for its far-reaching and liberal concessions. It is to be hoped that this statesmanlike act will form a precedent for Russia's attitude to all her Slavonic kinsmen under foreign rule, and that when the Russian armies again enter Lemberg, such deplorable incidents as the persecution of Monsignor Szeptycki, "the Ruthene Strossmayer," will not be repeated. That Catholics and Orthodox can live amicably side by side without any injury to the national cause is shown by the almost ideal relations which subsist between the Roumanian Uniate and Orthodox Churches in Transylvania. The enthusiasm of many million Catholic Slavs in Bohemia, Hungary, and along the Adriatic coast-line, for Russia as the great Slav brother is an asset which a few fanatics must not be allowed to barter rashly away. Neither the Southern Slav nor the Bohemian nor the Polish nor the Galician questions can be solved on any basis save that of a *Tregua Dei* between Catholicism and Orthodoxy; and as the solution of all four problems is an essential preliminary to a durable European settlement, it lies quite as much in the interests of the Western Powers as of Russia herself, to insist upon this point of view.

In order, then, to bring the principle of nationality to its own in Europe, it will be necessary to destroy Turkey and to dismember Austria-Hungary. But to attempt to apply similar methods to Germany would be to deny, not to enforce, that same principle. The regeneration of Germany

can only come from within ; it can never be imposed from without. And that regeneration must be the aim of Europe, if the future peace is not to be one long nightmare of rival armaments tempered by epidemics of bankruptcy. For the moment Germany is content with the Hohenzollern conception of kingship and of the state ; and any attempt on our part at interference with the internal arrangements of the Empire could only strengthen its hold upon the people. Underlying the whole struggle is a fundamental difference of mentality and outlook, and herein lies the true tragedy and the crowning danger of the situation. Only by exploding the doctrine of Materialism and Brute Force as the gospel of humanity can we hope to produce in Germany a reversion to that cult of idealism in which her people formerly led the world.

Attempts are being made in certain quarters to imitate the ridiculous outbursts of hate by which a German poet-aster has advertised his name and which the lineal heir of the Stuarts, Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, has stooped to endorse. The exposure of authentic "atrocities" is a thankless but necessary task ; but those who found anti-German societies or inveigh against the inclusion of German Rhodes scholars on the roll of honour of an Oxford college, are not merely betraying a lack of perspective and wasting energy which might be well employed upon definite war objects : they are also guilty of a crude tactical error, for their abuse only tends to strengthen the reactionary party in Germany. It is a notorious fact that the brutalities committed by the German authorities in Belgium are not merely the expression of a militarism run wild, but also part of a deliberate policy which aims at stifling any tendencies on the part of the progressive elements in Germany to favour reconciliation with the Western Powers. It is

equally notorious that the German military authorities were seriously alarmed at the friendly feeling displayed by the troops on many sections of the front towards their enemy in the opposing trenches, and that drastic steps were taken during the winter to stifle the growth of such a feeling. To those who are aware of the changed attitude of our own soldiers during the past six months—from chivalrous and tolerant regard for a gallant foe to burning indignation at methods of foul play—further comment is superfluous. But though no one with a spark of humanity will be surprised at this result, it is well to realise that it was deliberately desired by the German authorities, and to decline as far as possible to play their game in other fields. The Junker party is playing for a *rapprochement* with the Russian reactionaries, and the German Radicals, who are to-day paying for their impotence and lack of policy in the past, find themselves reduced to silence by the tactless, though perfectly natural, exaggerations of a few fire-eaters in the West. They do not, it is true, represent a very serious force in German politics; and indeed the history of the last seventy years in Germany has been the history of the discomfiture of popular government by the exponents of military despotism. And yet a time may be at hand when they will no longer be a negligible quantity. Defeat may secure for German democracy what victory could never bring. On the very eve of war one of the most distinguished of Prussian historians, Professor Hans Delbrück, freely admitted in a moment of candour that the German Officers' Corps would never tolerate the introduction of a parliamentary régime in Germany, save after a new Sedan in which Germany was not the victor but the vanquished.¹

Lack of humour and ignorance of psychology lie at the

¹ "Regierung und Volkswille," p. 136.

root of the German official attitude. Their attempts at "frightfulness" are based on a characteristically low reading of human nature, on the tacit assumption that material considerations must rule the world. A classic instance of this lack of comprehension was supplied at an early stage in the war, when the German press treated the special prayers prescribed by the Archbishop of Canterbury as a sign of fear and panic. These critics made the same mistake as an English king six centuries ago, who saw the Scottish army kneeling in serried ranks upon the field of Bannockburn, and joyfully hailed their approaching surrender. To William II. we can surely repeat the words of Edward's more discerning general: "They kneel, Sire, but not to you!"

Since the war began, many words have lost their meaning, values are utterly changed. The nation has on the whole shown a truer perception of this fact than we perhaps had any right to expect, and has incidentally proved that it is by no means so lacking in imagination as its critics were fond of asserting. It is true that a few individuals are still incapable of flinging aside the old catchwords and still cling to the theory when the practice has already been abandoned; but the number of those who hailed the collapse of the party system with unabashed delight is unquestionably far greater than the few survivors from that vanished world of "pre-war" ideas and theories would care to admit. The classic example of the overwhelming transformation which ten months of war have wrought, is the new attitude of the nation at large towards the army. If many of those who opposed Lord Roberts's propaganda in the years that preceded the war have no hesitation in admitting their error to-day, we are at the same time entitled to protest with equal emphasis against those who wish to

force unalloyed "conscription" upon a nation of "slackers" and against those who regard the slightest departure from the voluntary system as a crime against freedom and humanity. The one party tends to minimise what has been achieved, the other to minimise the vast task which still lies before us. Both fail to realise that such claptrap phrases as "conscription" and "compulsion" are wholly inadequate as the interpretation of our present need. The true traitors to our national cause are those who, for whatever motives, read into the noble phrase of "National Service" a meaning which is utterly alien to it. National Service can have no limitation. In times of crisis every citizen must serve his country, whatever may be his age or sex or profession; and it is the duty of the State to apportion to each individual his or her own special task, whether it be military or civil. But at all costs we have the right to demand that the idea of National Service shall never be restricted in a merely military sense, but shall remain as an irresistible claim upon the whole nation. In the words used to me only a week ago by a prominent Socialist deputy, "Every man who is not doing something for the State to-day, is fighting for the enemy!"

Many of us, whom our work has kept at home, are frankly envious of the men at the front and feel that our best efforts in other causes are contemptible in comparison with the sacrifice they have made with so gay a heart and with scarcely a word of false sentiment or parade. We gladly face the fact that after the war it is the millions who return from active service who will be the controlling force in British politics. We know that they will introduce a steady influence, an element of reality, which was too often lacking in the internal disputes of the nation, and that their voluntary acceptance of the hardships of war will

have given them a moral force which compulsion could never have supplied. But there can be no hard-and-fast rules for supreme moments like the present. After ten months of war we are still at the beginning of our task, and we must be prepared to discard many more of our comfortable habits and traditional prejudices before the goal can be reached. To the pessimists who accuse the nation of sloth and indifference we can proudly point out that never in history has there been a voluntary acceptance of military duties on so large and so successful a scale ; while the optimists who accept this undoubted fact as a proof that further innovations are not needed, may be reminded with equal truth that the efforts put forth by this country are still relatively far less than those of our little Serbian ally, and that complete victory, whether on the field of battle or in the intellectual sphere, only comes to those who are prepared to pay the full price of sustained and concentrated effort.

The goal of this effort is the destruction of the German military machine. It is a task of enormous difficulty, but it can be performed, and we have no choice but to perform it. But we have not got to crush the German people, because that is at once impossible and undesirable. Impossible, because a compact and highly organised nation of 75,000,000 souls can never be crushed or annihilated, and any such attempt must inevitably recoil upon its author. Undesirable, because, despite the wild and inaccurate statements of our Jingo press, the German people represents, and always will represent, one of the most valuable elements in the intellectual and moral life of Europe. Its very virtues have contributed to its exploitation by a relentless and unscrupulous machine.

Earlier in the war it was almost a commonplace that

we were fighting the military caste, but not the people ; but this argument was abandoned when at last it became clear that the German nation is genuinely behind its leaders. And yet it is necessary to uphold the distinction between the governing class and the nation as a whole, for on this distinction alone does any hope for a better future rest. With the existing régime in Prussia there can be no permanent peace ; but unless some *modus vivendi* can be found with the German people, Europe will inevitably be condemned to a fresh period of agony and fratricidal strife.

The blasphemous arrogance with which the Supreme War Lord has claimed the Deity as a kind of Hohenzollern lackey is thoroughly in keeping with his attitude for many years past. At the same time those who have studied the psychology and behaviour of the military caste in Germany for the last two decades ought not to have been (and generally have not been) surprised at the manner in which its official "Kriegsbrauch" has been translated into practice in the present war. Neither the pseudo-Christian Caesarism of William II. nor the brutal theories of the General Staff are typical of the German national character, though the crimes and errors of both are inevitably visited upon the head of the nation as a whole. Hence to treat Germany as a pariah is as short-sighted as it is futile. Our outspoken condemnation of the infamies of Louvain and Dinant, of illegal methods of warfare on sea and land, were salutary and necessary ; and if fortune favours our arms, we shall most assuredly hold the highly placed criminals to strict account. But Germany herself will recover her senses, as surely as France after the orgies of the Reign of Terror ; and we, who have long since ceased to regard our closest ally with the eyes of Burke or Pitt, must frame our policy to meet the requirements of the future as well as of

the present. While firmly resolving never again to be caught napping by an unscrupulous diplomacy, and insisting on practical steps to render fresh aggression impossible, we must at the same time avoid any action such as might render more difficult Germany's recovery from the madness which has overpowered her. I have no desire to echo the futile cry of a handful of sentimentalists that "Germany must not be humiliated." Defeat is always humiliating, even after a fair fight! and those who do not desire Germany's complete defeat are traitors to the cause of Britain and of civilisation. We must impose our terms, if we can, but this can be done without outraging the soul of a great nation. In the words of M. Paul Sabatier—most assuredly one of the spiritual guides of the new Europe—"Victory on the battlefield will not be complete and definite unless we crown it, not by acts of revenge against the countless misdeeds of the Germans, but by a sort of missionary effort. Civilisation would be lost, if in order to take vengeance on the Germans, we were to adopt the sentiments of national pride and ferocious hatred which have created German militarism and made of Prussia a spiritual danger." The spirit which aims at dismembering the greatest national State in Europe must be sternly discouraged, not merely because it reveals an incapacity to distinguish between the possible and the impossible, but above all because any such attempt would be a monstrous negation of the very principles of which we have made so loud a profession.

The dominant factor, then, upon which not merely Anglo-German relations but the whole future of civilisation depends, is simply this: What will the 75,000,000 of Germans think after the war? What will be their attitude to the world around them? Can they be brought to

POLAND

- frontiers of Poland (1772)
- - - other pre-war frontiers
- Eastern frontier of Kingdom of Poland (1815-1914)
- approximate new frontiers (on ethnographic basis)



THE NEW POLAND

believe, and above all to impose the belief upon their rulers, that there is a higher appeal than to Brute Force? Or are they so sunk in materialism, so tamed by long years of over-discipline, as to be incapable of realising the triumphant power of an idea? There was a time when no people on earth understood this so well as the German: time alone can show whether they will revert to the idealism of a great past, or whether the system of blood and iron which now holds them as in a vice, will prove too strong for the awakening spirit of self-criticism. This is the great riddle of the future, to which no man can pretend to supply a trustworthy answer. It will be the duty of the statesmen of the Entente to avoid so far as possible a policy which would either silence the advocates of conciliation or drive them into the arms of the reactionaries.

Some well-meaning people to whom the domain of Foreign Policy remains a sealed book despite all their efforts to map it out, would have us believe that the evacuation of Belgium and Northern France by the Germans would provide a tolerable basis for peace negotiations. *Sancta Simplicitas!* we may well exclaim. On the one hand the Prussian Government will never consent to such terms until its financial (if not its military) situation is desperate, though it is already using such informal proposals as a convenient manœuvre to impress neutral countries with its moderation. But on the other hand—and this is infinitely more important—public opinion must grasp the fact that our aim in this war is not merely the restoration of unhappy Belgium to her former position. That is one of our many aims, and it was one of the determining facts in our action last August. But it is only a small detail in the great task that awaits us—and I use the phrase advisedly without for one moment minimising all

that Belgium means for Europe and for us. Our task is nothing less than the regeneration of Europe, the vindication of the twin principles of Nationality and Democracy, the emancipation of subject races from alien rule. Restore Belgium, reunite Alsace-Lorraine to France, but ignore the agony of Poland, the irresistible movement for Southern Slav Unity, the new and hopeful dream of an Italian Italy, the growing resolve of Bohemia, the aspirations of the Roumanians, Slovaks, and Ruthenes, the impossible nature of Turkish rule, the vital need for Balkan co-operation, the overwhelming claims of Russia to an access to the Mediterranean,—and in so doing you are giving your vote for the old Europe of reaction and materialism, and selling your birthright in the new and transfigured Europe of our dreams. Half-measures are for times of peace; to-day we must build on broad foundations, not waste our time upon the scaffolding of a house which has been condemned as unsafe. But where is the master-builder? That is our greatest need to-day. The nation has already shown during this war that it can respond to a clear call; and in the great problem of munitions at least one man has shown himself ready to lead us. But in Foreign Policy the same lead is urgently needed—no longer the silence of pessimism or caution which has weighed upon our spirits during the past six months, but the gallant and incisive phrases with which our statesmen roused our enthusiasm in the early stages of the war. Britain must prove true to her mission as the soul of the Entente—not as the exponent of some new-fangled “English Culture,” but as the champion of those wider principles of mutual tolerance without which neither a healthy national life nor healthy international relations are possible.

THE FAILURE OF SIR EDWARD GREY (1916)¹

“What we all want is the certainty that individual Ministers will be no more immune than individual generals from the consequences of failure. At present there is no such certainty. There is not even a reasonable probability that failure will mean retirement.”—*Times*, January 17, 1916.

“The one idea has been, and is, to keep us all in the dark about our own business for fear we should be scared. It is Ministers who are scared, not the people.”—Mr. H. M. Hyndman, May 1915.

HAVE we a Foreign Policy to-day ?

Have we ever had a Foreign Policy since the death of King Edward ?

Is there any prospect of its present controller evolving a Foreign Policy in the near future ?

Such is the problem to the discussion of which the present article is devoted. It has been written by one who before the war was a Liberal, but whom the war has forced to “scrap” one fond illusion or prejudice after another, and who is prepared to “scrap” many more things in his pursuit of an energetic and constructive Foreign Policy, as an indispensable aid to military success.

¹ From *The English Review*, February 1916.

I

King Edward succeeded to the throne during the course of a foreign war, when the dangers involved in our much-vaunted policy of "Splendid Isolation" had become only too apparent, and when this country, for a number of reasons, enjoyed abroad an unpopularity differing only in degree from that which the Germans have won for themselves in the present war. Above all, he was confronted at every turn by his own nephew, William II., as a perpetual element of restlessness and uncertainty in European politics, for ever reiterating his pacific intentions, yet no less frequently parading the terrors of his mailed fist.

From the very first King Edward's aim was perfectly clear and logical, and was pursued with all his unrivalled diplomatic *flair*, personal tact, and knowledge of the intricacies of Continental politics and of human nature in general. This aim was the removal of the chief danger-points in the European situation, and they were many. Our long isolation had bred in us a spirit of arrogance and a disinclination to study our neighbours, which culminated in the regrettable but by no means "inevitable" incident of Fashoda. The South African War taught us a much-needed lesson—not to despise small nations—and revealed to us the depths of our insularity and unpopularity, and the dangers to which these two hard facts exposed us. The explosion of Pro-Boerism on the Continent was like a flash illuminating the abyss at our feet.

King Edward, unlike his Imperial nephew twelve years later, took the warning to heart. But for him it may be doubted whether either the Anglo-French Agreement or the Anglo-Russian Convention would have been realised, though it would be grossly unfair to under-estimate the

share of Lord Lansdowne as Foreign Secretary in initiating the former, and of Sir Charles (now Lord) Hardinge and Sir Arthur Nicolson (now Lord Carnock) in negotiating the latter. The policy to which these agreements provided a solid base has, of course, been represented, and indeed decried, by his enemies as one of "Einkreisung"—the encircling or even isolation of Germany. It is an unjust definition, but represents a jealous rival's natural attitude to our new policy of turning former enemies into friends. Such a transformation was bound to be galling to those whose political game it suited that we should remain at enmity with France and Russia. The idea of "Einkreisung" is only true in one very limited sense—as an attempt to remove as many inflammable objects as possible from the reach of a man who was never tired of brandishing a flaming torch of "Kultur" round his head. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the *rapprochement* of the Western Powers with Russia was the inevitable result of the predominant position won for the Triple Alliance by the success of Bismarck's policy of isolating the potential enemies of Germany. The consolidation of German influence in Turkey only served to accentuate this fact.

The Agreements with France and Russia constituted a definitely constructive policy. What still remained to complete that policy? Obviously an Anglo-German Agreement. Many observers of foreign politics, especially on the Liberal side (and, I have to admit, myself among the number), were most anxious to attain this end. Many of us had long been aware of the poisonous and reactionary outlook of the Prussian Junkertum, of the officers' corps and the Tirpitz clique, of the Pangerman pamphleteers with their dreams—to-day mere dreams no longer!—of "Mitteleuropa" and "Berlin to Bagdad"; but we

consoled ourselves with a belief in the growing strength of liberal and progressive elements in German society as a counterpoise to Jingo influences, and considered that every year gained for peace made the resort to arms more improbable. Events have shown that we exaggerated their influence and their backbone, and even among the most ardent pacifists there are not many whose eyes have not been at least partially opened.

A good understanding with Germany was entirely desirable, from the standpoint of those who wished a forward policy of Social Reform at home and a restriction of activity abroad to the mere retention and development of the Empire. But an understanding, if it was to be attained on sound lines, presupposed two things—first, that Germany's rulers were acting *bona fide*, and that in any negotiations their real aim was a permanent arrangement, free from all ulterior motives. The cumulative evidence of German preparedness for aggression in the spring and summer of 1914—evidence which need not be recounted here—reduces this presupposition to very doubtful proportions. Secondly, that no action which we might undertake must injure existing arrangements, and that no intimacy with a new acquaintance, however desirable in itself, is worth the estrangement of an old and valued friend. In other words, the Entente with France must be treated upon the basis, *Noli me tangere*. Personally, though I was appalled in July, 1914, at the prospect of war with Germany, I remember now with satisfaction that during that month I more than once warned my friends in Berlin that they must reckon upon the absolute certainty that any attack on France would involve immediate war with Britain also.

Granted these two assumptions as to the necessary

tactics to be followed with a view to an understanding with Germany, can we find any thread to the policy pursued by Sir Edward Grey in the years immediately preceding the outbreak of war? Till 1910 he had followed the lead of King Edward, and of his diplomatic advisers, who invariably took the place of the Foreign Secretary at meetings with foreign sovereigns and ministers. Since then there have been growing signs of indecision and "wobbling," which were duly exploited by the Wilhelmstrasse and its exponents in the British Press and in circles of international finance both in London and Paris, to say nothing of the cruder campaigns organised in various Continental newspapers (notably the *Neue Freie Presse*; the *Kölnische Zeitung*; the *Berliner Tageblatt*, *Vossische Zeitung*, and *Kreuzzeitung*; the *Pester Lloyd*, and *Le Jeune Turc*).

The first serious campaign of "Grey Must Go" preceded the Agadir crisis by some months, and coincided with one of the more acute Cretan crises. After Agadir it was renewed with increased vigour by the Germanophil section of the British Press, influenced quite unconsciously, but for that reason all the more effectually, by manoeuvres from the German Embassy. While Sir Edward Grey was being quite unjustly attacked as anti-German, the true criticism upon his policy would have been its negative character, its lack of any pronounced quality of "pro" or "anti." Being entirely honest and well-meaning, and genuinely anxious for the preservation of peace, he proved himself a most successful follower of King Edward's "directive"¹; but when that was once withdrawn he

¹ It is pretty well known within the inner Liberal ring that he owed his appointment to the post of Foreign Secretary to the fact that the Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and King Edward intended to conduct their own policy and regarded him as an admirable mouthpiece for their views.

tended more and more to follow the line of least resistance, and to prove his good intentions (which need never have been challenged—for, after all, it is not good intentions, but judgment, constructive power, sympathetic knowledge, and energy at the hour of danger that we are entitled to demand from our Foreign Secretaries) by yielding ground before a determined outcry from within the ranks of his own party. To admit this incontestable fact is, however, a long way from suggesting that Germanophilism was merely the product of doctrinaire Radicalism.

From the winter of 1911 onwards there was (to the initiated) a noticeable increase of overtures to Germany on the part of Sir Edward Grey, the most notable incident of the new era being Lord Haldane's visit to Berlin. This visit, so far from being blameworthy in itself, may be regarded as a laudable and genuine attempt to promote good relations between Britain and Germany. But Lord Haldane's subsequent attitude in relation to that event is blameworthy; for it suggests either angelic innocence or superhuman folly. Either the Cabinet was fooled by a misleading account of his visit and by a concealment of the disillusionment which he has publicly assured us that he brought back with him, or—it is a disagreeable alternative—his public utterances in the summer of 1915 contain grave mis-statements. In either case, Sir Edward Grey's continued intimacy with Lord Haldane, above all his continued reliance on Lord Haldane's political judgment, inevitably arouses misgivings, and strengthens our doubts as to whether Sir Edward Grey has any definite line of policy.¹

¹ One who had quite exceptional sources of information, and who has few equals in historical criticism, wrote at the time the following comment upon this passage: "Lord Haldane went to Berlin with the full consent of the Cabinet, to try to pave the way for some

In judging this question, it is necessary to remember that the warning which Lord Haldane claims to have transmitted to the Cabinet early in 1912 was by no means the first warning of Germany's intentions. It is certain that he had received in the spring of 1908 a definite warning from the then French Premier, M. Clemenceau, as to the aggressive designs of Germany, of the determination of the Germans not to respect Belgian neutrality, and of the absolute necessity of adequate military preparedness on the part of England. M. Clemenceau assured him that 150,000 British troops would be of no avail, but that if 250,000 British troops could be landed on the other side of the Channel within ten days of the outbreak of war the German rush could be stopped, and that if England had 500,000 men ready, the course of the war would be changed. In the light of our experiences since the outbreak of war the wisdom of M. Clemenceau's warning is apparent.

This remarkable incident throws some light upon the suicidal policy of "drift" which preceded the war—a

all-round agreement as to world policy, which might avert a war. Incidentally he told the Kaiser that if Germany attacked France, England would certainly fight. He came back with a feeling that the war party had got stronger in Germany, and that the situation might become serious. He was, however, entitled justly to argue that however willing the Germans might be to fight Russia and France, they would think twice before attacking Russia and France with the very probable chance of England as a third; and the definite refusal of Germany's neutrality proposals did constitute such a probability. Now what was he to do? Was he to say to England, 'These Germans are plotting a war against France and Russia. We must come in when they do, and adopt universal service at once'? Such a course would inevitably have precipitated the attack on France, whom he knew to be unprepared; for it was not to be supposed that the Germans would allow the grass to grow under their feet until we had created a big army. He did in my opinion the only thing possible. He created a large Staff College, so that the brain of the army would be big enough when the emergency should come."

policy of moral commitments towards Continental States without any preparation to meet their probable consequences. Such a lack of policy (for policy it most emphatically was not) was equally insane as the basis of a system of European alliances in which military obligations are the inevitable corollary to political advantages, and, on the other hand, as a means towards attaining an agreement with Germany ; for it should have been obvious from the very first that the only factor likely to impress the German Government with the need for coming to terms was a clear and overwhelming demonstration of armed power. In foreign policy, as in the schoolroom, it is impossible to have one's cake and eat it.

But not merely did Sir Edward Grey fail to appreciate the psychology of the German ruling class. As late as May 1914 he betrayed his complete failure to gauge the psychology of France, when he remarked to M. Clemenceau, " At last I am convinced that France is a pacific country." Translated into English psychology, what can such a remark mean, save that till then he had looked upon France as a jingo nation, permeated with the spirit of " revanche," and had regarded the indefinite nature of his commitments towards her as a means of keeping the " switch " in his own hands. The best that an apologist could say is that the observation was let fall by a man who, after holding for eight years the office of Foreign Secretary, was paying his first visit to the capital of his country's closest political friend !

So long as peace endured in Europe, Sir Edward Grey's lack of a constructive policy was only apparent to a few rare observers. His undoubted eagerness to preserve European peace and his genuine efforts in that direction served to conceal his defects under a cloak of admitted

good intentions. It was just these good intentions, and his obvious qualities as a straightforward English gentleman, which explained the admiration which we felt for him so long as we remained in ignorance of the inner history of his policy.

But what of this inner history? As we shall see, a considerable period before the outbreak of war had been devoted by Sir Edward Grey to private overtures to Germany and even to risky negotiations with her behind the back of the other two Entente Powers; while all the time the German campaign of "G.M.G.," representing him as hostile to Germany, were merely skilful manœuvres of the Wilhelmstrasse Press Bureau. Each time they were repeated, his lack of a settled policy, combined with his honestly pacific tendencies, increased his eagerness to meet the critics at least halfway; with the result that his devotion to peace led to the imposition of periodic blackmail. In support of this assertion a whole series of concrete facts may be adduced.

In the autumn of 1911 Italy, by her invasion of Tripoli, became involved in war with Turkey, and Sir Edward Grey adopted an attitude which was anything but favourable to Italy. In the course of the autumn and winter he twice sent Circulars to the other Great Powers inviting them to address a joint Note to Italy, warning her not to tamper with the Dardanelles. The only effect of this step was a severe diplomatic snub for its author. The second invitation presented to the Austro-Hungarian Government in the sense indicated was actually handed by Count Aehrenthal¹ himself to the Italian Ambassador in Vienna, with the words: "This may amuse you. I shall not answer it."

Sir Edward Grey's Balkan policy will be dealt with more

¹ Then still Minister for Foreign Affairs.

fully at a later stage. For the moment it may suffice to refer to his *naïve* acceptance of the Chairmanship of the Ambassadors' Conference in London, thus putting the Entente in a permanent minority, playing into the hands of Germany, and incidentally suggesting that once more he was not following any definite line of policy. His eagerness to forward the cause of European peace was altogether praiseworthy, but such an aim, when pursued as a mere abstraction, becomes a chimera. During these conferences, early in 1913, the former Grand Vizier, Hakki Pasha, was sent to London to negotiate about the Bagdad Railway. His mission is understood to have been arranged in Berlin between the Young Turk leader, Djavid Bey, and the Wilhelmstrasse. The Bagdad Railway negotiations dragged on for over a year, until at last an Anglo-German agreement, with Turkey as a subsidiary party, had been reached. It was initialled in the late spring of 1914, but had not yet been signed when war broke out. The publication of its contents to-day would hardly be calculated to strengthen Sir Edward Grey's position as a bulwark of British interests against Germany.

The Treaty of London (May 1913) was virtually imposed upon the Balkan delegates by strong pressure from Sir Edward Grey; and Bulgaria in particular regarded Britain as irrevocably committed to supporting her claim to the Enos-Midia line. Yet, when Bulgaria's criminal attack upon Serbia and Greece ended in disaster and the Turks took advantage of her distress to reoccupy Adrianople, Sir Edward Grey, far from holding Turkey to her newly assumed Treaty obligations, actually continued to negotiate with Hakki Pasha about the Bagdad Railway, while the Ottoman Government were engaged in tearing up the Balkan Treaty concluded under his auspices. He did this

in the teeth of urgent warnings from experienced advisers as to the disastrous consequences for British prestige in the Near East of so undignified a proceeding. His whole attitude was not merely treated in Central Europe as an ignominious "climb down," but also strengthened throughout the East the belief that Britain was afraid of Turkey and would do anything for her separate advantage. It is superfluous to point out that this abandonment of Bulgaria rankled fatally in the minds of King Ferdinand and his statesmen, and explains as much as anything else the distrust with which they have regarded British diplomacy, and which finally decided them to adhere to the Central Powers. What is an even more fatal criticism from the diplomatic point of view, Sir Edward Grey deeply offended Bulgaria without at the same time doing anything to conciliate Greece, Serbia, and Roumania, the two latter of whom it had so long been a tradition of British policy to treat as negligible quantities.

Much more serious and open to even graver criticism is the parallel negotiation with Germany regarding the Portuguese colonies. The origin of this affair is wrapped in considerable mystery, and dates from before Sir Edward Grey's accession to office. When at the end of November 1899, soon after the outbreak of the South African War, Mr. Chamberlain made friendly overtures to Germany, the idea of an Anglo-German agreement was mooted by William II., and suggestions were made for a partition of the Portuguese colonies in the event of their liquidation. Certain negotiations were conducted behind the back of Lord Salisbury, then in poor health and abroad; and a Treaty embodying a scheme of compensations and territorial rearrangements was actually initialled. It was, however, never signed, for two reasons. On the one hand, Lord

Salisbury opposed it, doubtless recognising that we were merely putting a premium on German intrigues for the destruction of Portugal. On the other hand, it was discovered to be unworkable, if only because the Dutch had a right of pre-emption on the Portuguese half of the island of Timur. The scheme was thus upset and remained in abeyance until Sir Edward Grey, having been freely accused by the "pro-German" clique of wishing to prevent Germany from obtaining "a place in the sun," agreed to revise the Treaty and make it workable. This was in the winter and spring of 1913-14. When it is remembered that the Portuguese possessions include points so important as Goa, Madeira, Cape Verde, Angola, and Mozambique, it will at once be obvious that a scheme of partition of these colonies might have enabled the Germans entirely to encircle the Dominion of South Africa.

Yet not a word concerning these negotiations seems to have been allowed to transpire, and if the leading South African statesmen were ever taken into the confidence of the home government (a point upon which we are insufficiently informed), it is at least certain that Dominion parliamentary and public opinion was completely ignored. The natural line of defence for the Foreign Office was that the new partition was more favourable than that of the earlier Treaty; but this is an argument savouring strongly of the era of Metternich, and ill adapted for the use of a Liberal Government and Foreign Secretary.

The affair, which had originally been kept secret from the French, got to their ears early in 1914 and caused great consternation in Paris. Two messages were sent to London to the effect that if the fact of the Treaty's conclusion were to be published before or during King George's impending visit to Paris, the Government of the Republic could not

be responsible for the consequences! France, indeed, is understood to have lodged a protest at Berlin, as she was entitled to do under the existing Franco-German agreements. Finally, in view of the French attitude, the Germans asked that the matter should be left in abeyance for the time. The British Foreign Office interpreted this as a sign that the Treaty was to be dropped; but Prince Lichnowsky, as late as the end of June, 1914, privately declared this view to be unfounded, and stated that he hoped to find means of solving all difficulties. Chief of these obstacles was the fact that Sir Edward Grey, after having initialled the Treaty, took the view that he could not sign it finally unless it was to be published, and that in order to make the situation quite clear he would be obliged to publish simultaneously the so-called "Windsor Treaty," which had been concluded with Portugal, and by which Britain guarantees the integrity of Portugal and her possessions. He appears, however, to have made no arrangements by which these two apparently inconsistent Treaties could be reconciled. Germany naturally raised objections to this course, which would have made her look the dupe of England. The *naïveté* of such a suggestion on the part of Sir Edward Grey seems yet another indication that he had no policy, but was merely striving blindly towards peace, in a well-meaning and honest but entirely aimless manner.

His whole attitude on the outbreak of war is in keeping with this theory. Given the negative policy of the four previous years, and given also the facts of the Central European situation and the absence of any positive aim (for the platonic desire to avert war is not a positive, but a negative, aim), it is hard to see how he could have done better during the fourteen critical days which ushered in

the Great War. But even his best endeavours in that crowded period, regarded in the light of previous history and of subsequent developments, only serve to emphasise still further his lack of a definite policy, and that fatal vacillation between alternative actions which has proved so disastrous in his dealings with the Balkan States.

Meanwhile it will be obvious that all this necessarily appears to the German mind in a very different light, and explains the extraordinary bitterness of the more honest German political circles towards Sir Edward Grey, and also the secret satisfaction of that inner ring which knows the real truth regarding his purposelessness and vacillation, that he should continue to direct our policy, or rather to deprive our policy of all directive, while supplying the German nation with a convenient and obvious target for projectiles of abuse.¹ Those who do not know him as we in this country know him—and that applies to the vast majority of Germans—fail to appreciate the degree to which his character blends pure subjective honesty with that ultra-English quality of objective inconsistency which lies at the root of all Continental misconceptions as to English national character. Hence they invariably jump to the conclusion that he was wittingly dishonest and that all his negotiations regarding the Balkans, Portugal, and Bagdad were an elaborate “blind,” concealing plans of exceptional perfidy and intended to forestall Germany’s own designs of aggression till the right moment arrived. The delays

¹ William II. performs, with more reason, the same function in this country; but the average Englishman has less need of an “Aunt Sally” than the average German. With the former grumbling is merely a useful tradition and an incentive to his rulers; with the latter, a necessary foundation for the elaborate logic upon which he builds up any political case, and without which he feels absolutely bewildered.

between initialling and signature might be taken to lend some colour to this view. Unquestionably those who explain the motives of others by the motives likely to actuate themselves in such circumstances—and this is a typically German frame of mind—might be excused for arguing on these lines.

No doubt the German Emperor, who tried " bluff " upon Sir Edward Grey as upon so many other people (on two separate occasions he assured him in conversation that in the event of war the German armies would reach Paris in little over a fortnight), was perfectly well aware that such suspicions were based upon error. But the effect of Sir Edward Grey's lack of policy upon German psychology was undoubtedly a very vital factor during the first period of the war.

In this connection we may point to the allegation brought by the German Chancellor in the summer of 1915 against Sir Edward Grey, of having said in his parting interview with Prince Lichnowsky that Britain might render to Germany more effectual services by taking part in the war than by remaining neutral. This assertion has not been denied by Sir Edward Grey, though in his letter to the Press he denied the conclusions which Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg drew from it. Yet if it be true, it proves even more conclusively his lack of a policy.

Within six weeks of the day when he is alleged to have made this remark, we find Sir Edward Grey concluding a convention with Russia and France, pledging us not to conclude a separate peace. Once more, then, we are confronted by two alternatives—either he said nothing of the kind or he has no policy, for no one with a clear policy could conceivably have made such a remark in good faith

and followed it up so rapidly by a commitment which would render it meaningless.

The letter addressed by Sir Edward Grey to the British Press in answer to the Chancellor contains one specially illuminating passage. Writing a year after the outbreak of war, he complained that the Germans, by rejecting his proposals for arbitration, had destroyed the last chance of averting war; "and what a good chance it was." The phrase is either meaningless or, taken in its proper context with the various secret treaties and negotiations to which we have referred, it means that he was prepared to concede to Germany practically all her demands in return for peace. Criticism of such an attitude may be limited to pointing out that any one who knew anything of the German character, especially of the ruling German's character, would have known that this was the surest way to confirm them in their aggressive designs—designs for which we now have overwhelming evidence.

Sir Edward Grey's lack of a policy would have been highly dangerous even if it had involved complete passivity; but though there was no guiding principle there was plenty of activity. This took the form of a growing tendency towards secret diplomacy, a growing habit of leaving Parliament, and still more the country at large, completely in the dark as to foreign policy, and a growing reliance on a tiny clique, of which more than one influential member had the closest ties, both political and private, with high German diplomatic circles. The pledge given to Parliament after the first Moroccan crisis, that no further arrangements would be concluded with foreign Powers without previous consultation with Parliament, has been repeatedly ignored, not merely in spirit, but in letter. (That the Dominions have been ignored in matters of

foreign policy is, of course, the fault, not of Sir Edward Grey, but of the lack of any Imperial constitution; and one of the first tasks which will confront us when peace returns will be to remedy this deficiency.) The apologists of Sir Edward Grey will doubtless reply that he observed the strict letter of the pledge by only initialling, not signing, the Treaties in question. But even this excuse cannot be pleaded for the Windsor Treaty, still less for the fatal Treaty concluded between the Entente and Italy in April 1915.

II

d
During the first nine months of the war Italy's neutrality presented one of the most vital and delicate problems in the European situation. Our traditional friendship with Italy rendered the prospect of her military co-operation highly agreeable, the more so because the general aims of her policy seemed to conflict neither with British political interests nor with the more abstract aims of general policy proclaimed by British statesmen. Our programme rests upon the principle of nationality and the rights of small nations. The two chief aims pursued by the Italian Government and General Staff—the completion of Italian national unity and the acquisition of a safe strategic frontier—are at once legitimate in themselves and in no way incompatible with the Entente's programme. There was thus no conflict of principle between Italy and the Triple Entente, and it ought to have been perfectly possible to reach an equitable compromise between the national claims of Italians and Southern Slavs. Unhappily, those who conducted the negotiations between Italy and the Entente seem to have been inspired by other motives. The secret Treaty, as finally concluded on April 27th, assigns to Italy

the Trentino, Gorizia, Trieste, the line of the Julian Alps to near Fiume, the whole of Istria and its islands, the whole of the Dalmatian mainland and islands down to Cape Planka, between Šibenik (Sebenico) and Trogir (Traù), and finally the South Dalmatian islands of Vis (Lissa), Hvar (Lesina), and Korčula (Curzola). Such an arrangement, if ever carried into effect, would involve the handing over to Italy of at least 700,000 Slavs, and indeed of the very Slavs among whom the movement for Serbo-Croat national unity has struck deepest root. As its framers were from the first well aware that it could only be imposed in direct defiance of the wishes of the population concerned, and that Serbia, in her position of trustee for her kinsmen, could never become a party to such a betrayal, it was decided to conceal the whole negotiation from the Serbian Government and incidentally to ignore the numerous exiled Serbo-Croat leaders who were in every way qualified to represent the inhabitants of Dalmatia, Croatia, and Istria. The whole responsibility does not rest on the shoulders of Sir Edward Grey: it must be shared by M. Delcassé and by MM. Sazonov and Isvolski, who were influenced by the same narrow Orthodox feeling which has been responsible for Russian misrule among the Ruthene Uniate Catholics during the occupation of Galicia. But it is to be observed that neither the French nor the Russian statesman had committed himself to the high-sounding phrases of the British Government on the subject of nationality and the rights of small nations. By acknowledging Italy's right to occupy the Dalmatian coast upon strategic grounds and against the wishes of its inhabitants, Sir Edward Grey knocked the bottom out of the British programme, and robbed Britain of the moral right to denounce the German conquest of Belgium. Germany has as good a right to

Belgium and Holland as Italy has to Dalmatia. Both claims rest on strategic reasons, and upon the sword. Italy's claim to Dalmatia is the less tenable because, in addition to flouting the rights of race and language, it ignores the economic facts of the situation and would spell complete and immediate ruin for that unhappy province by cutting it off from its economic hinterland.

Those who understood the psychology and aspirations of the Southern Slavs and of the other races of the Dual Monarchy urgently warned Sir Edward Grey before it was too late that Italy's entry into the war was the one thing needed to galvanise Austria-Hungary into life at a moment when she was cracking at every joint. Their warnings were disregarded, and they were assured that military opinion expected Italian intervention to be decisive. Yet, as might have been predicted, the Austrians were able to hold the Italians in check on that difficult frontier without seriously affecting their power of offensive in Galicia, and within three months were actually able to reduce the garrisons of Pola and of Bosnia to half their strength before Italy's entry. This Treaty was the work of a small group of diplomatists following thoroughly Metternichian principles. On the French and British side it was a gross betrayal of those principles for which the two peoples fondly imagined their representatives to be contending; on the Russian side it was an intrigue directed by a few reactionaries against the Catholic element, without which Jugoslav unity is impossible; while on the Italian side it in no way reflects the generous impulses which led the nation to break its bondage to the Triple Alliance.¹

¹ In the original I here added the following sentences: "The progress made by public opinion in Italy during the last six months encourages me to refer openly to-day to an arrangement which has

III

The Balkan policy of Sir Edward Grey was for all the world suggestive of a child trying to work out a Chinese puzzle with the wrong bricks. He never, either before or during the war, showed any signs of comprehending the vital significance of the Balkans in a European war, above all to British policy. His lack of a constructive policy towards Serbia has become notorious in the light of recent events; but it was no less marked at the outbreak of war. Entente policy towards Serbia and Bulgaria was tacitly left to Russia to manage, on the basis of the comfortable catchword that we must not be more Slav than the Russians. This in itself is a fatal mistake, for it overlooks both the fatalistic trait which influences the Russian character so deeply and also the inexpressibly narrow outlook of Russian governing circles even in Slav matters—two factors which quite definitely necessitate our being *more*, not *less*, Slav than the Russians in such questions as the Southern Slav, the Polish, and the Bohemian.

The complete indifference displayed by Sir Edward Grey as to the merits of the dispute between Serbia and Austria-Hungary, and the problems which had given rise to it (Blue-book, Nos. 1 and 5), can no doubt be justified by his earnest desire to preserve peace and to avoid anything which

been known to me from the beginning; for it is clear that the Italian public has now reached a truer appreciation of the moral as well as the strategic and military factors in the situation and of the vital need for a close understanding between Italy and the whole Jugoslav race, whose interests are identical with her own. The moment has arrived for a generous revision, such as would win the Jugoslavs for ever to the Italian side and ensure permanent peace in the Adriatic." This reads cruelly in 1919.

might offend Austrian or German susceptibilities at the critical period. But he must even then have been perfectly well aware that the Serbian Government was entirely innocent of the Archduke's murder, that one of the assassins was the son of an Austrian police spy, that the behaviour of the Bosnian police was something more than strange,¹ and that the whole Austrian case against Serbia lay in the hands of Count Forgách, the man who, while Austro-Hungarian Minister in Belgrade some years previously, had been publicly proved responsible for an elaborate plot of forgery and espionage against Serbia and the Serbo-Croat Coalition in Croatia.

Serbia was from the first excluded from the position and privileges of an ally; but that did not deter the Entente from putting pressure upon her to invade Austro-Hungarian territory, when such a diversion might assist the allied cause. In September 1914 this invasion was carried out in the teeth of expert military opinion and of the obvious alphabetic facts of the situation. It of course failed, both in Bosnia and in Slavonia; indeed, strategically it was bound to fail; and the results were disastrous for the Serbo-Croat population, which had welcomed the invaders, and was hideously punished when the authorities returned a few weeks later.

So little had Sir Edward Grey gauged the true situation in Serbia in the autumn and winter, that the final rout of the Austrians took him completely by surprise, though all who knew Serbia were well aware that it was purely a matter of making good the deficiency of ammunition in the

¹ In this connection it is worthy of notice that as early as May 1914 a prominent New York newspaper announced that a plot against the life of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand was being planned in *Vienna*, and that the intention was to throw the blame upon the Serbian Government!

Serbian army. When at last this began to arrive, the tide turned very rapidly.¹

At the very moment when lack of ammunition made itself most seriously felt an incident occurred which throws a flood of light upon the Bulgarian attitude, and supplied a warning which was disregarded. As the ammunition upon which Serbia's salvation depended was at last beginning to arrive, strong Bulgarian bands, with machine-guns, raided the Vardar valley from the nearest point of Bulgarian territory and destroyed one of the chief bridges on the only railway linking Salonica with the outer world. This dastardly act was passed off by the Government of Sofia as a regrettable incident of which they had no cognisance; but every child knows that a raid with machine-guns can hardly be undertaken even in the most primitive country without the knowledge of the authorities.

Save to the blind, Bulgaria's attitude has been perfectly logical from the very beginning of the war. Those who controlled her destinies were fully conscious that the midnight attack of June 29th, 1913, which began the Second Balkan War, was both a crime and a blunder, and were savagely angry at its failure. They were determined to upset the Treaty of Bucarest at the earliest opportunity, they were hostile to those who had imposed it, and at the same time they were distrustful of those who had induced them to conclude the Treaty of London under what was little short of a guarantee, and had then almost without a murmur allowed the Turks to treat it as a mere scrap of paper. Hence, when the great war came, they were without illusions, and resolved at all costs to be on the winning

¹ That the necessary steps were taken was very largely due to the urgent messages of the British Military Attaché, Colonel Harrison, and the then correspondent of the *Times*, Mr. Crawford Price.

side. During the first and second Austrian invasions of Serbia (August–September 1914) Bulgaria held back, for three very good reasons. She was afraid to move until she saw which side the Turks would take: she was uncertain as to the attitude which Greece and Roumania might adopt in the event of her entry on the German side; and she was impressed by the Russian conquest of Galicia. When the third Austrian invasion seemed about to triumph, she tried to drive the last nail into the coffin of Serbia by cutting the Vardar valley. Here she was merely following the approved Bulgarian policy of “a stab in the back.” After its unexpected failure she reverted to strict neutrality. To all suggestions of intervention she replied by an emphatic insistence upon the cession of Macedonia—with “effective guarantees” for its retention—as the only possible programme which could secure her adhesion to one side or the other.

For some years previously only two factors had counted in Bulgaria. The first was King Ferdinand, who was Austrophil and still more Magyarophil, and who had reached a private understanding with Vienna at least as early as June 1913, if not in the late summer of 1908, when the joint Austro-Bulgarian *coup* against Turkey was in preparation. The second factor was the “Macedonian” party, consisting of political refugees from Turkish, and latterly from Serbian and Greek, rule in Macedonia. This party controlled a large section of the army and the Sofiote bureaucracy, stuck at nothing in its savage fanaticism, and was politically blind to everything save the redemption of Macedonia. The moment that its aims coincided with those of the King, who controls foreign policy without even consulting Parliament, there was nothing else in the country which could check them.

This alliance represented a league between diplomacy and brute force.

At the turn of the year Bulgaria noticed a growing tendency on the part of the Entente to exercise pressure upon Serbia, and began to regard the Entente as more likely to deliver the Macedonian goods than the rival firm of the Central Powers. The question at issue has been persistently confused by the advocates of Bulgarian or Serbian ethnological theories. In reality it was merely a question of Baksheesh. Bulgaria had fought for Macedonia—had fought by methods of political and military treachery—and had lost. But after all, Macedonia was the price of Bulgaria's participation, and if the Entente valued her military aid against the Turks sufficiently highly to pay the inevitable price, then it had to be paid quite irrespective of the Treaty of Bucarest or the mediaeval frontiers of Tsar Dushan. Unhappily, it was not till August that Sir Edward Grey realised that any solution of the Macedonian question had of necessity to be *imposed* upon the Serbs, instead of being left to their initiative.

In February 1915, however, a definite offer of intervention against the Turks was made to the Entente by Dr. Radoslavov. It is not altogether clear through what medium it was made, but for some inexplicable reason it was not transmitted to London.¹ As we shall see, the Entente snubbed the smaller Powers when they made overtures to us and then exposed itself to counter-snubs by

¹ Almost at the same time King Ferdinand himself, as a member of the House of Coburg, made a direct overture in the form of an autograph letter to King George. The fact that he went behind his Cabinet, his General Staff, and even his own secretary, and handed it direct to a private individual of high standing, may throw doubt upon his good faith, but surely did not justify those who prevented it from being either delivered or answered.

making undignified overtures to them after the psychological moment had already passed.

For the next six months Sir Edward Grey played with the idea of a Serbo-Bulgarian Agreement; and after the Russian retreat and the Suvla Bay disasters the Bulgarians responded by playing with Sir Edward Grey. In August he at last realised what was obvious in January, that internal conditions in Serbia made it impossible for her to yield Macedonia voluntarily, and that strong if friendly pressure on the part of the Entente was an indispensable condition. But quite apart from having realised this six months too late, he had in the meantime, by the Treaty with Italy and by his steady refusal to accept Serbia as an ally, enormously increased the difficulty of concessions by the Serbian Government. Serbia could not be asked to concede Bulgarian "national unity" in a form which she has steadily refused to recognise, at any rate without an assurance that the Allies would support her own claim of Serbo-Croat national unity; and it was just this assurance that Sir Edward Grey and his colleagues were indisposed to give, owing to their commitments to Italy. From the moment that the mismanagement of the Dardanelles Expedition became apparent to the Bulgarians (and it must be remembered that the whole Balkan Peninsula was ringing with the details at a time when the British public was still allowed to know nothing), only one thing could have prevented them from joining the Central Powers, and that was the prompt display of military force, as a practical proof that we should not allow our ally to be crushed. Unhappily, Sir Edward Grey and his military advisers showed only too clearly that they did not appreciate the issues at stake. They did not realise what has been obvious for the past nine months, even to the man in the street, that Serbia

alone blocked the German advance to Constantinople and Bagdad, and that Serbia alone provided the road for a serious offensive against Germany's weakest spot, the great Hungarian plain.

IV

Throughout the period wasted in negotiations with Bulgaria there was always an alternative policy. Instead of offering the unscrupulous Ferdinand the territory of our ally or our friend in the name of a principle for which he cared nothing, we might have taken our stand on the Treaty of Bucarest and rallied Greece and Roumania in its defence. Unhappily, our policy towards Greece has been even more unsatisfactory than our policy towards Bulgaria. All through the autumn of 1914 Greece was known to be willing to come in on our side whenever we wanted her; but we never did want her, and indeed steadily discouraged her intervention. Early in December the situation changed, and the Entente invited Greece to join them, but as no promise of support against Bulgaria, in the event of her joining the Central Powers, could be obtained, the Greek Government not unnaturally declined to take the risk. None the less, there is the strongest reason to believe that at the very beginning of the year detailed plans for the intervention of Greece on the side of the Allies were laid before the British Government with the knowledge and consent of King Constantine, and that they were not even considered. In the last days of January Mr. Venizelos drew up his famous Memorandum to the King, definitely advising intervention, and, if necessary, even the cession of Kavala to Bulgaria, in return for the acquisition of Smyrna. This latter proposal was, however, promptly withdrawn in view of the revival of Bulgaria's financial

arrangement with Berlin, the Greek Premier naturally treating this as a proof that his Bulgarian colleague was not "doing business" with the Entente. In March, in view of the attack on the Dardanelles, which is believed to have been undertaken in the teeth of advice from the Greek General Staff, Britain and France again invited the Greeks to join us, and Mr. Venizelos went so far as to favour intervention without any definite guarantees from the Entente. The rejection of this policy by King Constantine led to the resignation of Mr. Venizelos and the formation of the Gounaris Cabinet. Only a few weeks after its accession to power, tentative proposals were made on its behalf to the Entente through a member of the French Cabinet. Prince George of Greece was sent to Paris by his brother, the King, with a virtual offer of intervention in return for the Entente Powers guaranteeing the integrity of Greek territory. The French were inclined to consider the offer, but it was rejected by London on the ground that no attention could be paid to "unauthorised amateur diplomacy." This astonishing phrase was allowed to reach the King of Greece, and having been applied to his own brother on a mission which was anything but unauthorised, naturally gave the greatest possible offence.

August came, and with it the moment when the German plan for the invasion of Serbia (which had been in careful preparation ever since German troops first appeared in the Hungarian Banat in January 1915) was at last complete, and when the straightening of the German line against Russia made possible the release of the necessary troops. Sir Edward Grey, instead of taking immediate steps in conjunction with his allies to meet this new menace, was engaged in ineffectual efforts to repair the mischief caused by his betrayal of the Southern Slav cause on the Adriatic.

It was only after Sofia knew the Germans to be ready that the Allies summoned Serbia to consent to the cession of Macedonia to the Bulgarians, undertaking themselves to garrison the disputed territory till the end of the war. But by that time Ferdinand had already made up his mind that the Central Powers were going to win ; while even the Entente's friends in Sofia were rendered suspicious by the fact that our offer to garrison Macedonia was limited to the east bank of the Vardar, whereas the districts most coveted and least likely to be disgorged lay on the west bank. This fact did not, of course, decide the issue, but it is interesting as showing how even in small details we invariably contrived to create an unfortunate impression.

The actual invasion, foreseen by all students of the Balkans for nine months previously, found the Entente Governments, and, above all, Sir Edward Grey, not merely wholly unprepared, but actually relying upon Greece to rescue us from the consequences of our own inaction. How little our leaders grasped the situation may be gathered from the fact that, three weeks before the Germans opened fire on the Danube, one of the highest military authorities in England assured a Serbian representative that in his opinion the whole operation was probably bluff.

When hard facts disproved this opinion, it might have been expected that we should act promptly and strain every nerve to recover lost ground and to redeem a situation which was becoming grave, but was still far from desperate. Instead of this, Sir Edward Grey pinned his whole faith upon Greece fulfilling her Treaty with Serbia by a declaration of war against Bulgaria. The common view of this treaty is that Serbia was bound to furnish 150,000 troops against Bulgaria in the event of the latter attacking one or other of the contracting parties ; and as, in view of

the Austro-German menace from the north, that number could not be spread by the Serbs, Mr. Venizelos, on September 21st, asked France and Britain to make good the deficiency, and thus enable Greece to observe her part of the Treaty with some reasonable chance of success. It was on this basis that the allied troops were sent to Salonica.

As a matter of fact, the Treaty was much more comprehensive than is generally supposed. Under its provisions the *casus foederis* arises not merely in the event of a Bulgarian attack on Serbia, but also of an attack from any other quarter also ; and therefore Greece, in not coming to Serbia's aid against Austria-Hungary in 1914, had already broken her pledge. Hence Sir Edward Grey, who must have been well aware of this fact, was surely running a very grave risk when he relied upon Greek constancy in a situation which his own diplomatic failures had rendered infinitely less favourable.

On September 23rd Bulgaria mobilised against Serbia ; yet on September 27th Sir Edward Grey practically vetoed Serbia's proposal to take advantage of her own military preparedness and to attack Bulgaria before she could be ready. Next day (September 28th) in the House of Commons he uttered his famous pledge that, in the event of Bulgarian aggression, " we are prepared to give to our friends in the Balkans all the support in our power, in the manner that would be most welcome to them, in concert with our allies, without reserve and without qualification." At the moment every one in England, and above all in Serbia, took this to mean that we were going to send Serbia the military help for which she was clamouring ; but on November 3rd Sir Edward Grey explained to an astonished world that he merely meant to convey that after Bulgaria had joined Germany " there would be no more talk of con-

cessions from Greece or Serbia." The *naïveté* which could prompt such an explanation is only equalled by the confusion of mind which could read this interpretation into a phrase so explicit and unequivocal.

If the references to Serbia in his statement of September 28th were extraordinarily misleading, his simultaneous references to Greece were directly mischievous in their effect. Following upon a prolonged attempt to barter Serbian territory to Bulgaria in the teeth of Greek disapproval (based upon fear for the fate of *Greek Macedonia*), his assurance that Bulgaria had no aggressive intentions (this, five days after the Bulgarian army had begun to concentrate between Vidin and Zaječar!) and that in Britain there was not only no hostility, but "a warm feeling of sympathy for the Bulgarian people," created anger and consternation at Athens, and was directly responsible for the fall of Mr. Venizelos and the King's repudiation of the Serbo-Greek Treaty. Then at the critical moment, when Greece's betrayal of Serbia opened the road of the Bulgars to Skoplje (Usküb), there were, at Salonica, not the promised 150,000 allied troops, but 35,000 French and only 13,000 British, the latter under strict injunctions on no account to cross the Greco-Serb frontier. It would be interesting to know whether this order was given with the approval of Sir Edward Grey. Attempts have been made to throw the whole onus of the Serbian disaster upon Greece's defection; but it is well for us to remember the unpalatable fact that Greece's failure in her Treaty obligations towards Serbia alone saved Britain from the charge of failure to fulfil *her* pledge to Greece. Nothing can exonerate Greece's desertion of her ally, but in view of our tergiversation and irresolution, some allowance must be made for King Constantine's attitude towards the Entente.

Moreover, if it had been intended to deceive the Serbs and to dislocate their plans of defence, no better method could have been imagined! For not the least of the enormities for which Sir Edward Grey is responsible has been, that though he and his military advisers were from the first opposed to sending military help to Serbia and blocked it at every turn, they none the less carefully concealed the fact from the Serbian General Staff, instead of giving them fair warning that help would not be forthcoming. Worse still, they kept urging the Serbs to hold the Danube front at the risk of exposing their flank to Bulgaria's onslaught.

While Sir Edward Grey remained apparently unconscious of his duty towards a small but gallant ally, whom he had persistently excluded from the counsels of the Entente and whose function as a bulwark of British interests in the Middle East he failed to understand, our French allies showed a growing perception of the issues at stake. Finding himself insufficiently backed up from London, M. Viviani, then still Prime Minister, crossed the Channel shortly before the reconstruction of the French Cabinet; and one of the objects of his visit was to urge a more vigorous Balkan policy. A little later M. Millerand, then still Minister of War, crossed upon the same quest, and found it necessary to prolong his stay in order to extract some, albeit ambiguous, promises from our reluctant authorities. As he remarked to an English friend, he felt he could not return without some guarantee of military support, "otherwise the rupture would have been too grave." But from these promises our Government began at once to recede, and within a fortnight General Joffre himself found it necessary to come over to plead the cause of Serbia (October 29th). On his arrival, Sir Edward Grey, throwing to the winds all his public pledges to Serbia,

definitely urged upon the French Generalissimo complete withdrawal from Salonica and the abandonment of the Serbs to their fate. General Joffre replied with the historic phrase: "Vous nous lâchez sur le champ de bataille!" ("You are deserting us on the field of battle, and we shall have to tell the world!"). Seldom, if ever, has a British Foreign Secretary exposed himself to so humiliating a retort from the lips of an ally. But the taunt was effective. General Joffre carried his point, and in the biting phrase of Sir Edward Carson, the Government "decided that what was too late three weeks before was in time three weeks after." But those three weeks, which might have transformed the fortunes of the campaign, had been irretrievably lost through Sir Edward Grey's lack of a Balkan policy. Even then our hesitation continued. Instead of attempting seriously to check the Bulgarian advance in Macedonia and to thwart the long-cherished Austrian design of a port on the Ægean (which, as things are, would rapidly become a German submarine base), the Government allowed itself to be beguiled by a plan (if plan it can be called) for the abandonment of Salonica and the Dardanelles and the concentration of a defensive force on the Suez Canal—presumably in order to wait till the Germans had established their hold on Greece and Roumania as well as Bulgaria, reorganised the Turkish army, completed the Bagdad Railway, replenished their own supplies from Asia Minor, and were ready for the invasion of Egypt. On December 3rd the pressure of these craven spirits wrested a decision from the Calais conference in favour of evacuation; but happily the French Cabinet refused to ratify so disastrous a decision, and after a further week of disunion the War Council of the Allies finally overrode Sir Edward Grey.

Thus for many weeks a strain was put upon the Entente which would have been extremely dangerous but for the chivalrous loyalty of the French and their knowledge that the British nation did not share the pusillanimous views of its Foreign Secretary. In Paris the question was asked on all sides : why Sir Edward Grey, after such repeated fiascoes, did not follow his colleague, M. Delcassé, into retirement ? . How intolerable the situation had become, how ruinous to our prestige in the Near East, might be proved up to the hilt by allusions to the fiasco of our Turkish policy in the summer of 1914, to the notorious *Goeben* incident, and more recently to the situation in Roumania. But it will suffice to quote the astounding message conveyed late in November by King Constantine to prominent representatives of the Entente, to the effect that the conquest of Serbia renders the Salonica Expedition superfluous and that the "protection" of the Franco-British forces in their retreat into Greek territory can only be guaranteed by Greece in return for an explicit undertaking to re-embark immediately ! This seems to have been a little too much even for Sir Edward Grey to stomach ; but it was, after all, merely the logical outcome of that vacillation and lack of directive to which King Constantine very aptly alluded in his conversation with the *Times* correspondent (*Times*, December 7th). M. Gustave Hervé wrote in *La Guerre Sociale*, of December 8th, that after that interview "our English friends must begin to realise that they are largely responsible for the present attitude of Constantine. Our friends in England do not take sufficient account of our peculiar temperament, so different from theirs. We, in whom the sentiment of honour is more developed than the sentiment of interest, are incapable of entertaining for an instant the idea of

abandoning the Serbs. We are, perhaps, idiots, but we are made so."

[The concluding paragraphs were merely written for the needs of the moment, but it would not be honest to omit them from the present reprint.]

It is also high time that the British public should awake to the fact that Sir Edward Grey and his military advisers are sowing the seeds of future trouble with France. And here silence is full of dangers; the true and only remedy is free speech. For there can be no question of any quarrel or even of any divergence of view between the French and British peoples at the present juncture; all that is needed is to restore French confidence in British leaders, and that can only be done by the choice of leaders qualified to lead.

Britain is suffering to-day from the fatal habit of cloaking the faults and errors of our leaders, both civil and military, of pooch-pooching serious criticism as mere "whimpering," and pleading that we are doing our best in the best of all possible worlds. That is not the way to win the war. The method at present favoured by a section of the Press is to plaster London with the ill-considered assertion of one of our party leaders that "Germany is beaten." Beaten, forsooth, when her armies have marched in triumph from Ypres to Vidin, from Mitau to Prizren! That savours of the period when officers labelled their luggage to Pretoria, only to arrive there as prisoners—not of the "Black Week" when we set our teeth and laid the moral foundations of our future victory.

A very common argument against any change at the Foreign Office is that the fall of Sir Edward Grey would greatly encourage the Germans; and it may be readily admitted that if he were to give place to Lord Haldane or a member of the U.D.C., the enemy would have good cause to rejoice. It is quite true that Sir Edward Grey is regarded by the man in the street in Germany as the arch-conspirator and author of this war; that is a convenient dogma which it has suited the German Press Bureau to inculcate. But official Germany has long known that his honest aimlessness and naïve obstinacy make him one of their greatest assets, and the German Chancellor was unwise enough to hint this in his recent speech, when he ascribed Germany's Balkan

successes in large measure to our mistakes. The fall of Sir Edward Grey, as the result of a demand for a more energetic conduct of the war and for still closer co-operation with our allies, and the substitution of a man of energy and first-rate ability, would be far the most serious and disconcerting blow which the Germans had yet received.

The fear of drastic changes is entirely out of place in the middle of a life-and-death struggle such as the present war. No past service, however signal, can atone for the long series of blunders from which we have tried to select the most flagrant. France and Germany and Russia are at present strewn with reputations which this war has wrecked, very often unjustly. Why should we alone adhere to homœopathic methods ?

WANTED—A FOREIGN POLICY (1917)¹

FOR eleven years our foreign policy has been controlled by one man. His tenure of office has not only been longer than that of any Foreign Secretary since Canning, but it has coincided with the most momentous events of our modern history. During the opening years of this period the Anglo-French Entente and the Anglo-Japanese Alliance were consolidated, and the long-sought Anglo-Russian Agreement successfully concluded. Much of the credit for these achievements must rest with the late King Edward, whose political ability may have been exaggerated by uncritical admirers, but who combined an astonishing *flair* and knowledge of Continental affairs with that even rarer quality, the magical talent of creating or transforming an atmosphere. With his death our foreign policy entered upon a new phase, the most striking and regrettable characteristic of which was, on the one hand, the complete lack of interest in it displayed by the nation as a whole and by its representatives in Parliament, and, on the other hand, the profound secrecy in which our relations with foreign Powers were shrouded. It would be absurd to blame a single man for such a development. Parliament, which indulged in party brawls instead of acting as a trustee of the nation, and the nation itself, which was absorbed in

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. i. No. 9, December 14, 1916.

domestic affairs and unduly bent upon its own amusement and enrichment, are at least equally to blame. But the fact remains that in the year preceding the war, parallel with a Balkan policy which gravely jeopardised our prestige and sowed the seeds of future trouble, a whole series of secret agreements with Germany were negotiated, such as would have transformed the map of Africa and Western Asia in her favour. We are still very much in the dark as to these treaties; but the testimony of four prominent students of foreign affairs—Sir Harry Johnston, Mr. Morton Fullerton, Count Reventlow, and Herr Paul Rohrbach—enables us to provide the following survey.¹ Parallel but distinct negotiations appear to have been carried on between Turkey, on the one hand, and Britain, France, Germany, and Russia, on the other; between Germany on the one hand, and France and Britain on the other; and finally between France and Britain. The essential point which underlay all these various agreements was that Germany was recognised as “the sole concessionnaire” of the Bagdad Railway, but consented to make its terminus at Basra instead of the coast-line of the Persian Gulf, and to leave Koweit in the British sphere of influence. While France secured concessions for the construction of railways in Syria and even in Armenia, both she and Britain strictly bound themselves to refrain from building any line which would compete with the main German line; and Count Reventlow significantly tells us that the other concessions, though considerable if reckoned in kilometres, were “de-

¹ “The Political Geography of Africa before and after the War,” by Sir Harry Johnston (*Geographical Journal*, April 1915, with maps). “Problems of Power,” by W. Morton Fullerton, 3rd (revised) edition, 1914, pp. 305-8. “Deutschlands auswärtige Politik,” by Graf Ernst zu Reventlow (4th revised edition, 1916), pp. 472-3. Paul Rohrbach in *Das Grössere Deutschland* for August 15, 1914.

pendent on the Bagdad railway as the backbone of the whole system of communication." Meanwhile, according to Mr. Morton Fullerton, France acquired control of the ports of Heraclea and Inebali on the Black Sea, and of Jaffa, Haifa, and the Syrian Tripoli on the Mediterranean. Russia secured fresh pledges for the Europeanisation of Armenia, while Britain acquired effective control of the Persian Gulf.

So far as Africa is concerned, we learn from Sir Harry Johnston that France was prepared to surrender practically the whole of the French Congo, with the right of pre-emption over the Belgian Congo; and that Walfisch Bay was to have been ceded to Germany for part of "the Caprivi strip in Zambezia," and the island of Zanzibar in return for the connection between Uganda and Tanganyika; while the dormant proposals for the sale of the Portuguese colonies to Germany were revived in a new form which aroused both alarm and dissatisfaction in Paris. The net result of all this would have been to secure for Germany a great Central African Empire, linking the Cameroons by land both with German East and South-West Africa, and in that case the transference of Angola and at least the northern half of Mozambique to Germany would have only been a question of time and opportunity. If it be true, as Sir Harry Johnston hints, that all this was to have been conditional upon "the retrocession of Metz and French-speaking Lorraine," and the "extrusion" of Luxemburg from the German Customs Union in favour of Belgium, it is, of course, impossible without further facts at our disposal to pass a final verdict upon the whole transaction; but in the light of our experience during 28 months of war the grave dangers which it involved are only too apparent. Turkey and Central Africa would have fallen like ripe fruit into the lap of Germany.

All these efforts towards peaceful demarcation seem at first sight admirable, and may perhaps have been worth trying as a last means of averting disaster. But they were vitiated by a fundamental misconception of Germany's intentions, and by a failure to comprehend her arrogant outlook towards her neighbours. Not merely the German Government or the Prussian ruling caste, but the average thinking German—as all who came into close contact with our enemies are well aware—was profoundly convinced of the decadence and growing exhaustion of France, and of course still more of the other "inferior" Latin nations. The "boundless corruption" of Russia and her inability to withstand German efficiency either in the military or the economic sphere had become a dogma with most Germans, and provided a common platform for Socialist, Liberal and Junker, for Jewish journalist and Uhlan officer, for commercial traveller and Centrum deputy. The fact that this overweening contempt was combined with an instinctive fear of what Russia might and would become when once she had thrown off the shackles which bound her giant limbs, and set herself in real earnest to putting her house in order, only served to increase the temptation to forestall the day of her reformation and to strike when her strategic railways were still unbuilt and her resources still undeveloped. And parallel with all this depreciation of France, Italy and Russia, though no doubt less widely spread, was the German conviction that Britain too had passed her zenith and was destined ere long to yield up her primacy and her undue share of the good things of this earth to more vigorous and more highly organised nations. In Germany there may have been more friends of Britain and of British ideals than it is to-day the fashion to admit. But there was also a growing number of those with whom power

rested, who not merely looked across the Channel with eyes of jealousy and greed, but dreaded closer relations with Britain, as a nation whose habits, training, and outlook upon life were antagonistic to their own, and likely, if studied too closely, to produce a dissolvent effect upon those old-world institutions upon which their own existence rests.

Our foreign policy, then, since King Edward's death, has rested upon a complete disregard of foreign psychology, a fundamental misconception of Germany's intentions, and a pathetic desire to placate the tiger with bread and milk. In view of the fact that our Government decided to intervene in the war before it was too late, it is not necessary at this juncture to pass in critical review all the acts of omission and commission that marked its conduct during the famous Twelve Days. Besides, too many important points remain obscure to permit a final judgment upon the method as distinguished from the result. What is clear, however, is that the decision to make war was not accompanied by a complete conversion to a warlike frame of mind on the part of the Government as a whole, and particularly on the part of the Foreign Secretary. For a long time his attitude was not merely that of a man who regretted the decision, as all such decisions must be regretted in the abstract, but who mourned inwardly over the collapse of a series of illusions which he had entertained for years, which the war had already shown to be illusions, but which he seemed to hope might nevertheless be resumed or revived after a short struggle should have convinced the belligerents of the folly of their course. It was not until shortly before his resignation that the Foreign Secretary seemed really to have felt that the war must be waged whole-heartedly, because its outcome involves not only the existence of the

British Empire, but the very ideals to which his political life has been devoted.

The one outstanding feature of Allied and British diplomacy which our Foreign Office is entitled to recall with unqualified satisfaction is the conclusion of the Pact of London. The credit for that act of clear-sighted statesmanship has still to be allotted. The overwhelming burden of available evidence seems to indicate M. Delcassé as the real author or inspirer of the agreement that none of the Allies should make a separate peace. But to the credit of all of them it must be said that the suggestion was no sooner made than it was generally accepted. German attempts to circumvent the Pact of London, cunning as they have been, have hitherto utterly failed to achieve their object. Russia appears to have been the subject of the most elaborate of these efforts. The "creation" of the Polish Monarchy, which involved an unpardonable affront to the Tsar, indicates, perhaps, the moment of the failure. Other efforts of the same kind will doubtless be directed towards Italy, France, and even Britain. But every effort is an additional tribute to the solid wisdom of the step taken on September 5, 1914.

Yet another solid achievement of our foreign policy, though it as yet relates to the future rather than the present, is the agreement by which the Western Allies recognise Russia's right to Constantinople and the Dardanelles, and with it that access to the open sea which geography has hitherto denied her. Our satisfaction at an arrangement which was alike inevitable and fundamental is tempered by regret at the secrecy of the methods adopted, and the persistence with which that secrecy was maintained. It is quite true that King and Cabinet together represent the nation in war and may claim a latitude, unknown in times

of peace, to institute and carry through secret negotiations with friendly and even hostile Powers, but that any individual Minister should acquire virtual omnipotence over the future destinies of the nation, by arrogating to himself an implicit power of attorney, creates a highly dangerous precedent. Once more we must emphasise the fact that Parliament has been gravely at fault in not exercising its right of control ; but at least equal responsibility must fall upon the Minister who consistently refrained from any attempt to create machinery of any kind such as might facilitate such control without unduly hampering his own powers of discretion. The institution of a Special Committee of Foreign Affairs in the French Chamber points in the direction which must ere long be followed in Britain also. That exactly the same methods cannot be adopted in the two countries is obvious ; but the principle of control, in some form or another, must be asserted, unless democracy is to be declared bankrupt in one of the most vital spheres of political action. The gulf between Parliament—and therefore the country at large—and the direction and control of foreign policy is one of the most disquieting factors in the present situation, and the sooner an attempt is made to bridge it the better.

How far is it possible to proclaim a national policy, couched in specific terms and no longer in vague, if eloquent, generalities ? Such phrases as the vindication of public law and the rights of small nations, or the crushing of German militarism, are far more abstract than they may seem at first sight. Obviously, our first and most essential aim must be to achieve such a victory as will not merely realise our immediate military objective, but also guarantee a lasting peace, based upon the firm foundations of popular will and the legitimate aspirations of all the nations. Our

influence must be used constantly with our Allies in this sense ; and no facts or expedients must be sanctioned by our rulers which are manifestly incompatible with such a result—even should these expedients seem to promise some momentary advantage. Moreover, we must endeavour to make the Alliance less and less a residuum of contradictory aspirations. If victory is to be achieved, all the allied nations must accept as inevitable, and cheerfully submit to, a complete “pooling” of all their military, diplomatic, and economic resources. Much has been done to co-ordinate military enterprise, but the theory of the “Single Front” is still in its infancy ; and in this respect we have still to learn not alone from the Germans, but even from the Turks. But this theory must be extended to every branch of life, and the requirements, capacity, and powers of resistance of each Ally must be carefully weighed. Notably, in regard to measures for safe-guarding and regulating the food supplies of the populations, uniformity of policy and purpose is urgently required, whether it be in drastic measures against submarine warfare, in further control of freights and shipping, in shipbuilding reform, in the application of State control to all means of communication, or in the adoption of the “ton for ton” policy, or its equivalent, as a cardinal point in the Allied programme.

A diplomacy which has no directive and persists in waiting upon events has sheltered itself behind the proverb which says that it is unwise to divide the bear’s skin until the bear has been killed. No one in his senses will venture to challenge this doctrine ; but it is none the less true that the lack of a definite plan is fatal to any enterprise, and it is essential that we should think out beforehand all possible contingencies and realise clearly whither events are leading us. Of course, all such speculation depends upon victory ;

since in the event of defeat the solution of every problem would pass from our control. The will to victory involves a clear knowledge of the lines upon which we desire to see Europe reconstructed and revived. The supreme test of this will to victory lies in a recognition of the fact that there can be no "new Europe" unless Austria-Hungary be broken up. The disruption of the Dual Monarchy is not to be regarded as the distribution of territory by conquest, but as a necessary step towards the institution of a new era in Central Europe, and towards that vindication of the Principle of Nationality which has been so solemnly proclaimed as a cardinal point in the Allied programme.

The British Cabinet crisis is merely part of an European crisis. In France the press is demanding with growing insistence far-reaching military changes. The practice of holding secret sessions of the Chamber is becoming more firmly established; and there is general dissatisfaction with the aimlessness and lack of co-ordination which characterise Allied policy. In Russia the late Premier has been driven from office, not merely by his mismanagement of the Roumanian situation, but by the extraordinary confusion which he and his colleagues had introduced into the vital problems of communications and food supplies at home. The astonishing scenes in the Duma, when the Ministers of War and Marine ostentatiously shook hands with an Opposition leader who had violently criticised not merely the Government but the Empress, would only have been possible in a situation where dissatisfaction with governmental methods had reached a dangerous pitch. It was to appease this universal discontent that the new Premier, Mr. Trepov—of course with the full approval of

the Allied Governments—announced the agreement as to the fate of Constantinople and the Dardanelles. In Italy the sense of crisis is less acute, but none the less real, and the recent speech of the Premier, Signor Boselli, regarding Italy's Adriatic aims and their recognition on the part of the Allies, is unquestionably due to a similar need for appeasing the nation's growing alarm and dissatisfaction at military failures and diplomatic fiascos. Meanwhile, even in Germany, there are growing signs that the same process is in operation. Even the nation whose military successes have been so sensational—and so well advertised—is profoundly dissatisfied with the course of events. Those who escape from the vast prison-house of the Central Powers always have the same tale to tell: even the misery and bereavement are felt less than the isolation, the absence of man-power, and the continual strain. Everywhere in Europe new ideas and questionings are stirring. The discontent which in former epochs was directed against this or that institution is now disposed to challenge the ideas which have hitherto formed the very foundations of the social structure. When we describe the prevalent feeling in all countries as volcanic, it is because we have not as yet found a word to fit a situation for which there is no precedent in history.

Amid all this welter of ideas and conflicting tendencies nothing has been more remarkable than the piecemeal attitude of our statesmen. A policy has been proclaimed in resounding phrases, but no attempt has been made to define their meaning in the work-a-day world of practice. That here and there private engagements have been undertaken which can hardly be reconciled with the general principles laid down was perhaps inevitable; but there can be no excuse for a fundamental failure to realise the

logical consequences of the commitments entered into by our statesmen. Here again the case of Austria-Hungary provides the classical instance of our failure to think out a policy. *The New Europe*, like other advocates of the disruption of Austria-Hungary, has been attacked on the grounds that such a proposal is not merely radical and drastic, but incompatible with the programme of the Entente, and dangerous in its effects upon Europe. And yet what we advocate, so far from being new, is implied in a whole series of public pledges and private engagements, for which all the Allied Governments are responsible, and most of which are known to, and sanctioned by, the overwhelming body of public opinion in their respective countries.

The convention which preceded the entry of Italy into the war recognised that country's right to annex the whole, or portions, of three or four of Austria's southern provinces ; and if her national aspirations should be realised, Austria will *ipso facto* be deprived of her chief commercial port and her principal naval arsenal. While Serbia—largely as the result of bad diplomacy on the part of the Entente—was being overrun by the armies of the Central Powers, Mr. Asquith, speaking in the name of the British Government, and with the approval of our Allies, declared that we should " never sheathe the sword " until Serbia had recovered " in full measure all, and more than all, which she has sacrificed." If this phrase has any meaning whatsoever, Serbia, in the event of our victory, must not merely retain all the territory secured to her by the Treaty of Bucarest, but also acquire at least a portion of the Serbo-Croat territories of Austria-Hungary. Thus, though careful to avoid committing us to the doctrine of Southern Slav Unity, the late Premier certainly committed us to a

further inroad upon the integrity of Austria-Hungary. Again, the entry of Roumania into the war was preceded by a formal recognition on the part of the Entente Powers of her right to annex the Roumanian districts of Hungary, to say nothing of the southern portion of the Austrian province of Bukovina. The realisation of this design could be amply justified on the basis of nationality, but are we to suppose that some of the statesmen who sanctioned it failed to comprehend that it would involve nothing less than the end of the Kingdom of Hungary as at present constituted? Finally, the Russians have made it abundantly clear that they regard Eastern Galicia, Northern Bukovina, and the Ruthene districts of Hungary as "unredeemed" Russian soil, and Western Galicia as part of that future Poland which they hope to reunite under the sceptre of the Tsar. Thus we find that the British Government stands committed, in effect, to nothing less than that very disruption of Austria-Hungary which some of its staunchest supporters still refuse to contemplate. Yet it has shown such a rooted aversion to plain-speaking, or such a lack of confidence in its programme and its powers of persuasion, that no steps have been taken to bring this fact home to the general public. Mr. Lloyd George's speech about the "ramshackle Empire" at an early stage in the war stands alone as the solitary pronouncement of any British Minister on the subject of Austria-Hungary.

This fatal reluctance to think out any policy or project to the end has not merely exercised a numbing effect upon public opinion at home and upon the Government's own powers of decision, but, it must be added, has aroused very serious misgivings in the minds of our Allies themselves. The fear that British half-measures and the fog which has hitherto surrounded British policy are due to some dark

purpose of preserving Austria-Hungary intact, is too real to be ignored with safety, and can only be finally dispelled by a clear and statesman-like pronouncement.

If the old Europe is to be reorganised and regenerated, if the new Europe is not to remain a mere dream, the Allies must defeat Imperialism in its Prusso-Austrian and Pangerman form, and in so doing stave off finally the German *Drang nach Osten*. The centre of gravity in the war lies in that central zone of small nations which divides the East of Europe from the West, or, to speak in terms of the Alliance, Russia from her western Allies. In this zone, too, lie the stakes, and it is for its control and exploitation that Germany is really fighting. The only alternative to such control and exploitation is the dismemberment of Turkey and Austria-Hungary. The aggressive designs of Prusso-Germany (*Preussen-Deutschland*, as Treitschke and his school of historians consistently re-christened the new Germany) aim at the organisation of Central Europe for her own selfish ends, and treat all those peoples which lie on her path as a mere bridge to Asia and Africa, not as units entitled to their own freedom and development. To such a design the Allies must reply with the rival project of *Free Central Europe*, neither German nor Pangerman, but organised on national lines and free to work out its own salvation.

The immensity of the war is the measure of the problem with which Europe is faced. Not merely the small nations, but even the greatest, are confronted, thanks to Pangerman Imperialism, with a struggle for existence, with a fateful alternative which brooks no half-measures. At the beginning of the war there were few who had realised this; now, after two years of struggle, it is beginning to be felt and understood on all sides. The iron hand of necessity and logic is forcing not merely the diplomatists, but the

nations as a whole, to face a solution of the greatest of all world-problems. In this world-struggle Britain has been assigned a foremost part and a special responsibility. The war of to-day and the peace of the future may be stated as a British problem; and it is for us to decide whether the Great Alliance is to continue, and whether we will give our permanent support to the policy whose germ may be traced to the understanding between France and Russia. To-day half-measures in our foreign policy can only lead to incalculable disaster. If the war has forced us to choose between Germany and Russia, between the Teutonic and the Slavonic world, the latest developments of the struggle bring home to us the inexorable need for pushing the choice to its logical conclusion. The old hesitations of the past, the futile suspicions of Russia which still linger in certain quarters, but which—let us freely and unreservedly admit it—the late Foreign Secretary did so much to combat, must be banished once and for all. Neither military nor economic prejudices must be allowed to prevail. There must be an end to the Policy of Buridan's Ass. Our alliance with Russia was at first unconscious and experimental—a mere step at random, though prompted by a true instinct. The future of the British Empire, of Europe as a whole, depends upon Britain's conscious determination to choose, and to choose finally, between Germany and Russia.

The principle of nationality will play a decisive part in any reconstruction of Europe, but even more decisive will be the part of Democracy as a political force. As a result of the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary and Turkey, only one new State—Bohemia—would emerge, and this would only be a reversion to a great historic past. Poland also would recover her lost individuality, this time in unison

with Russia. Some States, like Serbia and Roumania, would be enlarged; others, like Prussia and Hungary, would be curtailed. The dynastic interests of the House of Habsburg would certainly suffer severely; but only a few reactionaries would venture to sacrifice to a single family the future of many millions of its present subjects. Vienna and Budapest have too long been judged in this country from the standpoint of the superficial tourist, who is impressed by fine architecture and charming manners. To the political student they are known as inveterate haunts of oligarchy and absolutism, none the less flaunting because there are moments of concealment. Indeed, nothing can be more repulsive than the megalomania of a small nation like the Magyar, which, once infected by the imperialist doctrine of Prussia, has of its own free will degraded itself to the position of Berlin's henchman.

Our political programme is not directed against the German nation, but rather against Prussian aggression and political materialism. We do not demand the destruction of Germany, if only for the excellent reason that a nation of seventy millions cannot be destroyed. The Germans have staked their all upon Brute Force, and must be forced, by their own weapons turned against their own breast, to revert to those humaner doctrines which inspired their greatest men. When they have abandoned the brutal and decadent philosophy of the Superman, the Blonde Beast, and the *Herrenvolk*, they may, perhaps, find their place once more as equals among equals. The Bismarckian policy of Blood and Iron, with its Machiavellian foundations, has sapped the moral fibres of a great nation and made of them a danger to Europe and to mankind. Germany, if set free from Prussian materialism and lust of conquest, may become once more a useful member of the community of

nations, and may contribute once more to the constructive political and social work which lies before us all.

✓ The Allies must not win the war merely to lose the peace. The greatness of this war does not consist in the vast armies thrown into the field, nor in the appalling loss of human life, but rather in the far-reaching evolution which is already altering all political and social values, and will assuredly bring with it changes such as no man living can foresee. In the light of these changes, mere rectifications of political frontiers almost sink into insignificance. An immense task awaits the diplomatists and statesmen of the future Congress of Peace: it will be theirs to mark out the lines of development which humanity should follow in a new era, or to warp that development fatally for all time. The Great War is in itself a hideous revelation of the futility and artificiality of the purely diplomatic peaces and compromises of the last century. This time there must be no mere ephemeral revisions of the map, no insincere makeshifts merely calculated to last till an early and more favourable resumption of hostilities, but an organic reform of international relations. At the future Congress history and philosophy must be the handmaids of diplomacy.

THE ALLIES' PROGRAMME (JANUARY 1917)¹

THE Allied Note to America is a landmark in the history of the war. It is addressed to the greatest of the neutrals, but its true interest lies not so much in what it tells America as in what it tells Europe. It would be an exaggeration to assert that this is the first time that the Allied Governments have told their own peoples what they are fighting for, but it is certainly the first time that they have made any attempt at practical definition of their war aims. Hitherto we have had to rest content with eloquent but vague generalities about the destruction of "Prussian Militarism." The Note of January 10 at last provides us with some idea as to how the statesmen of the Entente hope to accomplish that destruction; and it is not a mere phrase when one of the leading organs of the New York press describes it as "a charter of emancipation."

If President Wilson's action in inviting the two rival groups to state their terms has been correctly interpreted by his apologists, he may be congratulated upon the result, even if his actual methods were open to misunderstanding. The lofty motives which inspired him are admitted on all sides, but it is felt on this side of the Atlantic that he has been inclined to lay undue stress upon the abstract at the

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. ii. No. 14, January 18, 1917.

expense of the concrete, to concentrate his attention upon the ideal of "international settlements" and a "League of the Nations" and to overlook the need for political revision and readjustment—for the creation of a new Europe—as an essential preliminary to such a league. The President, like many another enthusiast, has his eyes so firmly fixed upon the mountain peak towards which he is pressing, that he fails to reckon with the intervening ridges which have to be traversed. The Allied Note is a salutary warning against the futility of placing the cart before the horse in matters of international politics. A League of European Nations is undoubtedly the goal towards which human effort must be directed; but it can only be achieved as between free nations, each in control of its own destiny and no longer hampered by the arbitrary restraints, whether political or economic, of a rapidly vanishing past. The only possible basis of internationalism is a free, contented and untrammelled nationalism. "That man's the best cosmopolite who loves his native country best," said Tennyson, and true loyalty to Europe presupposes perfect liberty for each man to love, and to live in, his native country without interference from alien rule. It is its frank recognition of this fundamental fact which makes the Allied Note so remarkable. Stripped of all unessentials, the kernel at its heart is the acceptance of the principle that territorial revision must precede international accord.

After all previous convulsions the main desire of European statesmen has been, so far as possible, to get back into the old groove of the *status quo*, with the minimum of interference with ancient vested interests, dynastic or other. For the first time we find a majority of the states of Europe definitely proclaiming their desire to escape from the old grooves, to base their existence upon new lines—in a word,

to will a new Europe. This, then, is nothing less than a landmark in the history of the world. "The reorganisation of Europe"¹ is to follow that restoration, compensation and reparation which have long been regarded on all sides as the first axiom of peace. The foundations of this reorganisation are to be three-fold—a respect for nationalities, a recognition of the right of every people, small and great, to free political and economic development, and the establishment of "territorial conventions and international settlements" as guarantees for the future.

For over a century past the principle of nationality has been the dominant factor in the political development of Europe; and yet throughout that whole period it has never been alluded to in any international treaty. At the three great congresses of Vienna, Paris, and Berlin (1815, 1856, 1878) it was consistently flouted and ignored, and the destinies of the nations were decided on other than national grounds. Under the stress of the greatest war in history this vitalising principle has asserted itself, and has been irrevocably adopted into the programme of the Entente Powers. Thus we already have the certainty that, unless the Entente is crushed or seeks to evade the engagements to which it stands committed, the principle of nationality will dominate the future congress of peace.

This would not, of course, in any way mean that political, religious and economic factors would be ignored, but simply that national claims would take precedence. It is superfluous to point out that race and language can never be made the sole test of nationality, as Belgium and Switzerland nobly testify. It is also very generally recognised

¹ We would remind our readers that an article under this very title, "The Reorganisation of Europe," was published in No. 4 of *The New Europe*, November 9, 1916.

that there are instances where economic considerations are of paramount importance, and where special provisions are necessary to reconcile the conflicting claims of geography and ethnography. For instance, the question of Constantinople can only be solved upon an economic basis, the determining factor being Russia's outlet to the warm sea, rather than the fate of the last European foothold of the Turks. In the same way Italy is fully entitled, on a basis of nationality, to the possession of Trieste ; but its establishment as a free port must be made the absolute condition of any change, since the economic peace of Europe will depend on there being no artificial customs barrier between so important a port and its great commercial hinterland. Yet, again, the future of Poland depends, to a large extent, upon some economic arrangement being reached regarding the lower Vistula ; and unless there is to be permanent friction between Poland and Germany, it is essential that the port of Danzig, while assigned to Poland, should recover its ancient status of a free and autonomous city.

The Allies then are careful, while adopting nationality as their watchword, to safeguard themselves against its exaggerated interpretation, and to emphasise their determination to respect other no less important factors in modern civilisation. But the implicit distinctions which the Note draws between " Nation " and " State," and its frequent references to " Nationalities " and " Peoples," are of the very greatest importance, as a complete innovation upon all previous diplomatic practice. It is worth noting in this connection that President Wilson's Note also speaks of " weak peoples," while the Allies' reply contains references both to " small peoples " and " small states."

The greatest obstacle to the reorganisation of Europe is the mediaeval practice which bases all territorial settle-

ment upon military and dynastic reasons or upon narrow caste interests. After twenty years of convulsion, this mediaeval outlook reasserted itself more strongly than ever at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. In the words of the French historian, M. Debidour, "the diplomatists of 1815 took a year to provide Europe with bad laws. It was to take Europe a century to repair the evil which they wrought upon her." To-day we may push this view to its logical conclusion, and maintain that the present war is the direct result of a stubborn refusal on the part of European diplomacy even to try to repair that evil. The Allies' reply to America would seem to justify us in the hope that after over two years of purposeless groping and exaggerated secretiveness, the statesmen of the Entente have definitely realised the need for breaking with the diplomatic traditions of the past and identifying themselves with those forces of progress to which the nations owe their inspiration.

It is no mere accident that Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey should be ranged on the same side in the great European struggle. Each stands for the principle of brute force and materialism; each represents, in varying degree, a negation of popular rights as the controlling element in the State; each has obstructed according to its power the growth of international law and the acceptance of arbitration as a substitute for war; each upholds, with varying efficiency, those false conceptions of nationality which place the "small peoples" at the mercy of the great and assert the right of forcible assimilation. Germany, even when deprived of her unjust control of Alsace and of Posen, will always remain a great national State; and as surely as France recovered from the madness of the Carmagnole, Germany will regain her sanity in the years that follow her defeat, and, we may hope, will use the national freedom

which her enemies will, on principle, leave unimpaired, in order to revert to those ideals which once made German culture the glory, not the disgrace, of Europe. But Austria-Hungary and Turkey are, in their very essence, artificial and *a-national*, in so far as they are not directly *anti-national*, and the efforts of those who desire to reconstruct Europe must inevitably be concentrated upon them, as the chief survivals of mediaevalism in the bad sense.

The New Europe, when attacked some weeks ago for advocating the disruption of Austria-Hungary, pointed out that such a policy, so far from implying a new departure on the part of the Entente, was "implied in a whole series of public pledges and private engagements for which all the Allied Governments are responsible, and most of which are known to, and sanctioned by, the overwhelming body of public opinion in their respective countries." The entry of Italy, and later of Roumania, into the war was preceded by a clear recognition of the right of those two countries to annex the territory inhabited by their co-nationals in Austria and in Hungary respectively. The late Prime Minister, in publicly assuring Serbia of the support of the Allies until she has recovered "all and more than all which she has sacrificed," very definitely committed us to a further infringement of the territorial integrity of the Dual Monarchy; while Russian claims upon the greater part of Bukovina and Galicia would, if realised, carry the process of disruption still further. The Allied Note frankly faces these facts and pushes them to their logical conclusion. After reiterating the obvious demands for the restoration of Belgium, Serbia, and Montenegro, and the evacuation of the invaded territories in France, Russia, and Roumania, they proclaim the need for the reorganisation of Europe on the threefold basis already alluded to, and then proceed to indicate the

broad lines which this must follow. "The restitution of provinces formerly won from the Allies by force or against the wish of their inhabitants" is a phrase which can only refer to Alsace-Lorraine, and is too obvious to require further comment. "The ejection of the Ottoman Empire from Europe, as foreign to Western civilisation," represents the adoption of the Gladstone policy of "bag and baggage," and the formal recognition of Russia's right to assume the guardianship of the Straits, and to replace the Cross upon the dome of St. Sofia. The other two sections of this paragraph are only susceptible of one logical meaning, but in view of the silence which the leaders of the Entente have preserved on this subject throughout the war, they require more elucidation than ought to be necessary at this stage.

"The liberation of the Italians, as also of the Slavs, Roumanians, and Czecho-Slovaks, from foreign domination" is only possible as the result of the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary: for its achievement involves the destruction of the German hegemony in Austria and of the infinitely more brutal and unrestrained hegemony of the Magyars in Hungary. The wording of the phrase strongly suggests that the original text was modified at the very last moment: for the "Czecho-Slovaks" are of course "Slavs," and there is therefore a certain redundancy, not to say inaccuracy, in placing the two side by side in a list. The reference to the latter of course means that the Allies desire that Bohemia, after three centuries of national extinction, should recover that independence which the Hussites once defended so gloriously against Europe in arms. The fact, then, that the Czecho-Slovaks are separately mentioned, and that a special paragraph is devoted to the Allied pledges towards Poland, limits the

word "Slavs" by a process of elimination to the Southern Slavs—in other words, to the three sister-races of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. If, then, words have any meaning, the Allies accept in principle that idea of Southern Slav Unity which Mazzini was the first of the non-Slavs to welcome, and to which the Serbian Government and dynasty have repeatedly and irrevocably committed themselves.

The paragraph devoted to Poland is at one and the same time a delicate compliment to the Russian Tsar and a reproof to those who have dared to throw doubt upon Russia's word. The Allies seem to say that the Imperial pledge to erect a free and united Poland out of the ruins of this war is so irrevocable as to render further public guarantees superfluous. But it would be absurd to treat the clause as a reversal of the policy indicated in the joint telegram of Mr. Asquith and M. Briand. The Polish question, as the fount of European woes, concerns all Europe, and nothing can alter its international character. But the Entente as a whole freely recognises that it concerns Russia far more vitally than any other State, and is ready to consider her interests and defer to her wishes to the utmost possible limit compatible with a lasting settlement of a problem which has endangered European peace for over a century.

The German Chancellor, both before and during the war, has laid stress upon the struggle between Slav and Teuton as the underlying factor in the European situation. The programme of the Allies tacitly acknowledges what the whole course of this war has shown, that Panslavism is not so much political as intellectual, and is indeed rather a tendency than a policy, and, therefore, that it differs essentially from that utterly materialistic conception which

is summed up in the word Pangermanism. The Germans have already realised, for all practical purposes, their programme of Berlin-Bagdad, as a glance at the war map will at once reveal. The Allies are therefore confronted with the alternative of breaking the chains which Germany has riveted right across Europe and Asia, or of resigning themselves to a German hegemony on the Continent such as could only end in the assertion of German world-power. The Allied Note rests upon the frank recognition of the fact that the thwarting of Pangermanism and the re-organisation of Europe on a national basis are merely two sides of the same medal. There can be no new Europe if the Slavs and Latins of Central and South-Eastern Europe are left under the military and economic control of Berlin, Vienna, and Budapest.

Not the least remarkable feature of the Note is the fact that Great Britain has refrained from putting forward any demands on her own behalf. It may perhaps be argued that the final defeat of the Berlin-Bagdad and Berlin-Cairo designs, with their grave menace to our Empire in India and Africa, would in itself be a sufficient reward, and that we should not be justified in annexing territory. The real explanation of this silence is, however, probably to be found in the fact that the settlement outside Europe will depend far less upon Britain herself than upon the self-governing Dominions. It is absolutely essential that Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa shall be represented at the Peace Conference, and it is upon them that the fate of most of Germany's colonies will depend. An Imperial Conference has been hastily summoned to discuss those problems which the late Government seems to have been unwilling or afraid to touch; and upon its decisions at the end of next month our whole attitude to the colonial

settlement and the extent to which we are to insist upon a "ton for ton" policy depend.

Paragraph X. of the Note emphatically repudiates the suggestion that the Allies aim at the "extermination and political disappearance of the German peoples." It cannot be too often repeated that a nation of 70 millions "cannot be effaced or permanently reduced to impotence," and that our challenge is directed, not against the national unity or legitimate aspirations of the German people, still less against its right to control its political destiny, but against the ruthless exploitation by Germany, for her own political and dynastic aims, of the vast populations of her allies. The proclamation which William II. has addressed to his people under the first impression of the Allied Note only serves to accentuate still further the radical difference of outlook between the two belligerent groups. His clap-trap phrases about "the crushing of Germany" and "the enslavement of the freedom of Europe and the seas," remind us, for all the world, of Tennyson's remark to a theological casuist: "My dear sir, it seems to me that your God is my devil." What the Emperor describes as "this glorious spirit of freedom planted in our brave people's hearts" is to us an arrogant spirit of domination over subject or vassal peoples and a determination to impose German culture upon a reluctant world. What he describes as our "lust for conquest" appears to us a determination to liberate the peoples of Europe from a nightmare as intolerable as that which roused his own ancestors against Napoleon. Argument is impossible, for words do not convey the same meaning to the rival groups. If anything were still needed to prove this, it is the letter addressed by the Emperor to the Chancellor on October 31 and now published for the edification of the world. If Burns were alive to-day, we

should have a new version of "Holy Willie's Prayer." The present generation of Britons can only turn away in disgust from this crowning blasphemy on the part of a monarch who, for almost thirty years, has persistently confused his own position with that of the Deity. The world has had more than enough of this "ruler with a conscience," whose shallow brilliancy is the heritage of insane or abnormal ancestors. The crimes of William II. and his armies have kindled something far more sacred—the conscience of the nations—and we firmly believe that the day will come when this truth will penetrate even the thick crust of materialism in which the German mind is to-day imprisoned. As yet there is no sign of returning sanity, no prospect of renewed intercourse between the people of Germany and the peoples of the Entente; and, in spite of all that has happened, this is a matter of profound regret. But with Hohenzollernism and its creed there can be no compromise, if there is to be any peace in Europe save that of sheer exhaustion.

THE PASSING OF THE *STATUS QUO* (JANUARY 1918) ¹

WE have already emphasised the urgency of a re-statement of Allied war aims, alike for our own sake and in the interest of our relations with the outer world. The crusading fire which kindled an all-too-self-centred nation's imagination in the summer of 1914 has now burned low; and, in the words of the Prime Minister, the hour has come for a "cold zeal," no less sustaining, but far harder to achieve. But this "cold zeal" must drive us to the same goal. High principle must be our guide; and the words of our statesmen must ever show that the liberating democratic motive of our original declaration of war is still the paramount feeling. We do not for one moment deny that our own security combined with an unselfish anger to force us into war. Far-sighted men warned the nation that Great Britain would suffer grievous harm in her most vital interests if German aggression were not checked. But it is no less clear to all who lived through that memorable August of 1914 that it was the fate of Belgium which alone rallied the country to a policy of war and silenced all opposition. It is the literal truth that the real popular motive was keen resentment at the wrongs inflicted upon a small neighbour.

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. v., No. 64, January 3, 1918.

Cold reflection, however, revealed the underlying fact that on the fate of Belgium, and no less of France, depended the national security of Britain. Security was the watchword by which Pitt sustained his countrymen in the long struggle with Napoleon. Security was the motive which inspired the policy of British statesmen throughout the nineteenth century, and notably that famous "scrap of paper," the Treaty of London of 1839, upon which Belgium's international position rested.

For close upon a century Britain hugged the security which her efforts had won, and congratulated herself upon her splendid isolation. Absorbed in many activities throughout the world, she wellnigh forgot Europe, or at most was conscious only of her immediate neighbours in home waters. But, in the interval, historical processes had slowly but surely dissolved the old aloofness of the nations, and interwoven their destinies by a hundred mechanical and spiritual ties. Events have shown that it is now impossible for Britain, and even for America, to resist the stars in their courses.

When war came there were many to whom the old cry of security merely meant the maintenance of the comfortable old order which they had known since childhood and whose natural appeal was summed up in the phrase *beati possidentes*. In a word, amid the dire shock administered to their nervous system their main desire was to revert as soon and as easily as possible to the *status quo* which Germany had so wantonly disturbed. Had the war been short, it is conceivable that but for certain territorial adjustments, the old Europe might have returned, and that with it materialism, Imperialism, and their fellow isms might have acquired a fresh lease of life. But the war has dragged on beyond all expectations, and the *status quo* has been

blown to pieces as effectually as Ypres or Rheims. The old frontiers of Western Europe might conceivably be restored, but in the east and south-east political landmarks have been effaced by an irresistible flood. The Russia which we have known (or rather, not known) has given place to a number of units of which many of us were hardly conscious. Poland is rising again from her tomb, Finland is free to assert her most uncompromising claims, new national life is stirring in Lithuania, Lettonia, the Ukraine, and the Caucasus. Those who know Roumania and Serbia know only too well that the very foundations of their former existence have been undermined and that they have no choice save between the achievement of their national unity and final political absorption by those who have hitherto held their kinsmen enslaved. In a word, we have already reached a stage at which one half of Europe could not under any conceivable circumstances be restored to even a semblance of the *status quo*, while in the other half such a restoration would indeed be a semblance, but not a reality. Thus when we assert that the "reorganisation of Europe" is the most essential of all war aims, we are not crying for something remote or unpractical: we are merely insisting that there should be a conscious and determined effort to complete a process which has already reached an advanced stage. Reorganisation of some kind cannot be avoided: do what we will, something entirely new will be evolved from the crucible of war, and the essential question is whether the Western Powers and America are to yield to dynastic and autocratic incantations and to accept their formulas for the future from the alchemists of Berlin and Vienna. National security remains the minimum upon which even the pacifists insist, but events, by overwhelming the *status quo*, have robbed them of the refuge to which

they would fain resort, and have inevitably made our national security dependent upon a European resettlement.

We are engaged in a war of nations for which there is no precedent in history. Our fate and our interests are intertwined with those of other nations to a degree which could scarcely have been conceived four short years ago, and which proves that we have already entered upon a new era in the history of the world. Those who shrink from a programme which involves the reconstruction and regeneration of Europe as a whole are still thinking in terms of splendid isolation and "sacred egoism," and are not ready for the wider international outlook without which the idea of a league of nations cannot be achieved in practice. It is a curious irony that many of those who are loudest in their advocacy of a league of nations profess the keenest horror at prolonging the struggle for objects with which their own country is only indirectly concerned. We have heard distinguished statesmen express pious horror at the bare thought that Lancashire lads could be asked to shed their blood for the freedom of Bohemia. We can understand the standpoint of those who allow no consideration save the selfish interests of their own nation to weigh with them; indeed, under the dispensations of the old diplomacy, from Metternich to Kühlmann, this was the only sound basis of policy. But in the mouths of those whose avowed design it is to create a new political heaven and earth, to institute entirely new diplomatic methods and to establish a close community of nations resting upon freedom and equality, we entirely fail to understand this repudiation of the only true international doctrine. In any case, the events of the war have abundantly shown that partnerships once assumed cannot lightly be thrown off, and that the

sufferings or gains of one nation react immediately upon the fate of all.

If in foreign policy the *status quo* has been effectually dispelled, it is no less true that in home affairs also the *status quo* has vanished beyond all possibility of return. The labour market has been shaken to its very foundations; Capital and Labour alike are faced by new and momentous problems. Entirely unforeseen circumstances have driven Trade Unionism into a position from which a return to the old order of things is, for good or ill, impossible. Railways, mines, shipping, have been subjected to State control. Problems of co-operation, distribution, labour-saving, have assumed a new importance. Women's labour has upset many standards. The fate of the invalid and discharged soldier is already affecting the questions of pensions and insurance. The creation of national factories has transformed the whole industrial system. The feeling against profiteering has struck deep root throughout the community. Above all, the fabulous financial charges imposed by the war have revolutionised all standards and converted many pre-war theories and formulas into so much scrap-iron. In every walk of life events have utterly out-distanced human comprehension, and we are left breathless and blinded as in the glare of an ocean sunrise.

The period immediately following the war will accentuate all these changes still further. State control of the most drastic kind will be inevitable during demobilisation. Iconoclasm will eclipse all previous records in the economic sphere. Conscription of wealth, already recognised to be the logical consequence of conscription of flesh and blood, may have to be extended even further than we imagine. The war has killed the Party system, cutting clean through all the old lines of cleavage; and our future rulers—the

men who return from the trenches and who will have earned the right to express their political will—will insist upon an entirely new standard of living, a far more stringent control of affairs of State and the practical fulfilment of the theory of equal opportunity for all. The working classes are at last coming to realise their vital interest in foreign policy, whose neglect or mismanagement they may pay for in the blood of their sons ; and they may be relied upon to demand not merely a reformed diplomacy and an extension of democratic control, but all those educational facilities that alone can give them the knowledge which is the key to that control.

Thus, on the one hand, the war is raising standards, whetting appetites, testing and challenging what but yesterday seemed unchallengeable, and creating on all sides fresh needs and fresh demands such as only a vastly increased expenditure can satisfy, and on the other hand the available margin is shrinking every day. One thing alone can secure the future of all those causes for which the collective name of Social Reform will serve as well as any other—one thing alone, a drastic limitation of armaments. Any peace which is inconclusive will render such limitation impossible, and would therefore be suicidal from the point of view of internal national security ; for it would destroy all hope of progress save under the guidance of a rigid militarist caste.

It is idle to pretend that the impending transformation of society is regarded with anything like unanimous feelings. Now that it is obvious that only immediate peace can save the last surviving fragments of the old order, the little group of reactionaries who under various disguises have attached themselves to the two veteran parties in the State, find themselves agreeing in the desire to make peace

as soon as even tolerable terms seem within reach and in the hope that they may thereby pass into the new order with a minimum of change. The feudal landlords who scent danger to their estates link up with certain radical doctrinaires whose early Victorian shibboleths are powerless before the strong spells of a more revolutionary age. There are others who will the end, but not the means, because they cannot discern the connection between the two. But the number of those is growing who understand that in the life of nations, as of individuals, there are moments when it is necessary to take our destiny into our own hands and to stake everything upon the result. In 1914 we took the risk, not realising how great it was. To-day we are faced by a similar decision. In England, as elsewhere, it is becoming more and more obvious that there are only two parties which really count—those who mean to win the war and those who do not. In other words, those who consciously will a new Europe, and those who are cravenly content with a bankrupt past.

La Victoire Intégrale is the chosen device of those who seek to rescue Europe from an evil past and to set her upon the road that leads to a new and abiding security. Rightly interpreted it means a victory of principle by which every people on this distracted continent may acquire a new lease of life and liberty securely guaranteed against misrule and war alike. To-day, as we pass from the old year to the new, we may ask whether the victory we desire is in sight. If we judge this matter solely on military grounds, we must admit that, for the moment, the outlook is not clear: the events of last autumn seem to have dimmed our prospect. But military grounds are not the sole nor the main factor in our calculation. The influence of political ideas plays a larger part: and, provided we face the future with that

confidence which finds full justification in our resources, the triumph of our principles is assured. The proviso is important, for the effect of events in Italy and in Russia has been to suggest to certain minds that a compromise is the only way out. Such a suggestion is at once the effect and the cause of lack of confidence ; but mature reflection will prove that if we were to accept the terms of the Central Powers at present we should achieve neither security nor peace. The negotiations at Brest have shown that Berlin and Vienna are prepared to welcome " self-determination " for all the Russian peoples, while denying it to their own : and since this principle is to-day the true test of the good European, its acceptance by all the belligerents must be laid down as the first foundation of peace. Until Herr von Kühlmann and Count Czernin subscribe to it, not merely by the lip-service of the Brest-Litovsk parleys, but by honestly reorganising Central Europe upon it, there can be no agreement between us and them.

It is because we are firmly convinced of this essential factor in European reconstruction that we lay such emphasis on nationality. Our belief in racial freedom, whether in a liberal confederation of self-governing peoples or in the absolute independence of each, is no fetish. It is an historic truth driven home to our minds by the experience of the British Commonwealth. We hope that our Government, and the Governments of our Allies, realise that we are to-day in the presence of one of those great spiritual movements which create and recreate whole peoples, for only by realising it can they guide us aright out of the chaos into a new order. The common people in every land is awake to the issue. The Labour Party of Great Britain, for instance, has recently shown that the working-man grasps firmly the fundamental principles now at stake : and the Bolševiks

themselves have pushed some of them into the forefront of discussion in their negotiations, though they have shown a strange reluctance to insist upon the same rights for other peoples in Europe which they demand for themselves. It is too early to say whether Russia has compromised the future of the other Slavonic peoples or not, but we suspect that they have fallen a prey to the craft of Herr von Kühlmann and have thus given Prussian power a new lease of life for 1918. Be that as it may, the stars in their courses fight against the Prussian idea. The success of German arms in Italy conceals from no one the broad fact that the year 1917 has witnessed a large advance of democratic thought all over the world, and that the year 1918 promises to give us that triumph of principle which we have called *la victoire intégrale*.

PLAYING WITH AUSTRIA¹

WHILE in each of the two belligerent groups the Governments still cling desperately to the discredited methods of the old Diplomacy, it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain that secrecy which is so essential a part of the system. Even before the present war the revelations which followed the Balkan wars had made it evident that a new era was dawning in diplomatic history and procedure; and they have long since been thrown into the shade by the far more sensational revelations of the great war itself. But while this applies even to the most jealously guarded state documents, it applies no less to secret negotiations and even to surreptitious meetings between statesmen. A recent example of this is the fact that the encounter between General Smuts and Count Mensdorff, the late Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in London, became known to the general public within a few weeks of its actually taking place in Switzerland, and that it has proved equally impossible to conceal the resumption of the intrigue early in March.

If on the Entente side it was merely intended to engage upon informal discussions with a view to obtaining a clue to the inward mentality of the enemy, we should not be justified in condemning the step without further enquiry.

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. vi. No. 75, March 21, 1918.

But rumour has credited the Entente representative with accepting as a basis of discussion conditions such as would not only render any reconstruction of Europe impossible, but would strike at the root of existing engagements, and even with offering to one of our enemies territorial concessions such as could not be reconciled with the principles so solemnly proclaimed by Entente statesmen. We therefore cannot help feeling that Lord Curzon, instead of contemptuously dismissing Lord Willoughby de Broke's very natural enquiry in the House of Lords, would have done well to reassure the nation by a formal refutation of such very persistent and concrete reports. Lord Curzon might, it is true, have had to face the question why the Foreign Office—always assuming that it was consulted in the matter, which is not a small assumption in these strange times¹—selected as its emissary a man whose high qualities are universally recognised, but who has only the most elementary knowledge of the country whose trained diplomatic representatives he was to meet. This is the more regrettable, since there is no European country which contains so many pitfalls for the amateur diplomatist as Austria-Hungary. Not only are its political problems far more numerous and far more complex than those of its neighbours, but they have gradually become obscured and complicated by a political terminology which cannot be learned in a day. Words have not the same value nor ideas the same content in Austria or in Hungary as farther west; and only personal experience can supply the key. Count Mensdorff is no genius, but any one who negotiates with him is at a hopeless disadvantage unless he has at

¹ It was soon to transpire that the mission was carefully concealed from the Foreign Office and arranged by the Prime Minister and his secretariat.

least a working knowledge of the internal conditions in the Dual Monarchy, and their essential bearing upon its relations with neighbouring countries in each of the two warring groups.

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In its Austrian policy the Entente is faced by one of two alternatives, and any approach must be made in one of two directions: towards those who actually control the destinies of the two states, or towards those nations or national groups which desire to emancipate themselves from their present yoke—in other words, towards the faithful allies of our principal enemy, Germany, or towards his openly declared opponents among the subjects of *his* chief ally, Austria. Until we make this fundamental choice we are only toying with the subject, and negotiations conducted by persons whose mind is irresolute and who are still balancing the rival advantages not merely offer no serious prospect of success, but are calculated to do grave injury to the Allied cause.

Many arguments can be adduced to prove that even if the young Emperor seriously desired to reconstruct his dominions on a genuine federal basis, not one of those factors upon which the existence of the State has hitherto rested—the aristocracy, the army, the Church, the bureaucracy, the German *bourgeoisie*, and the Magyars—could be relied upon to support him in such a policy. If this contention be true—and we believe it to be unanswerable—then it follows that the Entente can only come to terms with the ruling powers in Austria-Hungary on conditions which involve acceptance of the territorial *status quo* and a negation of the principle of nationality.

Under such circumstances the only effect of proposals from our side (and this holds good even if, as seems probable, the first overture came from bankrupt Vienna) must

inevitably be to convince Austrian statesmen that all the public professions of the Entente during the past three years are mere hypocritical phrases. It has probably encouraged them to believe that our situation is far less favourable than we would have the outside world believe, and must in any case have betrayed the fact that in 1918, as in 1914, British statesmen have little or no grasp of the fundamental facts of the Austrian situation, and consequently of Central European policy. Moreover, the more uncertain the basis of discussion, the better the opportunity for Vienna, on the one hand, to prove its loyalty to Berlin by promptly handing on the information, and on the other, to discourage the various Slav elements in Austria which rely upon the Entente, by demonstrating to them how little ground they have for such reliance.

The idea of a separate peace with Austria-Hungary is a fatal illusion. The Germans of the Empire are, it is quite true, cordially detested throughout Austria and Hungary—by the Austrian Germans and the Magyars, no less than by the Slavs. It is even safe to speak of acute friction in their personal and social relations. But this does not affect the Alliance, for the very simple reason that the more Vienna and Budapest find themselves dependent upon Berlin, the more obvious it becomes to them that only Berlin can save the German hegemony in Austria and the Magyar hegemony in Hungary. During the war Austria-Hungary has cracked no less than six times; and each time it has only been saved from disaster and disintegration by German military intervention. To-day it is only the German Army which stands between Austria-Hungary and complete collapse; and in a certain sense it is a mere unlucky accident that Russia has collapsed first.

Austria-Hungary's dependence upon Germany is not

merely political, but above all military. For a long time it has been obvious that as the result of a very definite policy from Berlin the Austro-Hungarian and German armies are inextricably dovetailed into each other—just as inside the former the various racial units have been set to watch and counteract each other, and even individual regiments have been blended racially for purposes of more effective control. Indeed, Germany had special reasons of her own for extending her military influence, through the autumn offensive against Italy, on the one front from which it had hitherto been excluded.

But, quite apart from this conclusive military reason, there are strong financial and economic factors which militate against all idea of a separate peace. Austria-Hungary is virtually bankrupt, its gold reserve has almost vanished, and it is tied hand and foot by financial commitments to the big Berlin banks. The financial prosperity of Vienna and Budapest has been artificially puffed beyond its natural limits at the expense of the subject nationalities, and would suffer from any restoration of the balance in favour of, say, Prague or Agram. The big Jewish banking interests of both capitals are hopelessly anti-Slav and hopelessly tied up with the old political order, with the German alliance, and with the trade and finance which follow the German flag. Meanwhile the press of Vienna and Budapest, which was always more or less controlled by the various industrial cartels and trusts, has during the war fallen to an alarming degree under the influence of the Berlin banks and the Westphalian armament firms, with disastrous effects upon what is the Austrian equivalent of public opinion.

The young emperor and his entourage undoubtedly resent their dependence upon Berlin and the Hohenzollern. Even the Austrian military chiefs have had enough of the

game, and are disturbed at the decline of discipline and the spread of subversive revolutionary ideas from Russia. But there is no serious evidence that they really contemplate a separate peace or regard it as practicable. On the contrary, everything goes to suggest that they regard separate negotiations as a mere trap to ensnare the unwary and commit the Entente to "negotiations all round." Moreover, however low our opinion of the Habsburgs may be, we are not entitled to believe them to be capable of such unparalleled treachery towards an ally as their abandonment of Germany under present circumstances would involve. The Habsburgs have displayed on more than one occasion the basest ingratitude and intolerance and have exploited without scruple the devotion of their adherents or their allies. But they are not dead to all sense of *noblesse oblige* and cannot be treated like Oriental desperadoes of the stamp of Talaat and Enver. Moreover, as the world is constituted to-day, their betrayal of Germany would bring down the whole fabric of the already tottering dynastic principle about their ears, and they are too essentially dynasts not to realise this to the full. Finally, mere common sense must warn them that if the impossible could be accomplished and the alliance with Germany could be repudiated, Berlin's prompt answer would be the occupation of Prague and Cracow. In short, we are driven back to the conclusion that in making overtures to the Entente, Vienna has been simply laying a trap, designed to compromise us in the eyes of our friends and to provide Berlin with the means of testing our spirit and *moral*.

The persistence of the Austrian intrigue in Western Europe is a curious phenomenon which it would not be difficult to trace to certain definite sources—social, financial, international, ecclesiastical, *défaitiste*—often mutually

antagonistic, sometimes strangely intertwined. But if we exclude those who are manifestly either tools or dupes, we shall find that those who are actively working for the preservation of Austria are invariably—however divergent their spheres of action may be—at heart reactionaries and adherents of the old order. On the Austrian side are arrayed the dynastic principle (which is poles apart from the British conception of limited monarchy), the conception of a hereditary military caste bound by no ties save loyalty to the Imperial House, the cults of ascendancy and racial hegemony, the fear of a sluggish and unreformed Church for changes which must affect its inordinate temporal riches, the alarm of a nerveless aristocracy at the growing land-hunger of the peasantry, the infinite blocking capacity of a bureaucracy which is impervious to the ferment of nationality around it and owes its influence to a genius for petty espionage and to its skill in erecting “*Divide et Impera*” into a complete system of government. Behind all this stand the cryptic figures of international finance and the landed interest, urging a cessation of the struggle while each can still hope to maintain some remnant of its old power.

These intrigues will not succeed; events are far too strong, far too inexorable. But they sap the *moral* of the nations, undermine confidence between allies, and drive us to despair of the irresponsible levity and cynicism with which we are governed. What, then, is the policy of the War Cabinet? Are those whom we regarded as real “war minds”—men like Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Milner, General Smuts—losing their nerve and preparing secretly for a patched-up peace? We could have peace to-morrow with Germany, but only on the basis of an unholy bargain between two Imperialistic policies. Africa and the Arab world might be bartered for Central and Eastern Europe,

and Germany would transfer her colonising and Germanising designs to the scene of her mediaeval triumphs. The *status quo* would thus be accepted for the territory of our enemies and reversed for the territory of our friends. We do not deny that "enquiries" must take place before the true negotiations for peace can begin. But, to judge from the statement issued by the Allied Premiers after the recent London Conference, the time is not ripe either for the "enquiries" or for the negotiations themselves. And if simultaneously with declarations of that kind this hole-and-corner diplomacy continues the Western Alliance may begin to crumble. If General Smuts visits Count Mensdorff, why should not Signor Tittoni meet Prince Bülow, or Mr. Pašić parley with Dr. Baernreither, or Mr. Politis with Mr. Gešov? Why should not France even send M. Briand to accept the very favourable offer which Germany is alleged to have made in the present month? Why not, indeed: except that a general *sauf qui peut* cannot lead to peace and security. Whatever governments may think or do, the democratic peoples of the West are not prepared to sell their birthright for an empty peace which gives no security.

THE END OF AN ILLUSION¹

THE subterranean intrigue with Austria upon which certain Entente statesmen had rashly engaged, and against which we have so often had occasion to protest, has at last ended in the inevitable fiasco. The revelations of M. Clemenceau have roughly torn away the veil, and displayed the dupes and the tools in various stages of *déshabille*. Some of those whose illusions are shattered and whose reputation for political sagacity is threatened are left vainly seeking for excuses for their past action or lamenting the thoroughness with which the invisible wires have been destroyed. But the French Premier, unlike most of his colleagues among the statesmen of the Entente, has some personal knowledge of Austria; and it was a sure instinct that led him to revert to hard realities. Already the wits of Paris are saying that, being no longer able to overthrow Ministers in France itself, the Tiger has transferred his energies to enemy countries.

Some time may still elapse before we can hope to gauge the full effect produced by the publication of the Imperial letter upon the internal situation in the Monarchy; but it is already obvious that, following closely upon the Lichnowsky-Mühlon-Jagow revelations and coinciding with the Roman Congress of oppressed nationalities, it has

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. vii. No. 81, May 2, 1918.

profoundly shaken public confidence throughout Austria-Hungary. It is not merely Prince Sixtus of Parma and his sister the Empress Zita who are placed in an extremely difficult situation: the young Emperor and the Habsburg dynasty itself are gravely compromised.

Attempts are, of course, being made to represent Charles as having from the first acted in strict collusion with Berlin, and with the object of involving the Entente in negotiations of a general character, such as would inevitably have placed Germany in an advantageous tactical position. But the real significance of Charles's overture lies in the fact that he was probably acting behind the back of his ally—doubtless salving his conscience with the hope that he might pave the way for general discussion, but quite definitely resolved to see what he could obtain by his own separate initiative. His whole attitude was that of a young colt still unaccustomed to harness. The letter was written on March 31, 1917; and it is to be remembered that ever since his accession, barely five months earlier, he had been engaged in dismissing the men who had enjoyed his granduncle's confidence, and surrounding himself, alike socially and politically, with others who had belonged to the circle of the murdered Archduke. Even the all-powerful Tisza saw his position tottering. Those "Old Austrian" sentiments, which have always been a distinguishing feature of the Austrian feudal aristocracy, reasserted themselves for a brief moment, and rallied a small but socially influential group, of whom the chiefs were Czernin and Clam-Martinic, round an ignorant young man of petulant will, who resented the position of vassalage in which he found himself towards his tactless patron, William II.

The chief error of foreign opinion has been in crediting Charles and his advisers with brains and a clear programme.

In reality, they are all men of mediocre intelligence and confused thought, still dreaming of the days of Prince Eugene and Laudon, and utterly incapable of any constructive effort. The letter was written at a moment when Germany's insistence on the submarine campaign was resented in Austria as calculated to prolong the war by still further embittering feeling, and, above all, by involving America; while the Russian Revolution, then in its initial stages, was causing intense alarm in Vienna and Budapest, which well remembered the reflex action of previous Russian movements upon the Dual Monarchy. Thus Charles, in acting as he did, was inspired by that instinct of self-preservation which has, perhaps, been a more marked characteristic in the House of Habsburg than in any other European dynasty. It would be churlishly unjust to deny to him and his wife that longing for the restoration of peace which fills more and more the heart of the veriest "die-hard" in every country. But beyond all question his dominant motive was fear—deadly fear for the Imperial House and for the ruling classes, when the dire results of their moral and political bankruptcy should force themselves upon the attention of a world no longer mobilised. Fear and inexperience combined to make him forget that he was between the traces, and that a practised driver was on the box; since then he has learnt by repeated experience the uses of bit, reins, and whip.

The censors of the Central Powers have taken care that excuses should be made for the young Emperor's action, but nothing can allay the suspicion into which the general public has been plunged. The line adopted by the Vienna correspondent of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* is especially significant. "The error," he tells us, "took place at a time when a young and impulsive monarch, under the

pressure of altogether exceptional circumstances, might have believed that by his own private initiative he could do the whole world a service, and did not fully recognise the great effect of such a step, both as regards the enemy and his ally." But the public, and in particular the German public, is intended to read between the lines of the intention of Charles to emancipate himself from German dictation. The completeness of his failure has been rendered all the more obvious by the publication of the letter at the very moment when Vienna's utter dependence upon Berlin had become notorious even to the blindest of Austrophils.

Charles was already in the toils; henceforth the fact was no longer to be concealed. There is reason to believe that Count Czernin's famous speech of last December, in which he established an exact parallel between Strassburg and Trieste, was delivered in direct defiance of the wishes of Charles and after consultation between the Foreign Minister and German G.H.Q. Moreover, that the advocates of a German alliance *à outrance* were already in possession of compromising facts concerning the Emperor was obvious from the frontal attack of Dr. Friedjung upon Professor Lammasch, the distinguished jurist who has long been known to possess Charles's confidence. Friedjung's reference to the memorandum in which Lammasch recommended a dissolution of the German alliance as a step towards reconciliation with the West, was worded in such a way as to make it obvious that there was much more behind; indeed, it is notorious that some such scheme commands favour in court circles, though there is a complete absence alike of men and machinery by which it could be translated into practice. When, then, M. Clemenceau launched his high explosive, William II., with his habitual tact, decided upon the public humiliation of Charles, and demanded

from him telegrams repudiating the French Premier's charges and affirming the Dual Monarchy's entire solidarity with Germany. The text of this pronouncement was actually brought from German G.H.Q. by an officer of the General Staff and presented to Charles for signature, just as the cold soup of yesterday's supper is placed before a naughty child. Of the contents of the letter to Prince Sixtus, with its famous reference to "the just claims" of France to Alsace-Lorraine, little need be said. The special stress laid upon Belgium is explained by the position of Prince Sixtus as an officer in the Belgian Army and by the peculiar outlook of the Habsburgs, who remember Belgium as a former possession of their House. The proposal with regard to Serbia is milder in tone than any previous Austrian reference, but to every Serb it is the equivalent of the final renunciation of his national aspirations; and Charles cannot have been so simple as not to realise that for the Entente to have accepted such a basis for discussion would have been regarded by Serbia as a cruel betrayal and might thus prepare the way for direct negotiations between Vienna and Corfu. But the key to the whole document, as the *Corriere della Sera* and other leading organs of Italian opinion have not been slow to recognise, was its absolute silence with regard to Italy. Applying to foreign policy that principle of "Divide et Impera" on which Habsburg rule has rested for centuries past, Charles virtually offered to betray Germany, if France in her turn abandoned Italy. Hence the heads of the British, French, and Italian Governments, who are known to have given the overture very careful consideration and who presumably also consulted President Wilson (then on the very point of intervening in the war), were absolutely right in concluding that it offered no basis for serious negotiation. For even on the assump-

tion—an assumption which we have more than once shown to be entirely fallacious—that Austria-Hungary was in a position to break away from her masterful partner, it was even at that date obvious that the most which the Western Powers could hope to obtain was a tolerable settlement on the Western front and outside Europe, at the expense of their allies in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. Russia, Roumania, Serbia, and Italy would have had to pay the bill of victorious Germany. Fortunately honour and interest alike forbade the Western Powers from perpetrating an act of treachery not unlike that contemplated by the Tsarist Government on the eve of its overthrow. They realise what some of our sentimentalists still seem unable to grasp—that though it is historically true that we only entered the war to save Belgium and France, subsequent events have produced a situation in which the fate of Austria-Hungary, Russia, and the Balkans are no less vital matters for the future peace and security of Europe and the world at large. There is nothing inconsistent in the triple assumption that Charles was very much in earnest, that those who inspired him (for the letter bears all the traces of having been composed with the help of a practised diplomatist) were aiming above all at producing discord in the Allied ranks, and that the whole project was from the very first moment foredoomed to failure.

There is something delightfully humorous in the charges of forgery levelled against M. Clemenceau and the French Government by Austrian official circles. Foremost in its support of this thesis is the Clerical *Reichspost*, whose editor, Dr. Funder, as joint defendant in the notorious Friedjung trial in 1909, was proved to have accepted wholesale from the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office the forged “documents” which were to provide an excuse for

overrunning Serbia and crushing Jugoslav nationalism inside the Monarchy itself. Foreign opinion has a short memory, or no Austrian would ever dare, after the exposure of the Agram and Friedjung affairs, to breathe the word "forgery" in connection with a political document.

After an interval of some months, Austria-Hungary resumed, through various channels, her overtures to the Entente. This time there was a double motive at work—on the one hand, the desperate internal situation of the Dual Monarchy, which already threatened the State with political upheaval, economic disaster, and the physical ruin of the population; on the other hand, the need for paralyzing, so far as possible, any offensive, whether military or political, which the Entente might be disposed to launch against the Monarchy. This time the channels employed were those cosmopolitan aristocratic circles which are almost equally connected with all the belligerents. On the one side was a personal friend of the Emperor Charles, Count Revertera, an Austrian of Italian origin; on the other, an elderly French aristocrat, Count Armand, whose conservative and clerical tendencies rendered him solicitous for the welfare of the Habsburgs, and who, though completely ignorant of Austria and its political conditions, vaguely fancied that he had detected a common interest between France and Austria, based upon memories of the *ancien régime*. The meetings between these two persons took place at Freiburg in Switzerland, in the house of Revertera's mother-in-law, Princess Aldobrandini-Sarsina, *née* La Rochefoucauld. Their significance lay in the fact that Armand belonged to the Intelligence Bureau of the French War Office, and was being employed, behind the back of the Quai d'Orsay, by a group of Austrophils entrenched in high military and political positions. There is, in all this,

a highly piquant analogy to the mission of General Smuts and subsequent English emissaries, who appear to have acted behind the back of the British Foreign Office. In France it is already being alleged that M. Poincaré and those military chiefs who used Armand as their tool, infringed the French Constitution by their cryptic methods ; and it is doubtful whether Mr. Lloyd George's methods of conducting foreign policy commend themselves to our constitutional lawyers. Certain it is that the connection between the two sets of overtures would well repay further enquiry, since this could hardly fail to reveal widely divergent aims among the various Austrophil cliques. The Socialist, the financier, the *défaitiste*, the aristocrat, the Jesuit, each contributes his quota ; but their respective values in the complicated interplay of forces are increasingly difficult to estimate.

One of the most skilful operators in this network of intrigue was Baron Oskar von Montlong, the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General at Geneva, who has exploited to the full his French origin and connections, and has established an elaborate Austrian espionage bureau, whose special task it is to watch the activities of the various national committees in Switzerland. As the former "Press-chef" at the Vienna Foreign Office, he has great experience in the corruption of the press and of individuals, and he has had the good fortune to rediscover in Switzerland more than one foreign journalist whom he had formerly got to know at the Ballplatz. His press work is ably assisted by Dr. Szemere, of the *Neues Pester Journal*, Mr. Vályi of the *Revue Politique Internationale*, Mr. Holló, former editor of Count Károlyi's organ, *Magyarország*, and the Clerical deputy, Mr. Huszár. The constant endeavour of Montlong and his group has been to reach and influence

French political opinion through many roundabout channels, and, as far as possible, to permeate the local Swiss press with Austrophil sentiments. Even the *Journal de Genève* has not remained unaffected by the atmosphere thus subtly created, and, while remaining consistently Franco-phil, has, from time to time, relapsed into language such as seemed to betray the influence of Vienna.

There is yet another element in all this Swiss intrigue. The General of the Jesuits, Count Ledochowski, of an ancient Polish family, has made the little country his headquarters during the war. The claims of his race and of his order combine to concentrate his interest upon the fate of the Western Slavs, and in his vast designs of proselytism in Eastern Europe, a specially subservient rôle is assigned to Catholic Austria, decadent but politically pliable.

The action of M. Clemenceau represents a complete breach with the whole of this Swiss underworld, and will probably involve a revision of tactics on the part of the Reverteras and Montlongs. Even the link which Charles had established with Washington through Professor Lammasch and the Coffee King, Herr Meinel, would seem to have been abruptly severed. But, pending the next batch of revelations, it behoves the Allied Governments to abandon unpromising coquetting with bankrupt Austria. They and their peoples must realise that only defeat can release the Habsburg Monarchy from its present vassalage to Berlin and that it is mere waste of time to deal with the valet behind his master's back.

A CONTEST OF IDEALS¹

A CRITICAL moment has once more been reached in the great struggle of ideas and tendencies which is being waged behind the more material struggle of the trenches: and unless we are content to be forestalled by the Central Powers, we must advance beyond mere abstract principles and give practical expression to the political faith that is in us.

The Treaty of Brest stood for the open abandonment by Germany of the Reichstag Peace Resolution of July 1917 and the policy underlying it—if and in so far as that policy was ever seriously meant. While professing to rest upon the principle of self-determination, as accepted by Revolutionary Russia, it actually applied it according to the crude schoolboy method of “Heads I win, tails you lose.” It was to be valid for the former Russian Empire, but the territories of the Central Empires were strictly excluded from its operation. In short, Berlin’s affected concern for the fate and aspirations of Lithuania or Courland is simply a gigantic scheme of camouflage, intended to add a whole series of new and dependent satellites to the great “Central European” State which is forming before our eyes. The Treaty of Bucarest again is the logical and inevitable outcome of Brest, and the consummation of both is the agree-

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. vii. No. 84, May 23, 1918.

ment concluded between the two Emperors last week at German Headquarters. Those who complain that M. Clemenceau's publication of the Emperor Charles's letter has driven Austria-Hungary under the German yoke have not grasped the elements of the political situation in Europe. The vassalage of the Habsburgs to the Hohenzollern had long been an accomplished fact, the result of Austria-Hungary's military impotence, economic exhaustion and internal disintegration, and still more of Russia's overwhelming collapse. The French Premier merely tore aside the veil and revealed to the general public what the initiated were already fully aware of. The outward and visible sign of subjection was the assignment of Tirol to Bavaria and of German Bohemia to Saxony for purposes of food supply. A State which can no longer feed those sections of the population upon which its whole political fabric rests can no longer be regarded as an independent factor.

The terms of this new bargain between Berlin, Vienna, and Budapest—in which, it must always be remembered, Vienna plays a far more subordinate part than Budapest—have not yet been made public. But from the first there has been no attempt to conceal the fact that the alliance of 1879 has been renewed on new and stringent lines, and that the net result is a surrender of military and economic independence such as effectually undermines political and dynastic independence also. Not only the decision itself, but also the manner in which it has been taken, may serve as an object lesson to those interested in testing political values, real and apparent, in the Dual Monarchy—as a proof that all the constitutional machinery which has been created in the past sixty years does not really touch the heart of things. We have just had a practical demonstration that there is nothing to prevent the monarch from

dismissing a Foreign Minister who enjoys the confidence of the farcical Delegations, and replacing him by his own nominee, without consultation with either of the two Premiers. This has been followed by the still more conclusive demonstration that the whole ruling caste of Hungary has finally identified itself with Berlin and the German Alliance, and is prepared to stake its whole future on the result. Those in authority are at last coming to realise a fact which *The New Europe* has always asserted to be part of the European political alphabet—namely, that the Magyar oligarchy can only maintain its racial and social hegemony over the disfranchised non-Magyar majority of the population and over its own hideously exploited Magyar peasantry, by strict alliance with the one military Power which has a selfish interest in maintaining Hungary's integrity against Russia, Roumania, Serbia, and Bohemia. Finally we have the demonstration that the very foundations of State policy can be altered or transformed in defiance of the wishes of the Austrian Parliament and people, and that an irresponsible dynastic clique, covered by the farce of an incompetent monarch's "irresponsibility," can enter according to its own good pleasure upon commitments of the most far-reaching nature. After this it is impossible to describe Austria as a constitutional State.

The delusions which led Western statesmen to dream of "detaching" Austria-Hungary had at least one good side, as showing a dim, if tardy, realisation that in a very material sense the present struggle is being fought out for the bodies of two once great empires—Russia and Austria. The victory of one group would place both under the domination of Germany, and so secure to her the possibility of making a fresh bid for world power after one, or at most

two, generations. The victory of the other will emancipate them both and will inaugurate a new system of national states as the basis of international order. It is essential that public opinion in this country, which already has a very sound grasp of the moral issues involved, and of the rival ethical standards between which the world is called upon to choose, should be encouraged to think out their practical application, not merely in the West, but also in the East of Europe.

The broad lines of the enemy design are already visible. The Habsburg dominions will become a Triple instead of a Dual Monarchy by the addition to them as a separate entity of the greater part of Russian Poland. The Polish Conservatives may be beguiled into an acceptance of the scheme by the promise of Eastern Galicia, the much-contested Cholm and, perhaps, even portions of White Russia; and Germany, while recouping herself by annexing some of the industrial districts adjoining Silesia, will aim at permanently embroiling the Poles with the Ukrainians and with Russia—a task rendered easy by the memory of old feuds. The formation of a bogus Polish State under the Habsburgs will reduce the Slav population of Austria by eight millions, and place the Czechs in a minority as against the Germans. The assignment of Bosnia and Dalmatia to autonomous Croatia, as an *annexe* of the Hungarian Crown, will have the double advantage of completing the isolation of the Czechs and of separating the Croats from the Slovenes, the latter thus becoming more than ever the prey of militant Pangermanism in its advance upon Trieste. Under such a dispensation the Slovaks and Roumanians would be surrendered, body and soul, to the Magyars. Meanwhile Germany would establish a direct control over the new border States of Lithuania, Courland, Esthonia, and the Ukraine. Finland would become a strategic key for the

domination of the Baltic, the Ukraine and Roumania a double line of approach to Caucasia and Persia.

The immediate issue upon which we entered the war—the violation of Belgium—has been transcended by the far vaster issues of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. Belgium, Alsace, and Serbia are symbols of outraged Public Law. The huge zone of subject peoples which lies between the Baltic, the Black, and the Adriatic Seas represents the stakes upon which the fate of the moral world depends. Just as Germany's ruthless employment of the thirty-five million unwilling Slavs and Latins of Austria-Hungary as "cannon-fodder" has made all the difference to her powers of resistance, so her organisation of the human and material resources of these hitherto undeveloped territories will supply her with the instruments of world power and frustrate all aspirations towards a Society of Nations resting upon legal suasion and the consent of the governed. The moral and material issues are inextricably bound up. To regret this is like regretting the solar system. We have been put in this world to respect the laws of the Universe, even when expressed in terms of international politics.

The favourable military situation which Germany has known so well how to exploit, makes it all the more incumbent upon the Allies to define still further the moral aims for which they are contending, to evolve a concrete political and social theory such as will act as a decisive antidote to the Prussian doctrine of the Will to Power. In the speeches of President Wilson, and in a lesser degree of other Entente statesmen, we already possess the broad lines upon which the new world order may be worked out. But the vindication of Public Right and the establishment of guarantees for a lasting peace must be translated into immediate

action. To wait till Germany can be included in a League of Nations would be to wait for a "change of heart" such as only time, and (in the belief of many of her own best minds) probably only defeat, can bring. But there already exists a League of Nations, great and small, whom the stress of circumstances is every day forcing more and more to "pool" their resources and energies, and slowly but surely to standardise their political ideals as well as their ships and engines. Let us impart to this League without undue delay a conscious form: let us endeavour to ensure its permanence as the bulwark of a new order: let us organise its economic forces and supplies of raw material, not for purposes of vengeance or extortion, but as a conscious instrument for rendering innocuous the marauding tendencies of the Prussian dynasty and state.

The Allies, if their abstract ideals are to become a living reality and not a mere delusive vision, must work out and publish a practical scheme of the world as they conceive it when victory shall have been achieved—of the workaday world in which every nation—the German nation no less than its enemies or its victims—is to find scope for its own legitimate and peaceful development. And in any scheme the real test of success must lie in European reconstruction. The Entente already stands deeply committed to the principle of Nationality as the preliminary condition to a stable international order, but it still hesitates to accept all the implications involved. Here and there it has shown undue tenderness towards certain dynastic or financial interests which act as props to a slowly decaying structure. It must once and for all associate itself with the interests and aspirations of the peoples and leave the dynasties to find their own accord. Above all, in order to prove its constructive value, it must adduce proofs to show that

the national regrouping of the Dual Monarchy and of the Russian borderlands will increase, not diminish, the stability of the political situation : that the alternative to present conditions is not the creation of a crowd of weak and mutually antagonistic states of the second or third rank, but far rather the restoration of political units such as Poland and Bohemia, which at an early stage of history amply justified their right to independent statehood ; the consummation of the Jugoslav and Roumanian movements for national unity, which in their own way are as irresistible as their forerunner in the Italian Peninsula ; and the constitution, on the sure foundations of racial affinity, economic interest, and geographical self-sufficiency, of groups or leagues of allied nations, capable of forming a first stage towards a wider international system. Thus Bohemia, Poland, and Roumania would form a natural chain, resting upon a restored and federated Russian Republic : nor would there be anything to prevent a Hungary, once purged of its ruling oligarchy, associating itself with this group. Roumania would be the connecting link between this and another more southerly group, consisting of Jugoslavia, Albania, and Greece, in intimate alliance with Italy, who in her turn would be closely linked with the Western Powers. Here again the inclusion of Bulgaria in a future Balkan Confederation would no longer be a mere Utopia when Jugoslav and Roumanian unity were achieved and when the Coburger and his tools saw themselves forced to renounce their design of a Bulgarian hegemony in the Balkans.

OUR PEACE TERMS (OCTOBER 1918)¹

Two years have passed since *The New Europe* was founded, and our second birthday has brought us—to quote the phrase of Lord Grey—“within sight, though not yet within reach” of that Integral Victory upon which “the Reorganisation of Europe” and the peace of the world depend. For two years we have not ceased to warn our readers against the German designs of “*Mittel-Europa*” and “Berlin-Bagdad,” and later on against the no less dangerous after-thoughts of which the Brest and Bucarest Treaties are the practical expression. To-day the whole edifice of Pangerman ambition seems tottering to its fall, and Berlin, faced by the defection and collapse of its Allies, is desperately striving to forestall overwhelming military defeat. But for that very reason we shall warn all the more insistently against the plausible and insidious proposals by which the enemy still hopes to save the old order in Central Europe, to preserve the prestige of the military caste, and to avert the collapse of German and Magyar hegemony and the emancipation of its victims. To-day even the sceptic will admit that the realisation of our programme is no longer utopian; but this only serves to enjoin upon us the need for sober language, based upon calm confidence in a just cause.

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. ix. No. 105, October 17, 1918.

¶ The pace hastens as the climax of the war is reached, and amid the rush of events a speech of Mr. Balfour, made on the occasion of Bulgaria's surrender, has not received the full attention which is its due. One passage in particular we think it well to reproduce in full, since it appears to us to sum up the true doctrine with regard to a peace settlement, and to refute, in the most direct and simple manner, the all too common fallacy that our present enemies can be admitted into a League of Nations on the basis of the territorial *status quo*, and that, in that event, all the open sores which have plagued the body politic of Europe will heal by homœopathic methods.

If you are going to bring into existence an international machinery for the securing of peace, you must so arrange the map of Europe and of the world that great occasions for wars will not overwhelm you. If you perpetuate the state of things which exists now in Central Europe—if you render permanent the German domination over Russia, especially over West Russia; if you leave no hope to the small peoples along the Baltic; if you refuse to redress the century or more of wrong to Poland and leave her where she has been for all these generations; if the subordinate peoples who have for generations in Austria-Hungary been trampled under the heel of German and Magyar minorities are still left in their present position; if the Balkans are again to be the scene of bloody wars among themselves and the occasion of hostilities among their neighbours; if the Turk is to be allowed to resume his bloody sway over the territories which have been torn from him; if Italy is not to have restored and added to her those populations which will really make her Italy redeemed; if Greece is to be threatened by the domination of the Central Powers; if Serbia is not to be restored after all her appalling sacrifices, and after all her glorious gallantry; if France is not to resume her full place in Western Europe, and if Belgium is not to have restored to her in full measure all that the abominable brigandage of the Central Empires has torn from her—if all those evils are not potentially to recur, then you must do something more than merely establish



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a League of Nations—you must put all these wrongs right before the League of Nations sets to work. You must give them a clean slate to work upon. . . . After you have freed Europe from Prussian Militarism, after you have restored Asia as well as Europe to a position in which self-development is possible for the various nationalities which occupy them—then, and then only, will your League of Nations work.

As Lord Grey said a few days later, “A League of Nations cannot be a substitute for a successful termination of the war. It must arise out of the successful termination of this war.” Europe must be reconstituted on the basis of satisfied nationalism before the new international order of things can be established. When we speak of a League of Nations, we mean a League of Nations, but there are still many who conceive of it as a League of States and Governments in the old pre-war sense. And yet, so long as a State like Turkey is recognised as the mouthpiece of those non-Turkish races which have survived centuries of misrule and massacre, it is not merely illogical but positively farcical to advocate its inclusion in a League of Nations. So long as Austria-Hungary survives as a feudal family estate, perpetuating the hegemony of two races and castes over a horde of political helots, it is equally useless to talk of a League of Nations. Austria-Hungary and Turkey are not even geographical expressions; they are the dunghills of European history, which to-day are a danger to the public health, but to-morrow may serve to fertilise new and fruitful fields of national life.

Meanwhile, President Wilson and Lord Grey are unquestionably right in claiming that “the constitution of a League of Nations and the clear definition of its objects must be a part, in a sense the most essential part, of the peace settlement itself.” The cart cannot come before

the horse, and thus the establishment of a new order and the "reorganisation of Europe" (to use the official Allied phrase of December 1916) must be our first concern. But the cart and harness must be in readiness, and although the building of the League can only be the second stage, it must follow logically and without an interval from the first stage. We believe that we are interpreting the mind of President Wilson himself when we maintain that a public and immediate enunciation of the essential principles upon which future international relations must rest, would be the surest means of establishing general confidence in our intentions.

We do not presume, at so critical a moment as the present, to put forward cut-and-dried schemes for the settlement of all the vast questions raised in this greatest of wars. But we believe that the moment has come when we must justify our attitude for the past two years by a frank statement of the faith that is in us—a statement which shall include alike the abstract principles which must direct the new order, and the very practical conditions on which alone we can consent to bargain with our enemies, and at a later stage to readmit them to the comity of nations. Our foremost aims are to stimulate thought and discussion and to contribute towards that unity of resolve and aspiration through which alone, when the war is won, we can hope to win the peace.

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

(Suggested Declaration of Adhesion)

The Contracting Powers declare it to be their foremost aim to prevent a recurrence of wars, and to lay the basis of a permanent peace between the nations and, in particular, in Europe.

They further declare their conviction that such an end can be best attained by the creation, after the conclusion of peace, of a League of Nations, vested with a definite super-State authority. They recognise, however, that such a League can only be made a practical reality if it be constructed with due regard to the following fundamental principles :—

1. That in every civilised State the consent of the governed must be the determining factor.
2. That this consent necessarily involves the right of every national unit to control its own destinies, and to decide its State-allegiance (self-determination).
3. That the principle of nationality is a vital factor in the European political situation, and that the satisfaction of legitimate national aspirations must precede the creation of an international order.
4. That dynastic interests must henceforth be subordinated to the interests of the peoples themselves.
5. That those Powers which are charged with the government of semi-civilised or uncivilised races are bound to govern as trustees for the governed, to prevent their military or economic exploitation, and to prepare them by gradual stages for self-government.

6. That the peoples, through their accredited representatives, are alone entitled to decide upon political engagements entered upon with neighbouring States, and that secret treaties concluded without their knowledge are no longer to be regarded as binding.

7. That only a prompt abandonment of competitive armaments, and the substitution of national militias for the existing conscript armies, can save Europe and the world from economic and social ruin.

They declare this Treaty to be valid only in virtue of the League of Nations which it brings into being.

THE TERRITORIAL SETTLEMENT

I. *Belgium*.—The Belgian question is on an entirely different footing from any other questions raised by the war, and thus the Germans must, as a preliminary to any discussion, abandon all pretence of treating Belgium or Belgian colonial possessions as a "pawn" for purposes of bargaining. Belgium must be restored to complete independence within her former frontiers, and must be indemnified by Germany for the destruction of property and for all public and private losses incurred during the war. Until the stolen property can be restored, and, above all, until the factories of Belgium recover the machinery and equipment which the Germans have removed, there must be adequate material compensation for the handicap to Belgian industry during the transition period.

The future international *status* of Belgium, and the question whether the old method of guaranteed neutrality is to be revived, must be decided in accordance with the wishes of the Belgian people itself.

The people of Luxemburg must be left free to determine whether the Grand Duchy shall continue as part of the German Zollverein or shall enter into a federal or integral union with Belgium.

II. *France*.—Alsace-Lorraine must be restored to France. The forcible detachment of these two provinces from France without their being consulted and in defiance of their publicly expressed desire, set the seal to that reign of force in Europe which it is the aim of the Allies to overthrow, and the undoing of this act of injustice is therefore an indispensable preliminary to the re-establishment of public right in Europe.

If it should be decided to reinforce this decision by a popular verdict the plebiscite must be extended to those families which have emigrated or been expelled since 1871, and denied to Germans who have only settled in the provinces during the present century.

III. *Germany*.—There must be no interference with German unity or with the German people's right to determine its own form of government; and while the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine, Slesvig, and Posen must be free to resume their former allegiance, if they should so desire, the German provinces of Austria must also be free to unite with the German Empire.

IV. *Poland*.—A united and independent Polish State must be created, comprising all territories inhabited by a compact Polish majority, and provided with the necessary access to the sea. The devastation of Polish territory during the war must be charged in equal proportions to the Governments of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia, or the Governments of such new States as may replace one or other of them; and an international commission shall be appointed to assess the damages.

V. *Russia*.—The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the supplementary economic treaties of September, and Germany's special treaties with the Ukraine, Finland, and Georgia must be declared null and void, and with them all engagements and contracts entered upon with the Central Powers or their subjects since the Bolševik Revolution of last November. All enemy troops must be withdrawn from the territory of the former Russian Empire. The various nations inhabiting that territory must then be given full opportunity to decide their own fate by means of freely elected Constituent Assemblies. This would apply to Esthonia, Lettonia, Lithuania, the Ukraine, the Caucasus, and Siberia, in addition to the mass of Great Russian territory. The Powers should make every effort to promote the reconstitution of Russia on a federal basis, and, while strictly refraining from all interference with the form of government to be adopted, should openly engage themselves to support the principle of Constituent Assemblies.

VI. *Austria - Hungary*. — The oppressed nations of Austria-Hungary must be assured the right of declaring and working out their national unity and independence, in conjunction with their free kinsmen beyond the existing frontiers. This right would be exercised by means of Constituent Assemblies, the elections to which would have to be set free from all German and Magyar control.

The effect of this would be (1) that Western Galicia, with a considerable portion of Austrian Silesia, would become part of the new Polish State; (2) that Eastern Galicia would be united with the Ukraine, whether as an independent State or as part of the future federal Russia; (3) that an independent Bohemia would be constituted out of the existing provinces of Bohemia, Moravia, part of Silesia and the Slovak counties of Northern Hungary;

(4) that Transylvania and the Roumanian districts of Hungary proper and of Southern Bukovina would be united with the kingdom of Roumania; (5) that a united and independent Yugoslav State would be formed, consisting of the free kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro, the Triune kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia-Dalmatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Carniola, and portions of Istria, Carinthia, Styria, and Southern Hungary; (6) that Hungary, reduced to her Magyar kernel, would become entirely independent, and, after sweeping away its corrupt and politically bankrupt oligarchy, would adopt extreme democratic forms; and (7) that the German provinces of Austria—Upper and Lower Austria, Salzburg, Tirol, Vorarlberg, Northern Carinthia, and Styria—would enter the German Empire as a federal State, taking with them or discarding the Habsburg dynasty according to their good pleasure. It might prove possible to add certain portions of German Bohemia to Germany (*e.g.* the Egerland and the district south of Budweis); but it would be necessary for vital economic reasons to preserve the existing northern frontier of Bohemia.

VII. *Italy*.—The Irredentist provinces of Trentino, Gorizia, Trieste, and the western districts of Istria must be assigned to Italy, the frontiers being drawn so far as is possible on a basis of nationality. A special arrangement must be guaranteed for the port of Trieste, and free linguistic and cultural development must be secured to the national minorities on either side of the new Italo-Slav frontier.

VIII. *The Balkans*.—A definitive settlement of the Balkan problem being dependent upon the settlement of the Austrian problem, the achievement of Yugoslav and Roumanian unity must take precedence of all other changes. The Treaty of Bucarest must be entirely abrogated, and

Roumania evacuated by German troops. Serbia, Montenegro, and Roumania must be indemnified for the ravages committed upon their territories. The conclusion of peace must be followed by a special conference of the Associated Powers and their Balkan allies for the purpose of delimiting the Balkan frontiers so far as possible on ethnographic lines (though with due regard for economic and geographical requirements), and of promoting a Balkan confederation, to which Jugoslavia, Roumania, Greece, Bulgaria, and Albania would be free to adhere. This conference would further have to devise the means for assuring to the Albanians the free right of self-determination. Italy would be free to retain Valona until such time as general disarmament and the dismantling of similar strategic points should be carried through.

IX. *Turkey*.—Ottoman rule must henceforth be restricted so far as possible to territory inhabited by Turks. Armenia and Arabia must form independent States, while the international status of Syria and Mesopotamia must be decided by a special Conference for the discussion of the affairs of the Middle East. To this Conference must also be referred all questions arising out of the future status of Constantinople and of the Straits, which must be made free and accessible to the ships of all nations; as also the questions of the Capitulations and the Ottoman Public Debt. Palestine must become a Jewish State, under the guarantee of the future League of Nations, a special status being, however, assigned to the Holy City and due regard shown for the privileges and traditions of each of the religions there represented.

X. With regard to the German Colonies, the Pacific Islands must be assigned to Australia, South-West Africa to the Union of South Africa, and Kiau-chau to Japan

(subject to arrangement with China); while the remainder should, in the phrase of Mr. Lloyd George, be held at the disposal of the Peace Congress, it being clearly understood that Great Britain, though ready to renounce them for herself, cannot consent to their being restored, as possible submarine bases, to Germany.

In addition to the above territorial conditions, the following provisions must be regarded as essential to a just and lasting settlement :—

A. The establishment of an international tribunal, before which all persons guilty of offences against the laws of war or of humanity, and in particular of the Geneva Red Cross Convention, shall be tried and punished.

B. The repudiation by all the Governments concerned of the hitherto prevailing methods of secret diplomatic contract, and the establishment of the principle that no treaty or agreement between States shall be binding until it shall have been ratified by the elected representative bodies of the respective countries.

C. The immediate establishment, after the conclusion of peace, of an international Economic Commission, with a view to removing, so far as may be practicable, all restrictions upon free commercial intercourse among the nations—always subject to such measures as may be found necessary in each country for the due protection of certain expressly defined “key-industries.”

D. The replacing by the Central Powers of all the mercantile tonnage belonging to the Associated Powers or to neutral States which has been illegally sunk by submarines during the present war.

E. The establishment of international control of river navigation on the Vistula, Elbe, Danube, Rhine, and Scheldt; of free ports, open to the commerce of all nations,

at Trieste, Fiume, Danzig, Salonica, and Constantinople ; and of international railway tariffs on certain lines connecting landlocked countries with the sea.

F. The establishment in every country of strict governmental control of armaments and of all firms dealing in weapons or munitions of war.

STRATEGY WHICH IGNORES POLITICS ¹

“ If the great (Balkan) game (of the Entente) had succeeded, it might have been, as we may now confess, the beginning of the end. Germany and Austria would then really have been a besieged fortress shut in on all sides.”—Col. GÄDKE, in *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, Oct. 14, 1916.

IF any doubts were still possible as to the true inwardness of the German war plan, the overrunning of Roumania must surely have dispelled them. It must at last be dawning upon even the most obtuse brain that the Germans regard the fate of South-Eastern Europe as a vital issue, and are prepared for its sake to take enormous risks. It is true that certain writers (including a distinguished retired general) do not hesitate to treat the campaigns of Mackensen and Falkenhayn as “ the last throw of a gambler ” whose “ fast drooping spirits ” are “ at the lowest ebb.” But the plain man who reads the daily bulletins with his atlas before him, and is not misled by the posters, whose persistent efforts to distort our mental focus have become little short of a public danger, will merely marvel at the astounding assertion that “ Germany and Austria have been defeated and thrown back on every other front.” That Roumania represented, for the moment, the line of least resistance is no valid ground for assuming that the

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. i. No. 3, November 2, 1916.

German staff knows its "defeat" to be "irretrievable." It is merely a proof that the Germans have always understood the lesson which we have always refused to learn, that it is well to hit an enemy at his weakest rather than his strongest point. One of our greatest weaknesses in this war has been the refusal to admit awkward facts, the strange illusion that reverses must at all costs be minimised or explained away, and that to admit them is equivalent to "whimpering." The optimism of the front to which Sir W. Robertson recently paid tribute is of a very different quality. Out in France every one realises that our main task lies before us, and the Germans—using to the full the superior mobility and uniformity of plan which interior lines and an absolute military control of their Allies secure to them—are still strong enough to dam back all the heroism of Verdun and the Somme, of the Carso and the Bzura, while they pursue those political aims for the execution of which the German military machine has been prepared with such minute, unflagging, and relentless efficiency. The Balkans, we are told, are a "side-show," and events in that region can never decide, or even materially influence, the main issues of the war; and public opinion, slow and illogical as ever, does not allow itself to be dislodged from this comfortable theory by the awkward fact that the Germans have sent two of their best generals, and all the men they can spare, to that very region at what is still called the "crisis of the war." And yet it is generously admitted that the Germans know something about strategy and warfare in general. Truly criticism of the airy kind which treats the conquest of Poland as having miscarried (see a leading weekly last Saturday) is difficult to deal with.

The conquest of the Dobrudja is an event of capital importance in the history of the war, if considered in the light

of what preceded it. The failure of the Western Powers to understand the true significance of Austria-Hungary or to seek out the gaping joints in her military and political armour had led them to neglect the lessons of General Potiorek's rout in Central Serbia. They were blind to the imperative need for holding the Danube front against invasion from the north, and thus both securing the gate which leads to the vitals of the Central Powers and cutting off the Turks from the material aid without which they could not have continued the struggle. Mackensen's fresh onslaught upon Serbia, in conjunction with the Bulgarians, found the Entente once more entirely unprepared. The hinterland of Salonica rapidly replaced the Danube as a barrier against the Germans and—yet another capital blunder—the inviolable Montenegrin fortress of Mount Lovćen, with all its neglected possibilities against the Austrian naval base of Cattaro, was soon afterwards allowed to fall into the enemy's hands. There followed nine months of inactivity, interspersed with intrigues of astonishing crudity and ineptitude with Bulgaria, while a fatal blend of sentimental irresolution and arrogant tactlessness drove King Constantine into the enemy's camp, and disorganised the whole Greek machine of State. The entry of Roumania in August provided the Entente with an opportunity of making good the fatal errors of the preceding autumn, of recovering a point of vantage against Austria-Hungary, and, at the same time, of co-operating with the Salonica expedition in the all-important task of cutting Germany's connection with Constantinople. But once again the Entente was without a plan, and threw away the advantages which Mr. Bratianu's diplomatic skill had earned. If the Russians were not ready at the moment when the Roumanians entered Transylvania, to pour several hundred

thousand men into Bulgaria, and, aided by a vigorous offensive from the Ægean, to threaten the line to the East, then it was nothing less than madness to allow the Roumanians to abandon their neutrality, and those responsible for prompting them deserve condign punishment. As a sign that a keenly observant neighbour regarded Austria-Hungary's position as irreparable, Roumania's action was highly significant; but what made it of such immense value to the Allied cause as a whole was the fact that it at last supplied Russia with the possibility of that land advance upon Constantinople which had hitherto been denied her. In point of fact, we now know that, instead of hundreds, there were only tens, of thousands; that, of these, the majority belonged to the heroic Jugoslav legions levied last spring in Odessa; that the Bulgars make short work of the pathetic Russian illusion that they would not resist the troops of the Tsar Liberator; and that Mackensen is straining every nerve to complete his conquest of the Dobrudja as far north as the delta of the Danube. It is to be hoped that the very strenuous if belated efforts of the Allies will prevent him from effecting a crossing and invading the rich plains of Roumania proper. But it must not be forgotten for a moment that, unless he can once more be ejected before he has time to consolidate his position, the Entente will be deprived of one of its most promising fields of strategy. Its final loss would add many months to the war, just as *a fortiori* the overrunning of Roumania would prolong it by at least a year, and, indeed, gravely compromise those prospects of final victory which depend upon the pivotal position of Constantinople. The question of the Straits may one day decide the future of the Entente and of Europe.

While, then, every effort must be made, and we believe

is being made, by Russia to retrieve the Entente's grave blunders in the past two months, and save the situation in Northern, and above all in Southern, Roumania, it is incumbent upon the Western Allies to play their part by strengthening the Salonica army by every means in their power. A year ago our authorities risked a severe crisis in the history of the Entente by their stubborn reluctance to fulfil the Balkan engagements which the French rightly held to be binding and urgent; and though, after much valuable time had been lost, we at length yielded to the insistent pressure of Paris, the official British attitude for the greater part of 1916 has borne an uncomfortable resemblance to that of Achilles sulking in his tent before Troy. It is to be hoped that the fatal old idea of starving Salonica has been finally abandoned, and that General Sarrail will receive all the necessary reinforcements before it is utterly too late. We have heard more than enough of the silly catchword that "the only thing which counts is killing Germans." But if that is really the end of military wisdom, it can be attained as easily at Monastir, in the Dobrudja, and in Transylvania as on the Somme and the Meuse.

November 2, 1916.

[It is now a matter of history, that so far from allowing such elementary considerations to weigh with them, the supreme military authorities continued for another year and more to press for abandonment, and when this was prevented by the sagacity of the French, to starve Salonica from a military point of view. It is also a matter of history that the final push which rendered the collapse of Austria-Hungary inevitable and precipitated the German Revolution, came from despised Salonica, and was conducted on the lines long advocated by the Voivode Misić.]

THE IMPORTANCE OF SALONICA¹

Two of the prime causes of failure in war have always been the ignorance of politicians who presume to interfere in strategy and the ignorance of soldiers who persist in paralysing policy. In this war we have suffered from both to an alarming degree. Meanwhile, the Germans have not merely had the immense advantage of interior lines and superior communications, but have been able to exploit this advantage to its fullest extent because they have from the first co-ordinated strategy and policy. They have always had a war plan—and indeed a war plan with several alternatives and “second-bests.” The Allies as a whole have never had a plan at all, and even at this moment are only very slowly evolving one. It is the consciousness of the fact that we are at length beginning to learn from our mistakes and to prepare for a really concentric attack, based upon unity of aim, that is one of Germany’s main reasons for desiring peace while her armies are yet at the top of their effort.

Individual initiative has always been the glory of the British race; but the days of Wolfe and Clive are in the past. To-day initiative is more needed than ever, but it must be disciplined in a sense hitherto unrealised, and must know how to take full advantage of all those forces upon

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. i. No. 13, January 11, 1917.

which modern science and organisation compel soldier and statesman alike to rely.

The Allies, we repeat, have need of a clear political plan. Without this there can be no such thing as strategic victory, for strategy is merely policy translated into terms of war. "The destruction of Prussian Militarism" or "the crushing of Germany" are mere rhetorical phrases far too vague to deserve the title of a programme. They can only satisfy the type of mind which regards the present war as a death grapple between two wild animals, one of which must scratch out the other's eyes. The real problem at stake is the final emancipation of Europe as a whole from those feudal conceptions which have lingered in so many quarters—from the right of dynasties to prescribe the fate of peoples, from the belief in brute force as the dominant factor in human progress, from the pacifist illusion that the wealth of nations merely consists in financial credit, and from the veiled designs of capital upon the liberties of labour. The German Will to Power can only be met on the part of the Allies by the Will to a new Europe. The determining factor in reconstruction will be the fate of Austria-Hungary, the Balkans, and Turkey, for it is in these countries that the stakes lie. So long as they remain the blind instruments of German policy and of German strategy—and the narrow castes which control their destinies can never be detached voluntarily from an alliance which is the very basis of their continuance in power—so long will Germany dominate the continent.

It took the nation a long time to realise that it was at war at all, and even to-day it has scarcely realised that it is at war with Austria-Hungary and with Turkey. Yet upon the fate of these two countries depends our ability to settle accounts once and for all with Germany. The skill with

which the latter dovetailed the armies of her allies into her own military system, thereby supplementing indefinitely the available stock of "cannon-fodder," symbolises the extent to which her fate is bound up with theirs. The neglect of these problems, the persistence of the theory that our only foe is Germany, who faces us at close range across the North Sea, is the natural legacy of that "splendid isolation" to which our insular traditions gave birth, and lies at the root of the exaggerated theory of "Westernism" which still lingers in high places.

While endeavouring to combat "Westernism" in its extreme form, we venture to think that any attempt to define the strategic issue as a combat between East and West rests upon a fundamental misconception of the facts. We believe it to be true to say that no serious advocate of operations in the East would dream of denying that our main effort must be in the West, and that the future of our relations with Germany, and therefore the whole future development of Europe, depends upon the military decision on the Western front. But this is a very different thing from arguing that "the fate of the world must be staked upon the Western front and nowhere else." Such an argument is merely a comic inversion of the proverb which warns us against putting all our eggs in one basket; and, after all, even what its most extreme advocates desire to convey, is simply that there is a limit to the number of baskets of eggs which two arms can conveniently carry at one time.

The problem of Salonica has from the first been surrounded by grave difficulties; but that is no excuse for complicating it still further by irresponsible and dishonest criticism. To-day the very people who consistently opposed it in the first instance, and thwarted and starved it at every

stage of its existence, are not merely trying to justify its abandonment by proclaiming a "failure" for which they themselves are largely responsible, but are actually trying to foist the responsibility for that "failure" upon the shoulders of the late Government. There are many things for which the late Government, and the late Foreign Secretary deserve criticism, and nowhere more so than in connection with the Salonica expedition; but the main criticism which might fairly be directed against them is that they listened so long to the advice of those who wished the Balkans to be abandoned to the enemy, that when at last they acted, they did too little, and did even that little too late. To suggest that because General Sarrail's forces have hitherto failed to cut Germany's route to the East they should be withdrawn altogether, is as absurd as to suggest that, because the Somme offensive failed to prevent the overrunning of Roumania, our Western policy is definitely bankrupt. The two arguments are based upon the same fallacy, whether we regard them from the military or from the political point of view.

"War," we are told, "is a business for soldiers and their trained minds," and we are left to assume by implication that civilians are not entitled to a say in military affairs and are sure to provoke disaster. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to find in history any instances of successful wars being conducted by mere soldiers to the exclusion of the politicians, though, of course, there have sometimes been supreme commanders like Gustavus, Frederick, or Napoleon, who combined the military and political control in their own persons. All experience goes to show that the ideal combination in war is a clear political brain to direct and a strong military hand to execute; when the positions are reversed, a dangerous lack of balance ensues. It is for the

statesmen of the country at war to prescribe their aims, to find generals capable of executing them, and to provide them with means adequate to the task. The Dardanelles Expedition is probably the most flagrant example in recent history of a political idea, essentially sound in itself but undigested and ill-thought-out, rashly imposed by politicians upon sailors and soldiers alike, under circumstances which rendered success extremely improbable. It is now notorious that saner counsels were overridden, and that the alternative proposal which was then laid before the British Cabinet—the despatch of reinforcements to Serbia—might have averted subsequent disaster in the Balkans, maintained Turkey in isolation from Germany, prevented Bulgaria from entering the war against us and given us the full benefit of Greek and Roumanian co-operation.

What is not nearly so well known is the fact that no less grave miscalculations have been committed by the most eminent soldiers on the Entente side, and that these were due, above all, to their undue neglect of political considerations. If the military had had their way, one of the most important towns on the eastern frontier of France would have been evacuated early in the war; and the decision was only reversed because the civil population decided to risk utter destruction rather than allow their homes to fall into German hands without resistance. If the military had had their way, Paris would not have been defended and the Germans, thus enabled to suck dry the richest prize in France, would long ago have brought the Republic to its knees. Even more significant was the indifference shown by the military, on purely military grounds, to the evacuation of Lille and “the French Lancashire.” It was only too late that they realised all that the loss of so many great industrial centres would mean to France during a

long war, and all the many advantages which it would bring to commanders so devoid of scruple as the German. Finally, it is hardly necessary to point out that at a critical moment in the psychology of the war, Verdun would have been evacuated, again on purely military grounds, unless the politicians had wisely insisted upon its defence.

If we turn to the Balkans we find the same story. Lord Grey, starting from the fundamental error that "our direct interests in Serbia are nil," completely failed to understand her significance to the British Empire as a barrier on Germany's road to the East. But the blame rests equally with the supreme military command of those days, who, only three weeks before Mackensen crossed the Danube, disregarded urgent warnings and treated the idea of a German invasion as bluff. It was military pressure quite as much as his own weakness that made the late Foreign Secretary try to recede from his public pledges of assistance to Serbia ("without reserve and without qualification") and brought upon him the historical reproach of General Joffre, "Vous nous lâchez sur le champ de bataille."

The French Government and the French Staff combined to save the honour of the Entente, and ever since then they have been unanimous in recognising the political importance of the Salonica front. But, none the less, obstruction and counter-intrigue continued, and the result of our lop-sided military policy and of the perennial lack of co-ordination between the Allies, has been that "the Army of the Orient" has never had numerical superiority, or anything like it, in fighting men. On paper we have nursed one illusion after another. In sober fact, the Bulgarians have always been able to hold their own because our forces have been "starved" politically; and the only real exploit has been that of the Serbs, but for whose capture of Kajmakčalan

(heights of 8000 feet) in the teeth of every strategic and physical disadvantage even Monastir would still be in Bulgarian hands. Our present tactics place an unduly heavy burden upon the most sorely tried of all our Allies, and, if pursued indefinitely, threaten the Serbian army with extinction before the end of the war.

It is his knowledge that there is powerful opposition in the West to placing the Salonica Expedition on a sound footing that lies at the root of King Constantine's attitude to the Entente, and has produced chaos in Greece. But the "starvation" policy of *extreme* Westerners (we repeat, we are all of us *Westerners*) is also very largely responsible for the "Roumanian blunder." Roumania's entry into the war was sheer insanity unless the Russians were ready to pour masses of troops through the Dobrudja and General Sarrail to make a simultaneous advance in force from Salonica. The fact that neither of these two elementary and essential steps was taken reflects equally upon the political and the military policy of the Entente, and proves that an entirely new outlook upon the war is needed in very high quarters if victory is to be assured. When at length there was a Balkan advance, it came two whole months too late, and lacked from the first the means necessary for success. A strong offensive from the south might have prevented Mackensen from pushing home in Roumania; but he was, of course, acting upon full knowledge of its impossibility in view of the limitations imposed upon Sarrail.

Now that prolonged neglect has prevented the Salonica Expedition from achieving much more than a negative success, those who have hampered and opposed it at every turn are now adding insult to injury by advocating its complete withdrawal. Such a proposal is the very culmination

of that inability to take wide views and envisage Europe as a whole which has been the secret of our failure hitherto. The life-interests of our Allies make abandonment unthinkable, and as Austria-Hungary's exhaustion progresses, the presence of a Southern army, ready to create a diversion when the time comes for Russia to strike home, will assume steadily greater, not lesser, importance. This should be obvious to all save those who have consistently refused to recognise that we are at war with Austria-Hungary as well as her partners. The abandonment of Salonica would be an irreparable blow to British prestige, and would mean the final extinction of our influence in the Near East, and the certain triumph, in one form or another, of the Pan-german design of "Berlin-Bagdad." That would be a just Nemesis for so craven and cynical an attitude towards our Balkan Allies, who have staked their all upon loyalty to the common cause.

The policy of abandonment rests upon so profound a neglect of the whole political and racial constellation in Central and Southern Europe, that we absolutely decline to believe that it can ever receive the sanction of those who now control the political and military destinies of the Entente.

January 11, 1917.

PANSLAVISM¹

NAPOLEON, to whom so many of the half-truths and catch-words of international politics during the last century may be traced, once said that Europe would become either Cossack or Republican. This is one of those phrases which helped to make Panslavism so long a word of ill-omen in England, and no serious attempt has ever been made to present our public with the true interpretation of the word. In the case of the great rival doctrine of Pangermanism, it is true that we all comfortably ignored its very existence, and still more its teachings, until the outbreak of war, and even later: but on the rare occasions on which we condescended to recognise it as a fact, we found its meaning perfectly obvious and simple. For us the real question was not so much "What is Pangermanism?" as "Need we take Pangermanism seriously? Has it any real support in the German people?" To-day, our Allies, and, above all, our Russian friends and our would-be allies among the Slavs of Austria, find it extremely difficult to realise that the "practical English," as they still call us, could ever have asked such a question. In the South Sea Islands every one knows whether a shark has teeth.

Panslavism is much more difficult to define, because it has many interpretations; and our attitude must depend

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upon whether we treat it as a purely Russian product, or as Panslavism in the literal sense of the word. If we limit ourselves to the Russian side of the movement, we inevitably find ourselves driven upon the rocks of political prejudice and unconsciously siding with one or other of the great tendencies which dominate Russian history, and which may, for convenience' sake, be described as the autocratic or theocratic, and the Liberal or Western. Panslavism has assumed many varying forms according to the currents of the day. Sometimes the racial, sometimes the religious, sometimes the political element gained the upper hand; but always the influence of all three was noticeable, though in varying degrees. But to-day the fundamental fact which can never be over-emphasised is, that just as you cannot even begin to solve any Slavonic question without considering the attitude of Russia as the greatest of all Slav Powers, so it must be regarded as an axiom in the Slavonic problem as a whole—that the wishes, opinions, and traditions of the other Slav races must receive equal consideration. What differentiates the Slavonic from all similar racial questions is not open to dispute, and those who had hitherto managed to shut their eyes to it have been forced by the events of the war to recognise it. There are admittedly ties of race, sentiment, and tradition which bind the various Latin races together, and this applies equally to the Anglo-Saxon, if no longer to the Teutonic world. In the same way much is now being written and said of Panturanianism—of the unity of Magyar, Bulgar, and Turk against the corroding influence of Russia, France, and Britain. But the links in the chain of Slavonic racial unity have always been far closer, far more subtle, far more irresistible than those between the Teutonic or Latin races. There is, in spite of the inevitable internal quarrels, a certain

solidarity of feeling which may be resented, or feared, or opposed by the outside world, but cannot be explained away—some deep-seated call of the blood, which rises superior to differences of language, religion, geography, and historical tradition.

It should be superfluous to recite the bare catalogue of the Slavonic races; and yet it is necessary to do so when writers of reputation are still capable of classifying even Magyar or Roumanian among the Slavs. The Slavs, then, fall into eight main groups—the Russians, the Poles, the Ruthenes, the Czechs, the Slovaks, the Serbo-Croats, and the Bulgars. Of the Lusatians, Mazurians, and other tiny fragments in Eastern Germany, it is unnecessary to speak. Yet even this list raises controversies of a political nature; for there are many Slavs who argue that the Ruthene (this is the name in common use in Austria, but the Russians describe them as Little Russians, and they themselves prefer the name of Ukrainians) is merely a dialect of Great Russian, and not a separate language. And there are others who in the same way decline to make any serious distinction between Czech and Slovak. The odium of this list, then, must fall, not upon me, but upon the greatest living Slavistic scholar, Vatroslav Jagić, who was Professor at Vienna University and a member of the Academy of Petrograd, for many years editor of that mine of Slavonic learning, the *Archiv für slavische Philologie*.

The true Panслав enthusiast would have us begin with the monkish chronicler Nestor, in the eleventh century, who described the various races known to him—some with us still, some long since vanished—and continued: "Thus was the Slav nation or language distributed, and the writing which it has adopted is called 'Slavonic writing.'" He even claims the Apostle Paul as "the apostle of the Slav

nation to which we Russians belong." Another early chronicler tells how the Slavs left the Tower of Babel and occupied Bulgaria, Dalmatia, Croatia, Bohemia, Poland, Russia, and the Elbe countries. Yet another treats of Cech, Lech, and Rus, the mythical founders of the Czechs, Poles, and Russians, as three brothers; and there is this much truth in the legend, that all the various Slav dialects seem to trace back to a common ancestor. We know that the Slav apostles, Cyril and Methodius, went from Bulgaria to Moravia to preach, and the fact that there were no serious linguistic barriers between the two countries seems to have been the main reason which prompted the direction of their journey. We, in our ignorance, are accustomed to regard the Slavs as entering far later than the others into the field of culture, and possessing no literature worthy of notice until the last century. But it is to be remembered that the national literature of Kiev, of mediaeval Serbia, and of Bohemia were each in turn abruptly extinguished by foreign conquest after they had already begun to flourish exceedingly.

We find St. Jerome quite seriously claimed as a Slav, and St. Adalbert publicly declared his Slavonic nationality; "Slovienen jsem" are his own words. We find continual traces in every century, alike in Bohemia, Poland, Croatia, and Serbia, of the consciousness of Slav origin and kinship. John Hus, Žižka, Vladislav Jagiellon, and that other Vladislav who fell at Varna, are obvious champions of Slav national feeling. But perhaps the most interesting figure in the early history of Panslavism is the Croat Catholic priest, Križanić, whose enthusiasm for Church reunion and grief over the sad state of the Slav race drove him from Rome to Petrograd, and prompted him to produce, in 1665, a Slav grammar, which aimed at constructing a kind of

Panslav language, or Slav *lingua franca*. He made a strong ecstatic appeal to the Tsar as liberator of the Slavs of the Danube. But he remained an isolated, though significant figure; his manuscript was not unearthed until 1859, and he himself ended his days in Siberia, paying the penalty for being ahead of his age.

To-day, it is interesting to note the extremely anti-German tinge of his writings. "The Germans," he said, "have driven us (Slavs) from whole districts—Moravia, Pomerania, Silesia, Prussia. In Bohemia there are only very few Slavs left. In Poland all the towns are full of strangers and we are their slaves; it is for them that we till the soil, for them that we make war, and they remain to feast in their houses, and treat us as dogs and pigs. By their incessant attacks and insults they have reduced many Slavs who live among them to such a situation of despair that they are ashamed of their language and race, and give themselves out as members of another nation. The Germans, after introducing themselves into all the Slav states, are furious at not having been able yet to reduce to their power the Russian Empire, which God has always preserved from their yoke. Hence, of all Slavs they most detest the Russians, and do all they can to harm them and spread the most infamous reports about them. They have managed to make the Russians absolutely despised in Europe and to divide them, continually sowing among them causes of intestinal quarrel." (Križanić was indeed a prophet, and he seems to have forestalled the Russian proverb: "What is good for the Russian is fatal for the German.") "It must, however, be remarked," adds this seventeenth-century apostle, "that we Russians and Poles are people of one tongue, children of the same father, and that there cannot be for Russia greater good fortune than a fraternal concord

between the two peoples." Is it mere folly to express the belief that such a reconciliation is to be one of the fruits of this war? Certainly it is true that, unless it can be achieved, there will have been no solution of the Slav problem, on Panslav, or on any other grounds.

The problems which are now being decided on the field of battle are of two sorts—problems which had been dormant until the war revived or rendered them acute—*e.g.* Constantinople or Poland, and problems which directly provoked the outbreak. One of the three main causes of the war, side by side with Anglo-German rivalry and the Southern Slav question, is the question of the Ukraine, which goes to the very root of the whole relations between Austria and Russia, and affects a population much larger in number and area even than the Poles. Will Russia, after this war, be able to exercise sufficient attraction upon the 30,000,000 inhabitants of the Ukraine? Will she follow the natural desire of many enlightened Russian patriots in allowing free scope to the language and to the local requirements of Southern Russia, or will she revert to the unhappy policy which led her to place soldiers round the grave of the Ruthene Burns, Ševčenko, on his centenary only a month before the war, or to arrest the Ruthene Uniate Archbishop, Monsignor Szeptycki, and during his forced absence in Siberia to encourage the spread of Orthodoxy among his leaderless flock? Only cowardice can make us shirk these questions; the fact that there is already wide recognition in Russia itself of the supreme folly of such acts must be at once our excuse and our hope for the future.

Križanić was not a mere isolated figure. In 1584 Bohoricz, a Slovene schoolmaster from Laibach, published at Wittenberg a book on Slovene literature in which he treated the Slavs and the Slavonic language as a single unit. The

Slav poets of the Ragusan republic, especially the famous Gundulić, sang the exploits of the great Slav kings, and Kačić, the reviver of Croat popular poetry in Dalmatia in the eighteenth century, cites the quaint legend of Alexander the Great having made a will in favour of the Slavs. The book of another Dalmatian Croat, Orbini, on *The Realm of the Slavs* ("il regno degli Slavi hoggi corrotamente detti Schiavoni"), published in 1601 at Pesaro, was thought worth translating into Russian by an Orthodox Archbishop more than a century later. If, to-day, it is specially worth noting the prominent part taken by that keenly Slavonic country, Dalmatia, in its expression of Slav solidarity, it is also interesting to remember a dissertation of the Bohemian Jesuit Balbin in the eighteenth century—the member of an order which had directed its energies to stamping out the national feeling and literature of Bohemia. After giving a list of countries in which the *lingua Slavonica* is spoken, he adds: "There is not in the whole world any other language with which one can, by merely changing the dialect, speak to so many peoples and nations."

If one descends from the clouds of seventeenth-century theories to the hard facts of modern practice, we of course have to admit that the Slavs have been handicapped by the lack of a common language, and it is a common gibe that members of the various Slav nations when they meet together are obliged to communicate in German. But the fact remains that a complete mastery of one Slav language supplies a key to all the others, that the syntax and construction are virtually the same in all, that those who have studied Old Slavonic at school (as is more and more the case) already possess a magic formula which opens all Slav doors; and, what is much more important, that the humble Slovak pedlar can wander from the Danube within an hour

of Vienna, all the way to Vladivostock, and yet always manage to make himself understood. Here, then, is the true inner explanation of the failure of Magyarisation in Hungary. The Slav peasant is asked to forgo his kinship with the 150,000,000 of the Slav world, for the sake of an Asiatic idiom which is never heard outside the narrow bounds of Hungary.

It was under Peter the Great that Panslavism first began to shape itself in the modern sense, and that the racial and religious affinity between Russia and the Balkan Christians first became noticeable in the field of international politics. There have always been certain mystical elements in the movement, bound up with the Imperial tradition of Byzantium and with Santa Sofia as the symbol of Eastern Christianity; nor can these elements ever be ignored by any one who desires to understand the Slav mind. Of course Peter, who was anything but a mystic, exploited them for political ends, but quite apart from his last will, which may or may not be genuine, he, like that remarkable throned adventuress, Catherine II., half a century later, must undoubtedly be regarded as one of the founders of Panslavism. Thus we have the beginning of that strong tendency in the Imperial house of Russia to dabble in private life in new-fangled philosophy and adventurous Western theories, while enforcing a ruthless system of autocracy—to support extreme reaction in Europe, and yet at the same time to champion the oppressed races of the Balkan Peninsula. Throughout we can distinguish two currents, the one genuinely Panslav in the literal sense of the word, the other more and more Panrussian or Muscovite, looking on all the other Slav races as, in the words of Puškin, “mere rivulets, all flowing into the Russian sea.” In this latter current religious motives

played a leading part and dominated the so-called Slavophiles, the inevitable and natural expression of that world of autocracy which, in spite of Peter's reformers, had remained impenetrable to all external influences save those of German officialdom.

The Slav idea, then, under the Russian Slavophiles of last century—men like Kirejevsky and Homiakov—assumed a peculiar Orthodox form. Arguing that the West had misunderstood the whole meaning of Christianity and distorted it in the light of the Roman world-state, they went on to declare the influence of the West to have been fatal to all the Slav races save the Russian. They, unlike the Romans, had had no culture before they accepted Christianity, and therefore accepted it more easily and kept it purer. They seem to have ignored the patent fact that on their own showing the Russians received Christianity from the Greeks, who possessed the most complete culture of all. Constantine Aksakov went so far as to uphold the theory that while all other states had been built up on violence, hatred, and serfdom, Russia alone is based on concord, freedom, and peace, on mutual love and trust between Tsar and people. Secure in this castle of his own imagination, he rejected Europe with opprobrium. Above all, Ivan Aksakov and Katkov became apostles of the idea that the Catholic Slavs must be rescued from the corruption of the West, and thus restored to health. Katkov, in particular, enjoyed a very extensive influence in Russia at the height of the reaction: by some he was lauded to the skies, by others denounced with vitriolic abuse. It is frankly difficult for Western minds to comprehend his strange infatuation for Byzantine culture: for it may be affirmed without hesitation, that what we admire to-day in the religious spirit of Russia is derived, not from

Byzantium—so false, so cruel, so formalist, so corrupt—but from the fervent natural religion of the Slavonic soul.

Katkov and Aksakov, who with all their faults were men of ideas and imagination, were translated into common jingoism by Danilevski in his book, *Russia and Europe*, which preached the modern doctrine of “sacred egoism” and absolute indifference to everything in Europe. “We must,” he said, “finally abandon all solidarity with European interests, and only regard those as our true allies who can be useful to us in our one and unchanging aim”—namely, Constantinople and the East. These exaggerations produced the equally absurd counter-theories invented by the Poles under the stress of brutal oppression, that there are two Russias, one Slav and one Turanian, and that the Russian Government represents the Turanian. Thus we have the strange result that the Russian Conservatives preached a return to Muscovy and its ideas as the only hope for Russia, while the word Muscovite came to be applied and accepted as a slight in the same sort of way as the name Papist for Catholics; and further, that British Conservatives swallowed whole this crude anti-Slav doctrine, and thus became the tools of German Conservatives, who saw the victory of Reaction in the alienation of Russia from the West. This ultra-Russian nationalism, which found such brutal expression in the reign of Alexander III., corresponds to the blatant type of Jingoism which prevailed in most countries towards the close of the nineteenth century. The balance was redressed by the half-mystical writings of Vladimir Soloviev, who pointed out that what was rotten in Europe was its non-Christian element, and that the essential need was not to uproot Catholicism, but, if possible, to reconcile East and West, as complementing each other.

It was, however, not in Russia, but among the Slovaks

that the first modern exponent of Panslavism in its ideal form arose. During the first half of the nineteenth century Jan Kollár, who was clergyman of the Slovak Lutheran Church in Budapest, wrote two epoch-making books: a long epic poem, *The Daughter of Slava*, in which he sang the glories of Slavdom, and created in imitation of Dante a mythical Slav Olympus and Hades, where the friends and enemies of the Slav race are picturesquely grouped, and a short essay advocating "The Literary Reciprocity of all Slavs." His appeal for closer intercourse among the various branches of the race, the fervour with which he argued that the feeling of Slav solidarity must transcend all political and religious differences, awakened a resounding echo throughout the Slav world. His equally famous contemporary, Šafářik, also a Slovak by birth, published a history of "Slav Antiquities," which will always remain the foundation-stone of all study of Slav origins, whether in the matter of language, geography, or race. As Kollár himself pointed out, it was natural enough that this idea of reciprocity should have struck deep roots and spread most rapidly among the Slovaks, who had hitherto produced little of their own in literature, and out of the isolation of neglect and oppression "were the first to stretch out their hands to embrace all Slavs." The labours of the pioneers were supplemented by the great scholars and philologists of Prague, whose researches paved the way for that intellectual and political renaissance of Bohemia which has been one of the most remarkable incidents in the whole nationalist movement of modern times.

In the year of revolution, 1848, Prague instantly leapt into prominence as a focus of Slav ideas, and it was there that the first Slavonic congress was held. Under the presidency of the great Czech historian, Palacky, delegates

assembled from Poland, Serbia, Croatia, the Slovak districts, and even Russia. It was the answer of the Slav world to the convocation of the German Federal Diet at Frankfurt. It is true that its results were even more inconclusive than those of the rival assembly. There was no sure political foundation upon which to build, and the various sections among the delegates had widely divergent aims and aspirations. In the words of a French historian, "Austria was for some a gaol, and for others a harbour of refuge, and each interpreted principles in the light of his need and passions": and it is curious to note that the idea of Panslav federation in its most advanced form was urged most strongly by the very men who were most hostile to the "Slavophiles" of Russia. But however inconclusive the congress may have seemed, an important step had been taken in the path towards mutual intercourse, without which all Panslav dreams must remain mere platonic vapourings, or, worse still, the cloak for Imperialist designs of conquest.

The Panslav Congress, which was held at Moscow in 1867, was attended by many Western Slavs, notably the great Czech leaders, Palacky, Rieger, and Gregr. But their visit proved actually detrimental to their own immediate cause; for, on the one hand, it provided Austria with a fresh excuse for the famous policy of "shoving the Slavs against the wall," which found expression in the Austro-Hungarian *Ausgleich* of the same year; and, on the other hand, a bad impression was created in many quarters by the fact that the organisers of the congress represented extreme reaction alike in Russia and in Europe, and had been foremost in their approval of the brutal repression of Poland only four years earlier. In those days political passions still obscured what is so obvious to the world

to-day, that a system which at one and the same time could advocate the Panslav idea and the impossibility of any understanding between Russia and Poland until both the Polish nobility and the Catholic Church had been rooted out, was obviously bankrupt and doomed to failure. The Polish question, then, was the real reason why so long an interval elapsed before the next congress could be held. It remained, in the words of the leading Russophil of Bohemia, Dr. Kramař, whom, in June 1916, the butchers of Vienna condemned to death, "an ever bleeding wound on the Slav body." Since the opening of the new century, and especially since the Japanese War and the Russian revolution, a new tendency became noticeable under the name of "Neo-Slavism." The root idea of its most eager advocates, notably of Kramař, was the reconciliation of Poles and Russians as the keystone to all progress in Slavonic questions; and this was the chief note of the Congress held at Prague in 1908. Considerations of internal policy, both in Russia and elsewhere, made it difficult to reach any concrete results. But it is probably true to say that more progress has been made in the direction of mutual intercourse and understanding between the various Slavs in the ten years immediately preceding the war than in any previous decade. The events of the Balkan War gave a tremendous impetus to the feeling of Slav solidarity. Agram, Laibach, Prague, even to some degree Cracow, greeted the victory of the Balkan League as their own; of Moscow and Petrograd it is unnecessary to speak. Students of nationality in Europe are too apt to confine their attention to Italy and Germany. Even to-day it is not yet fully understood to what an extent the national movement has revived and transformed the Slavs, and yet it is only necessary to compare the Slav nations of Austria and the

Balkans as they are to-day with what they were a hundred years ago, in order to realise that nationality among the Slavs is like an inrolling tide. If their emancipation is one of the results of this gigantic clash of arms, the misery and suffering of Europe will at least have a compensation. Once more Russia, despite the many shortcomings and imperfections of which her enemies are never tired of reminding us, is siding with the future, as surely as Germany, with all her marvellous energy and organisation, is siding with the past.

The Panslav ideal has been mellowed by time. To-day it is realised more and more that it can never be achieved upon a purely Russian or on a purely Orthodox basis, and that, even from the Russian point of view, such a consummation would be undesirable. Five out of the six Slavonic races whose fate depends upon the issue of this war—the Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, and Slovenes—are overwhelmingly Catholic (the second and third with a small Protestant minority), while the Western portion of the Ukraine is fervently Uniate. The indispensable preliminary to any solution of the problems affecting these races is the establishment, not merely of toleration, but of absolute religious equality.

The rival tendencies inside the Panslav idea may be summed up in three phrases by three great Russians. "The Slavophiles," wrote the ultra-conservative Ivan Aksakov, "regard Orthodoxy as the source of Russian nationality: it constitutes the fundamental principles of its historic life, which are a higher contribution to civilisation than those possessed by Western Europe." Alexander Herzen, probably the greatest of the advanced school of Russian thought, declared with equal emphasis that "When the hour of the Slavs shall sound, their idea will correspond

to that of revolutionary Europe." But as usual, Dostoevski raises the matter to a higher plane when he writes of "the plan to unite the whole of Slavdom under the wings of Russia. And this union, not for the appropriation of others' property, not for violence or for the annihilation of the various Slav individualities by the Russian Colossus, but in order to renew them and bring them into their due relation to Europe and to humanity—to give them at last the possibility of peaceful life and of recovery after countless centuries of suffering, and when they feel their new strength, of adding their bundle to the granary of the human spirit and saying their word in civilisation. Of course you may laugh as much as you please at these 'illusions' of mine about Russia's destiny, but tell me this: Do not all Russians desire the liberation and exaltation of the Slav on this very basis, for their full personal freedom and for the resurrection of their souls, and *not* to win them politically for Russia and through them to strengthen Russia politically, as Europe sometimes suspects?"

A word or two may be added as to the manner in which the Panslav dreamers express their theories in practice. Dostoevski, in the very passage quoted above, breathing as it does conciliation and tolerance, adds the phrase, "It goes without saying, that with this end in view, Constantinople must sooner or later be ours." Constantinople lies at the root of all Russian realities, national, political, religious, and economic; and it is a fortunate fact that our statesmen should realise that Constantinople in the hands of Russia is the surest guarantee of peace between the British and Slavonic worlds, and an impregnable barrier to German aggression in the Near and Middle East.

Danilevsky, a typical contemporary of our own Jingoës and a believer in "sacred egoism" as the sole basis of

foreign policy, advocated a kind of loose Confederation of Eastern Europe, consisting of the following eight units: (1) The Russian Empire including Galicia; (2) Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Slovakia; (3) Jugoslavia; (4) Bulgaria; (5) Roumania; (6) Greece; (7) Hungary; (8) Constantinople, as a separate province. The fatal and obvious flaw in this settlement is that it ignores Poland and the root fact that the Panslav ideal can never be achieved so long as Russian and Pole remain unreconciled.

More than enough has been heard of the notorious Pan-german General Bernhardt. Far too little has been heard of the Panslav General, Fadejev, whose words, written in 1869, are full of prophetic insight. He starts with the assumption that for Russia the Eastern question cannot be decided by a war in the Balkans, but only on Russia's Western frontier. "The Eastern question can only be solved in Vienna. Austria is like a loaded cannon, which may not go off for centuries, if the sparks are not applied. But for her to allow a solution in the Russian sense would be suicide." "The existence of free Slav kingdoms bounding with enslaved Slav countries is impossible. How can Austria allow a second Slav Piedmont, whose influence would not be confined to a corner of her Empire, but would extend to its centre? Austria has only two paths—either the Slavs south of the river Save (*i.e.* Serbia) must share the fate of the Hungarian Slavs, or the Slavs north of the Save must attain the position of Serbia to-day." Here, then, we find, in 1869, a Russian summing up in a few clear phrases the situation of 1916. Either free Serbia and Montenegro must become conquered provinces of Austria-Hungary and fodder for the *Drang nach Osten*, or they must unite the whole Jugoslav race in a single State.

The second prophecy is not less remarkable. "In re-

lation to Russia, Hungary forms the advance-guard of Germany. . . .The Germans see that they alone, without the help of the Magyars, can never finish with the Danubian Slavs. . . . If Austria-Hungary follows firmly on these lines, Germany will stand up for Austria just as much as for her own property." This is being literally fulfilled to-day in the course of what is at least as much a Magyar war as a German war. It was the racial tyranny of the Magyars, exercised upon the unhappy Slavs of Hungary and the Eastern Adriatic, which kept the Northern Balkans in a ferment, checkmated the better elements in Austria, and embittered the relations of the Dual Monarchy with Russia and Serbia. Just as it was Budapest in collusion with Vienna which plunged Serbia and Bulgaria into the fratricidal war of 1913, so it was the deliberate policy of Budapest in collusion with Berlin which precipitated the present conflict.

Yet another prophecy of Fadejev is to-day in process of fulfilment. "For Austria, the Polish question is a lightning-conductor for the Eastern question." Its true solution is to recognise the Poles as a Slav people with a right to its existence, and to Russian help in re-uniting its scattered portions. On the other hand Poland has, in effect, the choice of becoming the younger brother of the Russian nation, or a mere German province. Scarcely less interesting is his further assertion that France has a choice between Russian rule and German rule in Europe: "On the day when France realises that the fortunes of Poland are inseparably bound up with the triumph of the Slav idea, the heart of France will be with us."

There is only one point upon which this uncanny gift of prophecy failed him, and the fault lies at the door of *perfidie Albion*. Writing in 1869, he did not expect the sympathy

of England for his Slavonic dreams, and who shall blame him? That was long before Gladstone and Salisbury between them redeemed the deadly errors of Disraeli. It is the privilege of our generation to prove him wrong on this one point, and, as loyal and immovable allies of Russia, to help him to realise the rest of the Slav programme.

One of our own statesmen in an inspired phrase contrasted the attitude of Prussia and of Russia to the claims of nationality and sentiment. While the "higher civilisation" merely answered that "the liberty of the Bulgarian peasants was not worth the life of a single Pomeranian soldier . . . the rude barbarians of the North sent their sons by the thousand to die for Bulgarian freedom." Prussia since she was constituted a kingdom has done nothing for the freedom of her neighbours and much for their enslavement. Russia, like all great empires, our own included, has blots upon her 'scutcheon; but nothing can ever efface the historical fact that time after time she has gone to war for the cause of her Slav kinsmen or her Orthodox co-religionists, and that the democratic countries of South-Eastern Europe owe a great part of their liberties to the efforts of Russia and her rulers. History has linked Russia and Britain in the task of reconstructing Europe upon the sole basis which offers any hope of lasting peace, the principle of nationality and the rights of small nations. Poland, Bohemia, and Jugoslavia—these three together form the keystone to the arch of European liberty. Without the emancipation of the Southern Slavs and the Czechoslovaks from German aggression, Austrian inertia, and Magyar tyranny, without the reunion of Poland and its reconciliation with Russia, there can be no regeneration of the European commonwealth, no permanent settlement, no durable peace after the horrors of the Great War.

THE MUSINGS OF A SLAVOPHIL¹

“LET us observe them at this decisive moment,” writes Taine in his memorable description of the Terror. “I do not believe that any country or century has witnessed such a contrast between a nation and its rulers. By a series of inverted purges the best, not the worst, has been eliminated, and faction has been reduced to its dregs. Of the vast wave set in motion in 1789 nothing remains but the foam and the scum. All else has been rejected or has dropped out—first the upper class, clergy, nobility, and parliamentarians ; then the middle class, industrialists, merchants, and bourgeois ; then the *élite* of the lower class, small proprietors, farmers, and artisans ; in short, all the notables of every profession, condition, or trade, all that possessed capital, income, position, esteem, education, a mental and moral culture. To make up the picture, there was in June 1793 hardly anything left save the shifting workmen, the vagabonds of town and country, a degraded and dangerous mob, the outcasts, the depraved, the abnormal, and in Paris, from whence they gave orders to the whole of France, their group—a tiny minority—found its recruits even in that human refuse which infests every capital.”

The great past of France seems to be throwing its shadows upon the moving screen of Russia. And yet we do not

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. vi. No. 73, March 7, 1918.

need to be reminded that no historical parallel is ever exact. If, alas! Lenin and his comrades have insanely thrown away the weapons which lay in their hand, they have directly reversed the methods of Danton or of Carnot. The heart of Russia is sound, but her body has succumbed to the asphyxiating gas generated in the unhealthy atmosphere of Tsarism, by foreign intrigue and by internal corruption and unrest. But the plain man in the West knows but little of causes and judges by results. To a few fantastic demagogues the action of the Bolševiks in destroying the Russian army and making the Germans a present of its equipment is a superb gesture inaugurating a new era; to the plain man it is simply translated into fresh bloodshed and suffering for his own kith and kin. In his anger and disappointment he only sees the prostrate body of his former ally; he forgets the superhuman efforts to which Russia's exhaustion and in large part his own safety are due.

The ideas which underlie the new dispensation in Russia are neither new nor Russian. As in the case of the doctrine of self-determination, they often contain a sound kernel, borrowed as they are from the greatest progressive thinkers of modern times. The fault lies not with them but with their latest exponents, and consists in a crude attempt to blend elements which nature has resolved to keep apart. The militant idealism of Mazzini does not accord with the semi-Christian nihilism of Tolstoi, and both alike are fermented by an admixture of Marx, Proudhon, and Nietzsche. Spiritual ideas cannot be promoted on a materialist basis. From the alliance of Russian atheist and cosmopolitan Jew there is bred a mere spirit of negation—*der Geist der stets verneint*. In the history of ideas,

as in workaday politics, extremes tend to meet, and birds of a feather are found in seemingly opposite camps. It is no accident that the wheel which turned full circle from brutal absolutism to social iconoclasm often swings back to its starting-point. Mars has assuredly reduced the philosophers to silence, or we might long ere this have been reminded of the natural affinity between the Superman of Power and the Superman of Anarchy, between the essential dogmas of Nietzsche and of Bakunin.

The moral degeneracy of the Tsarist system, the foul corruption of the bureaucracy, the deplorable weakness of the middle class, had led to a progressive paralysis of the State. Deeds were replaced by an endless stream of words until the seething cauldron overflowed. Lenin and Trotski have been brought to the surface by the Titanic conflict of Tsardom and Junkerdom, of which the more efficient has triumphed, and is now marshalling its last forces against what still stands between it and world dominion. But the Bolševik Revolution has thrown to the winds the ideals which inspired all previous democratic revolutions. It derides the representative principle, it cares nothing for equality or fraternity. Instead of challenging monopoly and privilege wherever it can be assailed, enforcing equality of opportunity for all and paying tribute to the power that rests with knowledge, it has deliberately inverted the foul principle of autocracy, against which its leaders had fought so long and gallant a fight. Instead of the abolition of class and caste, we are merely to have one corrupt class domination substituted for another. The autocracy, the aristocracy, the *bourgeoisie* are to be rooted out, there is to be a merciless war upon culture in all its prevailing forms, and all power is to be concentrated in the hands of the proletariat. The class war, that most accursed of all

doctrines, is proclaimed as the ideal of society. Thus Lenin and his followers seek to apply to the struggle of the classes the very methods which the Germans employ in the struggle of the nations. The question of power, *die Machtfrage*, resolves itself into the elemental threat of red-clawed Nature, *Ich fresse dich oder du frisst mich*. The true ideals of the social revolution are equality and co-operation, the effacement of all social distinctions save those of inborn merit. Those who act upon the rival principle of *ôte-toi que je m'y mette* in its extreme Russian form, would have us revert to a state of nature where every man's hand is against his neighbour's; and there is no escape from the conclusion that the active promoters of such theories are enemies of the human race.

That certain of the general principles proclaimed by the Bolševiks at Brest command the sympathy of all true democrats is simply another way of saying that, in theory, it is possible to combine sound principles in foreign policy with a supremely mischievous policy at home—though recent events have shown how rapidly the one reacts upon the other in practice. But public opinion in a rash outburst of sentiment has assigned to Lenin and Trotski the credit for principles which they have merely taken over from their predecessors. The doctrine of self-determination is essentially that of Mazzini under a newer name, and rests upon Rousseau and other forerunners; every student of Austrian, Hungarian, and Balkan affairs knows that, in its German garb of *Selbstbestimmungsrecht*, it has lain at the root of national claims in Central Europe for two generations past.

Their calculations are essentially those of *va banque*. As the German authorities were quick to realise, the Bolševiks staked everything upon a sympathetic movement in

Germany, but, as a German Socialist organ bitterly reminds them, their intimate knowledge of German internal conditions has not saved them from the most absurd delusions. In Austria, it is quite true, Russian revolutionary doctrine has spread far and wide, but this is in part the result of Slavonic telepathy, and in part of the logical position adopted by the Russian delegates in the initial stages of the Brest negotiations. But the contrast presented by their subsequent moral collapse is not calculated to enhance their prestige in the eyes of the central proletariats, who well know how formidable are the defences which have to be stormed before a *German* revolution can be effective.

To Western opinion the inconsistencies of the Bolševiks are even less likely to appeal. After deliberately destroying a splendid fighting machine, they scream when they find the enemy's "knees upon their chest." After addressing the Germans in the menacing language of a conqueror: "You will not dare to send your army against the Russian Working Men's Revolution, the standard-bearer of the international proletariat"—they abjectly consent to sign whatever is laid before them. One day sees the impregnable fortress of Dvinsk surrendered without a blow, the next a summons to every man to entrench the capital. But, after all, if this were the only indictment against the Bolševiks, it would still be possible to find some material for an apology in the disintegration, exhaustion, and famine which already prevailed when they seized the reins of power. What no amount of phrases can palliate is the manner in which, since their accession to power, they have set every democratic principle at defiance. In their violation of press freedom they merely use the assault upon the *bourgeoisie* as a convenient pretext. In reality their

factional hate is turned no less against such tried revolutionaries as Maxim Gorki, Burtsev, and Plehanov than against the reactionaries of the old régime. If freedom of opinion is hampered, the representative principle is openly defied. The Constituent Assembly, the most representative body which Russia has ever seen, was brutally sent about its business as soon as it became clear that not all the control and pressure of the Bolševik Government could secure it a majority. Freedom was proclaimed as the goal of all nations, but it must be the *Freiheit die ICH meine* pilloried by the once radical *Simplicissimus*.

Even the principle of self-determination, seemingly the central dogma of the Bolševik creed, has been interpreted in the same arbitrary fashion. The Ukrainian Rada was recognised by Trotski as an independent government; but, as soon as it dared to act upon those independent rights and to follow Trotski's example in negotiating with the Germans, he withdrew his recognition and set up a sham counter-government at Harkov. The Ukraine, then, is free, but only free to act according to the Smolny Institute's good pleasure. Roumania, too, is entitled to self-determination; but if her people decline to eject the dynasty and to recognise as its lawful government Trotski's creation, the so-called "High Collegium" (not one member of which bears a Roumanian name), war is declared upon her by the new despots of Petrograd, and her government, like the Rada, is placed at the mercy of the Central Powers. Bessarabia, too, is to determine its own fate, but when the ultra-democratic Assembly of Kisinjov invites the assistance of the Roumanian Army its wishes and decisions are not listened to by the Bolševiks. Finally, Finland is to enjoy self-determination, but when it declares itself an independent

republic the Bolševiks decline to recognise it. Not merely are its requests for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Finnish territory evaded or refused, but these troops are encouraged to take part in a civil war whose ferocity recalls the evil days of La Vendée.

The Bolševik campaign against secret treaties and partitions, against all that "the Old Diplomacy" denotes, belongs to quite another category; indeed, it is this which has won sympathy for Trotski among many who are keenly conscious of the irreparable harm he is dealing to the cause of democracy in other directions. But there is one capital point on which criticism has rarely passed beyond the stage of generalities. That the Bolševiks, in repudiating the Pact of London, have done deadly injury to the Western peoples (to their proletariats no less than to their *bourgeoisies*) is cruelly patent to all; but its consequences are only slowly dawning upon us. As a writer in the *Round Table* has pointed out, there never was a treaty which ought to have been more secure against repudiation than that by which the Entente Powers in September 1914 closed the door to the idea of separate peace. And yet it was not the military despotism of Prussia which converted it into a mere scrap of paper, but the first government of modern times which claimed to speak exclusively in the interests of the proletariat. To those of us who cling to the distant ideal of a League of Nations as *politically* the one hope of salvation from a future of gloom and terror, this is the most disturbing fact in all recent developments. For if Bolševism were really free to extend its principles of repudiation to the world at large, we should be driven to despair of harmony and mutual faith among the nations, as of an impossible ideal.

Under stress of war and invasion Russia has reached

that gloomy period which, in France, followed the collapse of the Terror. Earlier in the great revolution men had rallied to the ideas of freedom and the constitution; then, as the tide rose, to the doctrine of equality, fraternity, and the republic. "But at the beginning of the Directory," writes Mignet, "there was belief in nothing. In the great shipwreck of parties all had been lost, both the virtue of the *bourgeoisie* and the virtue of the people." Two centuries of autocracy and corruption have deprived the Russian middle class as a class of all true sense of civic responsibility and sapped its moral stamina. With a few noble exceptions it shrank back at the moment of supreme crisis, and the decision passed to men lacking in every quality of constructive statesmanship, and not even capable of upholding the principles which they so loudly profess. With Victor Hugo, who provides a phrase for every turn of the revolutionary wheel, we may fairly ask:—

Offre-t-on au progrès, toujours trop a l'étroit,
 Quelque élargissement d'horizon et de route ?
 Non ; des ruines ; rien. Soit. Quant à moi, je doute
 Qu'on soit quitte pour dire au peuple murmurant :
 "Ce qu'on fait est petit, mais ce qu'on brise est grand."

In repudiating the Bolševiks and their disintegrating doctrine, we are less than ever tempted to repudiate Russia and the Slavonic spirit. It was Dostoievski who placed on the title-page of his literary masterpiece the words: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." We cannot see the harvest, but we know that it will surely ripen, and that Russia, though for a passing moment inarticulate, still has a message for the world. *Ex Oriente Lux*—the old saying seems of late to have exercised a strange

fascination on German statesmen and journalists. Can it be that they are dimly conscious of its inward meaning, that they realise the tremendous impact of ideas surging westwards over the frontiers which legitimacy and reaction once proudly erected, but which their own watchdogs, the Hindenburgs and the Linsingens, have finally overthrown in something far more than a military sense? They have destroyed their old enemy Tsarism, knowing in their heart of hearts that it was—outside their own borders—the one sure bulwark of the old order. To-day their triumph pales before the white light of the Russian revolutionary dawn. They may restore the broken image to its throne, and for a time they may drive unwilling worshippers to the temple; but morally they are already vanquished, however long the end may be delayed. While Tsardom survived it was always possible to confuse the true issues of the war by balancing rival designs of Imperialistic conquest. But the New Russia, giving to her allies a lead which none of them dare decline to follow, has actually applied to the victims of the Old Russia that principle of self-determination which is becoming more and more the chartèr of free humanity. Henceforth Germany has the choice between that principle and the rival principle of conquest—that fatal lodestone whose reefs are strewn with the wreckage of history.

The Russian Revolution is one of the greatest events in human history; and just as we do not idly curse the ocean because it destroys a breakwater, so we need not confuse the revolution with the froth upon its waves. France came to her senses after the orgies of the Terror. Even Germany will some day reject her false gods and return to the traditions of the splendid past. And are we to despair of Russia? The convulsions through which she is passing

are not the death-agony but the first physical reactions from the elixir of life. The Slavonic spirit will come to its own. Set free from the triple plagues of Tsarism, Prussianism, and Bolševism, it will teach the world the Slav lessons of justice, humility, and compassion.

HAVE THE ALLIES A RUSSIAN POLICY ? ¹

THE temporary collapse of Russia confronts the Allies with one of the most gigantic problems in history ; and it is not to be wondered at if the Allied Governments have shown hesitation in evolving a concrete policy where the best minds of Russia herself have been so obviously at a loss. But the wellnigh superhuman difficulty of the task does not absolve us from the obligation to face it. Chaos and anarchy will not endure for ever, and the future fate of Europe depends in no small measure upon the question through what elements in Russia order will be restored and to which group of belligerents these elements will look for practical support. Alike in the interests of Russia and of that common cause which—let us never forget it—her valour and self-sacrifice saved from grave peril in the early years of the war, prompt action is needed to provide a rallying-point for the forces of true progress and patriotism in Russia. Every fresh delay enables the Germans to establish themselves more firmly among the border nations, and to lay their plans for political isolation and powerful economic penetration.

Eighteen months ago Germany's political aims centred

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. vii. No. 83, May 16, 1918.

round the watchword "Berlin-Bagdad," and our main efforts were then devoted to exposing the dangers with which that programme threatened the British Empire and the free Western democracies. Since then the balance has shifted, and the Germans, with that political adaptability which so often counteracts their more obvious qualities of brutality and tactlessness, are actively engaged in working out new routes which shall lead them to the same ultimate goal. British public opinion, after a bovine tolerance of diplomatic blunders in the Near East but for which the war might long ago have been over, at last realised—late in the day, but not irretrievably late—the Asiatic and African possibilities of the German *Drang nach Osten*. The events of the war have sharpened its perceptions, and to-day it should be swift to realise the new form assumed by German aggression in the East. While the *défaitistes* of London and Paris still vainly endeavour to restrict our vision to Belgium and Picardy—even to the exclusion of Alsace and Trieste—all those who are capable of logical reasoning in foreign policy are fully conscious of what, for want of a better phrase, may be described as "the Black Sea Danger." The Germans, finding the road to Cairo, Mecca, and Basra blocked, are busily promoting their plans for converting the Black Sea into a German lake. With Roumania reduced to a position of hopeless strategic and economic vassalage, and the mouths of the Danube thus secured; with the Ukraine in still more direct dependence upon Berlin and played off against what is left of Russia on the one hand and what may be allowed to exist of Poland on the other; with the Crimea in military occupation and the possibility of Russian naval enterprise thereby frustrated; with German-led Turkish armies completing the extermination of the Armenians and pushing onwards

through Batoum and Kars ; with all this, the Germans calculate that they have laid the train for a vast design of political penetration of which the Caucasus will be the pivot, and which will give them access to Turkestan, Persia, and the Indian Ocean. The torrent which had been successfully dammed in Palestine and Mesopotamia is flowing by roundabout channels which lead no less surely towards the Indian frontier.

It is quite true that these are but tendencies of the future ; but the whole secret of constructive statesmanship is to detect and, where necessary, to frustrate such tendencies before they can assume definite form. Those who a year ago could have foreseen Brest-Litovsk and framed a Russian policy accordingly would doubtless to-day enjoy a supernatural reputation for political foresight ; but surely this country is not so bankrupt in brains as to be incapable of thinking out in advance the probable consequences of the spread of German influence between the Caspian and the Indus. A generation ago we allowed ourselves to be deluded by exaggerated fears of the Russian menace to India. To-day we must not plunge into the opposite extreme and ignore the far more serious clouds already visible on the far horizon.

If these dangers are to be met, the first and indispensable preliminary is to set Russia on her feet again—if not to make her an active combatant, then at any rate to arrest the process of anarchic disintegration which, under German connivance, is eating into the very vitals of the Russian state. How is this regeneration to be accomplished, and what party in Russia is to supply the motive force ? Where all else is uncertain, one definite fact emerges. Last November we wrote as follows : “ For us a Bolševik Government is something inconceivable ; it is, in fact, a contradic-

tion in terms, and in any event we can have no truck with it." What has happened in the interval only confirms us in this view. Since the fall of Kerenski there has been nothing in Russia which can fairly be described as a government, unless political phrases are to be twisted into entirely novel meanings. Acting on the anarchic principle "*La propriété c'est le vol*," the Bolševiks have, on the vastest of scales, substituted Theft for Property. Not merely have they proved themselves to be a purely destructive force, to which all the ideals and principles that we stand for are sheer anathema, but they have long since thrown to the winds all the principles which they themselves proclaimed so loudly. Their whole régime is a barefaced negation of Democracy, a defiance of the representative principle, a cynical refusal to trust the people. The effete Tsarist régime collapsed by reason of its inward corruption; last November it was replaced by a clique no whit less autocratic. The Prussian Junker General, von Hoffmann, was speaking the simple truth when he twitted the Russian delegates at Brest with the autocratic methods of Lenin and Trotski. These fanatics, as every one in real touch with their movement before the war was fully aware, have always had a supreme contempt for the Russian peasant masses, and regard them as mere fuel for the furnace in which the despotism of an international proletariat was to be forged.

Let us have done with illusions. The Bolševiks may not be German agents, and we have more than once protested against the crude Jingoism which fancies that it has explained everything by labelling them as such. But they have from the first played the game of our enemies; they have risen to power over the prostrate bodies of our friends; and they have not hesitated to employ even assassination

where it could serve their ends. As we wrote when their so-called "government" first usurped authority—"they represent neither Russia nor the Revolution. The cause of the Russian people is our cause; the ideals of liberty and self-government for which the New Russia stands [we were writing of the first, not of the second revolution] are our ideals; and it is for this reason that we repudiate those whose diseased fancy bids them proclaim nightmares as realities."¹ To-day only those who are utterly divorced from realities can seriously suggest that we should pin our faith to men with whom we have not a single aim or principle in common, and in so doing should throw over all those in Russia whose ideals are identical with our own, and who have staked their whole existence in the common cause. It was not unreasonable to suspend judgment of the Bolševiks in the earlier stages of the Brest negotiations, when for a time it seemed as though they were in earnest in their advocacy of self-determination. Co-operation with them to-day, when their whole system is bankrupt and the disillusionment of their dupes is proceeding apace, would be the supreme height of folly: it might postpone, but it could not avert, their final fiasco. Its only result would be to transfer to our shoulders a share of their discredit, and to reduce to a dangerous state of despair those sober elements which look to us for salvation.

But if we repudiate the fatal policy of coquetting with the discredited Bolševik desperadoes, we are no less firmly opposed to that other policy of desperation advocated by our reactionaries of the *Morning Post* school, who pathetically invoke the shade of Ivan the Terrible and dream of the restoration of the Tsarist régime. The misdeeds of Rasputin and the "Hessian woman" have undermined Tsarism as

¹ *The New Europe*, No. 57, November 15, 1917.

effectually as the Affair of the Necklace compromised the House of Capet; and though we have no intention of prophesying the form of government which Russia may see fit to adopt, we share the unfeigned delight of our cousins across the Atlantic at the disappearance of the most naked and unashamed of the three European autocracies.

Between Nicholas Alexandrovitch and Vladimir Ilyitch (Lenin) there is little or nothing to choose. Our Allies must not be sought in a narrow clique, whether it be dynastic or proletarian. In Russia, as elsewhere, we are only on safe ground when we accept the will of the majority and those representative principles on which rest the liberties of the modern world. These principles are incompatible with Bolševism, which condemned itself to sterility and reaction when it destroyed the Constituent Assembly and cynically disfranchised its own political opponents. It is not sufficiently known in this country—and the Bolševik telegraphic agencies made no effort to extend our knowledge—that the last act of the Constituent Assembly, the most democratic and representative body which Russia, and perhaps Europe, has ever seen, was to convey to the representatives of the Allied Powers an expression of shame and regret at the act of the Bolševiks in repudiating the London Convention.

It is with the Constituent Assembly—which is in no sense a party machine, but ranges in ideas from the Octobrist through the Cadets and Menševiks to the Social Revolutionaries—that the best hopes for Russia's future lie; and the Allies would be well advised if even at this late hour they were to declare their confidence in the Constituent Assembly and their readiness to recognise any government to which it gives its sanction. Only thus can the burning question

of intervention be solved. Only by such a declaration, made simultaneously on behalf of all the Allies, great and small, can Russian public opinion be convinced that "intervention" is genuine assistance no less to Russia herself than to the Allied cause as a whole.

14th May, 1918.

OUR RUSSIAN POLICY¹

WAR has ended in victory, and now that the Allies are faced with the still thornier problem of "winning the peace," their road is beset by serious obstacles of their own creation. In the South-East a peaceful settlement is endangered by secret treaties concluded in defiance of the principles proclaimed as the Allied goal. In the East the confusion and disintegration due to profound social and political causes has been still further accentuated by the irresolution and aimlessness of the Western Cabinets. Both individually and collectively, the Associated Powers seem unable to evolve a Russian policy; yet to-day the fate of Russia is the most fundamental of all the problems with which Europe is confronted, and contains in it the seeds of future peace or unrest for the world at large. Those who talk of a peace settlement without taking Russia into account are merely scraping the surface. The *désintéressement* which they profess is that of the ostrich, and can only end in disaster. It is futile to denounce Bolševism as the canker which is eating into the heart of the world, while declaring that it is no business of ours to attempt the cure. It is still more futile, besides being essentially disingenuous, to seek to justify a policy of *laissez-aller* by the plea that we lack the information upon which to form a decision. It is most

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. x. No. 118, January 16, 1919.

futile of all to deny our right of "interference" in Russian internal affairs, and in the same breath to insist upon the creation of a super-national authority.

The days of "non-intervention" as an abstract principle are over; and if the Society of Nations is to be realised at all, we must begin by at least limiting the veto which each nation has hitherto imposed upon the discussion of its own affairs by neighbouring states. If war is to be avoided in the future, it is necessary to introduce into the relations of states certain fundamental rules which regulate the relations of individuals. The private citizen, though free to conduct his own affairs and to dispose of his own property, at once encounters the law if he infringes public order or threatens the safety of his neighbours; but this, so far from being a limitation of his personal liberty, is the very condition which prevents that liberty from degenerating into licence or anarchy. If international relations are ever to be placed upon a permanent and peaceful footing, states must submit themselves to similar restrictions. The form of government and methods of internal administration cannot ever be imposed from the outside without fatal mischief resulting. But a government whose whole political theory consists of a negation of the foundations upon which its neighbours rest, and which proclaims as its avowed object the overthrow of the existing political and social order in every country, is as surely a menace to the world at large as the armed robber in a private society; and there is no possible escape from the dilemma that the rest of the world must coalesce to overthrow such a government, or admit the impossibility of creating a League of Nations. President Wilson described the Russian problem as "the acid test" of our democracies, and to-day this is true in the further sense that upon the manner in which

the problem of intervention is interpreted and solved will depend the success or failure of a new international order. Those who oppose "intervention" in any form are consciously or unconsciously playing the game of those who desire that the League of Nations should be stillborn.

"Hands off Russia" is a convenient catchword, but it is nothing more. In plain language it means that all the nations of the West are to keep their hands off the Bolševiks until the latter have time to organise themselves as an aggressive force and to lay their hands upon the rest of Europe. Six months ago the Allies could have crushed the Bolševiks with one-third of the effort which would be required to-day; in three months' time the effort necessary will have increased tenfold, and if it be postponed for a year, they may be confronted by a movement which will submerge all Europe, with the possible exception of France and Britain. Those who say that the Bolševiks have no idea behind them are fools. They have an idea no less definite than that which set in motion the armies of the first French Republic, and by the force of circumstances they are, in their turn, being driven to propagate it abroad or perish from moral inanition and sheer material famine. Unhappily this idea is the negation of all those political principles which the modern world has acquired through the crucible of three great revolutions, in England, in America, and in France. For liberty it has substituted terror—a terror such as the men of 1793 never dreamed of—for equality and fraternity, class-hatred, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the proscription of the intellectual class. And our sentimental democrats would have us observe a policy of "hands off" to men who mock at democracy alike in theory and in practice, and who absolutely decline to adopt "hands off" towards any of their

neighbours. When the Bolševiks respect the territory of our Polish and Esthonian allies and of our friends in Livonia and Lithuania, it will be time enough to adopt a rigid view with regard to the sanctity of the Bolševik frontiers. Meanwhile if we decline to take up their challenge while they are still only threatening Vilna and Riga, we may be forced to do so when they are already supreme in Warsaw, Berlin, and Budapest.

Intervention in one form or another is inevitable and desirable alike in the interests of Russia and of humanity ; all depends upon the interpretation given to the word. In our opinion the action of the Allies must rest upon a precise and publicly defined programme, having the sanction of the Allied Peace Conference, and thus of the League of Nations, which is already coming to birth.

In the first place it must be declared, beyond all possibility of doubt and misunderstanding, that the réstoration of Tsarism is impossible and intolerable to the free democracies of the West, and would be met with their universal disapproval and opposition. Conversely, we must commit ourselves no less publicly to the principle of a Federal Russian Republic, as alone capable of reconciling and centralising tendencies of economic life with the special national needs and outlook of the border nations.

It must be further declared that the Allies stand irrevocably for the principle of representative government, and therefore favour the convocation, at the earliest possible date, of a new Russian Constituent Assembly (the Assembly of December 1917 being past revival), based upon universal suffrage and free elections. On this point there must, and can, be no hesitation. We must nail our colours to the mast. There can be no compromise with the ideas of Lenin or of Karl Liebknecht. The autocracy of a single

caste or class is always odious and corrupting, whether it comes from the Left or from the Right, from below or from above. Social reconstruction must rest upon equal opportunity for all; levelling upwards rather than downwards, but, above all, *levelling*: government of the people for the people by the people: co-operation of every class in the common tasks of social, political and religious life. To all this the Bolševiks retort with the contention that the whole structure of modern society is rotten to the core and must be razed to the ground before new building can be attempted. Their attack is a frontal one, the contrast of ideals is absolute, and either their world or ours must perish.

Thirdly, we must take care that all those Russians with whom we collaborate are irrevocably committed to the full agrarian programme. The land must remain absolutely in the hands of the peasants throughout the territory of the Federal Republic, and while the final details of so vast and complicated a transference of property and of power must doubtless be left to a future legislative body, the bare idea of restoration to the old proprietors must from the first be made impossible.

Unless all uncertainty upon this point can be dispelled from the minds of the peasants, the success of any expedition would be endangered from the very outset. What made the armies of the Convention and the Directorate invincible was the firm resolve to preserve the newly acquired land from the clutches of the emigrant nobles whom an European coalition would fain have reinstated; and to-day the one and only thing which would rouse the rural masses of Russia would be a challenge to their possession of the land. But conversely they are uneasy as to their tenure under a Bolševik régime, and resentful of the more and more fre-

quent attempts to commandeer their stocks of grain. Thus those who came to them offering not only a firm guarantee of possession, but in addition those ordered conditions for which they are already longing, would arouse at once all that is most conservative and all that is most radical in their nature. The central fact in Eastern and much of Central Europe is a passionate land-hunger on the part of those inarticulate millions which form the backbone of the state; and the success or failure of Allied policy in those regions will depend upon the degree to which it reckons with this fact.

Such, in our opinion, is the policy upon which alone we can safely base any action in Russia. Certainly it is one which no one could describe as "counter-revolutionary" in the accepted sense of the word; for it would be the consecration of the Revolution of March 1917. We are convinced that such a policy represents the true interests of Russia herself, and would have the ardent support of all the best leaders of Russian political thought, of all with whom the future of the nation rests. If their hopes in the Allies should be disappointed, then there is grave danger that, whether the currents of political opinion in either country set towards the Left or towards the Right, the fate of Russia and of Germany will be linked together during the decisive period of reconstruction that lies before us.

In these days of reaction against a Slavophil policy, it is more than ever necessary to emphasise the immense services rendered to the Allied cause by Russian endurance and idealism during the darkest period of the war. Only the blackest ingratitude can forget that but for Russia's sacrifice—prolonged under a strain to which any Western nation would have succumbed at least a year earlier—Prussianism would to-day be triumphant in the world.

But quite apart from any debt of honour or sympathy, the problem of Russia is intimately bound up with another question to which no man can possibly remain indifferent—namely, that of disarmament. Early in the election Mr. Lloyd George very rightly committed himself and his government to the principle of general reduction of armaments and the abolition of conscript armies. Those malicious critics who accuse him of seeking to evade this pledge, thanks to the opposition of certain of our Allies, appear to not realise the fundamental fact that real disarmament both in Britain and America must depend upon disarmament on the Continent. As, however, the Western nations cannot disarm unless their neighbours farther East do so simultaneously, the fulfilment of the whole policy upon which social reconstruction and escape from bankruptcy in every country depend is in the long run contingent upon the establishment of ordered conditions in Russia.

“Intervention,” like many another catchword, is already being used to cover many different meanings; and it is obvious that to no one in his senses can it mean “the conquest of Russia.” Intervention means definite commitments in favour of our friends and against our enemies, and active support of the former by means of supplies, ammunition and finance. After four years of war we start from the assumption that only *volunteer armies* can be employed. This should not, however, present grave difficulties, since the number of men required would not be enormous, and since their main task would be to stiffen Russian armies which are already in the field, but are insufficiently equipped and organised. The Bolševiks are, of all others, those tales entitled to reproach us for employing a “mercenary” army against them, since their whole system rests upon a Pretorian army which, like the Janissaries of old, accepts

a rigid discipline in return for high pay, good food, and immunity for pillage and excess. The process which has placed whole peoples under arms now has to be reversed ; but before we can hope to replace conscription by the Jaurès conception of citizen armies, we must accept a transition period of small standing armies. The sooner order is restored in Eastern and Central Europe, the smaller will such standing armies require to be. Thus those who most desire speedy demobilisation of the conscripts should be most eager for the volunteer expedition to Russia.

The chief British opponents of Russian intervention are those whose war prophecies have so often been falsified by events. They are, for the most part, the same who pled so stubbornly for the preservation of Austria-Hungary. And just as they failed to realise that the disappearance of Austria-Hungary was a preliminary condition of victory for the Allies, so to-day they are blind to the glaring fact that until some external force intervenes to restore order in Russia, there can be no real peace in Europe, no general disarmament in Europe or America, no Society of Nations, no social reconstruction save through the horrors of dissolution and anarchy.

13th January, 1919.

THE FUTURE OF BOHEMIA¹

IGNORANCE of Bohemia has been a tradition in this country ever since the days when Shakespeare wrecked a certain famous ship upon its imaginary coasts. Yet in those days Bohemia still possessed an independent existence as one of the chief kingdoms of Christendom. By a still stranger confusion the word "Bohemian" has come to be associated with the Latin Quarter, and has thus acquired a peculiar, and a peculiarly misleading, flavour. It is right that in this year the memory of Bohemia should be revived, not merely because we hope that Bohemia may rise phoenix-like from the great European conflagration, but because the 6th of July serves to remind us of Bohemia's greatest citizen, and of Bohemia's greatest achievement in the history of Europe. On that day five hundred years ago, John Hus was burnt at the stake at the Council of Constance.

Till very recently it was the fashion to deride things Slavonic, as uncivilised and barbarous. The best answer to this—quite apart from the triumphs of Russian musical, literary, and dramatic genius which are no longer unfamiliar to us to-day—is to point to the existence, in the very heart of Europe, surrounded by hostile influences, of a highly cultured, democratic, progressive, Slavonic nation, the

¹ Lecture delivered at King's College, London, in honour of the Quincentenary of John Hus, 1915.

Czechs of Bohemia. It is right to remember on the anniversary of Hus, that the Slavs, as well as the Latin and Germanic races, contributed to the Reformation movement which was to transform Europe and the world, both from a religious and from a national point of view. Nowhere are the three dominant factors of modern life—religion, nationality, and economics—more strongly marked than in the history of Bohemia. At such a time as the present there can be no desire to give an aggressive turn to such an anniversary, or to exploit it in a way that might offend those of different religious views; but we cannot, surely, be blamed for using the occasion for the expression of our admiration and reverence.

For three centuries Bohemia has ceased to figure on the map of Europe as an independent State; but no atlas which attempts to reproduce the physical features of the various countries can hope to efface the marks of her geographical unity. Her lozenge-shaped plateau with its fringe of mountains stands out boldly from the surrounding countries. The Riesengebirge, the Erzgebirge, the Bohemian forest hem her in almost upon three sides, and even on the south and south-east there are clear lines of demarcation. The strategic importance of this natural fortress has long been a commonplace with military students; indeed, the phrase, "The master of Bohemia will be the master of Europe," is far more plausible than the parallel dictum of Napoleon I. about Constantinople. The famous Pan Slavist, General Fadejev, knew what he was about when, forty-five years ago, he wrote, "Without Bohemia the Slav cause is for ever lost; it is the head, the advance-guard of all Slavs."

Geographical unity Bohemia has, but *racial* unity has been denied to her. For centuries Bohemia has been inhabited by two rival races, the Czechs and the Germans,

and has formed one of the chief battle-grounds between the Slav and the Teutonic idea. Into the vexed question, which of the two races has priority or formed the true majority in earlier centuries, we need not enter. Much has been made of such arguments on both sides; but in reality it is quite as immaterial as the similar question whether the Roumanians were in possession of Transylvania before the Magyars, or the Magyars before the Roumanians. In the one case, as in the other, both races have been there so long that no one is entitled to regard either of them as inferiors or interlopers.

For our present purpose it is sufficient to note that as early as the seventh century there already was a Czech State, periodically at war with the neighbouring German tribes and varying greatly in extent and territory with every generation. Under the national Slav dynasty of the Přemysls it was gradually consolidated; two princes of that house acquired the kingly title, but it was not till the very end of the twelfth century that Bohemia finally became a kingdom. In the thirteenth century Ottokar of Bohemia (1253-78) was also Duke of Austria and Styria, until he was overthrown and stripped of his German provinces by Rudolf of Habsburg, the founder of the Austrian Imperial family.

But the heroic era of Bohemia lies in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, first under a French dynasty, the Kings of the House of Luxemburg, and later under a national King, elected from the ranks of her own nobility. The outstanding feature of this period, as of earlier and later periods of Bohemian history, is the perennial racial struggle between Czech and German.

In passing, it may be worth while pointing out that the Prince of Wales's plumes, so familiar to us as an emblem, were won upon the battlefield of Crécy from the blind King

John of Bohemia, after he had fallen in a mad but gallant charge. John's son and successor Charles, who was also Emperor, won for Bohemia a position of European importance. Under his wise and prosperous rule the Bohemian capital first received the name of "Golden Prague"—a name still accepted with enthusiasm by every visitor to that fascinating blend of mediaeval, rococo, and modern art. In 1348 Charles founded the University of Prague, which with striking rapidity acquired an academic rank not unworthy of its elder sisters Bologna, Paris, and Oxford. It was the first University to be founded in the whole German and Slavonic world, and it was here, fittingly enough, that the first great conflict of two widely differing cultures was to be fought out.

That the Czechs triumphed over their German rivals, was largely due to the genius of one man, John Hus, who as priest of the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague and Rector of the University, had won to a rare degree the confidence and admiration of his fellow-countrymen.

Any attempt to tell the story of John Hus would lead us far beyond the limits of the present essay; it will be sufficient to indicate the main features of his remarkable career.

1. The Bohemian movement for reform had, in its origin, not the slightest tinge of anti-Papal feeling. It began with protests against the gross immorality and worldliness of the Bohemian clergy, especially in Prague itself. Hus was by no means as great a heretic as is sometimes imagined. He of course suffered, like every public man in his century, from the gross scurrilities and deliberate misrepresentations of his enemies, which were not so easily refuted before the days of printing as in later days. But it is certain that he accepted all the main dogmas of the Roman Church. For

example, the view so fiercely held by the theologians of that day and so often challenged by subsequent reformers, that the unworthiness of the priest does not affect the validity of the sacrament, was never challenged by Hus, and indeed was more than once publicly affirmed by him. Englishmen may well be proud of Wycliffe's influence upon Hus ; but that influence was almost certainly less dogmatic than practical. In a famous message to his own congregation of the Bethlehem Chapel he referred to " Blessed England," but it would seem that his admiration for Wycliffe sprang from his zeal for the purification of the Church from existing abuses, not from any desire to overthrow the existing order of the ecclesiastical world. It can be, and has been, quite seriously argued that Hus never questioned any dogma which had obtained the sanction of the Church up to his day ; Papal Infallibility, which he did challenge, was of course widely upheld even in the fifteenth century, but was not erected into a dogma till 1870. But on the other hand no one can pretend to deny that his whole influence, the whole trend of his life and teachings was contrary to the Papal claims, and in favour of what afterwards came to be known as the Reformation. Luther rightly regarded Hus as his forerunner, and on a famous occasion exclaimed, " We have all been Hussites, without knowing it."

Just as at a later date Knox could say of the first martyr of the Scottish Reformation, " The reek of Maister Patrick Hamilton has infected all it blew upon," so it is worth noting that the teaching of Hus, which at the time found its fiercest opponents among the Germans, none the less a century later inspired the great religious movement which revived Germany. Time brings its revenges, and to-day the English, who burnt the Maid of France, and the Scots, who fought for her, unite in honouring her statue at Rouen.

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May we not, also at the anniversary of Waterloo, express the hope that ere long, as the result of a just and lasting settlement, the secular hates of German and Czech may be merged in a new enthusiasm for the cause of common civilisation ?

I have written as an ardent and convinced admirer of Hus the reformer as well as Hus the patriot. But I wish to make it clear that in admiring that side of him, I have not even the remotest wish to offend the Catholic sentiments of the majority of his countrymen of to-day. They have shown only too clearly that those who differ from him on religious matters can still revere him as a great national hero.

At a time when in England increased interest is being shown in the Russian Orthodox Church, it may be well to refer to the curious fact that in Russia Hus is very widely regarded as "Pravoslav" or Orthodox in his views and aims. The accuracy of this view has been challenged, and indeed refuted, by all the leading Czech historians from Palacky and Tomek to Count Lützwow. There is no trace whatever of Russian or Eastern influence upon Hus. But the origin of the idea is distinctly interesting. Christianity first came to Bohemia and Moravia from the East, through the great Slavonic apostles, Saints Cyril and Methodius, who began their career as missionaries of Byzantium, and then drifted into the Roman sphere. Methodius was Archbishop of Nitra, the old Slovak town in North-west Hungary, in the ninth century. It is also significant that the celibacy of the clergy and the withdrawal of the chalice from the laity became established at a considerably later date in Bohemia than in the rest of Western Christendom.

2. The movement inspired and inaugurated by John Hus was quite as much national as it was religious in

character. The Czechs were for reform, the Germans for reaction and the Papal supremacy. This is the secret of Hus's great popularity at the present day, when his portrait may be seen on the walls of many a devout Catholic priest, and Protestants form but an insignificant minority among his admirers. And indeed, his services to the national cause of Bohemia can hardly be exaggerated. What Luther did for the German language, Hus did a whole century earlier for the Czech language. Hus's writings are epoch-making not only in the history of Czech literature, but in Slavonic history as a whole. In addition to revising and correcting the existing Czech translations of the Bible, he wrote at least as much in Czech as in Latin, then still the usual medium for works of a theological nature. In yet another respect he was a linguistic pioneer; he was the first to attempt a reform of Slavonic orthography according to a logical system.

A further interesting parallel to Luther is the stress laid by Hus upon church music, and especially upon congregational singing. This was natural enough among a nation of musicians, the Czechs and the Welsh being perhaps the two most musical nations in Europe. The Hussite songs, the hymns of the reformer's own lifetime and the religious battle-songs of his more warlike successors, occupy a unique place of their own alike in musical and in political history.

Hus, then, was equally great as reformer and as patriot, as the inspirer of an intellectual movement and as the political leader of a nation. For five hundred years he has stood as the foremost champion of Czech nationality and the Czech language, and he also deserves some credit as one of the earliest advocates of Slav unity. The letter of congratulation which he addressed to King Vladislaw of Poland after his great victory over the Teutonic Knights

at Tannenberg (1410) is not without interest at a moment when the Germans claim to have wiped out that national disaster, but when we still confidently hope that a final Russian victory will seal the reconciliation of Pole and Russian as brothers in the cause of Slavonic unity. The heroic achievement of John Hus has been well characterised in the words of his countryman and biographer, Count Lützow: "If neglecting for a moment the minutiae of mediaeval theological controversy, we consider as a martyr that man who willingly sacrifices his individual life for what he firmly believes to be the good of humanity at large, who 'takes the world's life on him and his own lays down,' then assuredly there is no truer martyr in the world's annals than John Hus."

The Hussite Wars, which followed the tragedy of Constance, are one of the most remarkable episodes in history and especially deserving of attention at the present time. The Bohemian nation, alone and unaided, held all Europe at bay for close upon twenty years, and routed army after army which the Germans sent against them. There have been moments in history—it is necessary to emphasise this to-day—when the German spirit has led the van of Europe. But on the occasion of the Hussite Wars, as in the present European tragedy, Germany unquestionably stood for reaction and for the imposition of an alien "Kultur." To-day the legions of Bohemia are forced unwillingly, by a foul and unnatural system, to fight the battles of their deadliest enemies. But surely we are entitled to believe that the spirit of John Žižka, the heroic blind general of the Czechs, is fighting on our side to-day, and to hope that the nation which through his victories did so much to secure the intellectual freedom and progress of Europe, will ere long be in a position to pursue once more its independent existence.

The Hussite Wars were fought for an idea, for an abstraction—on the religious side, for the Communion in both kinds; on the civil side, for the rights of the Czech language against the encroachments of the German. These two ideal aims combined made Bohemia irresistible. What people in Europe can boast a prouder title than that which the Czechs won during the long Hussite struggle—"the People of the Chalice"? Bohemia's greatest historian, Francis Palacky, may surely be pardoned for putting forward the contention that the Hussite War is "the first war in the world's history that was fought not for material interests, but for intellectual ones, for ideas." Certain it is that when victory at last crowned the Hussite arms, they made a moderate use of it, and indulged in no revenge or proscription of the beaten side. The Taborites, it is true, showed the same excess of religious zeal as the sectaries of Cromwell's day. But the Utraquists, as the victorious champions of the Communion in both kinds came to be called, set a worthy example of tolerance in an intolerant age.

How different was the behaviour of the triumphant Romanist party two centuries later, after the great tragedy of Bohemian history, the battle of the White Mountain (1620)! The Thirty Years' War, it will be remembered, opened in Bohemia, with the sensational incident known as the "Defenestration of Prague," the brief interlude of the Elector Palatine's kingship and his defeat and expulsion by the Imperialists in that memorable battle outside the walls of Prague. His wife, the Winter Queen, daughter of our own James I., still holds her own place in English literature as "the eclipse and glory of her kind."

The victor of the White Mountain, the fanatical Ferdinand II. of Habsburg, set himself to exterminate

heresy from his dominions. He expelled the preachers and introduced the Jesuits. Utraquism was sternly suppressed. The ancient Bohemian nobility was to a large extent destroyed and replaced by foreign upstarts. Above all, systematic efforts were made to destroy Czech national literature, owing to its Hussite tinge. Indeed, one Jesuit boasted that he alone had burnt no fewer than sixty thousand Czech volumes. Ferdinand acted only too literally upon the advice of his Capuchin confessor, to show no mercy to the Bohemians, but to comply with the words of the Psalmist: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

Thanks to the tyranny of the Habsburgs and their Jesuit advisers, the condition of Bohemia was one of utter stagnation from the Thirty Years' War down to the second quarter of the nineteenth century. All national life was in abeyance. Bohemia was completely Germanised, bound hand and foot by the red tape of an indolent and brainless bureaucracy, by the intellectual and moral censorship of the Church, the Jesuits, and the police system.

Early in the nineteenth century a tiny group of Slav patriots was in the habit of meeting at intervals in the private room of an inn in Prague; and one of them, Rieger, remarked to his friends, "If the ceiling of this room were to fall and crush us, there would be an end of the national movement in Bohemia." And this was scarcely an exaggeration; for in Bohemia, as in many other countries, a handful of idealists and theorists—for the most part historical students and professors of literature—sowed the seed which a generation later was to awaken a whole race. The Society of the Bohemian Museum, founded in 1818, aimed at a revival of the national language; and it is worth noting that at first there was no feud with the

Germans. Goethe was himself an honoured member, and the poets Lenau and Meissner wrote in honour of the Hussites. It was not until the Czech revival assumed an openly Slavophil form, that the enthusiasm of the Germans cooled down.

It is important to note that the Panslav movement, in its most ideal form, as an expression of the kinship and brotherhood of all the different Slavonic races, originated quite as much in Bohemia as in Russia. Its earliest mouthpiece, Jan Kollár, who was clergyman of the Slovak Lutheran Church in Budapest, wrote two epoch-making books—a long epic poem entitled “The Daughter of Slava,” in which he sang the glories of Slavdom and created, in imitation of Dante, a mythical Slav Olympus and Hades, where the friends and enemies of the Slav race are picturesquely grouped, and a short essay advocating “The Literary Reciprocity of all Slavs.” Both books awakened a resounding echo throughout the Slav world. About the same time another Slovak, Šafářík, a professor in Prague, wrote an equally epoch-making book on “Slav Antiquities,” which has remained the foundation stone of all study of Slav origins, whether in the matter of language, geography, or race.

The literary movement in Prague steadily gathered force, and acquired a political tinge which all the efforts of the police failed to efface. The Czech press came to life, and—as all references to internal Bohemian politics were as carefully muzzled by the censorship of the 'forties as they are to-day in the existing reign of terror—one of their most brilliant journalists, Havlíček, contrived to criticise the Government in the skilfully veiled form of reports on the condition of *Ireland*!

In the great year of revolution, 1848, the growing Slav

movement found expression in a Slav Congress held in Prague, with the great Czech historian Francis Palacky as President and with delegates from Poland, Serbia, Croatia, the Slovak districts, and even Russia. Palacky earned the ill-will of the German extremists by his refusal to take part in the German Federal Parliament at Frankfurt. But he very rightly held that Austria's sole hope for the future lay in the introduction of a federal system, and this he advocated till the very end of his life. A famous saying of his has found its way through Europe and has formed the text of many edifying sermons upon Austria (I too must plead guilty to having used it more than once myself): "If there were no Austria, it would be necessary to create one." The root meaning of such a phrase has been all too often overlooked; Palacky regarded the continued existence of Austria as the sole means of avoiding a European cataclysm. But now that such a cataclysm has actually come upon us, surely we shall do well to remember another winged word applied by Palacky to his native Bohemia: "Before Austria was, we were, and when Austria no longer is, we still shall be." Surely a prophetic phrase.

Since 1848 the national movement in Bohemia has steadily and irresistibly progressed. Its weakest side has always been the political. The Czechs have produced a very large number of able leaders of the second and third ranks, but not a single one of supreme eminence, and what is most important of all, no one at all comparable to the really great men whom their Magyar contemporaries produced, Deák, Kossuth, and Andrassy. The inevitable result has been that the Czechs have wasted many golden opportunities and have been forestalled by other races, notably the Magyars and the Poles. They have allowed themselves to squander time and energy over barren

linguistic brawls, to overdo the policy of the mere wrecker and obstructionist, and so to destroy their prestige and reputation for political foresight both at home and abroad. Meanwhile their progress in other fields than politics has been altogether admirable. They have developed a rich and attractive literature, with at least two poets of the front rank, Svatopluk Cech and Vrhlicky, as well as numerous novelists, dramatists, historians, and men of science. Their system of education is highly efficient, and worthy of the tradition of their own Comenius (Komensky), one of the greatest educationalists of modern times. To-day there are two Universities in Prague, a German and a Czech, the latter with more students than Oxford and Cambridge combined, and some professors of European fame. In Bohemia and Moravia to-day there are practically no illiterates.

In drama the Czechs are also well to the fore. The National Theatre at Prague is one of the best of its kind in Europe; indeed, to many chance visitors the existence of this splendid Slavonic theatre must have been something of a revelation. Still more is this true of music, for which the Czechs are justly celebrated. They and their half-brothers the Slovaks are extraordinarily rich in folk-songs and melodies, many of which show obvious traces of the ancient Slavonic church modes. Moreover, they have produced several composers of the very front rank, notably Dvořák, who is famous throughout Europe, and Smetana, who is less known but equally great and is indeed regarded as the most characteristic of all Czech composers. Novák, Fibich, and other younger composers have also won the attention of the musical world, and it is almost superfluous to mention that Kubelik, the famous violinist, is a native of Bohemia. Prague is a famous centre of music and of art;

and though it is impossible to point to any Czech artist of altogether European reputation, all visitors to the modern Gallery of Prague and to the annual exhibitions of the various art societies, are aware that art is on a higher level in Prague than in many cities more famous in the artistic world. And at least a word of praise should be reserved for the brilliant group of Moravian artists who have rallied round the great Slovak peasant-artist Joza Uprka and have made of their art pavilion at Hodonín a shrine of popular art and an inspiration for the artistic development of the future. "Uprka red" has to be seen to be believed, and nowhere can it be seen to better advantage than in the prosperous Slovak villages of the Moravian border.

Bohemia and Silesia form to-day the chief industrial centre of Austria. Bohemian glass, sugar, and textiles have won something more than local fame; and so too the famous beer of Pilsen, and that other less innocuous product of the same town, the armaments of the great Skoda works. It is the rapid growth of Bohemian mining industries and manufactures which has so seriously complicated the racial struggle between Czech and German. So long as the population remained more or less rooted to the soil, there was at least the possibility of mapping out the mixed districts and settling upon their special treatment. But with a population kept in a state of continual ebb and flow by industrial developments, minorities are continually cropping up in unexpected places and then again disappearing; and it is unfortunately the case that both Czech and German employers put very considerable pressure on their workmen in a national sense. In short, economics and nationality are inextricably interwoven in Bohemia, just as in Hungary, Roumania, and the Balkans.

The present political and constitutional régime in Austria-Hungary dates from the famous *Ausgleich* or Compromise of 1867, by which the fate of ten races was surrendered into the hands of two, the Germans and the Magyars, one in each half of the "Dual Monarchy." Against this system the Czechs of all parties have always vigorously protested, insisting on the claims of the historic crown and kingdom of St. Wenceslas as entitled to at least as much consideration as the Hungarian Crown of St. Stephen. There was indeed a moment, during the Franco-German War, when the present Emperor seemed inclined to atone for his neglect of Czech interests and was on the point of being crowned King of Bohemia. But the Magyars immediately strained every effort to withhold from the Slavs the rights which they had so persistently and successfully claimed for themselves; and from that day to this Francis Joseph has always evaded his plighted word to Bohemia.

The protests of the Czechs have gained steadily in strength and volume, as the current of their national life broadened and deepened; and a year ago the Czechs might fairly have been described as a highly organised, highly educated, keen, hard-working democracy, perhaps sometimes needlessly aggressive, perhaps also short-sighted or narrow in its political outlook, but none the less progressive and modern in the very best sense of those words.

Their national attitude in home politics is reflected in their attitude to Foreign Policy. The Czechs have always been pronounced and outspoken opponents of Viennese policy, and still more of the poisonous influence of Budapest and of Magyar racial tyranny upon that policy. They have always opposed Prussia, Berlin, and the Triple Alliance by every means in their power. Public opinion

in Bohemia has always been consistently Francophil and Anglophil, and above all Russophil, emphasising the kinship and blood ties of all the Slav races. In 1870 it sympathised keenly with France, in 1878 with Russia and her noble struggle for the liberation of the Balkans, for opposing which Britain is to-day paying so terribly in blood and treasure. In 1908 it sympathised equally with Serbia during the Bosnian crisis; for it should be noted that Prague has long been a very important centre of Southern Slav culture, to which hundreds of Serb, Croat, and Bulgar students flock every year. In 1912 there was no country where the victories of the Balkan League aroused greater delight than in Prague; and to-day it is scarcely an exaggeration to assert that every man, woman, and child in Bohemia sympathises with Russia, and longs for the victory of Russia and her Western allies, as Bohemia's only hope of salvation. As a famous Bohemian put it to me during the war, even the Austrian police spies in Prague—so far as they are of Czech nationality—would welcome the Russians! And these are the people who, like their Serb, Croat, and Slovene kinsmen in the south of Austria-Hungary, are being compelled by a brutal and perverse system to fight the battles of Berlin, Vienna, and Budapest, to pay the bill run up by the crimes and follies of German-Magyar policy, to sacrifice thousands of their best sons, fighting against their own kinsmen and friends, against all their dearest traditions and aspirations. Hideous as has been the fate of Belgium and of unconquerable Serbia, it may safely be asserted that in this war the most hideous fate of all has been reserved for the Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, and Serbo-Croats of the Dual Monarchy, who are fighting under compulsion a war that is to them a civil war, and that from a national point of view, by far the greatest crime of

the Central Powers has been their ruthless exploitation of thirty millions of their subject races in a quarrel which is not theirs.

To-day the situation in Bohemia is altogether intolerable. Espionage and censorship are so complete that no one makes any comment in public. The newsboards and public notices are read in silence. Two men do not discuss the war, unless they are certain that no stranger is within earshot. The newspapers are of course completely muzzled, and are even forced to print communications with the contents of which they notoriously disagree. The editorial staffs and the general public alike have become adepts at the practice of writing, and reading, between the lines and at the art of skilful omission and indirect allusion.

Political life has of course been completely suspended. As neither the Austrian Parliament nor the provincial Diets are allowed to meet, there is no parliamentary immunity. The party leaders are under the closest observation and have to be extremely careful. Early in the war the authorities made great efforts to induce the Czech parties to publish a manifesto in favour of war, but entirely without success. All remained ominously silent. Bohemia has two political leaders of the highest standing—Dr. Kramář, the Young Czech leader, an ardent Russophil, a tireless opponent of the Triple Alliance, and one of the spiritual authors of the so-called Neoslav movement, and Professor Masaryk, the famous philosopher who has exercised so remarkable an influence over the whole younger generation of progressives in all the different Slavonic countries, and who is also well known for his courageous exposure of the methods of forgery, espionage, and provocation pursued by the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office in the Agram High Treason trial and the even more notorious

Friedjung trial. It was rumoured last August that both these men had been executed ; but happily this was a mere invention of the sensational Press. Till recently the only prominent Czech politician to be arrested was Mr. Klofač, the National Socialist deputy, who was implicated on the strength of compromising letters written to him from Switzerland—it is asserted, by Austrian *agents provocateurs*. At the end of May Dr. Kramář and Dr. Scheiner, the President of the Bohemian Sokol (Gymnastic) Societies, were also arrested.

Among the Czech regiments of the Austrian Army the feeling is more or less openly Russophil. It is sufficient to cite a remarkable incident which took place in Prague itself at the beginning of last autumn. One of the Prague regiments left for the Galician front, escorted on its way by a large and sympathetic crowd, soldiers and civilians singing together their national songs, and above all the famous Panslav hymn "Hej Slovani," which contains a verse in honour of the Russians and the French as friends in the struggle against the Germans. Not content with this, they carried before them a white banner bearing as an inscription an extra verse written for the same hymn, to the effect that "we are marching against the Russians, but nobody knows why." So strong was the feeling of both the soldiers and the crowd, that the officers of the regiment did not venture to remove the banner. But the incident was atoned for by an order which decimated the regiment when it arrived at the front. Other instances of summary executions in the Czech regiments have been known to occur throughout the course of the war ; and it is a notorious fact that the Czech soldiers surrender whenever an opportunity presents itself and are utterly averse to the idea of fighting either Russia or Serbia. Equally characteristic

is the fact that Bohemia is garrisoned almost exclusively by Magyar and Roumanian troops, and by German second-line troops from the Empire.¹

A few words must be devoted in conclusion to Bohemia's aspirations for the future—aspirations which can only be realised if the Allies are completely victorious. If Germany wins, Bohemia becomes a mere annexe of Berlin. To-day that ought to be clear enough to every one; and there is certainly no Czech who fails to realise it.

Bohemia, then, hopes that our victory will mean the break-up of the Dual Monarchy and the achievement of Bohemian independence. Independent Bohemia, if it can once be achieved, will not be by any means a mere negligible quantity. Comprising the greater part of the three Austrian provinces of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia—what is left of the territories of the mediaeval Crown of St. Wenceslas—and also the Slovak districts of Northern Hungary, Bohemia would possess a population of not less than eleven or twelve millions, and would thus occupy the eighth place among the twenty-two States of Europe. And here it is necessary to point out that with the fate of Bohemia is inseparably bound up the fate of their close kinsmen the Slovaks, one of the most naturally gifted and attractive of all the Slavonic races, whose political and intellectual development has for generations past been brutally stunted by the deliberate policy of the Magyar oligarchy. Their language has been banished from all secondary schools, colleges, and seminaries, and is being steadily expelled even from the primary schools. It is

¹ Later surveys of events in Bohemia during the war will be found in my "German, Slav and Magyar," and in numerous articles in *The New Europe*, but especially in Mr. Vladimir Nosek's "Independent Bohemia," published in December 1918.

excluded from the administration and from every public office ; even on the railways and in the post offices Slovak inscriptions are not tolerated. The Slovak Press has for years been subject to brutal persecution. Right of assembly or association does not exist for the unhappy Slovaks, or indeed for the other non-Magyar races of Hungary. The small intellectual class is the victim of official pressure and persecution in every imaginable form ; and the most drastic steps are taken to prevent the Slovak people from securing its due representation in Parliament. Nowhere has the scandalous system of electoral corruption and violence weighed more heavily than among the Slovaks. As a distinguished Hungarian statesman said not many years ago on the floor of the House, "In Hungary the Magyar is the master." The other races are mere helots.

It is to perpetuate this infamous system that the Magyar oligarchy, under the able leadership of Count Tisza, is fighting this war ; and it can hardly be wondered at that every Czech and Slovak should approve the rival programme of Bohemian independence. The difficulties which lie in the way of such a programme are many and obvious. The new State would be seriously handicapped by the lack of a seaboard, just as are Switzerland and Serbia to-day. This insurmountable geographical fact would unquestionably be the occasion of tariff difficulties. But it must be remembered that even before the war Bohemia and Moravia, which industrially possessed a special identity of their own, suffered seriously from the economic disadvantages of their situation. The attainment of their independence may not enable them to overcome all these disadvantages, but it is obvious that at the worst the Czechs can scarcely be worse off when they have complete economic and financial control of their own destinies and are thus able to consult

their own peculiar interests, than in their present situation, when in all matters economic and political alike the main decision lies at Vienna and Budapest rather than at Prague.

There can be no question that the new Bohemia would for a considerable period need backing from without. Her people would look above all to Russia ; for, though nothing is farther from their wishes than to become a province of Russia, they are certain to remain Russophil after the war, and to desire an intimate accord with Russia. If the war produces the hoped-for reconciliation between Russians and Poles, the Czechs are likely to prove a useful intermediary, in view of their community of outlook as Western Slavs. Above all, racial sympathies and a close community of economic interests are likely to link Bohemia with the new Yugoslav State which, it is to be hoped, will be formed by the union of Croatia, Dalmatia, and Bosnia with Serbia and Montenegro. Bohemia, like Jugoslavia, will alike by inclination and by necessity be the ally of the Triple Entente and a powerful obstacle in the path of German aggression.

The chief difficulty which will face the new State is the problem of racial minorities : for in the event of Bohemian independence it will inevitably include at least a million and a half Germans.

There are, of course, certain points at which the existing frontier can be pared down, leaving certain German districts, such as the Egerland, the territory round Bodenbach, or south of Budweis, to German-Austria, to Bavaria, or to Saxony, and along the Silesian frontier similar concessions could be made to the racial principle. But this is unhappily impossible in *North* Bohemia, where the new State, if it is to be self-sufficient and economically inde-

pendent, must of necessity hold on to the mining and industrial districts and where the existence of numerous Czech minorities cannot be overlooked. But this difficulty of racial minorities must not deter us. It is present almost everywhere in central and south-eastern Europe, and there is not a single problem which the war has raised that can be solved in defiance of it. The best that we can do is to educate public opinion to oppose strenuously the suppression of national minorities, and to make a guarantee of linguistic rights in the schools, churches, local bodies, and cultural institutions a *sine qua non* in the settlement of each individual problem. The Germans of Bohemia and Southern Hungary must be secured the same privileges as the Magyars in the future Greater Roumania. Such an arrangement is difficult, but most certainly attainable.

The Southern Slav Question has already forced itself upon the attention of the world. The time will soon come when the Bohemian Question will assume an equal importance, and it is therefore essential to realise that the two problems are intimately connected and likely to be more so every day. The interests of the Czechs and of the Southern Slavs coincide at every point.

Bohemia is called upon in the near future to play a great part as intermediary between Russia and Britain. As the most advanced and cultured of all the Slav nations, she can present to Russia the ideas of the West in suitable Slavonic garb. As an ardent and sympathetic admirer of Russia and Russian ideas, she may well become to us a door upon the Slavonic world. There will be room in the new Europe of which we dream for an independent Bohemia, industrious, progressive, and peaceful, a Bohemia which will have rescued its Slovak kinsmen from the intolerable yoke of the Magyar oligarchy, but which will

carefully avoid the Magyar example and give the fullest freedom to its own German minorities. The day has not yet arrived, but it will most assuredly come, if victory crowns the arms of the Allies. In the words of Bismarck, "Bohemia is a fortress created by God Himself." But she must become the fortress, not of Reaction, but of Liberty.

CZECHO-SLOVAK CLAIMS¹

[“The future fate of Bohemia will be the touchstone of the Allies’ strength, earnestness, and statesmanship.”—President MASARYK in *The New Europe*, February 1917.]

THE disappearance of the Habsburg Monarchy has involved a drastic readjustment of values throughout Central Europe, and even to-day the new political forms are only slowly taking shape in the furnace of war and revolution. But amid the general ruin two firm rocks stand out—the Czecho-Slovak Republic and the united Jugoslav Kingdom. By their policy during and since the Armistice the Allies have done all in their power to injure and disintegrate the latter, and attempts have not been lacking to foment internal discord and to encourage an artificial republican movement. Fortunately the national current has proved infinitely stronger than any attempts at its sabotage, and external dangers have only served to hasten the process of consolidation.

Bohemia has been more fortunate in her relations with the Entente Governments, which latterly at any rate have vied with each other in their professions of sympathy and friendship. Unhappily mere words do not suffice to over-

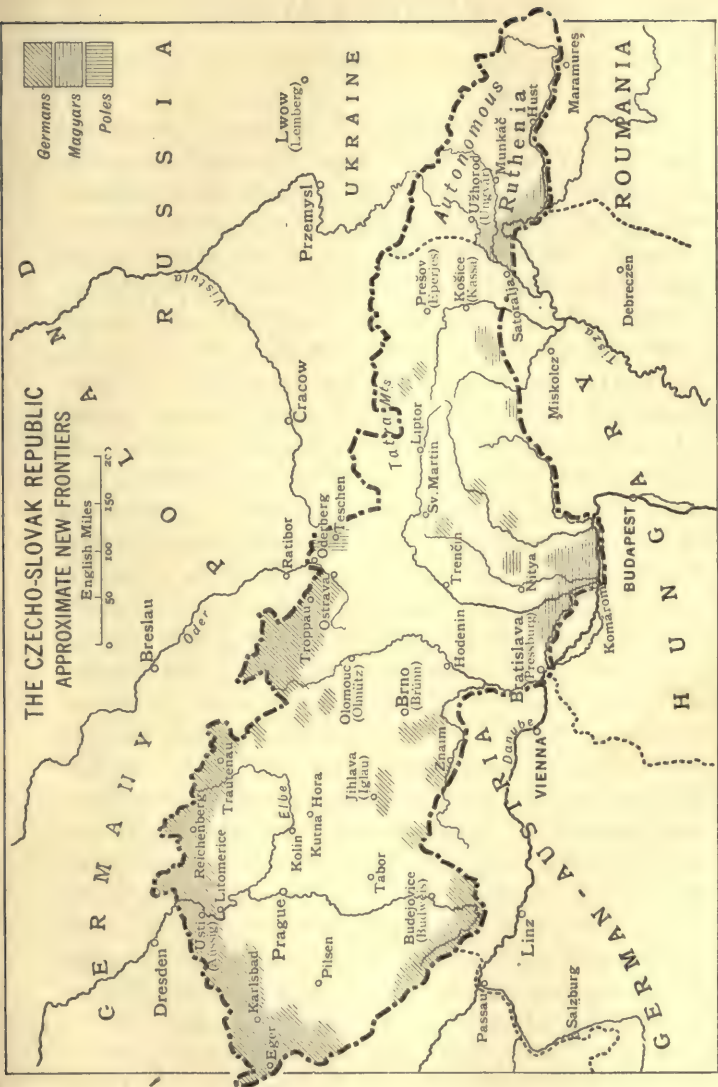
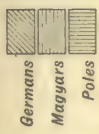
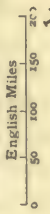
¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. x. Nos. 128, 129, 130, March 27, April 3, April 10, 1919.

come the difficulties of geography, and the Allies were so strangely dilatory in sending food supplies that Prague was on the very eve of famine before the necessary steps were taken.

The future of the Czecho-Slovak Republic is one of the most vital issues of European reconstruction, and its territorial and other claims deserve the most careful consideration. We propose to give a rapid survey of these claims, which may be divided under eight main heads: (1) German-Bohemia; (2) Slovakia; (3) Teschen; (4) the Ruthenes of Hungary; (5) land connection with Jugoslavia; (6) the Sorbs of Lusatia; (7) the Czech minority in Vienna; (8) international routes by rail and water. Of these, the first two are, from the Czech point of view, hardly open to discussion, save in points of detail; the third is regarded as vital economically; the eighth as a fundamental condition of the success of any League of Nations; while on the remaining four the Czechs, though holding perfectly definite views, are fully prepared to defer to the verdict of the Conference.

Unfriendly critics point out that the Czech claims are compounded of historical and ethnographic principles which are mutually irreconcilable. But this, though undoubtedly true, is not in itself a condemnation, for, quite apart from the more obvious examples of Poland and Italy, there is probably no single claim at present put forward by any nation which is not open to the same criticism. Indeed, this is merely another way of saying that no problem can be satisfactorily solved unless due regard be taken for the rival claims of nationality, geography, economics, and religion. Historic rights can be grossly exaggerated; but, on the other hand, it would be puerile to ignore the traditions of a long and unbroken historic past, resting alike

THE CZECHO-SLOVAK REPUBLIC APPROXIMATE NEW FRONTIERS



upon keen national sentiment and upon basic facts of geography and economics.

This is eminently the case with Bohemia. The lands of the Crown of St. Wencelas (Bohemia, Moravia) have formed a single unit since the Dark Ages : at first under primitive and uncertain conditions, since 1198 as a strong and self-conscious national kingdom. One of their greatest kings, the Emperor Charles IV., proclaimed the indivisibility and integrity of the Bohemian Crown (1355), and this was reaffirmed by the Habsburgs on their election to the throne (1526). Even after the suppression of Czech liberties by Ferdinand II., and under the long régime of centralisation and Germanisation that followed, the juridical and constitutional position of the Bohemian State was repeatedly recognised and confirmed by successive Habsburg sovereigns. It was thus only natural that from the very outset of the national revival in the nineteenth century, the Czech leaders, of all shades of opinion, should have insisted upon Bohemia's historic or "State-Rights" as a weapon in their struggle against German predominance.

As an alternative to recognising Bohemia's historic frontiers, it is urged that the German districts which lie on the periphery should be allowed to exercise the right of self-determination, and to unite either with Germany or with the rest of German-Austria. A glance at the map will show that three out of the four isolated fragments of which "German-Bohemia" is composed—namely, the north-west or Eger-Karlsbad districts, the north-east or Reichenberg-Trautenau districts, and the Moravian-Silesian group lying between Troppau and Olmütz—are entirely isolated from the rest of German-Austria, and that their union with the latter is only practicable under a scheme of Austrian federalism such as both Germans and Czechs

to-day utterly reject. Administratively, German Bohemia must either form part of the whole or be divided into its several component parts. It thus only remains to consider the idea of their union with Germany, or as it would work out in practice, the union of the various fragments with German-Austria, Bavaria, Saxony and Prussia (if German-Silesia remains part of Prussia) respectively.

It is natural enough that the Pangermans should insist upon union with Germany, for they know very well that it would place Bohemia entirely at their mercy. Once abandon the frontiers which strategy created and history has maintained, and there is nothing obvious by which they can be replaced. It is true that the districts nearest the frontier tend as a rule to be overwhelmingly German and those in the centre of the country no less overwhelmingly Czech; but there is no exact line of cleavage between the two races, and the Czechs cannot afford to abandon their widely scattered minorities in every German district save perhaps the Egerland and North-West Silesia. A further complication lies in the absence of really trustworthy statistics, owing to the misuse of the rubric *Umgangssprache* (language usually spoken) in place of the "mother tongue" in the Austrian census returns, and to the wholesale pressure exercised by German employers to ensure the Germanisation — at least on paper — of helpless Czech minorities. It is known that since the achievement of Bohemian independence flourishing Czech communities of varying sizes have sprung up in places that a year ago were German to all outward seeming. Indeed, it is seriously contended on the Czech side, and not without a considerable show of reason, that the number of Germans in Bohemia indicated by the census is at least 800,000 in excess of the truth.

While racial sympathies naturally plead for union with their kinsmen beyond the frontier, the Germans of Bohemia find that all their economic interests urge them in a contrary direction. The natural mountain barrier which separates them from Germany turns their whole outlook towards Prague and the central plateau. There is a natural balance between the mining and industrial districts of the north and the corn-growing districts of the centre. Union with Germany would cut off the former not merely from their best market, but also from the Czech labour upon which they depend, and would expose them to the most formidable competition from the great German industries. Nor need we overlook the more sordid motives which prompt many German-Bohemians to throw in their lot with the new state and thus evade the economic effects of defeat and ostracism which are likely to weigh upon Germany for at least a generation. That separation from Bohemia would spell ruin for the German districts themselves, was clearly indicated during the later stages of the war, when the Czechs, as part of their political campaign, declined to revictual German-Bohemia, and when it was found that lack of communications made help from Germany or German-Austria impossible.

The partition of Bohemia would at one and the same time deprive the new Republic of the possibility of defence and destroy its economic independence: and these are undoubtedly among the foremost motives of those who promote the anti-Czech agitation. On the other hand, Bohemia as a unit is self-supporting to an extent equalled by very few other countries, and can provide her own grain and sugar, her own coal and iron ore. Even put at its lowest, the Czech contention is that there is less injustice in placing two or even two-and-a-half million out

of seventy million Germans under Czech rule, than in leaving nine million Czecho-Slovaks—in this case the whole race—under alien rule. Only those who consistently give the preference to enemy rather than friend will challenge such a plea. For the rest there are certain directions (such as the Egerland, or the Jägerndorf district of Silesia—both purely German in character) in which territorial amputations could be made to mutual advantage, and the number of Germans thus materially reduced. It will, in any case, be necessary to guarantee to the German minorities the fullest possible linguistic rights in school, church, law-court and local administration, and it is well to emphasise the fact that the Czecho-Slovak Government has not waited for the ruling of the League of Nations on the subject of racial minorities, but has, of its own initiative, announced to the Peace Conference its readiness to accept and execute whatever international guarantees may be regarded as necessary. Despite the passions roused by centuries of German domination, the Czechs have every interest to conciliate their German fellow-citizens, and to render their position in the new Republic tolerable; and this is the policy which is being definitely followed by President Masaryk and his advisers. So far from being inconsistent with a Slavophil and Ententophil policy, it is the foundation stone upon which healthy foreign relations must rest.

THE SLOVAK-MAGYAR FRONTIER

The new Republic consists roughly of two halves—the lands of the Bohemian Crown and Slovakia—the latter being nearly equal in area to the former, but possessing barely a quarter of its population. In drawing the frontiers

of Slovakia quite other standards must be applied than those which we have shown to be valid in the case of Bohemia. Slovakia has never formed an independent State, though in the ninth century and until the coming of the Magyars it was the centre of that shortlived and loosely knit "Great Moravian Empire," of which Svatopluk was King and the great Methodius Metropolitan. Save for an interlude during the later Hussite period of the fifteenth century, the Slovaks have remained separated from their Czech kinsmen and subjected to the heavy yoke of the Magyars, who ever since the modern nationalist revival have spared no effort to denationalise the Slovaks, or where this was not possible, to foment distinctions between them and the Czechs and to foster local and particularist tendencies. It is indeed remarkable that a people whom geography and the deliberate policy of its rulers combined to isolate from the main currents of European history should none the less have proved peculiarly responsive to Slav sentiment in its widest sense, and in Kollár, Palacky, Šafářík, and Masaryk should have produced four of the most eminent apostles of the Slav idea. The plain fact is that the Slovaks are one of the most gifted races in all Europe, whose natural artistic, musical, and literary talents have here and there found an outlet even in the teeth of Magyar oppression, and of whom great things may fairly be expected now that the long tyranny has been shaken off.

The problem of demarcation is simplified by the fact that on the north the ethnographic line of cleavage corresponds with one of the most clearly defined natural frontiers in Europe—the mountainous barrier separating Hungary from Galicia. This will obviously remain unaltered. On the west, of course, the union wipes out the old Hungaro-

Moravian boundary ; but from the southernmost point of Moravia the river March again provides a natural and linguistic frontier between the Czecho-Slovak and German-Austrian Republics, as far as its junction with the Danube twelve miles west of Pressburg (now Bratislava). Thus the only serious difficulty is to devise a satisfactory line between the Slovaks and the Magyars.

Here, as everywhere else in Europe, the problem resolves itself into a compromise between ethnography and geography ; but it is obvious that the first essential must be an attempt to get as near as possible to the true racial boundary. The main lines of such a result can be obtained from the official Magyar census figures, and it is these which we have deliberately used in the present article. It is notorious that the results which they contain are in every case unduly favourable to the Magyar element ; but since 90 per cent of the essential facts can be proved out of the mouth of the enemy himself, the extreme course of rejecting all Magyar statistics as unreliable and "tendentious" would simply leave us in the position of having virtually no material whatever to work upon. Before, however, a sure and final verdict on the remaining ten per cent can be obtained, it will certainly be necessary to send an impartial international boundary commission to study conditions on the spot ; and it is safe to assume that in that case the numbers of the Magyars in Northern Hungary (as indeed in Transylvania and the south) will be found to have been vastly exaggerated. One simple proof of this is the fact that according to the statistics of 1910 the total number of Slovaks is given as 1,967,970, but the number of persons speaking Slovak as 2,776,743. As it is only too notorious that hardly any Magyar (even an official whose duty it is to do so) condescends to learn Slovak, the balance

between these two figures must obviously consist in the main of artificially Magyarised Slovaks.

It is necessary to point out that throughout the northern counties the Magyar element consists mainly of officials (administrative, judicial, or educational) imported from Central or Southern Hungary to hold down the Slovaks, and of a certain number of Magyarised Slovaks who have yielded to political pressure or forsworn their nationality in return for some local position. Of these, the former will automatically withdraw to Hungary, while the latter will speedily rediscover their Slovak nationality. When this natural process is complete the number of Magyars will be negligible. This, of course, does not apply in the same degree to the districts close to the ethnographic frontier, where there are many pure Magyar villages interspersed with Slav.

The Slovak counties fall naturally into three groups: (1) seven where the population is predominantly Slovak; (2) seven which are in great majority Slovak, but portions of which are mixed and therefore debatable; and (3) five which contain Magyar majorities, certain portions of which it will be necessary to sacrifice in order to attain a tolerable frontier. In the following tables these groups are divided for practical purposes into two categories: (I.) what can fairly be assigned without further question to the Czecho-Slovak Republic, and (II.) debatable districts which ought, if the Paris Conference still has the time and energy, to form the subject of a special inquiry on the spot, rather than be carved up arbitrarily by ill-informed diplomats at a distance:

I

(A)—Overwhelmingly Slovak Counties

	Slovak.	Magyar.	German.	Total.
Trenčín (Trencsén)	284,770	13,204	9,029	310,437
Turec (Turóc) .	38,432	5,560	10,993	55,703
Orava (Arva) .	59,096	2,000	1,518	78,745 ¹
Liptov (Liptó) .	78,098	4,365	2,591	86,906
Zvolen (Zólyom) .	113,294	16,509	2,124	133,653
Spiš (Szepes, Zips)	97,077	18,658	38,434	172,867 ²
Šaryš (Sáros) .	101,855	18,088	9,447	174,620 ²
Total (A) .	772,622	78,384	74,136	1,012,931

(B)—Counties with Slovak majority (deducting debatable districts)

	Slovak.	Magyar.	German.	Total.
1. Prešpurk :				
(a) Five districts N. of Danube ³ . . .	137,237	64,749	12,912	218,876
(b) Town of Pressburg	11,673	31,705	32,790	78,223
(c) Towns of Tirnova, Bazin, Modor, and St. George . . .	16,695	6,156	5,279	28,439
2. Nitra :				
(a) Ten country districts ⁴ . . .	283,021	36,065	24,959	337,698
(b) Towns of Nitra and Skalice . . .	9,084	10,259	1,895	21,437
3. Tekov (Bars) :				
(a) Four country districts ⁵ . . .	81,938	24,216	15,455	122,531
(b) Towns of Kremnice and Ujbanya . . .	5,738	1,971	1,593	9,328
Carry forward .	545,386	175,121	94,883	816,532

¹ The County of Orava has always contained the highest percentage of Slovaks (94·7 per cent in 1900); but in 1910 the Magyar statistics suddenly discovered the existence of 16,120 Poles, thus conveniently reducing the Slovaks to 75 per cent. This fictitious change rests on the obvious fact that along the linguistic frontier the Slovak dialect shows certain Polish-(as also Ruthene) influences.

² There are also 50,827 Ruthenes (12,327 in Spiš, 38,500 in Šaryš).

³ Malačky, Tirnova, Senc, Prešpurk, Galanta.

⁴ Galgocz, Myjava, Topolčany, Nitra, Zámky, Pištany, Prievidza, Skalice, Senica, N. Mesto.

⁵ Zlata Moravce, Garam Szt Kereszt, Oslany, Vrable.

(B)—Counties with Slovak Majority (continued)

	Slovak.	Magyar.	German.	Total.
Brought forward	545,386	175,121	94,883	816,532
4. Hont :				
(a) Two country districts (Batovce and Krupina) . . .	29,018	3,659	217	48,479
(b) Town of Stavnica (Selmezbánya) . . .	8,341	6,340	453	15,185
5. Novohrad (Nógrád) :				
Country district of Gács	19,633	1,557	56	21,679
6. Gemer :				
(a) Three country districts (Sobata, Garamvölgy, Revuca)	44,768	11,894	361	58,394
(b) Towns of Rima Sobata, Revuca, Jol-sva and Dobšina	3,304	11,227	1,858	16,712
7. Zemplín :				
Five country districts ¹	80,917	23,978	5,954	121,627
Total (B)	731,367	233,776	103,207	1,098,608
Total (A and B)	1,503,989	312,160	177,918	2,111,539

II

Prešpurk (Grosse Schütt)	412	60,757	2,841	64,212
Nitra (Ersekujvár, Vagsellye)	32,559	54,000	1,103	88,320
Tekov (Levice)	10,148	35,835	318	46,641
Komárom (north of Danube)	3,051	78,379	142	81,747
Esztergom (north of Danube)	908	36,075	77	37,092
Hont (Ipolyság, Ipolynyék, Szob, Vámosmikola)	10,703	62,732	6,393	79,761
Novohrad (Novohrad, Lučenec and towns of Lučenec and Balaša)	33,527	77,944	2,134	114,838
Gemer (Rimaseč, Putnok, Rožnava)	16,583	65,922	600	84,080
Abauj-Torna (Füzer and Košice) town of Košice	33,300	61,410	3,694	100,779
Zemplín (Sátoralja)	4,988	37,145	42	42,937
	146,179	570,199	17,344	740,407

¹ Galszecs, Humonne, V. Mikulas, Varanno, Stropko.

It is not of course to be assumed that anything like the whole of these debatable districts will be assigned to the Slovaks, but somewhere within them the final frontier will have to be drawn. The Grosse Schütt—the rich territory forming an island between the two arms of the Danube east of Pressburg—is claimed by the Czechs as necessary for their control of the river, though it contains only a few hundred Slovaks in over 100,000 Magyars. It is true that its economic interests lie to the north rather than the south. On the other hand, the town of Pressburg (now rechristened Bratislava), which contains a German-Magyar majority but is surrounded by Slovak territory, is vitally needed by the new State as its Danubian port and hence as a means of commercial access to the Balkans and the Black Sea.

Farther east the provisional frontier assigned to the new Republic follows the Danube from Komárom to the mouth of the Ipol, and thus assures to the Slovaks the whole course of their chief river, the Váh, and the two lesser rivers, Nitra and Hron. The advantages of securing this natural frontier are, of course, very great; but the Conference may conceivably decide to be guided by direct investigations as to the racial character of the districts lying immediately to the north of the Danube. It will probably be found that their Magyarism is for the most part little more than a political veneer imposed by the peculiar circumstances of the last two generations.

The provisional frontier follows the Ipol to no great distance from its source, and then, leaving the foothills near Rimovska, strikes diagonally north-eastwards until it reaches the Ung river near Užhorod (Ungvár), on the line of cleavage between Slovaks and Ruthenes. It is probably safe to assume that in its essentials this line will be made

permanent, and that the extreme Czech claim, comprising such towns as Vác and Miskolcz and the mining district of Salgótarján, which is so vital to the Magyars, will be disallowed. The main interest of the Czecho-Slovaks, as of every State under the new dispensation, is to be saddled with as few, not as many, alien subjects as possible; and it will be an unmixed blessing for Prague if it can find safe devices for paring down certain sections of the frontier and so reducing the number of its German and Magyar subjects.

Attention must, however, be drawn to the fact that while several hundred thousand Magyars will inevitably be included in Czecho-Slovakia, the Slovaks, on their side, will be obliged to sacrifice a number of flourishing colonies—amounting to 226,972, according to the official figures, and probably far more numerous—which lie scattered in the plains of Central and Southern Hungary, and which, owing to their geographical position, must necessarily remain in the Hungarian Republic (or even in Jugoslavia). Of these the most important are in Békés Co. (66,770); the Bácska (30,137); Pest Co. (26,681); Budapest (20,359); Csanád Co. (17,133); Torontál Co. (16,143). Thus, an exact racial division being impossible, the existence of small racial minorities on either side of the new frontier may be regarded as a guarantee of mutual tolerance, if, as is only too probable, any attempt to exchange them should break down in face of the peasants' attachment to the soil.

THE RUTHENES OF HUNGARY

Intimately connected with the problem of the new Slovak-Magyar frontier is the fate of the Ruthenes of Hungary, hitherto the most isolated and helpless of all the non-Magyar races. Their total number in 1910 was, according to official statistics, 464,259, distributed mainly as follows:

Šaryš (Sáros) . . .	33,988	Bereg . . .	95,302
Spiš (Szepes) . . .	14,333	Ugocsa . . .	32,721
Zemplín . . .	34,831	Maramuraş . . .	143,621
Užhorod (Ung). . .	55,742		

Isolated in their Carpathian valleys, the Ruthenes have little or no history or tradition, and even up to the outbreak of the present war had remained practically without any connections with their kinsmen on the northern slopes. They are the descendants of successive waves of colonists, introduced by the Hungarian kings as guarantees of the frontier; the main body arrived in 1340, under the leadership of their prince Theodore Koriatovič, to whom Louis the Great granted the town and castle of Munkáč. Originally Orthodox by religion, they accepted the Uniate rite, which had been adopted by so large a proportion of the Little Russians in Poland; but it was not until late in the eighteenth century that they had bishops of their own. Almost from the first the Magyars contrived to exert control over the Ruthenian hierarchy and clergy within the borders of Hungary; and since the *Ausgleich* of 1867 this control tightened year by year, until the Church, so long a bulwark of their distinctive national character, was in danger of becoming a mere instrument of their Magyarisation. It has been the very definite policy of the Magyars to prevent any national movement among the Ruthenes, to keep them without intellectual leaders and to promote so far as possible their complete absorption. The methods employed are best illustrated by the fact that at the outbreak of war the Ruthenes had not a single school, secondary or primary, in which their language was taught, no political newspaper of any kind, and practically no periodical literature. On the other hand, they had a higher percentage of illiterates and a higher percentage of emigrants than any other race in Hungary, and among them economic exploitation by the

great landed proprietors, by the Magyar officials, and by the Jewish traders and innkeepers had reached its height. Under these circumstances it is not to be wondered at that such leaders of opposition as the Ruthenes of Hungary possess, should look back upon Magyar rule as upon a long and evil nightmare, and should rely upon the Peace Conference to secure for them a settlement such as will render possible their free national development in the future. The basis for this has been provided by the proposals made to Professor Masaryk last autumn by representative deputations of the so-called "Carpatho-Ruthene," and "Ugro-Russian" colonies in the United States, and to the Czecho-Slovak Premier, Dr. Kramář, last December by a deputation of the local Ruthenian National Council in Munkács—in favour of the Ruthenes forming an autonomous province inside the Czecho-Slovak Republic. It is known that the Czecho-Slovak Government is not prepared to accept such an arrangement unless it represents the clear wishes of the population, and unless it has the certainty that the result would not be to embroil the new republic either with Poland or the Ukraine. As, however, there appears to be no desire either at Munkács or at Lemberg for union between the Ruthenes of Hungary and the Ukrainian districts of Galicia, and as Poland on its side, in the event of its securing the whole of Galicia for itself, would naturally not desire to annex an additional half-million Ruthenes, these difficulties do not exist; and all that remains would be to verify the representative character of the delegations by a possible plebiscite. Other things being equal, this arrangement has the double advantage of providing a common frontier between Czecho-Slovakia and Roumania and of maintaining the Carpathian watershed as the former's natural frontier to the north.

Should the principle of union with Czecho-Slovakia be accepted by the Peace Conference, it would obviously be on the basis of a special autonomy for the Ruthenes, and the precise manner in which the western border of this autonomous province was drawn would be a purely internal matter for the new republic, to be arranged between Prague and Munkáč, and hence it need not concern us here.

The Ruthene districts may be grouped in the following two categories :

(A)—*Predominantly Ruthene*

	Ruthene.	Slovak.	Magyar.	German.	Total.
1. Zemplín :					
Two country districts ¹	33,565	6,668	1,605	3,085	46,425
2. Užhorod :					
(a) Five country districts ²	61,044	18,788	18,628	6,959	116,723
(b) Town	641	1,219	13,590	1,151	16,919
3. Bereg :					
(a) Four country districts ³	75,133	15,950	11,750	15,950	104,274
(b) Munkáč Town	1,394	3,078	12,686	3,078	17,275
4. Maramuraš :		Roumanian.			
Five country districts ⁴	125,147	271	17,287	25,266	168,648
	296,924R.	45,703S.	75,546M.	55,489G.	470,264

(B)—*Debatable*

1. Užhorod (Nagykapos) .	26	6,357	21,606	273	28,447
2. Bereg :					
(a) Tiszahát, Mező-Kászony	1,622	..	68,235	224	70,224
(b) Beregszász Town	221	..	12,432	140	12,933
		Roumanian.			
3. Ugocsa (Tiszainnen) .	24,133	29	17,572	2,918	44,789
	26,002R.	6,357S.	119,845M.	3,555G.	156,393

¹ Szinna, Laborecz.

² Berezna, Perecseny, Szerednye, Szobrancz, Užhorod.

³ Solva, Verecke, Latorca, Munkáč.

⁴ Dolha, Hust, Ökörmező, Taraczvicz, Tiszavölgy.

It will be seen from these tables that certain portions of the counties of Bereg, Užhorod, and Zemplín will have to be deducted from autonomous Ruthenia and assigned to Slovakia proper, whereas it may be found advisable to add to the former those parts of Šaryš and Spiš counties which are Ruthene in character.

As between Ruthenes and Roumanians the River Tisza provides at once an ethnographic and geographical frontier. Only here and there modifications may be required, in order to ensure that the very important railway line up the Tisza valley remains on one side of the frontier, from the junction of Čapp to the outskirts of the town of Maramuraš, which will, of course, be Roumanian. This railway will be the main line of communication between Czecho-Slovakia and Roumania and Southern Russia, between Prague, Czerowitz, Jassy, Kiev, and Odessa. It is, therefore, probably inevitable that the railway junctions of Čapp and Sátoralja-ujhely should be assigned to the Czechs, even though this involves the sacrifice of some 25,000 Magyars. Otherwise there would be no railway connection between Slovakia and Ruthenia save through Magyar territory, and both the through routes already mentioned and the main Prague-Lemberg-Kiev route (on which also the Czechs set the utmost store, as securing their direct connection with the restored Russia of the future) would be cut. This adjustment of the frontier leaves Košice, a Magyarised town in predominantly Slovak surroundings, and Sátoralja to the Slovaks, but saves the Calvinist centre of Sárospatak and the valuable vineyards of Tokaj for the Magyars.

In conclusion, it should be mentioned that the new Ruthene province will be confronted by a most difficult economic and social problem, owing to the presence of an altogether disproportionate number of Jews (for the most

part comparatively recent immigrants from Galicia). In the seven counties inhabited by the Ruthenes there are no fewer than 181,630 Jews, or 11·8 per cent (Šaryš, 12,323; Spiš, 7475; Zemplín, 35,041; Užhorod, 17,587; Bereg, 33,660, or 14 per cent of total population in county; Ugocsa, 11,850, or 12·9 per cent; Maramuraş, 65,694, or 18·4 per cent) out of a total population of 1,530,841. In the districts summarised in Table A (p. 289) there are 62,861. The fact that the Slovak and Roumanian peasantry of Hungary have, by the aid of local banks and co-operative societies, emancipated themselves from Jewish control and from the terrible usury which prevailed twenty or even ten years ago, helps to explain why the Jewish population has tended to concentrate among the backward Ruthene population, whom systematic Magyarisation had left altogether without leaders and wellnigh incapable of self-help.

THE CZECHO-POLISH FRONTIER

The question of Austrian Silesia has given rise to an acute conflict between the Governments of Prague and Warsaw, into the merits of which we do not propose to enter. Here, as on the Adriatic, in the Banat, in Eastern Galicia, and at Danzig, the procrastination and bungling of the Entente Powers have envenomed and magnified differences which at the outset could have been settled with comparative ease. The result is an estrangement between two sister nations, which is not only highly regrettable in itself, but gravely endangers the natural political development of all the newly constituted States of Central and Eastern Europe.

On a basis of historic right, Silesia unquestionably belongs to Bohemia, with which the duchies of Oppeln, Teschen, Ratibor, and Bentheim were incorporated during

the reign of Charles IV. (1355). Of these, the two latter were forcibly annexed by Frederick the Great with the rest of what is now Prussian Silesia ; but Teschen and fragments of Oppeln, separated from each other by a tiny strip of Moravia, continued under the sceptre of the Habsburgs, as heirs of the Crown of St. Wenceslas. On a basis of ethnography none of the three races which make up the population has the majority, and it would be necessary to partition both sections of the little province. In the case of the north-western section, the districts of Freiwaldau and Jägerndorf are overwhelmingly German, and might, with advantage, be ceded to Germany or exchanged for the neighbouring Prussian district of Glatz, where there are over 60,000 Czechs. In any case Troppau and the mixed or mainly Czech districts to the south of it would obviously remain untouched. Similarly, on a purely ethnographic basis, the duchy of Teschen would be divided into two unequal parts, the smaller and western falling to the Czechs, the eastern, with the town of Teschen itself—which is in the main neither Czech nor Polish, but German—falling to the Poles.

But neither history nor ethnography will settle the question. The Poles, who in the east claim the frontiers of 1772, and in the name of "historic rights" would fain annex many millions of Ukrainians, Germans, White Russians, and Lithuanians, have no cause for complaint if on the west the Czechs in their turn invoke the same principle as an excuse for including 250,000 Poles in their new State. But though logic forbids the Poles to claim Silesia unless they relinquish Eastern Galicia, it equally forbids the Czechs to claim Slovakia unless they yield up the German districts of Bohemia. In both cases history and ethnography are at variance, and in both cases a

compromise must be sought between them and yet other, mainly economic, factors. The Czechs do not claim the eastern and admittedly Polish district of Bielitz ; but they are entitled to insist that the possession of the railway running from Oderberg through Teschen into Slovakia, and also of the coalfields between Oderberg and Karvin, is of vital importance to them, and that they should be included in Czecho-Slovakia even though this involves the retention of 100,000 Polish inhabitants. Industrially there can be no question whatever that the prosperity of the Moravian mine-fields and other industries is bound up with the possession of Karvin, and that as northern Slovakia tends to become industrialised—a process which is likely to be rapid in the next few years—it, too, will be dependent upon the same source of supply. It is also pointed out that Poland is already extremely rich in coal and has no need to insist upon a district which is small in area, whose population is already fluid and more interested in social than in national tendencies, and which is of tenfold greater relative value to Bohemia than to Poland. As, however, the Czechs could retain the essential part of the Karvin district, while probably not annexing more than 30,000 Poles, it ought to be comparatively easy to reach a compromise on this point. The railway presents greater difficulties, for the simple reason that larger numbers of Poles are involved. Here, however, the decision must rest with technical experts. All will agree that direct railway communication between Prague and Slovakia through northern Moravia and Silesia is an essential need of the new State, and that owing to the configuration of the land along the former Austro-Hungarian frontier, and also to the railway policy of the Magyars, there is no other line available, save the unsatisfactory Vlára Pass route considerably farther south. If, as some

contend, an alternative railway can be quickly and easily constructed, such as would link up the old Nordbahn (the main Vienna-Cracow line) with the Slovak junction of Žilina (Zsolna), it might be possible to induce the Czechs to modify their claim to Teschen, though even in that case a *condominium* would obviously be necessary for some years until the completion of the new line, and the Poles might fairly be asked to bear the expense of the necessary tunneling. Failing such an alternative route, however, it is safe to assume that the Peace Conference will allow the Czechs to retain the present railway, while leaving the more easterly district to Poland.

There remain three further questions which the Czecho-Slovak Government urges upon the careful consideration of the Conference, while very wisely differentiating between them and the absolutely vital problems of German-Bohemia and Slovakia, and therefore declaring itself from the outset ready to defer to the impartial ruling of the Associated Powers. These concern the Czech minority in Vienna, the Lusatian Sorbs, and the project for a "Corridor" connecting Czecho-Slovakia and Jugoslavia.

The official Austrian statistics admit the presence of 102,000 Czechs and Slovaks in Vienna at the census of 1910; but it is notorious that they were in reality two or three times more numerous. Even the Czech estimate of 400,000 may easily be true, if all those of Czech birth or parentage are included; but probably little less than half of that total may be regarded as having lost their national sentiment and become definitely Germanised. (The German Jingo demagogue Bielohlawek is an admirable instance of the process by which pure Czech families passed to the opposite extreme during the last few generations.) The policy of the Vienna municipality in first discouraging and

then (in 1913) actually closing and forbidding the "Komensky" schools which patriotic Czechs maintained in Vienna by voluntary subscriptions, was a permanent cause of friction between the two races. The Czechs are entitled to demand proper linguistic guarantees for the Czech minority in Vienna, which is likely to survive, even though reduced in numbers; but any such privileges will naturally be made contingent upon the extension of the fullest possible "rights of minority" to the Germans of Bohemia. Thus reciprocity is likely to prove the most practical basis for a settlement of this particular question.

In the case of the Lusatian Sorbs, as in that of the Viennese Czechs, it is obvious that union with Bohemia is quite impracticable. To-day their numbers are estimated at 160,000, their chief towns being Cottbus, Görlitz, Bautzen and Zittau. Utterly isolated and exposed to the growing danger of Germanisation, they have inevitably looked for help and sympathy to the Czechs as their only near kinsmen; and Prague feels morally bound to plead their cause at the Conference. The most, however, that can be hoped for them is that they should be assured a local autonomy of their own within the German Federal Republic, and that they should all be grouped in a single unit and no longer partitioned between Saxony and Prussian Silesia.

Bohemia has many natural advantages, but all are overshadowed by its landlocked position in the centre of Europe; and no one can blame the Czechs for their desire to secure some kind of access to the sea which will assure their trade connections with the outer world. But they were not so happily inspired when they put forward the so-called Corridor project, by which they would annex a strip of territory 125 miles long by 25 miles broad, running from the Danube on the north to the Drave on the south,

and comprising most of the four Hungarian counties of Moson, Sopron (Oedenburg), Vas, and Zala, with a population of 700,000, of whom only a quarter, under the most liberal estimate, are Slavs. This utterly artificial structure would separate the Hungarian and German-Austrian Republics, and would be a perpetual challenge to the former. In war it would be indefensible, and would have to be evacuated; while in peace its object can easily be attained by other and less questionable means. If Bohemia and Jugoslavia are closely united in their commercial and fiscal policy, it will always be in their power to prevent Hungary—humbled and reduced as she will be—from pursuing her pernicious old policy of artificial railway tariffs and trade restrictions.

The Czechs are on much firmer ground when they openly demand the "internationalisation" of the Danube, Elbe, and Vistula, and of the main trans-European railways—in particular, Prague-Pressburg-Trieste (Fiume); Prague-Košice-Jassy-Odessa; Prague-Budapest-Belgrade-Constantinople; Prague-Lemberg-Kiev-Moscow; Paris-Strasbourg-Nürnberg-Prague-Cracow-Warsaw; Paris-Milan-Trieste-Zagreb-Belgrade-Bucarest. This whole question requires special detailed treatment; but it must from the first be obvious that it raises one of the most vital factors in the whole peace settlement, and if fairly and effectively dealt with in conjunction with frontier revision, might revolutionise the whole relations of the various continental States and lay the basis of a new era.

ITALY, JUGOSLAVIA, AND THE SECRET TREATY¹

“ WE do not think we are wrong,” wrote the *Weser Zeitung*, in December 1916, “ in regarding the Adriatic question as the surest source of future discord within the ranks of the present Allies.” The grave events of which Fiume and Ljubljana (Laibach) have lately been the scene, and which are the direct and natural result of the unsound principles underlying the Austro-Hungarian Armistice, are giving point to the enemy’s comment, and convince us of the need for plain speech, before the growing breach between the Italians and Jugoslavs becomes irreparable. The general public in Entente countries is naturally overjoyed at the return of peace and apt to forget the many vital unsolved problems which lie beyond its ken, but it is none the less a dangerous policy to keep it deliberately in ignorance of the abyss which is opening at its very feet.

The relations between Italy and the Jugoslavs are one of the pivotal problems of the war and its settlement, both as regards the fulfilment of the public pledges towards “ the small nations,” and also as regards the whole future fate of the territories once known as the Habsburg Monarchy.

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. ix. No. 111, November 28, 1918, and vol. ix. No. 114, December 19, 1918.

Despite considerable abuse and some genuine misunderstanding, *The New Europe* has steadily worked for the cause of Italo-Jugoslav friendship, and remains to-day more than ever persuaded of the necessity for such a friendship as an important factor in restoring peaceful and ordered conditions in South-Eastern Europe. But though it has hitherto been possible to make out a case for not probing too deeply the causes which have hampered the attainment of a complete and cordial understanding between the two peoples, it is clear that the moment has now come when only a frank recognition of the facts can save us from disastrous decisions.

The root of the whole evil lies in the secret treaty concluded on April 26, 1915, by Great Britain, France, and Russia with Italy. The main lines of this iniquitous arrangement had already leaked out soon after its conclusion, but it was not until the Bolševiks obtained control in Petrograd that the actual text of the treaty became known; and to this day only two British newspapers—the *Manchester Guardian* and *The New Europe*—have dared to acquaint their readers with its sacred contents. The territorial concessions thus secured by Italy include, not merely Southern Tirol to the Brenner, Gorizia, Trieste, the line of the Julian Alps to near Fiume, and the whole of Istria (with the islands of Lussin and Cherso), but also the whole of Northern Dalmatia, including Zara, Sebenico and their hinterland, and even the southern islands of Lissa, Lesina, Curzola, and Meleda. This involves the annexation of nearly three-quarters of a million Slovenes and Croats, living in compact masses and with a keenly developed national consciousness.

The secret treaty was based upon entirely false premises, which have long since been proved incapable of supporting

sound conclusions. It was drawn up in an entirely different world, which three more years of war have literally blown to fragments, and only the blindest of the blind could delude themselves with the belief that it could be executed under present conditions. Not merely was it a secret contract, concluded behind the backs of the peoples upon whom it is alleged to be binding. This, though a grave defect, was thoroughly in accordance with those principles of old-world diplomacy which, even in the year 1915, determined the action of London, Paris, Petrograd, and Rome. But what gives this treaty a peculiarly flagrant character is the fact that its framers were, from the first, well aware that it could only be imposed in direct defiance of the wishes of the populations most immediately concerned, and that Serbia in her position of trustee for her kinsmen could never become a party to such a betrayal. Consequently, the Italian Government insisted, as a preliminary to negotiations, that the whole transaction should be concealed from the knowledge of the Serbian Government; and so strictly was this secret observed that but for the keen wit and energy of the exiled Croat leader Frano Supilo, the bargain might have long remained utterly unsuspected.

By abandoning to an alien rule something like 700,000 of the very Slavs among whom the movement for national unity had struck deepest root, and by allowing strategic reasons to outweigh the wishes of the inhabitants, the Entente statesmen stultified the programme of the Rights of Small Nations which they had so often and so loudly proclaimed. Moreover, they paid for Italy's adhesion, not with their own property, but with the property and indeed with the very life-blood, of other nations whom they did not deign to consult. If these statesmen to-day

are embarrassed by the refusal of the Jugoslavs to be used as the small change in an illicit bargain, the least that they can do is to buy out Italy with property of which they are entitled to dispose ; and they may be thankful if the Allied peoples do not punish them for a transaction which in private life would render its authors liable to penal servitude.

Meanwhile, quite apart from all moral considerations, the terms of the treaty are entirely meaningless, save on the assumption that Austria-Hungary is to survive as a Great Power ; and yet it is superfluous to point out that it was above all the cry of " *Delenda Austria* " which nerved Italy to so prolonged a contest. Now that the dissolution which Baron Sonnino steadily declined to regard as possible has become an accomplished fact, the whole bottom has in any case been knocked out of the agreement. It is an open secret that the territorial line laid down in the convention differs materially from that advocated by Italian naval experts and was inserted through the efforts of a small political clique in Rome. The submarine problem has so completely revolutionised naval conditions, that the reasons adduced for occupying as far as Cape Planka would only become really valid if Italy occupied the whole coast as far as Antivari ; and, in any case, she merely tends to replace naval by still more serious military liabilities. In Professor Salvemini's words (" *La Questione dell' Adriatico*," p. 167), " Rome, having occupied the Dalmatian coast to safeguard Adriatic commerce against the pirates, had, under Augustus, to occupy the hinterland as far as the Danube, to safeguard Dalmatia. When the Slavs occupied the basin of the Save, Dalmatia also was lost for the Empire. The Venetians, who occupied the coast, were long troubled in their possession by Slavs, Magyars, and

Turks. And Austria, when mistress of Dalmatia, had in her turn to occupy Bosnia. Does Italy wish to submit to the same necessity?" If Italy, after enforcing her claims under this convention, were to become involved in war with the Jugoslavs, her whole Dalmatian position would at once be untenable, or, at best, large forces would be locked up in an unprofitable and precarious expedition across the sea. Thus the only critics who can be found to justify the treaty are not the sailors and soldiers, but the politicians who framed it and who see their reputation at stake. History will pass upon it the verdict that it combined the maximum of immorality with the minimum of advantage, whether military, naval, political, or economic.

The blame for this treaty does not rest with Italy alone : it is shared equally by Britain, France, and Tsarist Russia. But while the other three Foreign Ministers who concluded it have long since fallen, Baron Sonnino still remains at his post, and with usurious stubbornness seeks to hold the Allies to their bond. For over two years he maintained a rigorous censorship against the Slavophil currents in Italian public opinion, and even since this was relaxed he has continued the practice of sending as propagandists of the Italian cause abroad the fiercest of anti-Slavonic fire-eaters. The Western Allies on their part have done nothing to bring him to a more reasonable frame of mind, and he has enjoyed the signal advantage of possessing in the French and British Ambassadors to the Quirinal two charming but weak enthusiasts for his person whom long residence has made more Italian than the Italians.

The effect of the treaty, when hints as to its contents trickled through to Austria, was exactly that which all competent observers had prophesied at the time. Italy, who by unreservedly entering the war upon the basis of

the Mazzinian principle of liberation, could have rallied all the subject-races of Austria-Hungary to her standard, saw herself regarded by them with alarm and suspicion, which Viennese and Magyar intrigue did everything to inflame. The false policy of Sonnino and his group galvanised Austria-Hungary into fresh life, and has cost the lives of many thousands on both sides of the black-and-yellow frontier. Nothing can better illustrate the unnatural situation thus produced than the fact that while Austria-Hungary was employing every measure of repression and persecution against the Jugoslavs at home, and while thousands of their volunteers were fighting heroically in the ranks of the Serbian Army in Macedonia and the Dobrudja, other Slav regiments stubbornly defended the Carso against Italy in the belief that they were saving their national territory from foreign imperialistic designs. The absurdity of denouncing as Austrophil this action of a race of Austrophobes is at last becoming clear even to the most wilfully blind : for the Serbs of the kingdom are absolutely solid with their kinsmen of Croatia and Slovenia in resisting Italian aggression. An ominous proof of this is provided by the intimation addressed on 15th November by the Voivode Mišić in the name of the Serbian Army and of the Zagreb National Council to the Italians marching upon Ljubljana, warning them that any attempt to occupy the Slovene capital will be resisted by force of arms.

From 1915 to 1917 Italy reaped the fruit of her short-sighted policy, but nothing occurred to shake the attachment of the leading Entente statesmen to the old diplomatic methods. But the situation was completely transformed by the Russian Revolution and the entry of America into the war. For, on the one hand, the young Russian Democracy, as yet free from Bolševist infection, repudiated

the secret methods of Tsardom and inscribed the watchword of Self-Determination upon its banners; while, on the other hand, America was entirely free from any European engagements and had not the slightest intention of entangling herself in diplomatic commitments savouring of the Congresses of Vienna and Berlin. The contrast between the public professions of the Entente statesmen and their cryptic agreements behind the scenes became more and more glaring. The doctrine of Self-Determination, though certainly surrounded by a good deal of loose thinking and vague talk, held the field as a general principle, and may be said to have been adopted by the Allied democracies as their common programme for a world-settlement.

In such circumstances it became more and more obvious that, unless professions and practice could be squared, eventual disaster was inevitable. As official circles in the three Western countries showed a complete inability to grasp this situation or to find a new and sounder basis of policy, a number of private individuals in Italy, France, and Britain set themselves to create a favourable atmosphere in the press and public opinion for the new ideas. In particular an attempt was made to bring together the more progressive political leaders of Italy and the exiled Yugoslav representatives — it being recognised that an understanding between Italians and Yugoslavs was an essential condition to a sound collective Entente policy towards Austria, and therefore towards the whole problem of racial and political reconstruction in Southern Europe. After a number of preliminary meetings and discussions, an agreement was reached last March between Signor Torre, representing a large proportion of Italian senators and deputies, and Dr. Trumbić, the President of the Yugoslav

Committee and co-signatory with Mr. Pašić of the Declaration of Corfu of July 1917.¹

The Torre-Trumbić agreement formed the basis of the Congress of Oppressed Austrian Nationalities which met in April in the Roman Capitol, and inaugurated the political campaign of last summer which contributed so materially towards sapping the final resistance of the Dual Monarchy. The public endorsement of the agreement by the Italian Premier, Signor Orlando, was generally regarded as an acceptance of the principle of revision of the London Convention; and it is an open secret that nowhere was the satisfaction at this changed policy more profound than in official American circles. Mr. Lansing, in his pronouncements in favour of the Czecho-Slovaks and Jugoslavs, is understood to have taken as his basis the Torre-Trumbić resolutions, as publicly endorsed by the Rome Congress. If one thing is certain at the impending Peace Conference, it is that America will decline to ratify or to be bound by the secret treaty of London, and will express herself in favour of an arrangement following as nearly as possible the lines of ethnographic cleavage and resting upon those principles of mutual respect and friendly give-and-take which are embodied in the Torre-Trumbić resolutions.

Unhappily, during the last six months Baron Sonnino has deliberately thrown away the "moral primacy" which Italy had assumed in the Capitol as regards the Austrian nationalities; and in his renewed efforts to hold France and Britain to the letter of their bond, and in his stubborn opposition to the recognition of the new Jugoslav Govern-

¹ There were three witnesses to their signature—Mr. Wickham Steed, Signor Emanuel (of the *Corriere della Sera*), and myself. Professor Borgese and Sir Arthur Evans were also present on two occasions during the negotiations.

ment, he appears to have had the backing of Signor Orlando, who has weakly receded from his former position. As we have already pointed out, the inclusion in the Austro-Hungarian armistice of the territorial line conceded to Italy by the London Convention—a step which has absolutely no military significance in view of the break-up of Austria-Hungary into distinct national units—has not unnaturally been regarded in all Slav circles as the affirmation of Italy's extreme territorial claim. Nor can the Jugoslavs be blamed for fearing lest the acceptance of these conditions by the other Allies and by America and their refusal to accede to the Zagreb Government's appeal for recognition are to be construed as an endorsement of that claim. The fact that the Italians have not even rested content with the line assigned to them by the Armistice, but have pushed forward into territory to which they have no conceivable claim, has greatly increased the danger of the situation and has led the Zagreb Government to lodge a formal appeal with the Entente, demanding that Italian troops shall be replaced by British, French, and American troops on Jugoslav territory, lest Italy should attempt by occupation to create some kind of title of possession. The history of the Greek Dodecanese has not been forgotten.

The Italians, on the other hand, have filled the columns of their daily press with moving accounts of the welcome received by their forces on the other side of the Adriatic and lost few opportunities of inflaming public feeling against the "Croats." They make a special grievance of the acceptance by the Jugoslav Revolutionary Committees of the Austro-Hungarian Fleet when it was handed over to them by the Vienna Government *in articulo mortis*. But they do not explain whether they would have had the Jugoslav Committees refuse the Fleet, especially after it

had been *de facto* in their hands for some days previously. Nor has any Italian journal yet had the courage to tell its readers that, but for the outrageous imprisonment and detention in Italy of the Yugoslav and Czecho-Slovak emissaries from the Austro-Hungarian Fleet, who left Curzola in a sailing boat and landed in Italy on 4th October, the Allies might have had full disposal of the Austro-Hungarian Fleet three weeks before the Yugoslavs took possession of it. These emissaries, led by well-known men, had definite instructions to communicate at once with Dr. Beneš, the Foreign Secretary of the Czecho-Slovak Government, and with Dr. Trumbić, the President of the Yugoslav Committee. They were not allowed to communicate with them for three weeks, although Dr. Beneš passed several days at Rome in the first half of October, while the emissaries, unknown to him, were actually interned there.

These facts and many others of a like nature ought to be known to the Italian public. They would help it to form a true view of the past, to understand the present position of the Italian Government in regard to its Allies, and to urge it to adopt the only policy which can save it from one of two regrettable alternatives—humiliation, or an armed conflict with the Yugoslavs. The only way of escape is for Italy to hark back to the principle of the Rome Congress and to take the initiative in promoting a good and just settlement with the people which, if not bound to Italy by friendly alliance, can only be her enemy. It is time for Italy to remember that she is a great liberal power, and that any attempt to substitute herself for Austria in dealing with the Adriatic and Balkan races can only bring her into conflict with her own best traditions and deprive her of the goodwill of all the other liberal powers of the world.

Unless a new and sounder basis can be found, Britain and France may at any moment be called upon to impose by force of arms upon a recalcitrant population a solution which runs counter to the fundamental principles in whose name the Great War has been fought and won. Even to the most obtuse and fiery of patriots it must be obvious that President Wilson and the American nation will never become a party to such action, and that to insist upon the Treaty would be one of the surest means of rendering the whole project of a League of Nations stillborn. Indeed, so obvious is this that many people are asking themselves whether the exaggerated insistence on the Treaty in certain quarters is not, after all, a mere pretext to cover far other designs.

Meanwhile, the Pact of Rome remains the charter of all who still uphold the cause of Italo-Jugoslav friendship; and it is safe to assert that it will also remain one of the historic documents of the war. Its text runs as follows :

The representatives of the nationalities subjected, in whole or in part, to the rule of Austria-Hungary—the Italians, Poles, Roumanians, Czechs, and Jugoslavs—join in affirming their principles of common action as follows :

1. Each of these peoples proclaims its right to constitute its own nationality and State unity or to complete it and to attain full political and economic independence.
2. Each of these peoples recognises in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy the instrument of German domination and the fundamental obstacle to the realisation of its aspirations and rights.
3. The assembly recognises the necessity of a common struggle against the common oppressors, in order that each people may attain complete liberation and national unity within a free State unit.

The representatives of the Italian people and of the Jugoslav people in particular agree as follows :

1. In the relations between the Italian nation and the nation of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes—known also under the name of the Yugoslav nation—the representatives of the two peoples recognise that the unity and independence of the Yugoslav nation is a vital interest of Italy, just as the completion of Italian national unity is a vital interest of the Yugoslav nation. And therefore the representatives of the two peoples pledge themselves to employ every effort in order that, during the war and at the moment of the peace, these decisions (*finalità*) of the two nations may be completely attained.

2. They declare that the liberation of the Adriatic Sea and its defence against every present and future enemy is a vital interest of the two peoples.

3. They pledge themselves also, in the interest of good and sincere relations between the two peoples in the future, to solve amicably the various territorial controversies on the basis of the principles of nationality and of the right of peoples to decide their own fate, and in such a way as not to injure the vital interests of the two nations, such as shall be defined at the moment of peace.

4. To such racial groups (*nuclei*) of one people as it may be found necessary to include within the frontiers of the other there shall be recognised and guaranteed the right to their language, culture, and moral and economic interests.

The Pact of Rome provides the framework of an agreement. It only remains to consider what its execution would involve in practice.

That each of the two nations should recognise the unity and independence of both as a common interest is merely a recognition of the principle of "live and let live" and of that parity upon which true neighbourly relations always depend. In effect, it is a public homage rendered by both parties to the principles of Nationality and Self-Determination and a renunciation of the imperialistic designs which inspired the bankrupt diplomacy of a recent past.

The liberation and defence of the Adriatic must of necessity be the foremost aim of both Italians and Jugo-

slavs. Any tendency to regard it as the exclusive possession of one alone must be firmly resisted. Nature has divided that sea between the two peoples, and each has an equal interest in preventing the *political* intrusion of others, while assuring absolute freedom of commercial intercourse to all comers. If Italian and Yugoslav should prove incapable of mapping out amicably their respective spheres of influence in the Adriatic and according to each other a maximum of reciprocity, then they are simply abdicating in favour of the German *tertius gaudens*. Such folly will injure not themselves alone, but also their friends of the Entente, who regard an Italo-Yugoslav understanding as one of the most essential elements of a new order in Europe.

It is obvious that the main difficulty centres round the question of the future frontier between Italy and Jugoslavia; but this, too, is not insurmountable, if only goodwill be shown on both sides and if the principles of the Pact of Rome—Nationality and Self-determination—be applied with due regard to other “vital interests.” An essential preliminary to any compromise is a recognition of the utter impossibility of finding a line which shall satisfy both races and which shall leave no minorities on either side. Such recognition should be followed by the admission that an ethnographic frontier would none the less be the ideal, by the undertaking to work for it in so far as geographical and strategic reasons may permit, and by the solemn mutual pledge of full linguistic rights in church, school, law court, and communal administration, to all minorities on either side of the new frontier. Any Government which refused this would *ipso facto* place itself in the wrong.

THE TRUE LINES OF AN ADRIATIC SETTLEMENT ¹

THE actual territory in dispute between the Italians and Jugoslavs is situated in the former Austrian provinces of Gorizia-Gradisca, Trieste, Carniola, Istria, and Dalmatia. The total number of unredeemed Italians amounted, at the census of 1910, to 768,422. From these the 385,700 Italians of Tirol have to be subtracted, since their case is not even open to discussion. The remaining 382,722 are distributed as follows :

	Italians.		Jugoslavs.		Total.
Gorizia-Gradisca	90,009	36 %	154,564	61 %	260,721
Trieste . . .	118,959	62·3%	56,916	29·8%	229,510
Istria . . .	147,417	38 %	223,318	57·7%	403,566
Dalmatia . . .	18,028	2·8%	610,669	96 %	645,666

Let us state as briefly as possible the salient facts behind these statistics :—(1) The right bank of the River Isonzo and a strip on the left bank as far as Monfalcone are purely Italian. The town of Gorizia has an Italian majority (roughly, 14,000 as against 11,000 Slovenes). In the remainder of the province there is not even an Italian minority. (2) The city of Trieste, in addition to 62 per cent of its native population, has a permanent addition of 30–40,000 Italian immigrants from the Kingdom of Italy,

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. ix. No. 116, January 2, 1919.

who accentuate still further its Italian character. Yet even inside the bounds of the municipality there is a strong Slav minority of between 25 and 30 per cent, progressive, well educated, and highly organised; and the moment the suburbs are left the traveller finds himself in purely Slovene territory. (3) In Istria the races are more mixed; but it is none the less possible to identify two zones—the Western predominantly Italian (129,903 Italians, as against 58,373 Croats and Slovenes) and the Eastern, which is almost exclusively Slav (135,290 Croats and Slovenes as against 6686 Italians). In other words, the Italians predominate in the western coast towns, Pola, Capodistria, Rovigno, etc., whereas the rural districts of the interior are incontestably Slav. (4) In Dalmatia the Italians are a negligible minority of less than 3 per cent in a purely Serbo-Croat population; and even this minority is confined to half-a-dozen towns along the coast, of which Zara alone accounts for one-third. In all the Dalmatian islands together the total number of Italians does not run into four figures. (5) There remains the town of Fiume, where there are 24,212 Italians and 15,687 Slavs. If, however, the important suburb of Susak be included (and the two are every bit as inseparable as Edinburgh and Leith), the population consists of 24,870 Italians and 27,393 Slavs (with about 10,000 Magyars, Germans, etc.), while the whole surrounding country is purely Croat.

There is a not unnatural tendency on both sides to insist upon the inclusion of the entire race within the national territory, and to overlook the consequences which this would involve for its neighbour. On this basis no human ingenuity can solve the problem; for the Italians, in order to satisfy the demands of every Italian minority along the coast, would be obliged to annex territory containing at

least 700,000 Slavs, while the Jugoslavs, in order to unite all their kinsmen to the new State, would have to annex not less than 350,000 Italian Irredenti, and, in addition, a corner of the Kingdom of Italy, containing 30,000 Slav-speaking Friulians. We have never hesitated to insist, with our Slav friends, that the latter claim (which, in its extreme form, has never been seriously put forward) would be at once monstrous and inadmissible; but for that very reason we are entitled to expect that our Italian friends should not put forward equally inadmissible claims in the opposite direction. If the Italians for the sake of a minority of 3 per cent (even the most daring controversialists do not claim more than 10 per cent) are entitled to annex Slav Dalmatia, obviously the Jugoslavs would, on the same basis, be entitled to annex Italian Trieste for the sake of a minority of 30 per cent. In reality, neither argument is valid; but, unhappily, the extreme Italian claim (with the single modification of Fiume) has acquired the sanction of the Secret Treaty.

The essence of the problem is to leave as few minorities as possible on the wrong side of the final line and to strike an average between ethnography and geography. Historic rights will not bring us far towards a solution, for while Dalmatia might conceivably be claimed in the name of her Venetian conquerors—hardly a title which the League of Nations is likely to accept—it would then be necessary to renounce Trieste, which voluntarily placed itself under the protection of the Habsburgs in 1382 and has ever since owed its entire prosperity to the connection with its hinterland to the north. It is neither on historical nor on economic, but on moral and spiritual grounds that Trieste must be assigned to Italy, as a centre of Italian culture and sentiment. But political union must immediately be

followed by the proclamation of Trieste as a free international port under the Italian flag. Any attempt to make its trade subject to the tariff system of Italy would mean not only disaster for the great commercial interests of the city itself, but infinite trouble with the landlocked states which depend upon it as their commercial outlet. One of the most important innovations which the League of Nations is likely to introduce into the European system is some kind of international regulation or control of certain main railways and waterways and the ports to which they give access ; and in this Trieste and Fiume will play a part only inferior to Constantinople itself. " And here it is well to point out that the party which favours exaggerated strategic claims will also be the party which opposes a liberal policy in Trieste ; for, as a free commercial port, open to every nation, the town will not require any elaborate land defences, whereas, as the commercial preserve of a State upon which it can never, geographically or economically, depend, it will require a wide hinterland and ceaseless military expenditure on a large scale." ¹

Meanwhile the true problem with regard to Trieste and its hinterland—Venezia Giulia, to quote the somewhat misleading name by which it is often called—is " not whether Italians shall destroy the Slavs, or Slavs eject Italians, but whether Italians and Slavs will succeed in uniting to keep the Germans away from the Adriatic, or whether the Germans will profit by the quarrels of the two races in order to reduce both to subjection." The German designs upon Trieste have, for more than a generation past, formed an integral part of the *Drang nach Osten*, and it has always been part of their tactics to foment the quarrel

¹ Seton-Watson, " The Balkans, Italy, and the Adriatic," p. 58 (1915).!

between Italian and Slav. To-day it is the duty of those who are the friends of both to prevent these tares from being sown. The growth of German commercial influence at Trieste has been very marked in recent years, and in 1910 the number of German residents in the city had reached 11,800. Vienna has always been the pliant tool of this penetration, and the policy of the Austrian Lloyd and of the Tauern Railway (connecting Trieste directly with South Germany by a remarkable engineering feat) showed to all but the wilfully blind that Vienna was really acting for Berlin and Munich. But to-day again it is only the wilfully blind who can pretend to argue that the Jugoslavs, and, above all, the Slovenes, can be anything but anti-German, or can ever consent to a German penetration of Trieste, unless indeed Italian appetites reduce them to the position of the starving beggar who can only think of his next meal. As Professor Salvemini has pointed out, "The Germans would have to ask for a free path towards Trieste, that is, the sacrifice to German political interests, not only of Italian Trieste, but of the whole Slovene hinterland. In other words, the basis of a German-Jugoslav alliance would have to be the amputation of the Southern Slav national State." In one contingency only would such an accord be theoretically conceivable—namely, if the Italians should insist upon a still greater amputation; and it is this which far-sighted Entente statesmen must keep in mind.

With regard to Gorizia there is general agreement that Italy must receive not only the right bank of the Isonzo, but also enough of the left bank to provide a satisfactory and tenable frontier line, and, in particular, the town of Gorizia itself (which has unhappily suffered more than any other in those regions from the ravages of war). Here the

natural preliminary to an agreement is the admission that it is unnecessary to adhere to the exact boundaries of the province of Gorizia-Gradisca, and indeed that the interests of the two are by no means identical, for a number of reasons quite unconnected with ethnography. If, however, we start from the standpoint that for the Italians the Trentino stands altogether outside discussion, and that no compromise is possible in the case of Gorizia and Trieste, we shall arrive, on close examination of the facts, at the conclusion that Istria—as is only natural, in view of its intermediary situation—lends itself to detailed discussion, whereas the Jugoslavs, in their turn, cannot accept any compromise on the subject of Dalmatia and Fiume.

In the case of Istria, both sides must once more accept as a preliminary axiom that an exact ethnographic frontier is unobtainable, and that there must be sacrifices on both sides. But it so happens that Italy's frontier in Roman times, running from the Arsa estuary northwards through the interior of the little peninsula, corresponds approximately with the line of partition between Latin and Slav, and may fairly be taken as a rough basis for discussion by the special international Commission which will doubtless have to make the final decision. It is clear that the western portion of the peninsula must be assigned to Italy, but that Jugoslavia is fully entitled to claim the inland districts, where the Slavonic population never falls below 90 per cent. Of the islands, Lussin alone has an Italian majority (7588 Italians to 4380 Croats); Cherso, of which the total population only amounts to 8000, contains a Slavonic majority of 3 to 1; while Veglia (Krk) is overwhelmingly Slav (19,562 to 1544 Italians). Here ethnography and strategy need not clash; for Lussin is a necessary protection to Pola and its approaches, and would therefore

naturally fall to Italy, while the two more easterly islands are equally necessary for the protection of Fiume, and should share the fate of the Croatian mainland.

The problem of Fiume is, above all, economic. Fiume and Susak are inseparable from each other, and have neither life nor meaning if artificially separated from the surrounding district, which is purely Croat. In order to include the 25,000 Italians of Fiume, Italy would be obliged to annex at least 100,000 Slavs, in addition to those whom she will inevitably acquire in Western Istria and behind Trieste. The right of Self-Determination must not be taken to mean that every town or village is free to detach itself from its neighbour, and Fiume less than most towns can be removed from its setting. It owes not merely its importance, like Trieste, but almost its very existence, to the commercial requirements and ever-growing demands of a wide hinterland during the past century and a half. Its severance from Jugoslavia would not only be an injury in which the new State could never tamely acquiesce, but would spell utter ruin for Fiume itself, since the Croats, if deprived of their chief port, would have no course save to divert the railway traffic to Buccari, where they could not be interfered with. It is quite true that in five or ten years the whole problem may have been transformed, and that when the railways of Jugoslavia have been completed, Spalato will become her chief commercial outlet. But as matters stand to-day, Fiume is the only Jugoslav port which has a broad-gauge railway connection with the interior, and must therefore, for a long time to come, be the chief harbour of Serbia and Croatia alike. Indeed, even if the trade of Belgrade is eventually diverted farther to the south, Fiume will always remain the chief Adriatic outlet of Zagreb, Budapest, Central and Southern Hungary, and even of

Bohemia. There are of course certain business and financial interests, which would like to secure for Trieste a monopoly at Fiume's expense, and seek to attain their end by goading the Irredentists of the latter city into a course which would spell their complete ruin. But such intrigues are foredoomed to failure, and common sense makes it clear that Fiume must form part of Jugoslavia, though preserving its special autonomous charter and proclaimed as a free port under the guarantee of the League of Nations.

Italian claims to Dalmatia fall into four categories: ethnographic, historical, cultural, and geographical or strategic. (1) The figures already quoted show the ethnographic claim to be utterly untenable, Dalmatia being inhabited, even on the showing of the Slavophobes, by an overwhelmingly Slavonic population. (2) The historic argument is of very little value, quite apart from the fact that its application would deprive Italy of Trieste. If Dalmatia is to be claimed as a Roman province, then Gaul, Britain, Spain and much else might be demanded with equal reason. If Italy claims the heritage of Venice, she will not rest content with Dalmatia, but will have to annex most of the Albanian and Greek coast towns, to say nothing of many other points in the Levant and along the Black Sea. But of course in reality Venice, great as she was, was never the promoter of *Italianità* on those coasts, still less the forerunner of modern Italian nationalism; and her conquest of Dalmatia was inspired by colonial and mercantile motives of the narrow kind then prevalent throughout Europe. Her supreme aim was to exclude all save herself from the navigation of the Adriatic, and even within its waters to prevent, at all costs, the commercial development of other Adriatic cities. The Dalmatian policy of Venice deserves to be consigned to a kindly oblivion, not to form

the basis of any new title of possession. Indeed, it might fairly be argued that the heirs of Venice owe a special debt of moderation to the province which she exploited so mercilessly in the past.

(3) Abandoning history and race, the controversialists contend that Dalmatia's whole cultural tradition is Italian, and that in the life of the province the Italian minorities fill a place so altogether disproportionate to their numbers as to entitle them to a decisive voice as to its fate. While, however, no one questions the deep influence which Italian culture has always exercised and may still exercise in Dalmatia, it is necessary to point out (what the casual inquirer is too apt to overlook) that side by side with the Italian, Dalmatia can boast of a distinctive Slavonic culture of her own. Dalmatia is the home of the Glagolitic rite, which has been sung in many churches since the ninth century. Its churches and artistic treasures are above all a blend of Byzantine and Venetian influences, but they are mainly the work of native Slav artists, who have added their own peculiar flavour. The Dalmatian Croats have produced a rich crop of popular ballads, which an Italian priest was the first to introduce to the West; and early in the seventeenth century they already possessed a brilliant galaxy of poets in the Ragusan Republic and in Spalato. During the present century many of the leading Serbo-Croat poets, historians, and artists belong to Dalmatia, and though Austria had shockingly neglected the schools of the hinterland, the coast towns have a network of educational and intellectual institutions which have long since out-distanced the scanty fragments which the Italians have to show.

(4) Some extremists assert that the natural frontier of Italy to the east is not the Adriatic Sea, but the high

mountain range which screens the Croatian and Dalmatian coast-line from its hinterland from Liburnia as far south as the Narenta. This is so patent an absurdity that it is perhaps superfluous to point out that all the most serious Italian writers from Dante downwards have always treated the Quarnero, either at the Arsa or Monte Maggiore, as the natural boundary.

There remains the strategic argument, which alone has any serious foundation. In making war Italy was inspired not only by the ardent desire to complete her national unity, but by a motive equally powerful and equally legitimate—the desire for a safe strategic frontier in the Alps, and for real security in the Adriatic. In its own very inadequate way, the Treaty of London sought to attain this end; unfortunately it relied upon the methods of the Metternichian era for its realisation, and thus started from the radically false assumption that Austria-Hungary would survive an Allied victory. But even from the purely strategic standpoint the whole basis of the Treaty was essentially unsound, since nothing short of the complete annexation of the whole Eastern coast, from Trieste to Cattaro, could really avert the naval dangers which a lively imagination had conjured up, and in the moment when the naval problem seemed solved, Italy would automatically be confronted with the new and still deadlier military problem of defending a frontier of 300 miles. Since, however, even the Treaty only assigns certain portions of the coast to Italy, the result would be to saddle her with an equal share of naval and military disadvantages, but to rid her completely of neither.

To-day naval power depends far less upon naval bases than upon the units of a fleet. Britain bore down Germany on sea, though the latter had armed to the teeth the base of

Heligoland. All the naval bases of Asia Minor and the Adriatic did not avail the Central Powers against our Mediterranean forces. Pola has proved to be of relatively little value owing to the superiority of the Italian, or at least the Allied, fleets; and it is obvious that in any further conflict Italy, who succeeded in outdistancing in naval armaments Austria-Hungary, with her 52,000,000 inhabitants, will always maintain a sufficient superiority over a small state like Jugoslavia to establish a blockade of the latter's ports. The submarine problem has upset all previous values in naval warfare, and the submarine and aerial developments of the next decade are certain to reduce still further the importance of naval bases, hitherto regarded as impregnable and decisive, and may lead to the distribution of war material over a far wider area.

The cession under the Secret Treaty of the two groups of Dalmatian islands, and even of a large section of the mainland to Italy was intelligible so long as there existed the deliberate intention to prevent the union of Croatia and Serbia. But now that this is an accomplished fact, these territorial clauses are not merely anachronous, but well-nigh incapable of execution, for their effect would be to cut the Jugoslav coast into three separate fragments, and thus to establish a galling control over the whole seagoing commerce of the new state, and even upon the ordinary communications between one town and another. If the Treaty were executed, a native of Fiume could not visit Spalato, nor a native of Spalato Ragusa, without passing through foreign territory, and every time that he did so he would have before his eyes the unredeemed homes of his kinsmen in the Northern archipelago, or in Lesina and Curzola. The disastrous effects upon the coast trade, and on those fishing and wine industries by which so many

Dalmatians keep body and soul together, may easily be imagined. Dalmatia has already suffered sufficiently under Austria from a policy of economic isolation ; but all such miseries would be accentuated tenfold if Zara and its district were to be severed even from such poor hinterland as it possesses. Zara, it is already being argued in some Italian quarters, is a backwater with no economic future, and may therefore be assigned the rôle of a national museum ! This, however, is a standpoint which is scarcely likely to appeal even to the most enthusiastic Italian that ever lived in Zara. It is, of course, obvious that the Jugoslavs, if deprived of their natural birthright in Northern Dalmatia, would treat it as dead flesh, cut off from all connection with the main body, and would set themselves to develop Spalato, Metković, and Gravosa against Zara and Sebenico, just as they would develop Buccari at the expense of Fiume if the latter were assigned to Italy. In such a deplorable event the railway, connecting Spalato with Knin (and so eventually with the outer world through Ogulin and Banjaluka) has been made under the Secret Treaty to run for a short distance through Italian territory, and this would at once become the source of further acute friction.

Such provisions merely challenge opposition. Dalmatia belongs to the Slavs, and Italy could only hold it at the sword's point and at the price of Jugoslavia's lasting enmity. But the demands put forward by many Italians that a special autonomous position should be accorded to the municipality of Zara within the new state, and that special facilities for instruction in Italian should be accorded in all the coast towns (in addition to the ordinary linguistic rights of minorities) are eminently reasonable, and are almost certain to have the support of the Peace Conference.

In addition to this, if Italy is not satisfied with naval

superiority, she can still further strengthen her position by occupying the five principal keys of the Adriatic—Trieste and Pola, Lussinpiccolo (which covers the back of Pola and commands the entrance to the Quarnero and to the port of Fiume, and which at the same time happens to be the only island in which the Italian element is not entirely negligible), Lissa (which is, in a certain sense, the Adriatic Heligoland and would be invaluable as a check to aggression from the Eastern coast), and Valona, which commands the Straits of Otranto. "All this can be secured to Italy without any very serious violation of the principle of nationality."¹ It is, however, obvious that the cession of Lissa to Italy, though only involving the loss of a few thousand inhabitants, would be keenly resented from the sentimental Jugoslav point of view, and would serve as a perpetual irritant between the two peoples. The best that could be said of it is that it would be better than a fresh war, the worst, that it might act as the incentive to one.

But when all has been said, Italy's security in the Adriatic must always depend upon two paramount considerations—the maintenance on the one hand of amicable relations with the population of the Eastern coast, and on the other of her own naval superiority. What greater national or strategic gain to Italy can possibly be imagined than what her alliance with the maritime powers of Europe and America has already brought her in the present war? Not merely has Austria-Hungary disappeared as a Great Power, it has actually ceased to exist, and the Germans have ceased to be a directing force in the Adriatic. Italy no longer finds as her neighbour a state of 52,000,000 inhabitants closely allied with the greatest military power of modern times, but a state of 11,000,000

¹ Seton-Watson, *op. cit.* p. 72.

exhausted and decimated by war, disease, and famine, and confronted by immense problems of internal organisation. Above all, the Austro-Hungarian fleet has ceased to exist, and Italy, with the consent of her Allies, is in a position to prevent it from ever being replaced. That loyal champion of Italo-Slav friendship, Professor Salvemini, wrote when Italy was still neutral: "We cannot prevent Austria from having a fleet, because she already possesses one. But the Serbia of to-morrow we must prevent from having one, both in her own interest and in ours; and we can take advantage of this moment, which will never recur in history, in order to exclude from the Adriatic Austria, which has a fleet, and to substitute for her a new state which has no fleet, and which we can prevent from creating one."

To-day no one could blame Italy for insisting upon this standpoint, since a Yugoslav fleet could only be directed against Italy. The Yugoslavs, on the other hand, while they cannot be expected to regard with equanimity a greatly augmented Italian fleet, which, so far as the Adriatic is concerned, could only be used against them, must realise that they can never seriously hope to compete in naval armaments with a country so greatly superior to their own in men and resources. Moreover, they will have no spare capital to invest in fleets and arsenals, and if once an honourable basis of settlement with Italy can be found, they will not only have no inducement to build a fleet, but every inducement to save themselves the heavy expenditure and commitments which it would involve.

Fortunately it is quite possible to find such a basis of settlement, equally honourable to both parties, and calculated to reduce enormously the relative importance of strategic questions. Just as the problem of the Adriatic

and of Italo-Jugoslav relations is a test case of nationality in the whole European settlement, so it may be taken as a test case for the League of Nations. The neutralisation of the whole Eastern coast of the Adriatic, from Trieste to the Bojana, if carried out under the guarantee of the League of Nations, would relieve Italy of all anxieties of a strategic nature while not imposing upon Jugoslavia any restriction which a free and high-spirited nation could not cheerfully accept. Indeed, there is little doubt that Jugoslavia, being thus saved the necessity for a naval budget, would very soon be an object of envy, at any rate among the smaller powers, and that the precedents thus created might be followed in many unexpected quarters. There is good reason to believe that the Jugoslavs themselves would be prepared to accept a solution which is so thoroughly in accordance with the principles of President Wilson, and if the proposal should be seriously put forward in the immediate future it may presumably count upon his and the Allies' enthusiastic support.

As a result, the Adriatic would present the happy spectacle of a sea in which naval arsenals and elaborate fortifications had become superfluous, and in which armed fleets could be replaced by a few gun-boats and patrol-boats, accepting orders from the new international (or "supranational") authority. It is obvious that in such circumstances the frontier dispute assumes an entirely different aspect, and can be solved far more nearly upon an ethnographic basis than would be possible if strategic considerations still predominate. It is in this direction that not only the advocates of Italo-Slav friendship, but also all who have the cause of European reconstruction and international harmony at heart, must continue to work. The true mind of Italy had already rallied to this programme,

when last April many of its political leaders ratified the Torre-Trombić Agreement and acclaimed it as the Pact of Rome ; and despite the regrettable set-backs of opinion during the past few months, we still cling to the belief that the Pact of Rome may even at this late hour form the necessary basis of an accord which the interests of Italy so urgently demand. The yelps of a tiny band of Press jackals cannot permanently prevent the good sense of the Italian people from asserting itself, and from realising the common interests which should unite them with their Jugoslav neighbours.

THE ROUMANIANS OF HUNGARY¹

THE history of Transylvania is, in many ways, unique in Europe. After forming the backbone of the ancient Dacia, it was fought over for centuries by tribe after tribe of barbarian invaders moving westwards. It was not till the end of the eleventh century that the Magyars extended their sway to what came to be called Erdély, Ardeal, Transylvania—"The land beyond the forest." Their kings, finding the country thinly populated after the ravages of centuries, encouraged Magyar and German settlers by the grant of special charters and concessions. The Transylvanian constitution crystallised round the so-called "Brotherly Union" of 1437, concluded between the three privileged "nations," the Magyar nobles, the Székelys or Frontiersmen of the eastern Carpathians, and the Saxon townsmen. When Hungary was conquered by the Turks in 1525, the principality of Transylvania survived under native Magyar princes, paying periodical tribute to the Turks. Parallel with the Turks from the South came the Reformation from the German North, and Transylvania became the scene of a remarkable experiment of religious toleration at the very moment when the wars of religion were at their height in the West. In 1571 the Estates re-

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. i. No. 1, October 19, 1916.

cognised the four confessions—Catholic, Calvinist, Lutheran, and Unitarian—as equal before the law.

Unhappily, in this seemingly ideal picture, there was one significant omission. Side by side with the three dominant races there was the silent mass of serfs, the Roumanian autochthonous population, who, in spite of their superior numbers, have never obtained recognition as a nation, and whose religion—the Orthodox or Eastern Faith—was excluded from the benefits of religious toleration. Alike during the period of Transylvanian independence (1526–1691) and the succeeding period of autonomy under Habsburg rule, the Roumanians have always occupied the position of real political helots, and have never lost an opportunity of asserting their claims of civil and religious equality. Just as in 1791 the memorable petition known as “*Supplex Libellus Valachorum*” was completely ignored by the Diet, so their great assembly on the “*Field of Liberty*” at Blaj (Blasendorf), in 1848, was a signal to the dominant race to rush through the Diet a law proclaiming the union of Transylvania with Hungary, in defiance of Roumanian and Saxon opposition. The fatal attitude of the Magyars, in refusing point blank to the Roumanians, as to the Slavs, those national rights which they claimed for themselves, ranged all the other races on the side of Austria and the Habsburgs in the terrible civil war which followed. Its evil traces still survive in memories of peasants shot and hanged wholesale without trial for their loyalty to the throne, and castles sacked and burned in revenge for centuries of oppression. When, after ten years of black reaction, constitutional government was revived in Austria in the early 'sixties, there was a brief interlude of honest dealing, the Roumanian nation and language being at last placed on an equal footing with the Magyar and the German,

and the Roumanian Orthodox Church receiving a definite charter, under its own hierarchy and elective assembly. This alarmed and angered the patriots of Budapest, and among the foremost concessions extracted from the Crown, as an earnest of the Austro-Hungarian *Ausgleich* of 1867, were the dissolution of the Transylvanian Diet, the consequent annulment of its concessions to the Roumanians, and the ratification of the forced union of 1848 by a new Diet, which was specially "packed" for the purpose, and which overrode the vigorous protests of both Roumanians and Saxons.

Since 1867, then, Transylvania has been merged in Hungary, and the Roumanian population has shared in the benefits conferred by a constitution which the Magyars are never tired of comparing to the British. To the Roumanians, as to the Slavs of Hungary, the chief pledge of political liberty has been the law of 1868 guaranteeing "the Equal Rights of all Nationalities." But this law, though for years past it has been held up to the uninformed outside world as a pattern of unexampled tolerance, has all the time, as a result of the deliberate policy of the entire Magyar ruling caste, remained a dead letter in the most literal sense of the word. It would be easy to take the document, paragraph by paragraph, and, by comparison with official statistics and the admissions of leading statesmen, to prove that, in all matters of administration, justice, education, etc., its provisions have been deliberately disregarded in favour of a ruthless policy of Magyarisation. For example, there are no state schools, secondary or primary, where the language of instruction is Roumanian, and though the Roumanians have been able to maintain their own denominational schools, this has been in addition to their liability to the state, and by the almost unaided efforts of a very

poor community. The scandalous Education Laws introduced in 1907 by that false prophet of constitutional liberty, Count Apponyi, were designed above all to effect the forcible Magyarisation of the denominational schools, the last stronghold of the nationalities. The Magyar point of view was brought out very well some twelve years ago during an education debate, when the well-known dramatist and newspaper proprietor, Mr. Rákosi, declared that the proper educational policy was to allow no teaching of any kind for three years in any of the schools attended by non-Magyars, except speaking, reciting, and singing Magyar! He was followed by Bishop Firczák, who said: "A good educational policy is in the interests of the state, but its first requirement is that it should be Magyar in all its parts. The second requirement is that it should have a moral and religious basis." The order is absolutely significant and characteristic.

It is, however, on the political side that the oppression of the Roumanians has been most glaring. Thanks to the great reputation and influence at Court of Archbishop Shaguna, the Roumanian Orthodox Metropolitan, their church autonomy was respected, and thus there was at least one valuable point of defence against Magyar aggression. But even Shaguna felt himself politically helpless, and after the *Ausgleich* coined the famous phrase, "*Flere possim, sed iuvare non*" (I could weep, but help I could not). His despairing followers committed the grave mistake of adopting a policy of abstention, and for years the Roumanians were unrepresented in the Hungarian Parliament.

In 1881 the irreconcilables met under the historian Baritiu, and founded the Roumanian National Party, whose chief demands were the fulfilment of the law of

nationalities, the restoration of Transylvanian autonomy, and universal suffrage. They were attacked with the utmost bitterness by the Magyars inside and outside Parliament, and, as press persecution grew, their committee addressed a petition to the throne, recounting their grievances in a masterly way (1892). The Hungarian Government, in its fury, not only prevented Francis Joseph from receiving them, but actually brought the whole committee to trial for "incitement against the Magyar nation"; and Dr. Ratziu and eight others were sentenced to a total of twenty-nine years' imprisonment. The Memorandum Trial awakened echoes throughout Europe, and especially in Roumania. Its victims, in a spirited defence, rubbed in the fact that it was not a question of law, but of mere brute force, declared themselves to have acted as mandataries of the Roumanian people, and denied that a whole people can be brought to justice. "By your spirit of mediaeval intolerance," they added, "by a racial fanaticism which has not its equal in Europe, you will, if you condemn us, simply succeed in proving to the world that the Magyars are a discordant note in the concert of European nations."

The Hungarian Government did not stop here. A month later it formally dissolved the Roumanian National Party as a disloyal institution, and denied the right of the Roumanians to form a party on national lines; and though events have rendered the literal enforcement of such a policy impracticable, it still represents the views of all representative Magyar statesmen. The present Premier, Count Tisza, in a famous speech in 1910, argued that, "at the moment when our Roumanian fellow-citizens form parties on the basis of nationality, they are already denying the political unity of the Hungarian nation." "Individual nationalities," said another Premier, the late Baron

Bánffy, "have no rights, only individuals have." Of course, not every one in Hungary is so crude or so frank as a well-known Budapest newspaper which, in commenting on the Memorandum Trial, expressed regret that the good old practice of affixing the heads of traitors to the gates could not be employed against the prisoners. But language scarcely less violent could be quoted *ad nauseam* from almost all the prominent public men of Hungary for a generation past. Count Andrásy, when Minister of the Interior eight years ago, defined the policy of the state as "kindliness and justice to the masses of the nationalities, but pitiless prosecution of the agitators who lead them"; and, next morning, a leading daily added the comment, "We, the Magyar nation and Magyar society, are not satisfied with so little. We wish to Magyarise Hungary completely." In short, in the words of Coloman Széll, one of the most moderate Premiers of modern Hungary, and the favourite pupil of the great Deák, "The unitary Magyar state is the highest aim of Hungarian policy, and every statesman must be irreconcilable in pursuing it. Hungary must first be preserved as a Magyar land, and then it must be cultivated, rich, and progressive."

At the elections of 1906, the Roumanians, abandoning the old policy of abstention, managed to secure fourteen seats in Parliament, but this was only a momentary oversight on the part of the Magyars; and in 1910 their number was reduced to five, as the result of one of the most corrupt and terroristic elections of modern times. It is difficult to convey to Western readers an adequate impression of the electoral methods employed in Hungary, especially in the non-Magyar constituencies. Apart from an elaborate system of gerrymandering, the absence of the ballot, and the narrowness of the franchise, the whole machinery of

state is set in motion to prevent the election of candidates whom the Government regards as undesirable. Cases could be cited where veterinary orders have been issued on the eve of the poll, forbidding horse traffic in the constituency ; or where the only bridge over a river has been suddenly declared unsafe and closed for traffic ; or where station-masters, by order, refuse to issue tickets to Roumanian voters ; or where electors have simply been shut up in an inn under lock and key till all was over ; or even where a candidate has been arrested as a suspicious character, his papers taken away, and he himself detained in gaol for two days and not allowed to communicate with his friends. I know of two instances in 1910 where a " dummy " candidate has been announced by the returning officer at the last moment, bearing the same name as the opposition candidate, and where the scale has then been turned by crediting votes for the latter to his imaginary namesake ! On one occasion the chief administrative official of a large constituency said to the opposition candidate, a non-Magyar friend of my own, " Even if 90 per cent of the electors go in your favour, you still won't be elected." Doubtful constituencies are flooded with troops and gendarmes, who are used to browbeat the peasantry, and, when necessary, to isolate them from their leaders. In many cases a cordon of troops is drawn round the town or village where polling is taking place, and the opposition is kept waiting outside in the wind and rain, or in the summer heat, while the Government party has the run of the town, and of the inns, with free beer and wine and other inducements. Sometimes such treatment goads the Roumanians to fury, and they resist ; then the gendarmes fire only too freely, and more than one blood bath has resulted.

In 1910 it was officially admitted by the Hungarian

Government that "only" 194 battalions of infantry and 114 squadrons of cavalry were employed at the June elections to "preserve order"—in other words, to prevent the non-Magyars, and even to some extent the Magyar opposition, from exercising their just political rights. Thanks to the help of friends who knew every cellar and backdoor in a certain Hungarian country town, I succeeded in getting through a triple cordon of infantry, cavalry, and gendarmerie, and witnessing with my own eyes such an election. On that occasion it was only the action of the non-Magyar candidate in withdrawing from the contest that averted serious bloodshed. He had an overwhelming majority of electors marshalled on the outskirts of the town, but the cordon had strict orders not to admit them. The only exception made was for the men of two particular villages, and of them the returning officer made short work, either disqualifying them altogether or crediting their votes to the Government candidate, whose hopeless minority was thus conveniently swelled into a triumphant majority.

For even when he has reached the poll, the elector's dangers are not at an end. Magyar returning officers are capable of transferring votes to the wrong side, losing the papers, allowing Government agents to vote three or four times over or to impersonate a dead man, and, indeed, disqualifying on almost any trumped-up grounds. The law of Hungary actually provides in detail for cases where the returning officer declares a candidate elected who has not received an absolute majority, or infringes the law "with the object of falsifying the result" (I quote the exact words). Such are only a few of the methods of a constitution which the Magyars are never tired of comparing with the British.

Much could be written of the systematic prosecution of

the Roumanian Press ; of how, in twenty years, over 350 Roumanian "intellectuals" were sentenced to over 150 years of imprisonment and enormous fines for so-called "incitement against the Hungarian nation"; of how public meetings are prohibited wholesale, Roumanian societies dissolved, Roumanian school books and song books proscribed, the Roumanian colours forbidden, Roumanian funds confiscated or arbitrarily diverted to other uses, Roumanian boys expelled repeatedly and in growing numbers from schools and seminaries, simply because they refuse to submit to the ban upon their language. But enough has already been said to prove that the political system under which the Roumanians of Transylvania and Hungary have hitherto lived is one of the grossest tyrannies which modern Europe has ever known, and that it would have justified Roumania a hundred times over in seeking to set free a race whose deep and virile national consciousness has survived all attacks.

THE QUESTION OF THE BANAT¹

OF all the new states which the war has brought into being, none is confronted with so many delicate frontier problems as Jugoslavia. At no less than seven points its frontiers are disputed by neighbouring races—on the north by the Germans and Magyars, on the west by the Italians; on the south by the Albanians and Greeks, on the east by the Roumanians and Bulgarians. With the dispute between Jugoslavs and Italians we have already dealt at some length. The less acute, but none the less delicate, dispute between Jugoslavs and Roumanians is now also ripe for discussion, and we propose to give a brief survey of the problem in its various aspects, ethnographic, geographical, economic, and political.

The territory in dispute is known as the Banat of Temesvár, and is bounded on three sides by rivers—the Maros to the north, the Theiss to the west, and the Danube to the south. The difficulty of tracing a just frontier here is still more difficult and complicated than in the districts north of the Maros; for the claimants are no longer two, but three (Magyar, Roumanian, and Serb), and whichever of the three is successful must pay due regard to the interests of a fourth race—namely, the large and flourishing German (or Swabian) colonies. Here the frontier question is merely a part of the delicate problem of the Banat, which since

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. x. No. 122, February 13, 1919.

1916 has to some extent clouded the hitherto cordial relations between Roumania and Serbia.¹

The Banat is sometimes claimed as a unit which it would be a crime against nature to divide. Such a claim has no historical foundation and only a very inadequate support from geography. Temesvár was the great fortress around which centred the defence of Hungary's southern frontier, but for that very reason it always formed an integral part of the Hungarian state system, save, of course, during the period of Turkish conquest. The grant of special privileges by Leopold I. to the Serbian immigrants aroused the indignant protests of the Hungarian Parliament, which never recognised their validity and insisted first upon their curtailment and finally their complete abolition. It is true that between 1849 and 1859 (during the period of reaction known as the Bach Era) the Banat was formed into a separate political unit; but students of history do not need to be reminded that the experiment ended in disastrous failure, owing, above all, to the lack of cohesion in that racial *macédoine*.

Meanwhile it does not require much knowledge of geography to realise that the Banat belongs to the Danubian river system. It has natural communications with the north, west, and south across the Maros, Theiss, and Danube, whereas towards the east there are physical obstacles which hamper intercourse. When the new states which have arisen on the ruins of the Habsburg Monarchy devote themselves to perfecting the lines of rail and water communi-

¹ Recent controversial summaries may be found in D. Draghicesco, "Les Roumains" (Bossard); S. Bocou, "La Question du Banat" (Lahure); G. Mironescu, "Le Problème du Banat" (Leroux); and Grégoire Yakshitch, "Le Banat" (*Rev. Hebdomadaire*, 1915). The standard work on the Serbs of the Banat is still that of Emile Picot (Prague, 1875); Professor Cvijić's great work, "La Péninsule Balkanique" (Colin, 1919) should also be consulted.

cation within their own territory and with their neighbours, it will be found that Roumania possesses only two easy means of access to the West—namely, down the Maros valley from Central Transylvania to Arad or Temesvár, and up the Danube valley from Wallachia through the Iron Gates. The fact that between these two lines there is no obvious route from East to West is the best proof that, geographically, the Banat belongs rather to Hungary or to Serbia than to Roumania. There are other arguments which make it imperative to assign at least a large portion of the Banat to Roumania ; but it is necessary at the outset to make it clear that the whole trend of geography is in the other direction, and that it is only the modern developments of swift communication by water, rail, and road that render it possible to overlook what would otherwise be a grave defect in the Roumanian case.

There are many obvious reasons why in this question ethnography must take precedence over both history and geography, quite apart from the stress laid upon the principle of nationality. The land is for the people, not the people for the land or for the fortunate few who have laid their exploiting hands upon it—be they dynasts, prelates, or magnates. The statesman can afford as little as the historian to ignore the traditions of the past ; but both must recognise that still more imperative are the needs of the present, and that the populations most directly concerned will, if means can be found to give free play to their wishes, find a suitable compromise between sentiment and interest.

Ethnographically there is no district in all Europe where the races are so inextricably mingled as in the Banat, and it may be laid down as an axiom which no one can contest, that, however the future frontiers may be drawn, minorities belonging to each of the four principal races will

inevitably be left in each of the newly constituted states. This fact is being used by the Magyar propagandists as an argument in favour of leaving the Banat in the possession of Hungary. Such a proposal could only be considered seriously in the event of an absolute failure on the part of Jugoslavs and Roumanians to reach an amicable agreement as to the lines of partition. It is quite true that neither Serbs nor Roumanians possess an absolute majority; but as against the Magyars, who only occupy the fourth place, they both unquestionably have a superior claim; while the possibility of a German (Swabian) territorial claim is ruled out by practical reasons of geography. The Magyars can no longer even plead that most evil of arguments, *beati possidentes*, and their rivals might well invoke the past record of Hungary toward her non-Magyar nationalities as a proof that no change of masters could conceivably be for the worse.

Impossible though it may be to disentangle the puzzle of the Banat, it is none the less possible to distinguish three main zones—

- (a) The county of Caras-Severin (Krassó-Szörény), which is predominantly Roumanian;
- (b) The county of Torontál, in which the Serb element is the strongest.
- (c) The county of Temes, in which the four principal races are inextricably mixed.

Caras-Severin.—In a total population of 466,147 there are 336,082 Roumanians (71 per cent), the only serious minority consisting of 55,883 Germans, who will be under alien rule, whatever may be the final solution. In the case of the 33,787 Magyars, we must allow for the habitual exaggeration of their number in the official statistics; and their ranks will be still further thinned by the withdrawal

to what is left of Hungary of the very numerous Magyar officials and their families. Finally the Serb minority only amounts to 14,674, and cannot therefore weigh in the balance when the rival claimants are Roumania and Jugoslavia. Unless, then, the Peace Conference proposes to leave the whole Banat in the hands of Hungary, there would seem to be an overwhelming case for excluding the county of Caras-Severin from the discussions and assigning it immediately to Roumania.

So far as the two western counties of the Banat are concerned, it will be well for the moment to consider the statistical data as a single whole.

A.—SERBIAN

(Districts where the Serbo-Croat element is in a distinct majority against the Roumanian.)

	Serbo-Croat.	Roumanian.	Magyar.	German.	Total.
<i>(1) Torontál.</i>					
Pančevo (Pancsova)	16,207	10,735	3,148	15,573	47,877
Pančevo Town . . .	8,849	769	3,364	7,467	20,808
Kovačica (Antalfalva) . . .	24,895	5,442	5,957	1,849	47,044
Bečkerek . . .	15,018	10,581	8,573	16,485	54,715
Bečkerek Town . . .	9,098	339	9,148	6,811	26,006
Modoš . . .	7,864	3,877	4,685	9,905	27,048
Török Becse . . .	32,941	110	14,136	1,054	48,464
Zsombolya . . .	3,908	4,643	12,026	25,552	46,904
Kikinda . . .	15,355	238	7,298	9,875	33,009
Kikinda Town . . .	14,161	436	5,968	5,855	26,795
Totals . . .	148,206	37,170	74,303	100,426	378,670
<i>(2) Temes County.</i>					
Bela Crkva (Weisskirchen) . . .	20,993	8,234	909	4,791	36,831
Bela Crkva Town . . .	2,013	1,806	1,213	6,062	11,524
Kevevára . . .	16,826	5,705	5,355	6,587	35,482
Totals . . .	39,832	15,745	7,477	17,440	83,837

B.—DEBATABLE

County of Torontál.

	Serbo-Croat.	Roumanian.	Magyar.	German.	Total.
Alibunar . . .	11,799	14,982	588	755	29,292
Banloc . . .	4,581	6,637	6,385	8,403	27,667
Párdány . . .	9,729	4,007	6,098	7,153	27,171
Csene . . .	6,479	3,626	3,736	16,468	30,936
Periamos . . .	3,423	8,218	1,352	16,692	30,334
Totals . . .	36,011	37,470	18,159	39,471	145,400

C.—ROUMANIAN

(Districts where the Roumanian element is clearly in majority against the Serb.)

Versecz . . .	5,533	18,174	3,422	8,605	36,978
Versecz Town . . .	8,602	879	3,890	13,556	27,370
Detta . . .	1,981	9,701	5,722	9,146	28,495
Čakova . . .	629	17,376	2,949	8,992	30,479
Buziás . . .	93	22,820	6,277	5,654	35,762
Központ . . .	903	16,109	6,092	22,635	46,372
Recas . . .	3,184	19,748	5,462	5,576	35,933
Vinga . . .	3,713	10,408	4,343	12,670	34,104
Aradul Nou . . .	2,039	9,289	3,071	19,319	34,117
Lipova . . .	78	21,215	2,703	10,646	34,833
Temesvár . . .	3,630	7,566	28,552	31,644	72,555
Totals . . .	30,385	153,285	72,483	148,443	416,998

It results from the above tables that a grey zone can be established between Jugoslavs and Roumanians, consisting of five districts of the county of Torontál (Alibunar, Banloc, Párdány, Csene, Periamos), to which, for obvious reasons of geography and communication, two districts of the county of Temes (Versec and Bela Crkva) must be added. The remainder of Torontál would fall naturally to the

Jugoslavs, the remainder of Temes (except the district of Kevevára, which is Jugoslav) to the Roumanians.

Within this zone it would not be difficult to draw a frontier which would leave a minimum of Jugoslavs to Roumania and a minimum of Roumanians to Jugoslavia. But the essential preliminary to any drawing of frontiers in this part of Europe is a recognition of the fact that no really ideal frontier can be found, and that it will be necessary to rest satisfied with something second best. It is doubtless this consciousness that is responsible for Roumania's insistence upon the extreme claim of the river frontier (Maros, Theiss, Danube). But even from the strategic standpoint this extreme solution would not bring satisfaction, since it would expose Belgrade (which, having a great future as the meeting-place of commercial routes is likely to remain the capital of Jugoslavia) to the guns of a foreign State immediately across the river. The solution of such difficulties must be sought on new lines. Just as the thorny question of Italo-Jugoslav relations cannot be completely solved without the neutralisation of the whole eastern Adriatic coast from Trieste to Corfu, so the surest way to avoid future trouble between Jugoslavs and Roumanians is to establish, under international guarantee, a somewhat similar régime in the Banat. It would then be illegal for either power to erect fortifications in any part of this province or to maintain garrisons in excess of some strictly limited number of troops. The establishment of a new and extended international régime for the Danube and certain of its tributaries—as part of the general system of control which the Peace Conference will have to apply to certain international railways and waterways—should contribute still further towards consolidating the relations between the two neighbouring peoples.

From the above tables two districts in the north-west of the county of Torontál have been excluded. These are :

	Serbo-Croat.	Roumanian.	Magyar.	German.	Total.
Török Kanizsa . .	17,104	2,058	24,961	2,961	47,639
Nagy Szent Miklós . .	2,832	10,239	10,982	12,921	43,442
Totals	19,936	12,297	35,943	15,882	91,081

To their case special considerations apply. They form a rough triangle between the rivers Theiss and Maros and the Aranka, an old and now neglected channel of the latter. Opposite the apex of this triangle, which is formed by the junction of the two main rivers, lies Szeged, the second city of Hungary (118,328 inhabitants, of whom 113,380 are Magyars), and the chief centre of the grain trade of the rich southern plains. The same reasons which can be opposed to the occupation by Roumania of Pančevo and the northern bank of the Danube opposite Belgrade, hold good when the Magyars oppose the occupation of the Aranka triangle by either Roumania or Jugoslavia. Szeged would be even more defenceless than Belgrade, since it lies in flat country; while the district in question is inhabited by a majority of Magyars. It is in any case clear that these two districts ought to be reserved for special discussion before the Boundary Commission whose duty it will be to recommend a detailed settlement to the Peace Conference.

It is obvious that special linguistic rights and privileges must be mutually assured to the minorities on each side of the new frontier, just as in the case of Jugoslav and Italian minorities along the Adriatic coast. Hitherto the Roumanian National Council in Transylvania has shown a tolerant and statesmanlike spirit towards this problem,

and is ready to concede a special autonomous position to the important Saxon and Székely communities of eastern Transylvania. Their needs once disposed of, there should be no difficulty in extending the arrangement to the non-Roumanian populations of the Banat.

At the same time the Roumanians are fully entitled to demand the concession of similar linguistic rights in church and school to the Roumanians of the Timok district in Eastern Serbia (122,429 according to Serbian official statistics for 1900, but probably not less than 150,000, perhaps even 200,000). The claim for their annexation to Roumania is only advanced by a few irresponsible extremists, and does not rest on any popular demand in the districts in question. Indeed the Roumanians of Timok are, for the most part, immigrants who voluntarily exchanged Roumania for Serbia owing to the contrast between agrarian conditions and peasant land-tenure in the two countries. In education they are distinctly backward, and not enough has been done for them by the Serbian Government; but this applies generally to the peasant population of the kingdom, not to the Roumanians in particular. Roumania is fully entitled to demand linguistic rights in church and school for her Timok kinsmen, under the general guarantee of the rights of minorities which the League of Nations will have to impose upon all nations. But a claim for their annexation cannot be taken seriously. If pressed, it would lead logically to the reopening of long-buried territorial questions in every European country, and if for this reason alone, is certain to be rejected by the Peace Conference.

In the above survey we have attempted to discuss the question of the Banat upon its merits. There is, however, another basis upon which a settlement might be attempted,

namely, that of the Secret Treaty of 1916 between Roumania and the Entente Powers. To this there are several capital objections. The first and most practical is that its adoption excludes all possibility of a compromise between Roumanians and Jugoslavs, for the simple geographical reason that the treaty assigns the entire Banat to Roumania. Our whole argument rests upon the need for friendly compromise; and compromise, while often attainable between two parties with exaggerated claims, is never attainable between a party which asks too much and a party which regards the whole object in dispute as an irreducible minimum. The least reflection will show that insistence upon the treaty must, in the long run, lead to a settlement by force.

The treaty is still further disqualified as a basis of amicable settlement by the fact that it is unilateral, so far as the two litigants are concerned. Serbia, who in those days represented the Jugoslav cause before Europe, was not merely not consulted in a matter directly affecting her vital interests, but excluded from all the negotiations, and not even allowed to know the nature of the agreement reached between Roumania and the Powers. Small wonder, then, if the representatives of Jugoslavia at the Peace Conference have solemnly declared the Treaty of 1916 to be null and void, and indeed non-existent so far as their country is concerned. Here, again, it is obvious that the treaty does not provide the basis for amicable agreement between the two countries, and, indeed, is a direct obstacle in the path.

For us, however, the main objection to the treaty is that, like the Secret Treaty of London, the Anglo-Japanese Treaty regarding the Pacific (now happily abrogated by mutual consent), and the Secret Treaty for the partition of

Asia Minor, the Treaty of 1916 is constructed in accordance with the worst traditions of the old diplomacy, and seriously blocks the way for the architects of a new Europe. It rests upon the iniquitous theory that Roumania is entitled to "*annex*" the Roumanian districts of Hungary, as if they were uninhabited and unclaimed deserts; and the fact that their inhabitants have always been so intensely Roumanian in sentiment and so unhesitating in their desire for *free union* makes the adoption of so unsound a basis all the more amazing and gratuitous. So far as Roumania is concerned, the treaty is no longer needed, since the just claim of the entire Roumanian race to unity and independence in a single democratic State far outweighs all other considerations in the eyes of the Peace Conference and of the world at large. So long as the question is treated as a mere bargain between four belligerents we hold that the Roumanian Treaty is morally no less binding than the others, and that the Fourth Treaty of Bucarest cannot be adduced by any man of honour as a ground for repudiating our debt to a very gallant nation. But the question forms part of a far greater problem, which is no less than the reconstruction of Europe, by the common work of all the Associated Powers of both hemispheres. Previous commitments of one or other of these Powers cannot be allowed to stand in the way of a general settlement, and must be modified or abrogated according as the principles of Allied policy demand. The unanimous acceptance of the Thirteen Points of President Wilson as the basis for the armistice is now admitted on all sides to have been the death-sentence of all the secret treaties without exception, and none save a few professional diplomats will shed tears over their grave.

Never in all history have Roumanians and Jugoslavs

been active enemies, and only an utter lack of statesmanship and political foresight on both sides and among the greater Allies will allow the question of the Banat, which so obviously lends itself to friendly compromise, to become a source of enmity and discord in the future.

THE EVOLUTION OF BULGARIA¹

DURING the generation preceding the Great War, the Bulgarians were the spoilt darlings of Western Europe, and it had become the fashion among the numerous journalists who penetrated, for a brief holiday, into the fastnesses of Balkan politics to regard them, not merely as the most enlightened and progressive of Balkan peoples, but as the only Balkan people who had any real future. Among this superficial class of writers and the well-meaning sentimentalists to whom a chance pamphlet of Mr. Gladstone was the alpha and omega of political wisdom, the Greeks were contemptuously dismissed as degenerate bastards, masquerading under the names of a great past; the Serbs, seen through the spectacles of Budapest and Vienna (no British journalist deigned to live in Belgrade), were regarded as cowardly and murderous; while the very existence of the Roumanians was almost ignored. The Bulgarian peasant—and every Bulgarian is a peasant—has sterling merits to which we would fain do justice; but, as in the case of other peasants, the uncritical adulation of strangers has not improved his character. It is not too much to say that the growth of a Bulgarian myth in France and England has been one of the most important contributory causes in that decay of Bulgarian public life

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. i. No. 6, November 23, 1916.

which found its supreme expression in the espousal of the Teutonic cause.

Ever since their re-discovery in the middle of last century, the Bulgarians have been reckoned as members of the great Slavonic race, and in such modern literature as they possess Russian influences are particularly strong. But though their language, with certain interesting peculiarities of its own, is closely related to Serbo-Croat, it is not to be forgotten that the original Bulgars were an invading Mongol tribe from Central Asia, akin to the Turks, Magyars, and other now vanished non-Aryan races. The events of the present war have revived the recollection of their origin, and the Pan-Turanian theory is now industriously preached in Sofia, Budapest, and Constantinople, as the natural basis of a close alliance between Magyar, Turk, and Bulgar, against Panslav barbarism and the corruption of the West. The fact that this whole propaganda is inspired by obvious political motives, and may collapse if the war should take an unfavourable turn for the Central Powers, must not blind us to the seriousness with which it is being pursued; and we should be ill-advised to treat it with contempt or to ignore the fact that it is the fruit of long years of preparation by Magyar journalists, politicians, and commercial houses. Before the war, those who wished to form some clear idea of contemporary happenings in Bulgaria were always certain to find in the journals of Budapest expert comment by close observers on the spot far superior to that provided for the consumption of any other foreign public.

Bulgarian history is full of extraordinary vicissitudes. During the ninth, and again during the tenth, century the Bulgars were led by rulers of signal ability—the grim and shadowy figure of Krum, of whom legend relates that he made a drinking goblet of the skull of his beaten enemy the

Emperor Nicephorus; Boris, their first Christian king, whose memory Ferdinand of Coburg invoked at the christening of his son and heir; and Samuel, who ruled from the Adriatic to the Ægean and the Black Sea, and whose long struggle with Byzantium ended in hideous tragedy at the battle of Belašica in 1014. There, within sight of the Allied lines of 1916, the Emperor Basil broke the power of the first Bulgarian Empire and sent back his 15,000 prisoners, blinded, to the camp of Samuel, every hundredth man being left with one eye that he might serve as guide to his helpless comrades. The memory of Basil Bulgaroktonos—"the slayer of Bulgarians"—is more alive than ever to-day in the peninsula; and it was with this name that the Athenian crowd acclaimed King Constantine after his victory over the Bulgars at Kukuš in July 1913. Thus the feud of Greek and Bulgar dates back for ten centuries, and has assumed many varying phases, of which we have not yet seen the last.

During the closing years of the twelfth century a second Bulgarian Empire arose, this time as the result of an ill-defined combination between Bulgars and Vlachs. But, by the middle of the following century, it was already once more on the wane, and Thrace was lost to the Greeks and Macedonia to the Serbs. The year 1330 marks the culmination of the first quarrel between Serb and Bulgar. At the battle of Velbužd the Bulgarian Tsar lost his life, and his country sank to the level of a vassal. The feud led inevitably to the undoing of both races, and made possible the advance of the Turks. The desperate appeal of the Eastern Emperor was disregarded by both Serb and Bulgar, though he is said to have warned them that they would rue the day when they left him unsupported. The jealousies of the small Christian powers directly furthered

the Turkish conquest, just as those of the Great Powers retarded time after time the day of deliverance, and just as, since 1912, the jealousies of the Balkan Allies, skilfully played upon from without, have restored discord, weakness, and misery to the reviving peninsula. The Serbian mediaeval empire perished at the memorable battle of Kosovo (1389), and that event was followed four years later by the destruction of the last fragments of Bulgarian independence. For nearly five centuries the Bulgars disappeared from the list of nations.

Turkish rule in Bulgaria did not differ in any essential feature from Turkish rule in Serbia or elsewhere, but nowhere was it so grinding and oppressive. This is of course due to the fact that it lay nearest to Stambul, and formed the inevitable route of every Turkish advance against Hungary and Central Europe. To-day history is teaching us what we did not care to learn before, that the fate of Serbia and Bulgaria has for centuries been determined by their geographical situation. The route of the Turkish armies lay through their land, and all that lay along it had to be stamped flat. To-day, again, Serbia lies across the route of other conquerors moving eastward, and Bulgaria has sold her soul in the vain hope of escaping her hated neighbour's fate, or, rather, in the craven desire to administer the *coup de grâce* herself.

If the Turks dug the grave of Slav nationalism in the Balkans, it was the Greeks who jealously guarded the tomb from the gaze of the outside world. All that was left of national life was concentrated in the Church, and the Church, thanks to the policy adopted by Mohammed II. when he conquered Constantinople, became the chief instrument of Hellenisation. The liturgy, the schools, the clergy alike were Greek, and, not content with this, the

ecclesiastical authorities adopted a grossly reactionary and intolerant view, systematically tried to root out everything Slavonic, and wrought deliberate havoc among the monuments and, above all, the MSS. of the historic past. Under such circumstances it is hardly to be wondered at that even the most celebrated scholars of the Slavonic world, the founders of Slav philology on a modern basis, knew next to nothing of Bulgaria or the Bulgarian language. This fact must serve as excuse for the complete ignorance displayed by Western historians of the early nineteenth century in all that concerns Bulgaria. Even Kinglake found it possible to describe his journey through what is to-day the kingdom of Bulgaria without a single reference to the existence of the Bulgarians.

The prime reason, however, of this oblivion lay in the deathlike quiescence of the Bulgarians themselves. It is no exaggeration to say that, till the third quarter of the nineteenth century, no Balkan people had given the Turkish authorities less trouble. The repeated insurrections of Greeks and Serbs, ending in their assertion of complete or virtual independence, the revival of national consciousness in Wallachia and Moldavia, scarcely touched the mass of the Bulgarian peasantry. When at length the dry bones stirred, the breath came to them from Russia and from Serbia; there was no great national hero like Kara George or Miloš among the Serbs, like the countless outlaw chiefs of the Greek islands and mainland, or even like the Roumanian peasant leader, Vladimirescu. "The Awakener of Bulgaria" is the title which adorns the tomb of Venelin, the Slovak philologist who lived and died at Odessa, and gave the first impetus to the Bulgarian educational system. The early organisers of the revolutionary movement, men like Rakovski and Levski, were tireless enthusiasts, who

gave their all to the cause, but not in any way the creators of a new nation.

The various risings which they organised in the early 'seventies were foredoomed to failure, and met with relatively little response from the population. But for external events, the ashes might have smouldered unnoticed for another generation, but, in 1875, the permanent unrest which had so long prevailed among the Serbs and Croats of Bosnia, burst into flame and spread to the neighbouring principalities of Serbia and Montenegro; and their struggle soon broadened into a veritable crusade for the liberation of the Balkan Slavs from the Turkish yoke. Russia stood forward as the champion of Christianity and the Slavonic idea, while Britain, with a shortsightedness for which we are paying heavily to-day, threw her whole weight on the side of Turkish misrule and anarchy. The Treaty of San Stefano dictated to Turkey by the victorious Russians at the very gates of Constantinople was, a few months later, replaced by the settlement of Berlin, which was to form the corner-stone of European law and order for the next thirty years, especially in all matters regarding the Balkan Peninsula. Both settlements were equally unsound and inequitable. That of San Stefano was based essentially on Slav interests and neglected, or did grave injustice to, the non-Slav races of the peninsula—the Greeks, the Albanians, and the Roumanians—while leaving Turkey with frontiers such as defied every law of geography, politics, and common sense. Above all, the new Bulgaria which was to be created would have been quite unduly aggrandised at the expense of all her neighbours. It is, indeed, the exaggerated programme of San Stefano which has become a fixed idea in the slow-moving but tenacious minds of the Bulgarians, and has proved directly responsible for the

Prussian dreams of hegemony, in which her second generation of statesmen have indulged, and which may still prove to be the undoing of the nation. If the settlement of San Stefano was unjust to all but the Slavs, and did not draw a just line even between those Slavs themselves, the settlement of Berlin succeeded in being equally unjust to all, for it was frankly based upon force, upon the interests of the Great Powers, and upon the negation of the rights of small nations. The various Balkan delegates were refused representation at the Congress, and the fate of the peninsula was decided over their heads, without any serious regard for the wishes of the populations concerned.

The dream of a "Big Bulgaria" was no sooner conceived than it was dispelled by the reality of three disunited groups: the new principality, with a population at that time scarcely exceeding two millions; Eastern Roumelia, with barely a million inhabitants, under a Turkish governor; and the unredeemed Bulgarians of Thrace and Macedonia. Such a situation was too unnatural to last, and it is only remarkable that it lasted as long as it did. Russia, who had shed her blood so freely for the liberation of the youngest member of the Slav family, showed herself strangely lacking in tact when it came to consolidating her influence in the new State. The Russians organised the Bulgarian army, laid the foundation of an educational and financial system, and were even responsible for the first draft of the constitution. But its ultra-democratic form was probably intended to leave the chief power in the hands of the Prince, and it was most certainly intended that the Prince should be a mere cipher in the hands of his near kinsman the Tsar.

Alexander of Battenberg found himself in a position of extraordinary difficulty. Bulgaria was entirely lacking in

political tradition. Her people was a nation of peasants, endowed with more than the usual dose of suspicion which is inherent in most peasantries, and with a natural disposition to dislike all foreigners. Her politicians were untried men, trained in half-a-dozen different schools, and each desperately jealous alike of the person and theories of his neighbour. Alexander himself was as inexperienced as the people whom he was called upon to govern, and soon tired of a constitution which seemed to him unworkable, only to find himself in the hands of the masterful Russian generals whom the heavy-handed and reactionary Alexander III. sent to maintain Bulgaria in fitting vassalage. Ere long the Prince found that his sole hope lay in a reversion to constitutional methods. But parliamentary life is a plant of slow growth, which has never flourished on Bulgarian soil ; and, for many reasons, the group system has flourished there exceedingly. The new conditions threw up a number of very remarkable men—Cankov, Karavelov, and, above all, Stambulov, who earned the somewhat misleading title of “the Bismarck of the Balkans.” It was his forceful energy that forced Alexander to identify himself with the revolution which united Eastern Roumelia to Bulgaria in 1885, and to risk the displeasure alike of Sultan and of Tsar. In a thoroughly characteristic phrase the minister bluntly warned his master that if he would not advance to Philippopolis he had better retire to Darmstadt. The union was cemented by the short war with Serbia, provoked by the jealousy and incompetence of King Milan. Dynastic and diplomatic intrigues thus revived the ancient feud between two sister peoples, who, till then, had seemed to be following the same development as England and Scotland in earlier centuries. The energy of Stambulov and the military prowess of Alexander carried the Bulgarian army to victory,

but the Prince's unexpected self-assertion earned for him the hostility of the Tsar; and though the nation was undoubtedly behind him, he lost heart, placed his resignation in his cousin's hands and retired abroad, to end his days as an officer in the Austrian army. For many months the throne of Bulgaria went begging, and it seemed as though the new State must inevitably sink to a position of complete vassalage. But Stambulov devoted all his extraordinary energy to the task of shaking off foreign interference. His was a government of the "strong hand"; no scruples were allowed to interfere with the end in view, and intrigue and violence were countered by even more drastic methods. The comparison with Bismarck is not altogether inapt. If the famous Prussian Junker had been a peasant, and if his country had spent five centuries under a grinding foreign yoke, his methods, no doubt, would have been correspondingly cruder. There is a further parallel between the position of the two great ministers towards the throne. In each case a young and energetic sovereign chafed at the domineering methods and diplomatic prestige of a virtual "king-maker"; in each case the weather-beaten pilot was dismissed with abrupt indignity, and spent the remainder of his days in sulky and spiteful criticism. But here the analogy ends. Bismarck died full of years and honours at Friedrichsruh; Stambulov, after more than one abortive attempt had failed, fell a victim to the assassin's knife before he had completed his fiftieth year. The crime was committed in broad daylight in a thoroughfare of Sofia; the police did not lift a hand to save him from the mutilation which followed murder; and the trial of the criminals was an open and notorious farce. Six months before the murder Stambulov had published an interview in the *Kölnische Zeitung*, in which he foretold his end and openly

hinted that his enemies had "the strongest support" in their designs upon his life. It was notorious that Prince Ferdinand had refused him permission to leave the country, and now public opinion openly credited him with the moral responsibility for the crime and for the manner in which it was hushed up. Many years later Ferdinand was to reveal himself, in a rash moment of candour, to an acquaintance of high diplomatic standing. "I intend to be on the side of the assassins," he said, and hitherto fate has enabled him to keep his word.

When the true history of the last thirty years comes to be written Ferdinand of Coburg will be remembered as one of the chief corrupters of his age. In him three widely divergent streams unite—the Coburg, the Bourbon, and the Koháry—and there is certainly more of the *roué* Regent of Orleans, of the cynical "Philippe Égalité" of the Revolution, and of Napoleon's unscrupulous army contractor, than of the more solid and respectable German dynasty which has given kings to so many different countries. A genuine student of ornithology and botany, a passionate collector and expert in gems, an inordinate stickler for etiquette, a physical coward, but possessed by a daring ambition that knows no bounds, a consummate master of the diplomatic game, a shrewd student of human psychology, concentrating his whole attention on the foibles and weaknesses of those around him—Ferdinand should have been a despot of the Italian Renaissance rather than the ruler of a modern peasant democracy.

For the first nine years of his reign Ferdinand's main efforts were devoted to securing the official recognition of Russia and of the other Great Powers, who hesitated to offend the Tsar by taking the first step. This prolonged indignity has long rankled in the mind of one who sees in

Nicholas II. a rival to the imperial throne and mantle which await him under the dome of Santa Sofia. The baptism of his son Boris into the Orthodox faith broke his wife's heart and provoked the resentment of the Pope, but restored him to the good graces of Petrograd. But tradition and temperament alike pointed Ferdinand to Vienna and Budapest, and, on his Hungarian estates, he could study at leisure those wholesale methods of electoral and administrative corruption by which the Magyar oligarchy maintained their political power over the unhappy helots of their country. In Budapest, too, he could investigate commercial and financial Panamism as a fine art ; while the Magyar satrapy of Croatia provided him, during the twenty years' rule of Count Khuen Héderváry, with elaborate receipts for seducing the loyalty, sapping the resistance, and corrupting the soul of political parties and individuals. From Hungary, Ferdinand imported with him the specifically Magyar quality of self-advertisement in the foreign press, of throwing dust in the dazzled eyes of strangers, of concealing under the fair exterior of pretentious new buildings and patent street paving the dearth of moral achievement and intellectual resources. During the twenty-eight years of his reign material progress was enormous ; the dunghill has blossomed into a rose-garden. But we are reminded at every turn of the Serbian proverb, " Too much light causes blindness, not only too much darkness." The Bulgarian has a genuine passion for education, but he lacks as yet the foundations upon which true culture must inevitably rest. With him materialist conceptions in private life are balanced by an extreme realism in politics, which borders upon megalomania ; both alike lend themselves to exploitation.

No Balkan country can boast so many political parties

as Bulgaria ; and this fact is due, not merely to the complete absence of Parliamentary traditions, but to systematic encouragement of the group system from above. Ferdinand, in particular, has pursued a policy diametrically opposed to that of his neighbour, King Charles of Roumania, who sternly discouraged fissiparous tendencies, and did all in his power to strengthen the party system. It suited Ferdinand to have numerous parties, who made up by clamour for their lack of real control, and exhausted in personal bickerings the energies which might otherwise have turned against his own person. Foreign observers have always exaggerated the importance of the parties and underestimated the power of the Crown and its particular puppets of the moment. In reality the educated and governing classes soon reconciled themselves to the system of "spoils" developed by the astute "Coburger." "Enrichissez-vous" became the scarcely veiled invitation to every public man, and foreign bankers, notably those of Budapest, obligingly facilitated the process, while strengthening their own hold upon the country's resources. The secret of Ferdinand's power has lain in his skill in calculating the psychological moment for driving each batch of swine away from the trough of power, and, still more, in his policy—pursued with a relentless and uncanny mastery of detail—of supervising their diet. In other words, he has made it his business to pry into the personal activities of his ministers, and his dossier of compromising documents is the envy of every criminal investigation department in Europe. The great Stambulov himself displayed a brutal shamelessness in using his official position to acquire a private fortune ; but his successors sought to veil their rapacity under a thin veneer of external rectitude. Petkov, his successor as party chief, began life as a needy journalist,

but, at the time of his assassination in 1906, he had already acquired a fortune of over a million francs. Such practices became the rule rather than the exception, and more than one voice was raised in protest ; but the system grew and extended its ramifications throughout Bulgarian public life, being favoured by Ferdinand for his own selfish ends. To such a pass have matters come that it has almost become the rule for ministers, after their fall from power, to be arraigned for some illegality committed in office. The list of such trials is a very long one. Foremost upon it stand the names of Mr. Radoslavov and of two members of his Cabinet, Messrs. Tončev and Ivančov, who, nearly twenty years ago, were prosecuted for using their official position to fill their own pockets. Similar charges were brought against all save two members of the Cabinet of General Račo Petrov, and again, against the Cabinet of Dr. Gudev. Quite recently the Stambulovist leader, Mr. Genadiev, who had already been condemned for peculation, has again been brought to trial and sentenced for offences committed when in office. It must, of course, be remembered that such political trials are one of King Ferdinand's most approved methods of reducing party leaders to complete subservience, and that trumped-up charges are often levelled at innocent heads. Even Mr. Gešov, during whose premiership the Balkan League was formed, has been the victim of judicial proceedings, based upon the charge of having tampered with a will which brought the fortune of the millionaire, Mr. Gergiev, into his family. The action had not been concluded when war broke out ; but it is obvious that it was being treated as a convenient means of pressure upon a statesman who had always been consistently Russophil and Anglophil, and about whom no compromising documents had hitherto been obtained. In

short, Ferdinand set himself to create a system by which the individual might grow rich and prosper exceedingly, so long as he remained the faithful servitor of the throne, but risked immediate disgrace and ruin if he ventured to assert his independence. Thus there was always a waiting list for the post of Premier, and whenever Ferdinand had had enough of one politician and his following, he merely had to turn to a rival group and entrust it with the "making" of an election and a majority. Not even in Hungary have such political *tours de force* been possible as in Bulgaria, where, at the magic word of the sovereign, a leader, whose party dominates the Sobranje, goes to the country and returns with a following of two or three, while another who stood almost alone returns with an overwhelming majority. It ought to be obvious that all is not gold that glitters in such a State, and that it can hardly be regarded as parliamentary in the Western sense of the word.

Most of the first decade of Ferdinand's reign was taken up in securing the recognition of Europe and entrenching his extremely insecure position. A still longer period elapsed before he secured the next goal of his ambitions—the declaration of independence and the assumption of the title of Tsar. The next stage, the conquest of Constantinople, seemed, for a brief moment, on the eve of fulfilment after the Turkish collapse at Lüle Burgas. In each case Ferdinand was playing for his own hand, and skilfully wrested concessions from Russia by his policy of mysterious coquetting with Vienna. The proclamation of Independence was made to coincide with the annexation of Bosnia by the Emperor Francis Joseph, and rested on a secret arrangement which deliberately flouted Mr. Izvolski, the Russian Foreign Minister of the day. The latter,

anxious to retrieve his discomfiture at the hands of his successful rival, Baron (afterwards Count) Aehrenthal, offered Bulgaria exceptionally favourable terms for the liquidation of her debt to Turkey. When Russia thus seemed to have reasserted her influence, Ferdinand, who, meantime, had secured Parliament's consent to the complete withdrawal of foreign policy from its sphere of control, allowed his Russophil Premier to enter upon a secret engagement with Serbia and Greece, which involved contingent hostility to Austria-Hungary. But, apart from the fact that Ferdinand almost certainly had no intention of fulfilling such an obligation, and is even suspected of having betrayed its terms to Vienna, the bait of Santa Sofia outbalanced, in this instance, the ambitious schemer's natural leanings towards the Magyar-German alliance. Though this final triumph was denied him, he again extracted, by skilful overtures to Vienna at the critical moment, Russia's consent to the retention of Adrianople and Thrace by Bulgaria. Hitherto the dangerous game of playing off Russia and Austria-Hungary against each other had produced highly satisfactory results. But, at this stage, Ferdinand, infected by the megalomania of his army and people, allowed his ministers, not merely gravely to underestimate the achievement of Serbia and Greece, but to ignore contemptuously the attitude of Roumania, who, though still loyal to the Central combination of Powers, viewed with disquietude the exaggerated claims of her southern neighbour.

King Ferdinand's intimate association with Count Tarnowski, Vienna's able representative in Sofia, further betrayed him into accepting Austria's military aid against Serbia as certain. But General Savov's failure to fulfil his promise of "cutting through the Serbs like rotten cheese"

led the military chiefs of the Dual Monarchy to hesitate once more until it was too late ; and the unsympathetic reply of Italy to their theories of a " defensive " war against Serbia finally decided them in favour of inaction. The dream of a Bulgaria enthroned upon " the four seas " and dominating the whole peninsula was replaced by the reality of the Treaty of Bucarest, at which the other four Balkan States imposed their will upon her and left her at the mercy of the advancing Turks. Ferdinand had to " furl his glorious standards until better days." But, for good or for evil, the " Coburger " stood henceforth committed to the Central Powers ; and the events of the Great War were to show that they alone could pretend to satisfy his soaring ambitions. At every turn Russia and her Western Allies were easily outbid by Germany. It was not merely that the Serbs held Monastir and a portion of Macedonia, which Bulgarian sentiment has long regarded as its natural birthright, and that it was more difficult for the Allies to offer the property of Serbia than for their and her enemies. This is true, but it is a mere fragment of the truth. The bait of Macedonia mobilised the Macedonian exiles, whose influence is so strong in the Bulgarian army and in the capital itself. But the real object of Ferdinand and his advisers went far beyond this. The conquest of Macedonia was to be the first step to the assertion of a Balkan hegemony. Serbia was to be reduced to complete impotence, and the ideal of Yugoslav unity was to be thwarted at all costs—at any rate, until such time as it could be achieved from Sofia rather than from Belgrade, and under Boris of Coburg rather than under Alexander Karagjorgjević. Meanwhile, Bulgaria was to extend her boundaries to march with Hungary, and thus consolidate her connection with the great Central European State which was emerging

from the ruins of Austrian incompetence and Magyar tyranny. The German Radical leader, Herr Friedrich Naumann, in his newly published monograph on "Bulgaria and Central Europe," significantly points out that last year, when he wrote his epoch-making book on Central Europe, it was impossible to refer too openly to Bulgaria; for, "though Tsar Ferdinand and Mr. Radoslavov even then knew very well what they wanted to do, and though the leaders of German foreign policy looked with growing confidence towards Sofia, it was obviously not allowable to speak of the ripening entente. Now all secrets are revealed, and the alliance is there. . . ." This is an interesting comment on the pathetic illusions of British Bulgarophils.

Ferdinand and his people—for it is yet another illusion to suppose that Ferdinand is alone in advocating such a policy—have gravitated towards Germany and Austria-Hungary as steel to a magnet. Bulgaria's whole policy for years past has been based upon the same ideal of materialism and brute force as that of Prussia or of Hungary. The desire for Bulgarian national unity has long since been swallowed up in a claim of racial predominance which postulates the disappearance of Serbia from the list of nations, and the reduction to impotence of Greece and Roumania.

For Germany, on the other hand, the importance of Bulgaria is clear. While the Danube is to be the great waterway of "Central Europe," and its alluvial banks a rich field of colonisation, the route now traversed by the Balkan Express is vital and indispensable, as the gate to Constantinople and Bagdad, to Persia and Arabia, to Suez and through Egypt to Central Africa. Herr Naumann is right when he declares that the town of Niš is symbolical of a great policy. "We (Germans) and the Bulgarians

likewise had to smash the hostile control of the Belgrade-Niš-Pirot line" at all costs. "A well-ordered Balkan railway is almost more than a State treaty." To every German this is as simple as the alphabet. When will it cease to be a complex algebraical problem for British minds?

THE UKRAINE PROBLEM¹

APART from an infinity of contributory causes—economic, social, financial—there are five main political problems which lie at the root of the World War. Of these three—Anglo-German rivalry, the question of Alsace-Lorraine, and the fate of Constantinople and the Straits—are fairly generally understood, or at least have from the first been recognisable in their main outlines: while the fourth, the Southern Slav question, though at first ignored or misconceived even by statesmen of the first rank, has gradually imposed itself upon the popular consciousness. Of the fifth—the problem of the Ukraine—it is true to say that after three years of war its very existence is still scarcely known to public opinion. The course of events since the Revolution, however, has made it impossible to ignore the problem any longer, especially as it has completely revolutionised the traditional attitude of Austria and Russia both towards it and towards each other.

The very name of the Ukraine had fallen into oblivion in the West: but that it is not a mere modern invention is shown by the numerous books devoted to Ukraine events which were published in English as long ago as the seventeenth century. The word signifies “border” and took its origin from the debatable country which then lay between the

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. iv. No. 44, August 16, 1917.

three unwieldy rivals of those days, Turkey, Poland, and Muscovy. But the territory inhabited by Ukrainians stretches far beyond this border country, and its inhabitants were commonly known as Little Russians, or in Austria as Ruthenes, until gradually "Ukrainian" has come to be accepted as the national name. To-day their numbers are estimated at some twenty to twenty-five millions on Russian soil, occupying Podolia, Volhynia, Kiev, and Cholm, and stretching far to the east of the Dniepr to the Sea of Azov and beyond; four millions in Eastern Galicia and Bukovina, and half a million in the Carpathian districts of Hungary. Their earliest state formation was that of Kiev, which accepted Christianity under Vladimir in the tenth century and had already attained a high degree of culture and commercial prosperity, before the rival Russian principalities of the north rose to power. Kiev's independence was destroyed by the terrible Mongol invasion of 1239. In a greatly reduced form the state of Halitch-Volhynia dragged out a somewhat precarious existence under its own dynasty for a century longer, until it in its turn collapsed before the combined onslaught of Poland and Hungary. The western half (what is roughly the Eastern Galicia of to-day) fell under the Polish crown, while Volhynia, Podolia, and Kiev preserved a looser connection with Lithuania, at whose court White or Little Russian was the predominant language. But after the union of the Polish and Lithuanian crowns in 1385, the oppressive aristocratic system of Poland asserted its sway more and more, until by the Union of Lublin in 1569 the old equality gave place to unfettered Polish hegemony. In the century that followed, however, Poland proved unequal to the task of defending her conquests against the hordes of Tartar invaders from the east or the

Turkish menace from the south: and in consequence anarchy grew apace throughout the Ukraine. It was under these unsatisfactory conditions that the Cossacks first became a serious political factor, forming as time went on "a regular guerilla republic of the steppe," defying all foreign suzerainty, taxation, or military service, and attracting to themselves large numbers of peasants who sought to escape the intolerable burden of serfdom. Thus the lands of the Dniepr and the Don were to all intents and purposes already lost to Poland long before the rising of 1648 united peasants and nobles in a common cause.

Under its famous Hetman, Bohdan Chmielnitsky, the Ukraine concluded in 1654 the Treaty of Perejaslavl, which, little as it has been respected, has ever since formed in theory the basis of its whole constitutional position. Drawn up in haste and ambiguously expressed, it was none the less a formal act of union between the Ukraine and Moscow, and as such must be regarded as one of the most important stages in the development of modern Russia. But no greater contrast in political outlook can be imagined than that between the two contracting parties. On the one hand stood ancient Moscow, in which autocracy, already strong in its semi-Tartar days, acquired additional strength from the methods which it borrowed from the West; on the other, a loosely knit republican organisation resting upon essentially democratic local institutions. Just as fire and water cannot mingle, one of these opposing types of government was bound to yield to the other; and under eighteenth-century conditions the victory of Tsardom was wellnigh inevitable.

From the very first the Tsars encroached upon the privileges of the Ukraine, whose Hetmans consequently wavered

between Moscow and Poland, the victims of continual infringements and restrictions from both sides. The attempt to find fresh allies led them into alliance with Turkey and with Sweden, but in each case "the Northern Colossus" proved too strong for them. The picturesque figures of Charles XII. and the Hetman Mazeppa illuminate for a moment this dark corner of history. The battle of Poltava (1709) put an end to all hope of Ukraine independence. Peter the Great, who in one of his ukases took the uncompromising line that "it is well known that all Hetmans since Chmielnitsky were traitors," set himself deliberately to break their power. His centralising work was completed by Catherine the Great, who deposed the last Hetman, Cyril Rasumovsky, in 1764, crushed the resistance of the Zaporogue Cossacks in 1775, introduced Russian administration in 1780, and three years later replaced the old peasant liberties of the Ukraine by serfdom in its most cruel form. The Church of the Ukraine was subjected to the Patriarch of Moscow, and "a vexatious clerical censorship" stifled literary development and russified education, which was far more advanced than the West is apt to imagine. It is estimated that in the middle of the eighteenth century there were in the province of Černigov 866 schools, dating from the period of Ukraine autonomy; but sixty years later not one of these survived.

The partition of Poland complicated the situation still further. The western fragment of the Ukraine fell under Austrian rule, and though this at first seemed to deliver it more than ever into the hands of the Polish nobility, it did in effect lay the foundations for a revival of national consciousness and culture in the nineteenth century. After 1815 in particular the Habsburg Court showed special favour to the "Ruthenes" and the Uniate Church: and

their language was encouraged both in church and in school. Further concessions were obtained during the Revolution of 1848, and even under the reaction which followed the Ruthenes fared relatively better than any neighbouring race; for, in its alarm at the revolutionary movement among the Poles, the Austrian Government sought a make-weight among the Ruthenes. But with the failure of the Polish insurrection against Russia in 1863 the whole situation rapidly changed. Galicia became a haven of refuge for the Poles, and Russian repression only served to facilitate an understanding between Cracow and Vienna. Austria found it well worth her while to buy the support of the Poles by what almost amounted to creating a Polish political monopoly in Galicia. The whole administration was Polonised, and in education and the courts the Ruthene language was subordinated to the Polish; while the most determined attempts were made to undermine that stronghold of Ukraine national feeling, the Uniate Church, and to introduce enclaves of Polish colonists among the Ukraine peasantry. For a generation past the struggle between Pole and Ukrainian has grown in acuteness, and has centred in the demand for Ukrainian schools and university and for a democratic franchise as a weapon of national defence.

Meanwhile, in the Russian Ukraine the old historic traditions smouldered under extremely unfavourable circumstances. For a brief moment national feeling raised its head in 1846, and a brilliant little group of writers created the Guild of SS. Cyril and Methodius at Kiev to further the twin ideals of nationality and democracy. But within a year it shared the fate of all similar institutions under the hateful rule of Nicholas I.: political thought and literary effort were repressed with equal severity. Centralism and autocracy went hand in hand; and in

1863 the Minister of the Interior, Valujev, roundly declared that "the Ukrainian language never has existed, does not exist, and must not exist." On this basis all attempts to develop the language were treated as the first step towards political separatism, and even scientific and historical research were viewed with profound disfavour. In 1876 the authorities went so far as to prohibit the publication of any book in Ukrainian, save of a purely historical or literary character: and in practice the censorship made this decree almost absolute. For thirty years this iniquitous embargo was upheld. The sufferings of the Ukrainian peasant-poet, Taras Ševčenko—the Burns of the Slavonic world—will always remain one of the most shameful incidents in the history of national Chauvinism. With a refinement of cruelty Nicholas I. even went so far as to order the exiled poet to be deprived of the physical possibility of writing and painting; and this order remained in force for three years. But here, too, the spirit of liberty triumphed over all obstacles—

Bury me, be done with me! Rise and break your chain.
 Water your new liberty with blood for rain!
 Then in the mighty family of all men free
 Maybe sometimes very softly you will think of me!¹

So sang Ševčenko, and his songs became the watchword of a new era for his race and set in motion forces as elemental and irresistible as the mighty waters of his own Dniepr. Hatred followed him beyond the grave, and on the centenary of his death the Tsar's soldiers held back with their bayonets the crowds which sought to pay their tribute at his tomb. But on the same day in Tarnopol and in Lvov thousands of peasants gathered in his

¹ From Mrs. Voynich's charming translations (Elkin Matthews, 1s.).

honour and hailed him as the re-awakened soul of a great nation.

For the Ukraine, as for all the nationalities of the Russian Empire, the Revolution of 1905 was the bursting of a dam behind which had gathered the pent-up forces of many generations. In South Russia the democratic movement at once assumed a national Ukrainian form, and its swift progress surprised even its own adherents. After thirty years of utter suppression there suddenly sprang up a flourishing Ukrainian press at Kiev, Harkov, Odessa, Poltava, Yekaterinoslav, and Mohilev. In 1905 thirty-four newspapers were founded, and popular pamphlets and other literature were distributed in large masses through various new publishing houses. Even after the first check under Stolypin this continued, as is best shown by the fact that the number of copies of Ukrainian books printed rose from 191,000 in 1909 to 600,000 in 1911. Numerous educational and patriotic societies came into being, notably the Prosvita of Kiev; while the Zemstva and the co-operative unions devoted themselves with special energy to the neglected cause of national education.

In the first Duma the Ukraine Club consisted of forty deputies. In the sphere of social politics their desires centred upon the land, for which every real peasantry has always hungered. But what lay behind was a programme of national autonomy within a federalised Russia—a reversion to the idea of contract between equal parties, which Drahomanov and other Ukraine historians read into the famous treaty of 1654. That such a programme was irreconcilable with Polish national claims—resting as they do upon a stubborn insistence on Poland's extreme historic limits and a negation of the modern idea of nationality—served as an index of future conflicts, but was immaterial

at a moment when the Polish State was still a distant dream. But, with Russian nationalism in the uncompromising form which dominated society in the last decade of Tsarism the conflict was immediate and fundamental. Not merely the extreme reactionaries in Church and State, but the whole political world which lay between them and the revolutionary parties of the Left, took alarm at a movement so antagonistic to the centralist régime. Under Stolypin's "cooked" franchise (1907) the Ukrainian deputies vanished from the Duma, their Press and national organisations were subjected once more to the old methods of repression, and the Ukrainian language of instruction, which had been partially introduced after the Revolution, was again banished from the schools. In short, the movement was driven underground, and to the superficial observer it was for the time possible to deny its very existence. Indeed, the Russian nationalists adopted in regard to the Ukraine the very arguments by which the Magyars so long befooled Western Europe in regard to the subject nationalities of Hungary. It is, of course, true that the Ukrainian and the Great Russian are closer kinsmen, both racially and linguistically, than any other two branches of the Slavonic race. But against the common theory that Ukrainian is a mere local dialect of Russian may be set the formal pronouncement of the Petrograd Academy of Sciences in 1905, recognising it as an entirely distinct language. The essential difference is one of temperament and political outlook, for in the South the old democratic traditions of the Cossack Republic have never died out. Persecution only served to accentuate this difference, and fanned dying ashes into flame. Never even in the history of national movements was there a more perverse example of a government kindling, by its stupid intolerance, centri-

fugal tendencies among a population which might easily have been appeased with a tithe of what it afterwards came to demand.

The political interaction between Russia and Austria-Hungary has been very great for at least a generation past, despite the tremendous barriers which impede intellectual intercourse. This was at once apparent in 1905; for it was really the Russian Revolution which made Universal Suffrage a living issue in Hungary, and carried it to speedy triumph in Austria. Here the chief obstacle to reform was the aristocratic caste, which still dominated the Polish Club, and the chief motive of their opposition was fear of the submerged Ruthene democracy, which so eagerly awaited political recognition. The Poles skilfully used their special position in the Reichsrat to extract unjust concessions at the expense of their rivals. Of the 103 seats for Galicia, 78 were assigned to the Poles, and only 25 to the Ruthenes, whereas, on a basis of population the proportions should have been nearly equal. None the less, the breach had been effected, and henceforth the Ukrainian Club was a factor which could not be ignored. The Galician capital Lvov (or Lemberg) became the centre of an acute racial struggle. Situated in territory which is overwhelmingly Ukrainian, the town itself is mainly Polish, with a large Jewish minority, but is none the less a focus of Ukraine national feeling.* It has found its patron in that very remarkable figure, Count Andrew Szeptycki, the Uniate Metropolitan of Lvov, who, himself a member of an ancient Ruthene family which had been Polonised till the present century, has long devoted all his energies to the task of spreading education, training up an active and keenly patriotic clergy, and fostering art, literature, and political thought. The Museum which he founded and the

“Ševčenko Society,” whose publications he helped to endow, exercised a profound influence beyond the Austrian border, despite all the frowns of official Russia.

The gross corruption by which the Szlachta—the ring of Polish conservative landowners—endeavoured to prop up their tottering power at the elections of 1907 (the first held under Universal Suffrage) created a very heated atmosphere in Galicia, and reacted upon the relations of Poles and Ruthenes. The struggle raged most fiercely in the University of Lvov, which remained in Polish hands, although a limited number of Ruthene chairs had also been created for such distinguished scholars as the historians Hruševsky and Kolessa. To such an extent were passions roused, that a young Ukrainian student, Šyčinski, assassinated the Polish Governor of Galicia, Count Potocki. Reprisals followed from the side of the Poles, scores of Ukrainian students were arrested, and the great hunger-strike which they organised in prison became one of the political sensations of Austria. The magnitude and democratic character of the national revolt became apparent when a couple of years later Šyčinski was smuggled out of prison and across the Russian border, to emerge during the Great War as the leader of the Ukrainian movement in the United States and Canada.

The Ukrainian party in the Austrian Parliament, though it has produced no outstanding personality who could be compared to the famous Czech leaders Kramář and Masaryk, has none the less proved its real worth as a firm bulwark of national claims, and is far from negligible in the interplay of parties. Its democratic outlook—inherent in a race whose aristocracy had been assimilated by an alien race—was intensified by bad economic conditions and the consequent growth of emigration. Driven alike by racial,

political, and economic reasons into hostility to its Polish masters, it would have gratified its natural Slavonic feelings by such an alliance with the Czechs and Jugoslavs as the summer of 1917 has finally produced ; but in those days it found itself repelled by all those who, in their enthusiasm for Russia, accepted the Russian reactionary thesis that Ukrainian nationality is a "fake." It was therefore driven by circumstances to seek temporary allies among the German parties. In the decade preceding the war it was looked upon with growing favour by the Clericals of Vienna and by their patron the late Archduke Francis Ferdinand, who sought to exploit the most national institution of the Austrian Ukraine, the Uniate Church, as a weapon against Orthodoxy. Fantastic designs of political and military ambition linked hands with no less ambitious ecclesiastical pretensions. "Barbarous Russia" was to be "hurled back into Asia," a vast Ukraine kingdom created, stretching from the San to the Dniepr or the Don, as an appanage of the Habsburg Crown, while the Jesuits were to establish their sway in the very heart of the Orthodox church-system and drive in a fatal wedge between Moscow and Constantinople. On the other side stood a certain school of militant Panslavists, who dreamt of nothing less than the extension of the Orthodox faith throughout the Slavonic world, and interpreted political movements in the light of religious fanaticism. To them the very existence of a Ukrainian movement in Galicia and the increasing latitude accorded to it by the Austrian Government seemed a direct challenge of the most dangerous kind. Indeed, self-preservation drove the old régime in Russia to oppose the Ukrainian idea by every means in its power and to encourage and even subsidise the so-called "Moscalophil" party in Galicia. The rivalry of Ukrainians and Moscalo-

phils—the latter refusing to admit the distinction between Great and Little Russians—was complicated by the jealousy of the Poles, who did not hesitate to join hands with Petrograd in its campaign of proselytism. The most striking example of this was the sensational end to the High Treason Trial at Lvov in June 1914; the accused Moscalophils being acquitted by a jury consisting of Poles and demonstratively presented with flowers on leaving the court. The concessions wrested from the Poles by the Ukrainian leaders in Vienna in the previous March, under pressure from the Austrian authorities, had equally alarmed Chauvinist opinion among the Russians and the Poles. The promise of a complete Ruthene University at Lvov had now become definite, and on many sides the opinion was openly heard that its opening would be regarded as a *casus belli* by the Petrograd Government. Galicia swarmed with spies, and the traffic in military information assumed unheard-of dimensions. Thus each move and counter-move added to the explosive material which already lay to hand when the final catastrophe came.

FRANO SUPILO: A SOUTHERN SLAV PATRIOT¹

PROBABLY but few of those who read the announcement of Frano Supilo's death had any perception of the man and what he stood for. And yet it is no exaggeration to describe him as one of the ablest political brains, not merely of his own nation, but of warring Europe as a whole—one of those who, if once assured a hearing, could not have failed to influence the deliberations of the future conference of peace. The story of his life is the story of a national idea which contributed materially to the causes of the war, and whose fulfilment must be a vital factor in any stable settlement of Europe.

Frano Supilo was born in 1870 of poor parents at Cavtat (Ragusa Vecchia), on the coast of southern Dalmatia. His political career began at the age of 14 as the result of a schoolboy prank. He and two other small boys hissed Crown Prince Rudolf on the streets of Ragusa during an official visit to the ancient republic: and this offence was visited in typically Austrian fashion by expulsion from every scholastic establishment in the Empire. One of the other culprits was the son of the mayor and deputy of Ragusa, then leader of the Croat National Party in Dalmatia: and private influence succeeded in reversing the

¹ From *The New Europe*, vol. iv. No. 51, October 4, 1917.

decision, with the result that Melko Cingrija followed the usual academic career and in due course stepped into his father's place as mayor and representative of the town. But Supilo had no powerful patrons, and in his case the veto held good. He was a self-made man in the best and most literal sense of the term : his education was what his own natural genius was able to wrest from adverse circumstances. The Italian language, the medium of intercourse between a purely Slav province and the outer world, came almost as naturally to him as his native Serbo-Croat ; and as with so many other Croat leaders, his mind was moulded by the teachings and example of the great Italian thinkers and patriots of the last century. At first he scarcely saw beyond the narrow limits of Ragusa, a city of magic memories, steeped in its ancient republican tradition, but living upon a dead past, in complete isolation from the world. The little town was as yet immersed in narrow party feuds, in which the national idea was too often overshadowed by religious and social motives ; and oil was continually poured upon the flames by local news-sheets, whose trade was mutual incitement and invective. Supilo, then, at the age of barely twenty found himself in a subordinate position on the staff of the *Crvena Hrvatska*, which had been founded to represent purely Croat interests against Serbs and Italians, who had combined to capture the Commune of Ragusa. A mutual friend, who before the war took a growing part in Dalmatian politics, used to tell me that it was only some years after he returned from America in 1898 that he first heard Supilo's name mentioned at all seriously.

In 1900 a wealthy group of Croat merchants in Fiume decided to found a paper of their own, still on strictly Croat lines, but with a wider outlook than that of remote Ragusa ;

and Supilo was selected as its first editor. Its main aim was opposition to the intolerable régime of Count Khuen Héderváry, who since 1883 had governed Croatia as a Magyar satrapy by every imaginable method of corruption and repression, and especially by skilfully playing off Croats and Serbs against each other, and kindling the dying flames of religious animosity. The press throughout Croatia had been effectually muzzled and thus Fiume, which being governed direct from Budapest is not subject to the reactionary press law of Croatia, was selected as the only possible centre for an independent organ of Croat opinion. Under Supilo the *Novi List* rapidly won its spurs as the eader of the Opposition press, and became a rallying-ground for the younger generation of Southern Slavs, so many of whom had shaken off the dust of Khuen's Croatia in disgust, and found their way to Prague University. Through them the ethical teaching of Professor Masaryk and a broader and more generous outlook upon the Slav world and its essential spiritual unity, permeated to Croatia and Dalmatia, and brought once more to the surface the old idea of Serbo-Croat unity, which had been universal in 1848 and had only suffered a temporary eclipse as the result of Austro-Magyar dividing tactics. To all thinking men it was becoming more and more obvious that only common action between Serbs and Croats could save their common country from political absorption and economic exploitation.

Now and for the next decade most of the political initiative among the Southern Slavs was to come from Dalmatia; and Supilo and the office of his little paper became a natural link between his native province and Croatia—between those of a single race whom a purely arbitrary frontier divided in political allegiance between

Austria and Hungary. Supilo found himself in the thick of the struggle at a time still known as the "Black Days," when rioting in Croatia was put down by bloodshed and wholesale arrests, and when wild tales of massacre found such universal credence as to induce the peasantry to drape their doors with black. Over thirty Croat deputies of the Diets of Istria and Dalmatia, roused by the general excitement, sought for an audience of the Emperor, in order to beg mercy for the victims of the Khuen régime. Francis Joseph's refusal to receive them—due to Magyar influence—marked a turning-point in the relations of the Habsburg dynasty and its Southern Slav subjects.

The active intervention of the Dalmatians gave a great impetus to the idea of closer co-operation between Croat and Serb; and it is worth noting that at this time such efforts enjoyed the open sympathy of the Italian element along the coast. Indeed, in 1904 Supilo was prosecuted for a series of articles in *Novi List*, urging the vital need for an accord between Italians and Slavs, if Germanism, their common foe, was not to triumph on the Adriatic. All this coincided with the rise of the Independence Party in Hungary, in whom Supilo and his friends saw a possible ally against the existing régime in both halves of the Monarchy. Nothing, they argued, was to be hoped for from Vienna after the rejected audience, and it would therefore be wise to make a timely alliance with the rising power in Hungary, and thus to secure for themselves a free hand for reforms in Croatia as soon as the new régime should triumph. Such an alliance presupposed a united front, and after a series of preliminary party conferences forty Croat deputies from Croatia, Dalmatia, and Istria met in October 1905 and drew up the famous Resolution of Fiume.

This document, which marks an epoch in Jugoslav

history, was drafted by the ex-Mayor of Spalato, Dr. Trumbić, the same man who last August signed with the Serbian Premier the no less memorable Pact of Corfu. Trumbić received his main backing from fellow-Dalmatians—Supilo, Milić, Čingrija, and Smodlaka. In the light of formulas which the Great War has made common property, the opening phrase of the Resolution deserves our special attention: for it asserts that “every nation has the right to decide freely and independently concerning its existence and its fate,” and thus places on record the Croat leaders’ title to political maturity. Being directly designed as a basis for close co-operation with the Magyars against Austria, it accepted the existing constitutional arrangement between Hungary and Croatia, but demanded the re-incorporation of Dalmatia in the latter and laid down an elaborate programme of reforms, alike “political, cultural, financial, and economic.” Events were to prove that they had utterly miscalculated in relying upon progressive ideas among the Magyars; but this does not for a moment detract from their work among their own people.

A fortnight later twenty-six Serb deputies met at Zara and formally endorsed both the Resolution of Fiume and the principle of joint political action between the Croats and Serbs as one nation by blood and language. It was on this basis that Supilo became the principal intermediary between Croats and Magyars. In the course of these negotiations he came into close contact with all the Magyar political leaders, and deeply impressed them with his political capacity and vision, his persistence, and his rugged incorruptibility. When, therefore, the Magyar Coalition came into power in Hungary in April 1906, and thereby brought its new ally, the Serbo-Croat Coalition, into power in Croatia, it was already obvious to Budapest that the

real driving force in the Croatian capital proceeded from Supilo and his Dalmatian friends, rather than from the nominal heads of the provincial government. A year later the Magyarising frenzy of Francis Kossuth and his colleagues of the Wekerle Cabinet destroyed the shortlived friendship between Magyar and Croat; and it was Supilo who, after his impassioned appeals for compromise had failed, became the soul of the obstruction by which the forty Croat delegates held up the whole business of the Hungarian Parliament for nearly two months. His achievement was the more remarkable because, amid all the work which political organisation and journalism entailed in that busy year, he had found time to master unaided the Magyar language to such a pitch as enabled him to use it for his speeches in the Budapest Chamber.

Croat resistance was of course overpowered, and the Magyars, through their nominee Baron Rauch, introduced an absolutist régime in Croatia and subjected their former friends of the Serbo-Croat Coalition to every kind of political persecution. By this time Supilo was a name to conjure with in both halves of the Monarchy, and those in authority viewed with growing alarm the emergence of a strong popular leader who owed nothing to position, favour, or even education. "We must destroy him at all costs," said a high Austrian official in 1907 to Mr. Steed. "He cannot be bought; he must be put out of harm's way." Though Vienna was not devoid of men who realised the full significance of the Southern Slav problem for Austria-Hungary, their warnings were disregarded, and official Austria made itself the accomplice of official Hungary in a deliberate attempt to wreck the idea of Serbo-Croat unity and at the same time to use its growing popularity as a lever for discrediting and attacking independent Serbia.

The full perfidy of the methods employed to this end are still very inadequately realised in the West, though they throw a searching light not merely upon Austria-Hungary's traditional policy, but also upon one of the prime causes of the present war. The annexation of Bosnia in October 1908 was preceded for many months by a skilful press campaign, intended to suggest that the leaders of the movement for unity were inspired, and even directly financed from Belgrade, and that thus so far from voicing any genuine national demand, they were mere venal agents of an alien dynasty. Wholesale arrests took place in Croatia, and in March 1909 there opened at Agram a monster treason trial which was to drag on for seven months amid scandals worthy of Judge Jeffreys himself. The whole apparatus of spies, informers, and *agents provocateurs* with which Vienna and Budapest had flooded the Southern Slav provinces was mobilised for the occasion; and as a further means of intimidation the secret police actually organised a band of hooligan students to set upon some of the Coalition leaders in the main streets of Agram. Supilo was a victim of one of these assaults. As the Bosnian crisis dragged on and the risk of war with Russia grew, yet other poisoned weapons were employed. On Aehrenthal's own orders the Viennese Foreign Office supplied Austria's leading historian Heinrich Friedjung with a formidable array of "documents," purporting to establish the corrupt complicity of the Serbo-Croat leaders in a widespread revolutionary plot organised by the Serbian Government in Croatia and Bosnia. On the very day fixed by the Austrian General Staff for a final rupture with Serbia the first instalment of Friedjung's "revelations" appeared in the *Neue Freie Presse*. At the last moment Russia yielded to William II.'s demonstration "in shining armour," and the danger of

a European war was averted for the time ; but the news reached Vienna so late at night that Aehrenthal's attempt to suspend publication came too late. In those days it was an open secret in Vienna that one of the first steps under martial law would have been the execution of Supilo and other coalition leaders. As, however, peace was preserved, nothing could prevent them from bringing a collective action for libel against Dr. Friedjung.

The amazing revelations of the Friedjung Trial cast an indelible stain upon Austria's diplomacy, and afford crushing proof of her bad faith towards Serbia. For the "documents" upon which the defence relied were proved to be impudent forgeries, concocted by officials of the Austro-Hungarian Legation in Belgrade, and supplied *en gros*, with the connivance of the Minister, to the Foreign Office in Vienna, for the purpose of poisoning the wells of public opinion against the Jugoslavs inside and outside the Monarchy. These forgeries, which deserve a special chapter to themselves,¹ were far too gross to have deceived the merest child ; and when Professor Masaryk on the floor of the Austrian Delegation branded the guilty diplomatist as a second Azev, the spy and *agent provocateur*, the Foreign Minister, remained seated in no less guilty silence. Those who like myself were present at the Friedjung Trial will never forget its atmosphere of mingled perfidy and prejudice. Still less will they forget the venomous and concentrated attack launched against the person of Supilo, revealing as in a flash the recognition of his strength and the resolve to annihilate him at all costs. In those days Supilo stood the test of an ordeal such as comes to few men,

¹ Full details of this sensational affair are to be found in my book, "The Southern Slav Question" (1911), and a more general survey in "German, Slav and Magyar" (1916).

and those who saw him in the flames could never again doubt his metal.

During the trial Supilo's colleagues loyally supported him, but after it their paths forked asunder. While most of them were too ready to rest upon their oars after so triumphant a vindication of their honour, Supilo was bent on continuing the fight with renewed energy. Henceforth he stood apart from the parties, relying more and more upon the rising generation and making of his *Novi List* a true focussing point of the growing movement for unity and religious freedom. Like the overwhelming mass of his people, he hailed the Balkan victories of Serbia as the herald of resurrection, and seemed to wait for the trumpet call that was to usher in the final struggle. To the very last the ruling factors in the Habsburg Monarchy would have none of him; none have ever known better than they how to squander or reject their national resources in men and in ideas. Supilo's whole career is a crushing indictment of their whole system. It was his unpardonable crime to combat the principle of *Divide et Impera*, and to help to join indissolubly those whom God's Vicegerent in Vienna had resolved should remain asunder.

On the eve of war Supilo was walking in Tirol, and crossed the Italian border to await events. The great storm, whose gathering electricity he and his compatriots had long felt around them, had at last burst, and for him there could be only one choice. To the Jugoslavs Austria's war with Serbia was a civil war, deliberately designed to shatter for ever the dream of unity and freedom. Supilo found his way to Rome and London, and in company with such other Jugoslav leaders as succeeded in crossing the frontier—notably his old friend Ante Trumbić of Spalato—devoted himself to pleading the cause and watching the

interests of the Jugoslavs in Entente countries. The time has not yet come to reveal his signal services to that cause in the spring of 1915, the skill with which he elicited essential facts from the official world, the persuasive eloquence and resource of argument by which he succeeded in enlightening ignorance in high places. But on one aspect of his activity special stress must be laid. Of all the Jugoslav leaders Supilo had the clearest grasp of the Adriatic problem as a whole, and of the capital importance of an intimate understanding between Italians and Jugoslavs, alike in their mutual interests and in those of the Entente as a whole. Undeterred by the yelpings of the gutter press, he worked incessantly to remove the causes of friction and distrust, and had already won the friendship and confidence of many representative Italians. Thus we shall mourn him not merely as a Slav patriot, but as a true friend of Italy.

To those who did not know him it is difficult to convey the full timbre of Supilo's mind. He was a real elemental force in politics, commanding attention by sheer strength of will, even where he could not gain entrance by more personal qualities. His political *flair* was as unrivalled as the patience with which he pieced together fragments of a story, tested their truth by exploring many a devious side-track and covered up his traces as he advanced. Nothing was more fascinating than to watch him adjusting his focus anew to the unfamiliar political conditions of Paris and London, and weighing in the scales of his mind the statesmen and diplomatists of the Entente. One of the secrets of his success was the zest with which he studied the psychology of all with whom his political work brought him into contact; and here his very lack of training stood him in good stead, enabling him to apply an absolutely untouched

intellect of the very first order to his study of men and events.

Like every man of genius, he had the defects of his qualities. He could not suffer fools gladly and took an almost impish delight in letting many of his weaker colleagues feel the grip of steel within the velvet of the glove. He never learnt the supremely difficult task of leading, while seeming to be led. Born of a race which is extraordinarily subjective and personal, Supilo, too, was swayed unduly by personal likes and dislikes. He had all the secretiveness of the peasant and not a little of the peasant's distrust of strangers; but, though he regarded himself as exceptionally *rusé*, there was in him also an element of *naïveté* and even of childlike simplicity which constituted much of his charm. When once he gave his confidence he did so wholeheartedly. Simple in his tastes, loyal in his friendships, he set an example of sterling honesty and straight dealing against which calumny and malice beat in vain. Behind a heavy and at first sight unarresting exterior there was hidden an amazing vitality whose magnetic force affected all around him. Having been privileged to know him for nearly ten years of stress and trial, I can only re-echo the phrase with which Professor Masaryk summed up his defence of Supilo in the memorable Friedjung Trial—"For him I would lay both my hands in the fire."

To the cause to which he devoted every energy, his death is a cruel loss; but to describe it as irreparable would be the worst of all reflections upon his memory. Supilo built surely upon unshakable foundations. He has died in exile, with the Promised Land not yet in sight, but truth is on the march, and nothing can arrest its course. That sense of spiritual unity which has been latent

through centuries of oppression, has kindled into flame by the great events of our own century, and has at last passed into the consciousness of the whole race. We cannot as yet foresee the political form in which this unity will find its practical expressions ; but we know that as the sparks fly upward, so in one form or another—soon or late, with us or against us—the Southern Slavs will achieve their national ideal. And in the Temple of Fame by which another great Dalmatian, Ivan Meštrović, hopes some day to commemorate the forerunners and champions of a new order, the name of Frano Supilo will assuredly not be forgotten.

GENERAL ŠTEFÁNIK

THE death of General Štefánik is one of those swift turns of fate to which we must submit, but which we cannot hope to explain. It would take the imagination of a Greek poet to do justice to the tragedy of this modern Icarus, plunging to destruction from the element which he had made his own at the very moment when for the first time he saw his country free after a tyranny of centuries, and freed in no small part owing to his own efforts. There are not many men to whom it is given to die at such a height of emotion or by a death which they would so unquestionably have preferred.

Like so many of his most distinguished compatriots, Milan Štefánik was the son of a Lutheran village pastor. From the first he was passionately devoted to his Slovak nationality; and as there was no room for so adventurous a spirit in the Hungary of the closing nineteenth century, he found his way first to Prague, then to Zürich University, and soon after began his active scientific career at the Observatoire of Meudon. When first I heard his name ten years ago, I little dreamt under what circumstances I should make his acquaintance, nor how stirring a part he was to play. During one of my visits to Hungary the Chauvinist Press gave some prominence to an "incident" which had occurred in the luncheon car between Budapest

and Vienna. A young astronomer, returning from his parents' home to his post in Paris, had actually had the audacity to speak Slovak to a friend in the presence of Magyar deputies and officials, and had even dared to resent their insulting protests. There were loud threats of a challenge to the rash intruder upon his native soil, and he was said to have fled before the representatives of a superior culture. But the simple facts were that he deliberately returned from Vienna to Budapest, sent a message that he was at the entire disposal of his challengers, and only left again when it became clear that they had pressing engagements elsewhere. The whole affair was highly characteristic of the ideas of liberty and good-breeding which then prevailed in the "Millenary Magyar State."

During the decade preceding the war (he only lived to be thirty-eight) he won a high reputation in the scientific world by his researches in every continent—in Thibet, at Cape Horn, on the Upper Amazon, in the Sahara and Tahiti—and the political tact which he revealed on more than one of these occasions was to stand him in good stead at a later period, when no connection, however slight, with the Western political world could be neglected by a protagonist of the Czech cause.

When war broke out, Štefánik volunteered for the French army and entered the ranks as a private soldier. Certain meteorological proposals made by him speedily attracted General Foch's attention, but he preferred active service in the field to the post offered to him. He entered the French air force, and rapidly made his mark by a combination of scientific knowledge, eagle sight, and fervid enthusiasm. Never very strong in health, he sustained grave injuries in an accident during the Serbian

campaign, and after the retreat through Albania underwent an operation which rendered all physical exertion finally impossible. But this handicap only served to increase tenfold his other activities, and henceforth he devoted his entire effort to the cause of Czecho-Slovak unity and independence. Already assured of the friendship of the French, from M. Briand downwards, he obtained through their good offices the permission of the Italian High Command to distribute leaflets from an aeroplane to the Czech troops in the Trentino. It was on this occasion that he was able to detect and report to General Cadorna in the very nick of time certain formidable concentrations of Austrian troops till then unsuspected by the Italians. From now onwards he became more and more closely identified with the efforts of Professor Masaryk and Dr. Beneš to win over the Entente countries to the Czecho-Slovak cause, and he soon became one of the triumvirate which eventually secured formal recognition from Paris, London, Rome, and Washington. He visited Russia and Roumania for the purpose of organising the Czecho-Slovak prisoners in those countries, and although the Tsarist régime blocked all his efforts, his visit undoubtedly prepared the ground for Professor Masaryk, who reached Petrograd in the early summer of 1917 and was soon able to establish the famous Czecho-Slovak army on a firm basis.

In April 1918 Štefánik, now honorary Colonel in the French army, was a prominent figure at the memorable Rome Congress, whose public decisions undoubtedly contributed so materially towards the destruction of Austria-Hungary, but which on the attainment of victory have been so cynically repudiated by the statesmen and public opinion of Italy. In the following month, very largely as the result of the personal relations which he

had established with General Diaz and King Victor Emanuel, Colonel Štefánik was able to conclude, in the name of the Czecho-Slovak National Council, a military convention regulating the status of the Czech legions on the Italian front, and specially devised so as to facilitate the defection of their comrades from the Austrian ranks and the demoralisation of the neighbouring German and Magyar units.

During the summer of 1918 the rôle of the Czecho-Slovak army in Russia became increasingly important, and indeed is known to have definitely saved the Allied cause in Siberia and even west of the Urals. To complete its organisation and to devise guarantees for its safety in so trying and isolated a situation, Štefánik went out with the French General Janin to Vladivostok and Central Siberia, where his presence inspired his discouraged countrymen with fresh enthusiasm. On the eve of the final *débâcle* of the Central Powers, he became War Minister in the provisional Czecho-Slovak Government proclaimed in Paris by Professor Masaryk with the consent and approval of the Allies; and when soon afterwards Prague became the capital of an independent Republic, his appointment was confirmed by acclamation. Many delicate problems of repatriation, to say nothing of high politics, had detained him in the West, and it was only now that he was returning home, relying on his favourite element the air to save him from touching enemy soil.

With his countrymen General Štefánik had already become a legendary figure, and his name will to all time be bound up with one of the most splendid romances of the Great War. His was a many-sided nature, and while some will think of him as a mediaeval knight-errant flung

by some freak of destiny into the era of the telephone and the airship, I prefer to regard him as a forerunner of the twenty-fifth or thirtieth century. For he was no mere creature of impulse or political passion: behind a reserved exterior there was a whole philosophy of thought and action. Such wretched health as his would have forced most men away from the directing currents of life. Almost it may be said of him that he lived, not as other men on food and drink, but by sheer force of will and applied mathematics. The motto which fits him above all others is—*Cogito, ergo sum*. And if his own fragile will was able to defy physical disability, still more was this true of his political creed. Like his chief—now President of the new Republic—he set himself a distant goal, only attainable through arduous effort, and to the ruck of mankind five short years ago so veiled in mountain mist as to seem not merely fantastic, but criminally impossible. It shall be, therefore it *IS*—so he reasoned. The mists have rolled away, and to the eye of faith the goal is revealed. Masaryk and his pupils have proved to all time that *Realpolitik*, so far from depending upon a skilful and unscrupulous adaptation to the circumstances of the moment, can only hope to succeed if it is based upon those fundamental moral factors which outlive dynasties and States, and which are to politics what the sun's flame is to the dead ashes of a fire. To Štefánik, the outcast son of a helot nation, the Slovak hymn used no mere figure of speech when it announced the dawn of liberty amid the thunders of the Tatra; and he lived to see the Magyar vultures driven from their nests. For him *le jour de gloire est arrivé*, and it will be enough for him if the Slovak peasantry guard his memory in their hearts. They have already shown those gifts of delicacy and imagination which their friends knew to

expect of them. By their spontaneous desire the remains of their latest hero, and of the three gallant Italians who found their death with him, will rest in a rock-hewn grave on the highest spur of the Small Carpathians, as guardians of Slovensko's freedom. And there surely he may rest in peace. For to us, who mourn the death of a very gallant gentleman, it is clear that he is but the type of his reviving nation, and that others will fulfil what he has made ripe for fulfilment.

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May 7, 1919.

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