

inner group of political thinkers that I was positively assured in January, 1914, by a gentleman deep in the confidence of the Kaiser that an Anglo-German alliance was only a matter of months! Germany sincerely thought so, and desired it passionately; hence the storm of hate aroused by Sir Edward Grey's insane duplicity.

Conceive of Palmerston in the Elysian Fields hearing that an Anglo-French fleet is bombarding the Dardanelles in order to open Constantinople to the Tsar!

It is against all political sense.

VIII.

Let us proceed to the congenial task of the reconstruction of the map of Europe!

In these days Germany is being blamed in many quarters. Let me at least play the piccolo in the anti-German band! Above, I blamed her for allowing the military advantages of possessing Metz and Strasbourg to outweigh the political advantages of winning the friendship of her western neighbor.

I accuse her of even worse mismanagement in 1914. The perfect statesman, had he been in absolute power, would have looked to permanent and not to temporary conditions.

Germany was hemmed in by an unscrupulous coalition of political maniacs; but she had a very simple resource. There was no quarrel with France or with England or with Belgium. The enemy of Germany was the enemy of all Europe—Russia. Had I been in power I should have said:

"Monsieur le Président, we propose to defend our frontier if you attack it. We have no enmity for you, and no provocation shall induce us to send a single Uhlan beyond the black and white posts.

"We sacrifice all the military advantage of taking you unprepared, of overrunning Belgium, of holding all Northeastern France, as we could easily do.

"Our quarrel is with Russia. Russia has treacherously intrigued against us in the Balkans, has turned our flank and rendered our position untenable. She has deliberately upset the peace proclaimed last year; she has overthrown Albania. She has even resorted to the foulest murders to gain her ends. Germany and Austria are your fortress against the savage Tartar hordes; leave us alone and we will hurl them back as we hurled the Turk from Vienna."

Had France and England joined against her after such a declaration the world had stood aghast. They would have been compelled to undertake a campaign of aggression. They would have been forced to elaborate and unconvincing explanations of obscure and dishonorable treaties.

However, the plan of the General Staff prevailed. The allies were able to misrepresent the intentions of Germany in a perfectly plausible manner. The press was able to utter its barbaric yawn about neutrality and to spread its ridiculous calumnies about "atrocities." (Invading armies always commit atrocities in the press. And of course invasion is itself an atrocity.) Nobody would have cared—or does care, now it has happened—about atrocities so far off as Poland. And the abnegation of Germany in refusing to attack would have been patent to the world and must have won its sympathy. In the face of such an attitude, I say fearlessly that England would never have dared to declare war. And the United States, which is naturally pro-German, must have been most friendly neutral. As it is, the public opinion of most responsible people sways toward the Allies.

I may be told that I overrate the intelligence of the world at large; that all this would not have been apparent; that Germany would have thrown away her trump cards for nothing.

If so, I apologize to the General Staff, and increase my contempt for the world at large, though that means straining my faculty of contempt to the breaking point.

In any case, the deed is done. It is no good crying over spilt blood. Our task is to reconstruct Europe so that these disturbances may not recur.

IX.

To do this needs only the general recognition of one salient fact, the fact which has been insisted on repeatedly in this article. The enemy of Europe is Russia.

It is Russia, and Russia only, that stands to gain any advantage in this war. True, Poland is invaded, but that merely saves the Tsar from his constant preoccupation—that of fooling and massacring the Poles.

The French have a bare foothold on some scraps of German territory, but a sixth of their own country is in Teuton hands. Belgium is pulped, and the flank turned to the north. England is besieged by submarines and sweats daily in fear of Zeppelins. German commerce on the high seas has been destroyed—that merely ruins British commerce.

But Russia has conquered quite a slice of Austria;* Russia has destroyed the balance of the Balkans in her own interest; Russia has a claw poised over Constantinople.

Russia has cleared the way to Egypt. Russia will be able to cut England from India within ten years.

Russia must absorb Hungary; Austria must crumble. One can already foresee Pan-Slavism unifying the whole of Eastern Europe, Balkans and all, and reaching mercilessly out to the Atlantic. She has stolen Finland; she will steal Scandinavia. If she wins the Dardanelles she will next complain that Gibraltar throttles her commerce.

How Petrograd must laugh at Paris and London! Suppose Germany sued for peace tomorrow, what could the Allies demand? France, a few square miles of land; England, some quite impracticable limitation of the fleet; Belgium, the snows of yester-year. But Russia could and would demand everything; and could and would get it. It is not merely the interest of Europe, but the interest of humanity, to check her.

X.

Russia is a country not well known; but I know her. As far back as 1897 I traveled in Russia to acquire the language. I visited Moscow and the interior still further East as recently as 1913. I know her.

The Russian aristocracy is a foreign element. The middle classes are all Jews or Germans. The peasant is an ignorant fanatic sot. He rarely reads or writes. He works only to obtain enough money to drink himself into insensibility. He has no initiative, no thrift, no energy. His religion is no better than the fetich worship of West Africa. In August, 1913, I knew an Englishwoman of good position raped by two Russians in a perfectly reputable hotel in Moscow. She had no redress.

Much-lauded Russian art is either mere barbarian Asiatic crudeness or base imitation. Russian poets ape Byron; Russian painters copy Bougereau or Luke Fildes! Russian novelists model themselves on Zola; Russian liberals quote Rousseau!

The Russian ballet is stolen from Gordon Craig and Isadora Duncan, since it ceased to thief the old conventional

*The Kaiser's telegram of August 1 did indeed express practically these ideas. But he might have stood by it in the face of the cynical repulse. Had he done so—I admit Germany might have suffered many things, but the most stupid and prejudiced could have no more doubted German magnanimity than German valor. Moreover, I doubt if the English Government would have dared to strike. A war so plainly aggressive would have meant revolution. Even now—?