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GREAT BRITAIN AND THE EUROPEAN CRISIS.

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CORRESPONDENCE, AND STATEMENTS IN
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TRODUCTORY NARRATIVE OF EVENTS.



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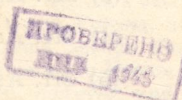
GREAT BRITAIN

AND THE

EUROPEAN CRISIS.

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CORRESPONDENCE, AND STATEMENTS IN
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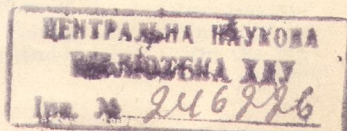
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ТРАДИЦИОННОЕ ИЗДАНИЕ
 Издано Б. Н. Косиновым
 2012 г.

INTRODUCTORY NARRATIVE OF EVENTS.

(1.)

On the 23rd June, 1914, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, nephew of the Emperor of Austria, Heir to the Throne, and Commander-in-Chief of the Army, left Vienna to attend army manoeuvres in the Province of Bosnia. On Sunday, the 28th, he visited Sarajevo, the capital of the province, and made a progress through the town accompanied by his wife, the Duchess of Hohenberg. While passing through the streets their automobile was fired on by an assassin. Both the Archduke and Duchess were killed.

No crime has ever aroused deeper or more general horror throughout Europe; none has ever been less justified. Sympathy for Austria was universal. Both the Governments and the public opinion of Europe were ready to support her in any measures, however severe, which she might think it necessary to take for the punishment of the murderer and his accomplices.

It immediately appeared, from the reports of our representatives abroad, that the press and public opinion of Austria-Hungary attributed much of the responsibility for the crime to the Servian Government, which was said to have encouraged a revolutionary movement amongst the Serb populations of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

That there had for many years been a strong Serb nationalist movement in these two provinces there is no doubt. This movement in an earlier form had swept the provinces, then part of the Turkish Empire, into the insurrection against the Turkish Government in the seventies of last century, culminating in the war of 1877-8 between Russia and Turkey. It had continued when Austria took over the administration of the provinces under the Treaty of Berlin in 1878. Austria then pledged her word to Turkey that her occupation should not "detract from the rights of sovereignty of His Majesty the Sultan over these provinces." Thirty years later, however, in 1908, she suddenly proclaimed their annexation to her Empire. On the 7th October of that year, the annexation was celebrated in Sarajevo by the firing of salutes and ringing of cathedral bells, amid scenes of official rejoicing and popular apathy. Servian nationalist feeling immediately asserted itself, and the Servian Government protested to the Powers against the annexation as a "deep injury done to the feelings, interests, and rights of the Servian people." Servia's attitude, coupled with the resentment felt by Russia and certain other Great Powers, nearly brought about a European war: but after six months of extreme tension she was induced to make a declaration abandoning her protest and promising to live on good terms with Austria. Her nationalist aspirations still continued, however, and were strengthened by her successes in the Balkan wars of 1912-13—successes which were compromised by Austria's opposition to her territorial expansion. As Servia grew, Austrian suspicion of her designs deepened.

(2.)

In the light of this history the storm of anti-Servian feeling which swept Austria-Hungary after the Sarajevo murders is easily understood. It was a feeling based on patriotism and loyalty. Europe was disposed to excuse its exaggerations and to sympathise with its motives.

But the dangers to European peace which it involved were immediately evident from the reports which reached the Government in London. Anti-Serb riots took place at Sarajevo and Agram. The members of the Serb party in the Provincial Council of Croatia were assailed by their colleagues with cries of "Servian assassins." Mobs in Vienna threatened the Servian Legation. The Austrian press, almost without exception, used the most unbridled language, and called for the condign punishment of Servia. There were signs that the popular resentment was shared, and perhaps encouraged, by the Austrian Government. Both the British and also the German Government knew that the peace might be disturbed.

In view of these reports, it naturally became incumbent on disinterested Powers to exercise what influence they possessed in a direction which would reconcile justice with peace. Unfortunately, though the attitude of public opinion in Austria, and, to a less degree, also in Germany, was plain, the intentions of the Austrian Government remained almost equally obscure. The Austrian Foreign Office maintained an attitude of reticence towards the British and Russian Ambassadors. On the 7th

July the Government were careful to make a public announcement that a joint meeting of the Cabinets of Austria and Hungary, which had just taken place, was only concerned with the question of domestic measures to repress the Pan-Serb propaganda in Bosnia. On the 8th July the Minister-President of Hungary made, on the whole, a pacific speech in the Hungarian Parliament, defending the loyalty of the majority of the Serb subjects of the Empire. On the 11th July the Servian Minister at Vienna had no reason to anticipate a threatening communication from the Austrian Government, and as late as the 22nd July, the day before the Austrian ultimatum was delivered at Belgrade, the Minister-President of Hungary stated in Parliament that the situation did not warrant the opinion that a serious turn of events was necessary or even probable.

His Majesty's Government had therefore largely to fall back on conjecture. It was known that the situation might become serious, but it was also known that Serbia had made professions of readiness to accept any demands compatible with the sovereignty of an independent State. It was known that the opinion of the Russian and French—and also of the German—Governments was that the Servian Government was not itself to blame for the crime, but that Serbia must be ready to investigate and put an end to the propaganda which had apparently led to it, and which was said to have originated in part on Servian soil. Sir E. Grey advised Serbia to show herself moderate and conciliatory. He promised the German Ambassador to use his influence with the Russian Government in the same direction. More could not be done, for no actual evidence had yet been furnished that Servian territory had in fact been made the base for revolutionary operations. It was only known that a court-martial had been set up at Sarajevo, the proceedings before which were secret. The Servian Government stated that they were only waiting for the Austrian Government to communicate the evidence thus collected before setting their own investigations on foot. The Servian Government also stated that both the assassins implicated were Austrian subjects, and that on a previous occasion the Austrian Government had informed the Servian Government, in reply to enquiries, that one of these men was harmless and was under their protection. It was remembered that Austria had tried on previous occasions to fasten guilt on the Servian Government by means of police evidence brought forward in Austrian courts, and had failed. It was therefore assumed on all sides that, before Austria took any action, she would disclose to the public her case against Serbia. When Sir E. Grey said this to the German Ambassador on the 20th July, the latter replied that he certainly assumed that Austria would act upon some case that would be known: but, as a matter of fact, His Majesty's Government did not receive any statement of the evidence on which Austria had founded her ultimatum till the 7th August.

It was, therefore, necessary to wait. The situation was as clear as it could be made till Austria would consent to throw off her reticence. There was nothing doubtful in the general international situation, no incalculable element which Austria could not take into full consideration. Whatever she did, she would know accurately the consequences of her action. The Triple Alliance and the Triple *Entente* remained as they had always been. We had been quite recently assured that no new secret element had been introduced into the former, and Sir E. Grey had stated emphatically in Parliament on the 11th June that the latter had remained unchanged so far as we were concerned. Russia's interest in the Balkans was well known. As late as the 23rd May the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs had reaffirmed in the Duma the policy of the "Balkans for the Balkans," and it was known that any attack on a Balkan State by any great European Power would be regarded as a menace to that policy. If Serbia was, as the Austrian Ambassador said to Sir E. Grey on the 29th July, "regarded as being in the Austrian sphere of influence"; if Serbia was to be humiliated; then assuredly Russia could not remain indifferent. It was not a question of the policy of Russian statesmen at St. Petersburg, but of the deep hereditary feeling for the Balkan populations bred in the Russian people by more than two centuries of development. These things had been, as Sir E. Grey said to Parliament in March, 1913, in discussing the Balkan war, "a commonplace in European diplomacy in the past." They were the facts of the European situation, the products of years of development, tested and retested during the last decade. Patient work might change them, but the product of years could not be pushed aside in a day.

(3.)

Yet two days were as much as Austria decided to allow for the task. On the 23rd July she showed her hand. She delivered an ultimatum at Belgrade and required an answer in forty-eight hours. She made ten demands, directed towards

the elimination from Servian national life of everything which was hostile to Austria. These demands involved the suppression of newspapers and literature, the suppression of nationalist societies, a reorganisation of the Government schools, the dismissal of officers from the army, the participation of Austrian officials in judicial proceedings in Servia, the arrest of two specified men, the prevention of all traffic in arms across the frontier, a full explanation of anti-Austrian utterances, and immediate notification of the enforcement of these measures. In addition, the Servian Government was to publish on the front page of the "Official Journal" a prescribed statement, which amounted to a full recantation of her alleged errors, and a promise of amendment. A very brief summary was annexed to the ultimatum, giving the bare findings of the secret trial at Sarajevo, with no corroborative evidence. No independent nation had ever been called on to accept a greater humiliation.

Between the delivery of this ultimatum and the declaration of war between Great Britain and Germany there was an interval of only twelve days. In the whirl of negotiations which now followed, there was no time to draw breath and ponder. At the outset, therefore, it may be well to explain definitely the British attitude towards the Austrian ultimatum.

Austria was under provocation. She had to complain of a dangerous popular movement against her government. What evidence she might have against the Servian Government no one in Europe then knew. Great Britain had no interest in the Balkans, except one. She desired the consolidation and progressive government of the Balkan States; she desired, in the words recently used by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs before the Duma, that "the Balkan Governments should recognise that, in the matter of strengthening a State, the acquisition of territory is insufficient; the devotion and confidence of the new citizens must be enlisted." The dispute between Austria and Servia did not necessarily affect that interest; it was a dispute between two Governments with which Great Britain had nothing to do. Sir E. Grey, therefore, consistently stated that he had no concern in that dispute; that he had no title to intervene between Austria and Servia; that he would express no opinion on the merits of the ultimatum. But there was the other side. If the dispute affected the interests of Russia, then the peace of Europe was at stake; and, from the first, Sir E. Grey told the Austrian Government that he did not see how Russia, interested as she was in Servia, could take any but a most serious view of such a formidable document as the ultimatum. The peace of Europe must be maintained, and it could only be maintained, as Mr. Asquith had said to Parliament in March, 1913, in discussing the Balkan crisis, by a "spirit of forbearance, patience, and self-sacrifice,"—by a "loyal spirit of give and take on the part of the Great Powers directly concerned." It was as the agent of this spirit of conciliation alone that Great Britain intervened in the European crisis.

(4.)

On the 23rd July the Austrian Ambassador told Sir E. Grey that an ultimatum was being handed to Servia. For the first time Sir E. Grey heard that "there would be something in the nature of a time limit." He immediately expressed his grave alarm. Next morning the text of the ultimatum was handed to him, and he learnt that the time limit was forty-eight hours. He confessed to the German Ambassador that, as no time had been left for deliberation, he felt helpless. There was no time to advise Russia or to influence Servia.

At this critical moment everything depended on Germany. As the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs said a little later, "the key of the situation was to be found in Berlin." What was Germany's attitude? Privately, the German Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed his doubts as to the ultimatum; officially, the German Government called it "equitable and moderate," and said that they "desired urgently the localisation of the conflict." Everyone desired that; but it was no time for phrases. The same morning the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs had summoned the French and British Ambassadors in St. Petersburg, had said that Austria's step meant imminent war, and had asked for the support of Great Britain and France. The French Ambassador had pledged the support of France, as was well known to be inevitable under the terms of her alliance. The next morning the Russian Government stated publicly that Russia could not remain indifferent to the Austro-Servian conflict. The next evening troops in Vienna had to be called out to guard the Russian Embassy from hostile crowds. "Localisation" was a good phrase, but we had to deal with facts. Austria had surprised Europe, and with surprise had come universal alarm.

During these forty-eight hours Great Britain made three attempts at peace. Before all things, the time-limit of the ultimatum had to be extended. Great Britain and Russia urged this at Vienna. Great Britain urged Germany to join in pressing the Austrian Government. All that Berlin consented to do was to "pass on" the message to Vienna.

Secondly, Sir E. Grey urged that Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy should work together at Vienna and St. Petersburg in favour of conciliation. Italy assented; France assented; Russia declared herself ready; Germany said she had no objection, "if relations between Austria and Russia became threatening."

Thirdly, the Russian, French, and British representatives at Belgrade were instructed to advise Serbia to go as far as possible to meet Austria.

But it was too late. The time-limit, which Austria would not extend, had expired; and after all Serbia did not need advice. On the afternoon of Saturday, the 25th, she returned to Austria a reply which amounted to an acceptance of all Austria's demands, subject on certain points to the delays necessary for passing new laws and amending her Constitution, and subject to an explanation by Austria-Hungary of her precise wishes with regard to the participation of Austro-Hungarian officials in Serbian judicial proceedings. The reply went far beyond anything which any Power—Germany not excepted—had ever thought probable. But the same day the British Ambassador at Vienna reported that the tone of the Austrian press left the impression that a settlement was not desired, and he later reported that the impression left on his mind was that the Austrian note was so drawn up as to make war inevitable. In spite of the conciliatory nature of Serbia's reply, the Austrian Minister left Belgrade the same evening, and Serbia ordered a general mobilisation.

But an outline of the Serbian reply had been communicated to Sir E. Grey an hour or two before it was delivered. He immediately expressed to Germany the hope that she would urge Austria to accept it. Berlin again contented itself with "passing on" the expression of Sir E. Grey's hope to Vienna through the German Ambassador there. The fate of the message so passed on may be guessed from the fact that the German Ambassador told the British Ambassador directly afterwards that Serbia had only made a pretence of giving way, and that her concessions were all a sham.

(5.)

During the next four days, 26th to 29th July, there was only one question before Europe—how could Russia and Austria be brought to an agreement? It was evident that Russia did not believe that Austria would, or could, stop short of the absolute ruin of the Serbian State, if she once actually attacked it. Here again, the question was not merely one of Government policy; the popular sentiment of two great nations was involved. Austria indeed professed, no doubt with perfect honesty, that she would take no territory from Serbia. But the Austrian Ministers were being borne along on a wave of violent popular enthusiasm. They said themselves that they would be swept from power if they did not follow the popular desire for a conflict with Serbia. Would this popular enthusiasm be content with any mere punitive expedition against the enemy? Surely not. Russia, therefore, openly said that she would have to intervene if Serbia were attacked; but she promised Austria on the 27th that she would use all her influence at Belgrade to induce the Serbian Government to give satisfaction to Austria, and only asked Austria to delay hostilities in order to give time for deliberation. Austria refused, saying it was too late. She declared war on Serbia on the 28th. Russia ordered a partial mobilisation on the 29th.

But meanwhile Sir Edward Grey had proposed that the German, Italian, and French Ambassadors should meet him in London, to discuss the best means towards a settlement. Italy and France at once accepted; Russia said she was ready to stand aside; but Germany refused. She did not like what she called "a court of arbitration," and proposed instead direct negotiations between Russia and Austria. These negotiations actually began, as we have seen in the last paragraph, but they were cut short by the Austrian declaration of war against Serbia. Austria then apparently considered that the moment for such negotiations was passed. She had, moreover, refused to discuss the Serbian reply in any way, and it was difficult to see, after that refusal, what Russia could negotiate with her about. Russia, therefore, fell back on Sir E. Grey's proposal for a conference of Ambassadors in London, which she had originally expressed her readiness to accept. The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs urged Sir E. Grey to induce Germany to indicate in what way she would consent to work for a settlement.

This brings the narrative of events down to Wednesday, the 29th July. Russia was mobilising partially in her southern provinces. Austrian troops were bombarding Belgrade. But, on the other hand, better news was coming from Berlin. Up to the 28th at least, both Germany and Austria had seemed unwilling to admit that the situation was really serious; Russia, it was said, was unprepared, and France was in no condition to go to war. Germany had said, in reply to Sir E. Grey's repeated advances, that she did not like to make representations to Vienna for fear of stiffening Austria's attitude. But on the evening of the 28th the German Chancellor assured the British Ambassador that he was trying to mediate at Vienna and St. Petersburg. On the strength of this assurance and similar assurances made by the German Ambassador in London on the 29th, Sir E. Grey telegraphed to Berlin once more, in accordance with the request of the Russian Government, urging the German Government, if they did not like the idea of the Ambassadors' conference in the form he had suggested it, to suggest any other form they pleased. "Mediation," he said, "was ready to come into operation by any method that Germany thought possible if only Germany would press the button in the interests of peace." The telegram was despatched at about 4 o'clock on the evening of the 29th.

(6.)

This appeal was followed almost immediately by a strange response. About midnight, a telegram arrived at the Foreign Office from His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin. The German Chancellor had sent for him late at night. He had asked if Great Britain would promise to remain neutral in a war, provided Germany did not touch Holland and took nothing from France but her colonies. He refused to give any undertaking that Germany would not invade Belgium, but he promised that, if Belgium remained passive, no territory would be taken from her.

Sir E. Grey's answer was a peremptory refusal, but he added an exhortation and an offer. The business of Europe was to work for peace. That was the only question with which Great Britain was concerned. If Germany would prove by her actions now that she desired peace, Great Britain would warmly welcome a future agreement with her whereby the whole weight of the two nations would be thrown permanently into the scale of peace in years to come.

For the next two days peace proposals and negotiations continued, some initiated and all supported by Great Britain. There remained a spark of hope. But from the British point of view the face of Europe henceforward was changed. On the 29th July the only conflict in progress had been on the frontiers of Servia and Austria; the only fear of further war had lain in the relations of Russia and Austria. Germany's declarations were pacific; Russia had said she desired nothing but a period of peace to allow for her internal development; France would not fight except to help her ally. There had seemed no insuperable difficulty in keeping the peace; it was only a question of allaying the mutual suspicion between Vienna and St. Petersburg. But now a new element of danger had been introduced. Great Britain now knew that Germany was contemplating an attack on France. She knew more. The independence of the Low Countries had for centuries been considered as one of the strongest means of securing the peace of Europe. Their position and the nature of the country rendered them the natural battlefield of Northern Europe. If it was made impossible for a Great Power to invade them, war would become increasingly difficult and dangerous. With the growth of the idea of a fixed system of international law founded on treaties, the neutrality of Belgium had been devised as a permanent safeguard to this end. As such, it had been consecrated by two international treaties signed by all the Powers, and recognised by two generations of statesmen. Now, when the peace of Europe was our one object, it was found that Germany was preparing to tear out the main rivet of that peace.

Germany's position must be understood. She had fulfilled her treaty obligations in the past; her action now was not wanton. Belgium was of supreme military importance in a war with France; if such a war occurred, it would be one of life and death; Germany feared that, if she did not occupy Belgium, France might do so. In face of this suspicion, there was only one thing to do. The neutrality of Belgium had not been devised as a pretext for wars, but to prevent the outbreak of wars. The Powers must reaffirm Belgian neutrality in order to prevent the war now threatened. The British Government, therefore, on Friday, the 31st July, asked the German and French Governments for an engagement to respect Belgium's neutrality, and the Belgian Government for an engagement to uphold it. France gave the necessary engagement the same day; Belgium gave it the day after;

Germany returned no reply. Henceforward there could be no doubt of German designs.

Meanwhile, on the 30th and 31st negotiations continued between Russia and Austria. On the 29th Germany had suggested to Austria that she should stop as soon as her troops had occupied Belgrade. Late on the same night Russia offered to stop all military preparations, if Austria would recognise that the conflict with Serbia had become a question of general European interest, and would eliminate from her ultimatum the points which involved a violation of the sovereignty of Serbia. As the result of this offer, Russia was able to inform His Majesty's Government on the 31st that Austria had at last agreed to do the very thing she had refused to do in the first days of the crisis, namely, to discuss the whole question of her ultimatum to Serbia. Russia asked the British Government to assume the direction of these discussions. For a few hours there seemed to be a hope of peace.

(7.)

At this moment, on Friday, the 31st, Germany suddenly despatched an ultimatum to Russia, demanding that she should countermand her mobilisation within twelve hours. Every allowance must be made for the natural nervousness which, as history has repeatedly shown, overtakes nations when mobilisation is under way. All that can be said is that, according to the information in the possession of His Majesty's Government, mobilisation had not at the time proceeded as far in Russia as in Germany, although general mobilisation was not publicly proclaimed in Germany till the next day, the 1st August. France also began to mobilise on that day. The German Secretary of State refused to discuss a last proposal from Sir E. Grey for joint action with Germany, France, and Italy until Russia's reply should be received, and in the afternoon the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg presented a declaration of war. Yet on this same day, Saturday, the 1st, Russia assured Great Britain that she would on no account commence hostilities if the Germans did not cross the frontier, and France declared that her troops would be kept 6 miles from her frontier so as to prevent a collision. This was the situation when very early on Sunday morning, the 2nd August, German troops invaded Luxemburg, a small independent State whose neutrality had been guaranteed by all the Powers with the same object as the similar guarantee of Belgium. The die was cast. War between Germany, Russia, and France had become inevitable.

Only one question now remained for this country. His Majesty's Government failed in their attempts to secure a general peace. Should they now remain neutral? The grounds on which that question was decided are clearly set forth in the statements of Sir E. Grey and Mr. Asquith in Parliament, which are contained in this volume,* and no additional explanations are needed here. But one fact may be emphasized. From the 24th July, when Russia first asked for British support, to the 2nd August, when a conditional promise of naval assistance was given to France, Sir E. Grey had consistently declined to give any promise of support to either of our present allies. He maintained that the position of Great Britain was that of a disinterested party whose influence for peace at Berlin and Vienna would be enhanced by the knowledge that we were not committed absolutely to either side in the existing dispute. He refused to believe that the best road to European peace lay through a show of force. We took no mobilisation measures except to keep our fleet assembled, and we confined ourselves to indicating clearly to Austria on the 27th July, and to Germany on the 29th July, that we could not engage to remain neutral if a European conflagration took place. We gave no pledge to our present allies, but to Germany we gave three times—on the 30th July, the 31st July, and the 1st August—a clear warning of the effect which would be produced on our attitude and on the sentiment of the British people by a violation of the neutrality of Belgium.

After Germany's declaration of war on Russia on the afternoon of the 1st, the Tsar telegraphed to His Majesty the King as follows: "In this solemn hour I wish to assure you once more that I have done all in my power to avert war." It is right to say that His Majesty's Government believe this to be a true statement of the attitude both of Russia and France throughout this crisis. On the other hand, with every wish to be fair and just, it will be admitted that the response of Germany and Austria gave no evidence of a sincere desire to save the peace of Europe.

Foreign Office, Sept. 28, 1914.

* See Part II.

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CORRESPONDENCE LAID BEFORE PARLIAMENT.

NOTE.

(1) Documents Nos. 1-159 have been published as a White Paper, Miscellaneous No. 6 (1914) [Cd. 7467].

(2) Document No. 160 has been published as a White Paper, Miscellaneous No. 8 (1914) [Cd. 7445].

(3) Document No. 161 has been published as a White Paper, Miscellaneous No. 10 (1914) [Cd. 7596].

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119	To Sir F. Bertie ...	1914 July 31	Has denied to French Ambassador that His Majesty's Government had given German Government the impression that they would remain neutral. His Majesty's Government could not, however, at the present moment give France any pledge, though further developments might justify intervention	63
120	Sir G. Buchanan .. (Telegraphic)	31	New formula proposed by Russian Government. Russian Government will maintain waiting attitude if Austria agrees to stop advance of her troops and to allow consideration by Great Powers of satisfaction to be given by Serbia to Austria-Hungary without prejudice to her independence. Czar has undertaken that no Russian soldier will cross frontier so long as conversation with Austria continues	64
121	Sir E. Goschen .. (Telegraphic)	31	German Government appreciate Sir E. Grey's efforts to maintain peace, but cannot consider any proposal pending Russian reply to ultimatum presented by Germany relating to Russian mobilisation	64
122	" .. (Telegraphic)	31	Belgian neutrality. Refers to No. 114. Secretary of State cannot reply to British request until he has consulted Emperor and Chancellor. He doubts, however, whether German Government can give any answer. German Government alleges commission of hostile acts by Belgium ..	65
123	To Sir E. Goschen	Aug. 1	Conversation with German Ambassador respecting the possible effect on British public opinion of any violation of the neutrality of Belgium. Any promise that His Majesty's Government should stand aside definitely refused	65
124	Sir F. Bertie .. (Telegraphic)	July 31	German ultimatum to Russia. French Government anxious to know at once attitude of His Majesty's Government	66
125	" .. (Telegraphic)	31	Neutrality of Belgium (see No. 114). French Government are resolved to respect neutrality of Belgium unless compelled to act otherwise by reason of violation at the hands of another Power	66
126	" .. (Telegraphic)	Aug. 1	German Ambassador has been informed that French Government fail to understand reason for German communication respecting attitude of France in the event of a Russo-German war (see No. 117). German Ambassador will see Minister for Foreign Affairs in the evening ..	66
127	Sir M. de Bunsen .. (Telegraphic)	1	Mobilisation of Austrian army and fleet	67
128	Sir F. Villiers .. (Telegraphic)	1	Belgian neutrality. Refers to No. 115. Belgium expects Powers to observe and uphold her neutrality, which she intends to maintain to the utmost of her power	67
129	Luxemburg Minister of State.	2	German Government have informed Luxemburg that the German military measures in that country do not constitute a hostile act, but are only to insure against attack from France ..	67

No.	Name.	Date.	Subject.	Page.
139	Sir G. Buchanan .. (Telegraphic)	1914 Aug. 1	Unsatisfactory result of discussions between German and Austro-Hungarian Ambassadors with the Czar and Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs respectively. Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs says that Austrian domination of Serbia would vitally affect Russia, and that he is weary of his ceaseless efforts to avoid war. Action of Austro-Hungarian Government and German preparations have forced Russian Government to order mobilisation, and mobilisation of Germany has created desperate situation. M. Sazonof would adhere to formula contained in No. 120, if its acceptance could be secured before the Germans cross frontier. In no case will Russia commence hostilities. Fear of general conflagration in the Balkans	71
140	Sir F. Bertie .. (Telegraphic)	1	French Minister for War has impressed on British military attaché that only way of securing peace was for Great Britain to take military action. Minister of War maintains that France has, by withdrawing from frontier, given proof of her desire to abstain from any provocative act ..	72
141	Sir M. de Bunsen .. (Telegraphic)	1	Conversation with Russian Ambassador at Vienna respecting German ultimatum to Russia. His Excellency thinks that German Government desired war from the first. Explains nature of Russian mobilisation, and says that Russia had no intention of attacking Austria. French Ambassador to speak earnestly to Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs. Anxiety as to attitude of Great Britain	72
142	Sir E. Goschen .. (Telegraphic)	1	General mobilisation of German army and navy ..	73
143	" " .. (Telegraphic)	1	Detention of British steamers. German Secretary of State has promised to send orders to release steamers without delay	73
144	" " .. (Telegraphic)	2	German Secretary of State says that, owing to certain Russian troops having crossed frontier, Germany and Russia are in a state of war ..	73
145	" " .. (Telegraphic)	2	Orders sent last night to allow British ships detained in Hamburg to proceed. This as a special favour to His Majesty's Government. Reason of detention was that mines were being laid and other precautions taken	73
146	Sir F. Villiers .. (Telegraphic)	2	Belgian Government confirms report that German force has entered Grand Duchy of Luxemburg ..	73
147	Luxemburg Minister of State. (Telegraphic)	2	Acts of German troops in Luxemburg territory are manifestly contrary to the neutrality of the Grand Duchy guaranteed by Treaty of London of 1867. Protest has been made to the German representatives at Luxemburg and also to German Secretary of State	74
148	To Sir F. Bertie .. (Telegraphic)	2	Assurance given to French Ambassador respecting protection by British fleet of French coasts or shipping subject to consent of Parliament. Question of despatch of British force to assist France. Effect of violation of Luxemburg and Belgium neutrality	74

No.	Name.	Date.	Subject.	Page.
149	To Sir E. Goschen (Telegraphic)	1914 Aug. 2	Detention of British steamers. Sugar unloaded by force from British vessels at Hamburg and detained. Should inform Secretary of State that His Majesty's Government trust that order already sent for release of British vessels covers also release of cargoes (see No. 143)	75
150	Sir E. Goschen .. (Telegraphic)	3	Detention of British steamers. Refers to No. 149. No information available	75
151	Sir F. Villiers .. (Telegraphic)	3	French Government have offered five army corps to Belgian Government. Belgian Government reply that whilst sincerely grateful they do not propose to appeal to the guarantee of the Powers, and will decide later on their action	75
152	To Sir F. Bertie ..	3	Communication of French Ambassador to effect that Italy does not consider <i>casus faderis</i> has arisen	75
153	To Sir E. Goschen (Telegraphic)	4	Belgian neutrality. His Majesty's Government have been informed that German Government have proposed to Belgium friendly neutrality entailing free passage through Belgian territory, and of German threat in case of refusal. Belgian Government have declined offer. Should ask for immediate assurance from German Government that they will not proceed with threat or violate Belgian territory	76
154	Sir F. Villiers .. (Telegraphic)	4	Belgian neutrality (see No. 153). In view of Belgian reply, German Government have threatened to carry out their proposals by force	76
155	To Sir F. Villiers..	4	To inform Belgian Government that His Majesty's Government expect that they will resist attempt to infringe their neutrality. His Majesty's Government prepared to join with Russia and France in assisting Belgian Government to resist German aggression and to guarantee independence and integrity in future years	76
156	To Sir E. Goschen (Telegraphic)	4	To demand immediate release of British ships detained in German ports	77
157	Communicated by German Ambassa- dor. (Telegraphic)	4	Assurance that Germany will in no case annex Belgian territory. Germany forced to disregard Belgian neutrality owing to knowledge of French plans	77
158	Sir F. Villiers .. (Telegraphic)	4	German troops have entered Belgian territory. Liège summoned to surrender	77
159	To Sir E. Goschen (Telegraphic)	4	Belgian neutrality threatened by Germany. Unless German Government prepared to give assurance by 12 midnight to respect neutrality of Belgium, His Majesty's Ambassador is to ask for passports and to say that His Majesty's Government feel bound to take all steps in their power to uphold their treaty obligations.. ..	77
160	Sir E. Goschen ..	8	Reports final negotiations at Berlin. Records departure from Berlin and journey to England..	78
161	Sir M. de Bunsen..	Sept. 1	Reviews negotiations with Austro-Hungarian Government at Vienna, and incidents upon rupture of diplomatic negotiations. Reports departure from Vienna upon declaration of war	81

LIST OF PRINCIPAL PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE CORRESPONDENCE, SHOWING THEIR OFFICIAL POSITIONS.

GREAT BRITAIN.

<i>Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs</i>	Sir Edward Grey.
<i>Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs</i>	- - - Sir A. Nicolson.
<i>French Ambassador</i>	- - - Monsieur Paul Cambon.
<i>Russian Ambassador</i>	- - - Count Benckendorff.
	Monsieur de Etter (<i>Counsellor of Embassy</i>).
<i>German Ambassador</i>	- - - Prince Lichnowsky.
<i>Austro-Hungarian Ambassador</i>	- - - Count Mensdorff.
<i>Belgian Minister</i>	- - - Count Lalaing.
<i>Servian Minister</i>	- - - Monsieur Boschkovitch.

FRANCE.

<i>President of the Republic</i>	- - - Monsieur Poincaré.
<i>President of the Council and Minister for Foreign Affairs</i>	- - - Monsieur Viviani.
<i>Minister of Justice and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs</i>	- - - Monsieur Bienvenu-Martin.
<i>British Ambassador</i>	- - - Sir Francis Bertie.
<i>Russian Ambassador</i>	- - - Monsieur Isvolsky.
<i>German Ambassador</i>	- - - Baron von Schoen.
<i>Austrian Ambassador</i>	- - - Count Scézszen.

RUSSIA.

<i>Minister for Foreign Affairs</i>	- - - Monsieur Sazonof.
<i>British Ambassador</i>	- - - Sir George Buchanan.
<i>French Ambassador</i>	- - - Monsieur Paléologue.
<i>German Ambassador</i>	- - - Count Pourtalès.
<i>Austro-Hungarian Ambassador</i>	- - - Count Szápáry.

GERMANY.

<i>Imperial Chancellor</i>	- - - Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg.
<i>Secretary of State</i>	- - - Herr von Jagow.
<i>Under Secretary of State</i>	- - - Herr von Zimmermann.
<i>British Ambassador</i>	- - - Sir Edward Goschen.
	Sir Horace Rumbold (<i>Counsellor of Embassy</i>).
<i>Russian Ambassador</i>	- - - Monsieur Swerbeiev.
<i>French Ambassador</i>	- - - Monsieur Jules Cambon.
<i>Austro-Hungarian Ambassador</i>	- - - Count Szogyény.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY.

<i>Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs</i>	- - - Count Berchtold.
<i>Under Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs</i>	- - - { Baron Macchio. Count Forgach.
<i>British Ambassador</i>	- - - Sir Maurice de Bunsen.
<i>French Ambassador</i>	- - - Monsieur Dumaine.
<i>Russian Ambassador</i>	- - - Monsieur Schebeko.
<i>German Ambassador</i>	- - - Herr von Tschirscky.

ITALY.

<i>Minister for Foreign Affairs</i>	- - - Marquis di San Giuliano.
<i>British Ambassador</i>	- - - Sir Rennell Rodd.

BELGIUM.

<i>British Minister</i>	- - - Sir Francis Villiers.
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SERVIA.

<i>Prime Minister</i>	- - - Monsieur Pashitch.
<i>British Minister</i>	- - - Mr. des Graz.
	Mr. Crackanthorpe (<i>First Secretary</i>).
<i>Austro-Hungarian Minister</i>	- - - Baron Giesl.

