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CHAPTER XII

THE GERMAN DANGER

CHAPTER XII

THE ANGLO-GERMAN DANGER

In 1910, when I first felt the extreme urgency of the Anglo-German problem, very few people regarded war as unavoidable, and I was encouraged by the view of important people, e.g. certain ambassadors, to see that relations with Germany could be affected for the better by action in Parliament.

The logical course was either to aim at avoiding a clash or to ensure security by superior force. As we could not be fully sure of the latter, it was reasonable to urge the former as well. German politicians are of course difficult to deal with, and there were men like Tirpitz who wanted war. Military factors always need restraining, and on the German side they were less restrained than in other countries, because pride in war is widespread in Germany. On our side it was natural to feel Germany to be a parvenu; on their side it was natural to be jealous of the British Empire. We were inclined to deny them equal status. Friction arose from the time of the Jameson Raid, and it increased in the days of Algeciras. However, the prospect of peace was hopeful until 1908, when Grey decided to quarrel with Austria about the annexation of Bosnia. It was a technical point, since she had governed Bosnia since 1878, and everyone who travelled there, as I did in 1902, knew it to be the only decent government in the Balkans. Grey reversed the British

tradition of friendliness to Austria, which had been so marked that I remember Dilke, speaking in the House, quoting the saying that if the Austro-Hungarian Empire did not exist, it would be necessary for us to create it. Lord Courtney and others condemned Grey's action. It led to the crisis in which Germany backed Austria, as, in the Kaiser's words, "her ally in shining armour"; and Russia was humiliated. War was brought definitely nearer.

In 1911 came the Agadir crisis. In August I was at Berlin, and found feeling running high on the question of colonies. Shop windows displayed maps colouring the world largely red and showing the tiny German area. The denial of German colonial claims succeeded in rousing patriotic pride and jealousy. The ambition was exactly what our own would have been, if in their shoes; and most of us would have favoured an attempt to right the injustice by force, supposing that it could not be done otherwise. National pride may be foolish, but we Britons have not regarded it so, anyhow since the days of Kipling. What made our action specially annoying to the Germans in 1911 was that we deterred France from making concessions after Agadir. Maurice de Bunsen, then Ambassador at Madrid, had written to me regretting that we were " more French than the French".

Our ambassador, Sir Edward Goschen, was in despair

over the effect of a speech by L.G., regarded by Germans as a threat. Goschen said to me, "it has undone all my work". I wrote an article in the Contemporary Review on the situation in Berlin, and one evening when we were going through the voting lobby at the House, L.G. talked to me about this article and said: "You would have hit me much harder if you had not been a friend of mine".

In the following two years things seemed to improve. Perhaps war would never have come if the Serb Government had not aided (as is now known) the assassination of the Arch-Duke. But there were many explosions ready to go off when the match was struck. The ultimatum to Serbia was the work of Hungarian rather than Austrian Ministers.

In August I met one of these firebrands, and asked him if he had not realised that the ultimatum would mean general war. He replied,"Of course I did". That type of mind was not so rare on the continent as one might think from our English point of view.

Then came the war. Many historians hold that we were responsible for encouraging Russia to mobilise and back Serbia, whose Government is now thought to have been responsible for encouraging the murder of the Archduke at Sarajevo. However that may be, there was nothing to do for the prevention of war in the future, except to wind the war, and arrange for a durable settlement. I had something

to do in the former direction when I was asked by Lloyd George and Churchill to go to Bulgaria, and use what influence I had there to keep her neutral or even to bring her to our side. I have told elsewhere what I have to say about this business.

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When my Balkan work was finished I worked in the diplomatic department of the Admiralty, but soon I saw that there was much to do in the cause of a durable settlement after the war. Those of us who foresaw that a knockout victory would mean a peace of humiliation, and would therefore lead to a war of revenge, in fact would mean more sacrifice for a worse result, had a hard job. Even the peaceloving Cecil thought that a knockout could be followed by a reasonable settlement. Lord Lansdowne in 1917 argued for such a settlement by negotiation but even he, with his great prestige, was flouted; and the result was the humiliating peace, the blockade by which children were starved though the war was over, the German thirst for revenge, and the war of '39. It was difficult to believe that men so much cleverer than myself could be less far-seeing. How often have I had to regret that we of the minority proved right. What a joy if our fears were unjustified!

In the House of Commons I did not work with men like Macdonald and Snowden, who were definitely anti-war, but thought it better to attack the different aims on which

the policy of the knock-out was based, e.g. the plan of carving up Austria and depriving Germany of colonies. Walter Long, in debate, while attacking Ramsay and the Union of Democratic Control, distinguished between them and me, saying that I was sound on the prosecution of the war, and should therefore be listened to, so that he would treat my arguments seriously. I was so far successful in my tactics. I pursued them by getting Lloyd George to breakfast at Rutland Gate, and putting before him maps showing how devolution of power in Austria-Hungary would satisfy national claims, and would also lead Austro-Hungary to detach herself from Germany and make peace. I invited Willie Buckler of the American Embassy to meet Lloyd George at this breakfast, in order to remind him of the United States in connection with their policy. L.G. was very charming. He admired the carrots which we were growing in our back garden, and told us stories of breakfasts at the Palace; one of the princes, then a young boy, had refused to eat his porridge, and on being pressed by the Queen, exclaimed, "Got lumps in it"! L.G. took care not to seem hostile to my proposals, but he was really committed to the knock-out policy which justified his seizing the premiership. In the early days of the L.G. Government, in December 1916, a speech by Balfour seemed to say that the Government was intending to negotiate with Austria; and about this time Smuts met the Austrian representative.

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However, before the House met again after the Christmas recess, they had become committed to the "delenda Austria" policy, and when I raised the question in the House, Balfour made this plain. Mazaryk, who contended with me in the columns of the "Statesman", had made an impression on Ministers, and enabled them to use the plan of a Czechoslovak plus state as an argument for destroying Austria.

This reminds me of an odd experience of those days. L.G. needed friends when he had ousted Asquith, and got a rich supporter to invite five or six to dine at the Ritz Hotel. To my surprise I was one of these, and I felt justified in accepting though I had no intention of backing L.G. Neil Primrose, his new Chief Whip, made freat fun at this dinner of the invention of Czechoslovakia; the device for justifying L.G.'s policy appealed to a cynical sense of fun.

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We only knew after the war that Balfour had said, in a memorandum to the Cabinet, that to destroy Austria would mean a stronger Germany, because all the German land would become united. When we had obtained the knock-out, we went further than breaking up Austria; we cut Germany in two by creating the Polish Corridor. To this day I do not understand how Ministers thought that a Germany cut in half by the Corridor would settle down to a lasting peace. It was almost as if a victorious Germany cut off Scotland by a German belt, and

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England were to accept the situation.

The deplorable election, immediately following the war produced what was called a "Parliament of hard-faced business men". 1919 was the critical time, and the knock-out election resulted in the policy of Clemenceau. L.G. argued for sensible terms, but was overruled by the threatening message sent to him by about half the members of the House of Commons, demanding that he should show "no weakness". Among these, oddly enough, were Halifax and Sam Hoare. Such was the blindness caused by victory, even among thinking men. Liberal and Labour had been unseated, as I was, by the election, and no serious resistance could be made to the policy of Versailles. Further, the treaty with Germany was dictated with every circumstance of humiliation.

The Paris Conference lost interest when the fate of the smaller enemy countries came up for settlement in the succeeding summer, after the big leaders had gone home. But I went to Paris in August because the case of Bulgaria was coming on, and her faithful friend, Bourchier, begged me to join him. Balfour was in charge for England, Henry White for America. His half-brother, Willie Buckler, took me to lunch with White at the Crion Hotel. White was perfectly sound from my point of view, but the Americans seemed to have no force in putting their ideas forward, apparently fearing to be regarded as amateurs beside the

French and British diplomats. Arthur Ponsonby (my nephew) was with me and we had an interesting time. Hoover, who was in control of American relief work, gave us lunch at a restaurant in the Elysée, and I remember the floods of cream which were in evidence. As Central Europe was then largely starving, and the German babies were without milk, the charms of the cream with which Paris abounded were lost on us. The space at the foot of the Elysee held a great pile of captured cannons, and everything was in harmony with the spirit of punitive triumph.

One day the Bulgarian delegates were brought to Paris, and placed in a house like prisoners, not being allowed contact with anyone. Stamboliski, their Premier, had opposed the war, and risked his life in doing so, but he had been addressed by the French general who signed the Armistice with Bulgaria as "salecochon". With him as secretary was Miss Stancioff, whom Charlie and I had seen in Paris on the way back from the Balkans in 1915, when she was nursing the French wounded, and who became afterwards a great friend of ours in London, when her father was appointed Minister there.

Arthur and I went to Vienna, and there visited hospitals and saw the distress which prevailed. All the men seemed to be carrying knapsacks in which to place any food they might obtain by going out to farms in the country. As we entered Vienna in a luxury train, we were dining in

the restaurant, and the starving Austrians relieved their feelings by spitting at the windows. It was not easy to enjoy our dinner, realising their point of view.

Through the help of an English doctor who was due in Budapest, we got a chance of going on to Budapest in his special train consisting of one carriage. The city was in disorder, and when we got to the hotel (Hotel Hungaria) Arthur, who was to follow with the luggage, did not turn up. Roumanian troops were in occupation of the town, and nobody could answer for their conduct. I was intensely alarmed, knowing Balkan ways. I forced my way into the H.Q. of the Roumanian general, and got him to concern himself with the matter, and in time Arthur reappeared. The hunger was even greater than at Vienna, and at the hospitals we saw the babies still covered with the newspapers which, for a long time, had been their only blankets. The Roumanians had stolen all the hospital supplies, including the milk. It was a fearful situation for the proud Hungarians to be under the thumb of Balkan upstarts. One day we were in a house facing the old bridge to the ancient capital which crosses the Danube, when band music was heard, and we saw Roumanian troops marching on to the bridge. No one had thought that the old city would be so degraded, and the Hungarians were deeply moved. However, they must have seen that they had

brought it upon themselves by sending the ultimatum to Serbia which began the war. I asked one who had been a Minister then if he had realised at the time that the ultimatum would mean war, He said certainly he did, and that they had hoped for it.

We could not return to Vienna by train, because the Roumanians wanted to be safe from attack from the West, and had announced that any train crossing the bridge would be shelled.

Getting back to Paris, I wrote to Mr. Balfour about the distress, as he could give orders. He asked me to lunch, and we had a very interesting talk, Philip Kerr (afterwards Lothian) being with us. I learnt later that ample stores were quickly sent to the hospitals in Vienna and Budapest. I attempted to make Balfour keen to help the victims of the Roumanians by telling him of the unattractive aspect of their civilisation at Bucarest. I mentioned a particular Minister in the lounge of the chief hotel, holding the hand of a demi-monde while talking to a foreign diplomat. I ought to have remembered that A.J.B. hated earnestness. To pull me up he interjected,"I wish I could have held one too !"

In 1920 I went to Berlin with Ramsay and Joe King. We stayed at the magnificent Kaiserhof Hotel, and it was strange to be in such a princely place with hardly any food. The substitute for jam was unspeakably nasty. We

were amazed at the apparent absence of any hostile feeling among Germans. People seemed cowed, perhaps through hunger; many were going about with little on except an overcoat. The Quakers and Americans were still doing relief work on a great scale. Ramsay did not like being taken to see these things, but when we went on to Geneva for the International Labour Conference, we perduaded him to address a meeting about it. It was characteristic of him that he then made a most moving speech, and showed that he had observed every little detail.

In the subsequent years I went often to Germany. The French policy of pin-pricks was the main feature of the situation, and the most alarming sight that I saw was at Mainz, where West African soldiers of the most pronounced negro type, swaggered about, happy, in their position of rulers over the Germans. When the Ruhr had been invaded, the man responsible for that folly, Poincaré, was invited to London in the hopes of showing him reason, but he was found absolutely intractable, as members of our Government told me, and the conference was broken off.

After we had been in office in 1924, I had an interesting experience in regard to France. Ramsay was invited to address the French Institute about the Labour Party, but he was nervous of ging himself and got me to

go in his place. I saw several leading men and was more than ever amazed at the French want of logic. They admitted that their policy of pinpricks ensured the hostility of Germany, and that Germany would eventually be stronger than France. In fact they agreed that their policy was suicidal, but they seemed blind to reason and replief, "Yes, it is fatal, but we will bully them as long as we can".

One year I went with Ben Riley to Danzig. The Poles naturally held by their right to the "Corridor" to the sea, but they made no attempt to diminish German resentment, which was the only possible way of avoiding conflict, once ~~the~~ German territory had been cut in two. Germany could also claim that we betrayed conditions of peace in "The 14 Points". Throughout these years, the League of Nations Union was insisting that unless we and the Allies were loyal to the League in regard to armaments and so on, Germany would be free to arm. I often spoke for the Union, and I think that if their advice had been followed, Hitler would have remained obscure.

Our second term of government gave Henderson a chance, as Foreign Secretary, to improve matters by withdrawing British troops from the Rhine. Unfortunately he decided not to approve of the German proposal to make a customs union with Austria, but to refer it as a legal question to the International Court at the Hague. The Court decided that it was technically illegal,

so the Allies appeared to Germany as obstructing every legitimate German claim. The result of this was the conversion to Hitlerism of countless Germans who, until then, had hated the upstart Hitler.

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It was an enormous shock when, in the beginning of 1933, Hindenburg made Hitler Chancellor, presumably hoping that responsibility would produce sanity. But a reign of terror immediately began. In the Spring I went to Berlin and saw several Ministers, in company with Evans and Ben Riley. The British Quakers' agent in Berlin had acquired a strong position through the Quaker relief work, and I thought it just worth while to appeal to the Nazis to let him visit the concentration camps, which had already

begun their dirty work, and to urge that British friendship, which they then strongly desired, would be alienated by illegal violence, which was also contrary to German tradition. After seeing Goebbels, Rosenburg, von Papen and General Blomberg, we got an interview with Hitler, but it was a forlorn hope, as I had realised. He declared that everybody loved him and that if he went into the Linden a hundred thousand people would crowd to acclaim him. He soon took to raving against the Communists, and violently asserted that every Communist was a criminal. He shouted in this strain as if we were a public meeting, and we broke off the talk.

The Hitler period is familiar to all, because the dnager became evident and was the chief feature of the time. To keep the peace was still more a failing hope than before, but the game was not wholly lost, at least in the eyes of our Ministers who did not prepare for war. Actual conflict might be avoided by good relations on the personal side, e.g. with the German representatives in London. My friends and I thought it worth while to make speeches in this direction in the Lords, and Lothian was a powerful advocate on this line. I thought it a good thing to keep in touch with German ambassadors. Hoesch in particular was a rational man and not a Nazi. He died suddenly without apparent cause, and many thought that his amiable countrymen in the Nazi Party had poisoned him. von Dirksen had a good name as a professional

diplomat, and when I lunched with him at the Embassy he expressed distress, which I think was in his case genuine, at the persecution of the Jews. Ribbentrop was ~~the~~ more important than any of them, and should have been humoured, though he was certainly a difficult and wooden-minded man. Some people handled him sensibly. Sidney Clive, who was Chamberlain of the Diplomatic Corps, had him to stay for a shoot. Others showed their dislike, and the Press made every possible occasion for offence. He was irritated in small ways. Here is an illustration: The German Embassy occupies two of the houses in Carlton House Terrace which have common rights to the terrace overlooking St. James's Park. Ribbentrop wanted to make the section of the terrace opposite his houses more private, and, as they are the end houses, this was easy and perfectly proper. Instead of putting this through as we would have done for the Russians or the French, the Foreign Office told Ribbentrop that he must get the consent of the neighbouring householders. It is quite possible that a thing like this might turn the scale in the mind of a rather stupid man, and lead him to decide that nothing could be done with these infernal, insular-minded British.

Perhaps it was too late when Chamberlain attempted appeasement, and sent Neville Henderson to Berlin, but it raised hopes. I had known Henderson and stayed with him when he was Minister at Belgrade, and saw him more

than once at Berlin. When he first took up his post, he discussed with the Head of the Foreign Office the way to show friendliness at Berlin. Vansittart replied that on no account should we make any attempt at friendliness whatever. Imagine Ribbentrop's talks with Vansittart! As the chief contact of a foreign diplomat is with the Head of the Foreign Office, one can see what stupendous consequences might result from this personal factor.

In these years our want of logic rivalled that of the French. We headed for war without preparing for it. We sublimely offered guarantees to Poland and Roumania, and committed ourselves to the struggle as if we had boundless power in Eastern Europe, when in fact we had none. If it is true that we did this as the result of French insistence, that is no excuse. In 1940 we were in danger of actually losing our independence, and that is the measure of our madness in defying German action in the East without due preparation. Baldwin and Chamberlain must be held responsible, because they had power, they knew the facts, and they concealed them from the country. They were either blind, or reckless, or criminally complacent. The latter seems to me to be the least indefensible of the excuses. How men with very good brains can act as if they were, at the best, misguided mystics is a thing which I can never understand.

After Hitler came to power I went several times to

Berlin, and also to the de Bunsens near Cologne, and the Bismarcks in Pomerania. In '38 I went to see Henderson, and on arriving in the evening found an invitation to dine at the Embassy at 8. I was tired enough with the journey and would gladly have got off, but of course answered that I would go. Having got there, and hoping to get away fairly early, I found it was a large party to meet Lord Londonderry, who was an apostle of friendship with Hitler. He was an hour late, and by 9.30. I was quite exhausted. However I forgave Lord Londonderry in the end, because we had a long and useful talk after dinner.

The colonial question was then to the front, and it was rather an episode that the Agha Khan was seeing German Ministers on the same lines as myself. This famous winner of the Derby invited me to meet him at the Adlon, and proved quite attractive. He was a novel sort of ally for me to work with.

In these years it seemed to me a mystery that our Government was content neither to keep overwhelming force, nor to attempt a modus vivendi. One could not be surprised at Hitler leaving the League of Nations when Sir John Simon, the Foreign Secretary, declared that the Allies were not bound to disarmament by the Versailles Treaty in the sense that everyone had understood. We had many debates in the Lords, and I several times reminded noble Lords of the

Allies' responsibility for bad relations, through the Blockade, the Ruhr Occupation, and the French use of Negro troops on the Rhine. The ablest of the small group who took our rational view was Lord Lothian (afterwards ambassador to America) and I was thrilled one day by his alluding to "the admirable speech of my noble friend Lord Noel-Buxton." He was very active and went to see Hitler, escorted and interpreted by my former secretary, Conwil Evans, as also did Lloyd George soon afterwards.

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Perhaps peace was impossible after 1933, and it was generally felt that Hitler meant to fight. Many pacifists thought not, and I felt it probable that he and his colleagues, Goering and Goebbels, were the sort of men who would be attracted to a great gamble; and to gamble with the chance of bringing down the British Empire would be the greatest gamble in history. But I held that if you are dealing with a savage bull, you don't wave a red flag in front of him, but keep him quiet as long as you can, while risking nothing. Hitler proclaimed his hope of friendship with England, and he had joined the League. It would probably have made a great difference if the English Press had been restrained from continually jeering at him in a way that no other European press was doing.

The attitude of the Labour Party seemed to me very illogical. They adopted the most provocative anti-German expressions, and at the same time they opposed preparation for war, while they reconciled their own minds by declaring that we should appeal to the League to take action, e.g. against Italy over the Abyssianian question. Yet they knew that the League could do nothing except with British forces. I could only excuse this on the ground that it had been a great effort to adopt the peace-loving Labour view to the use of force as part of the League programme. To shrink from applying this to action by England, apart from the League,

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was natural, but it was unrealistic. Of course it was the Government who were responsible for informing the country, and Baldwin was far more to blame; but it was natural that Conservatives defended Baldwin, on the grounds that the Labour Party had influenced public opinion, making it difficult for him to adopt war preparation. I myself felt that Hitler was probably ready to go to war, and I deplored the complacency which prevailed. I reported, for instance, what I saw in 1935 of the air base on the isle of Sylt, when I went there with Rufus to meet the Bismarcks.

The Foreign Office was violently anti-German, and the Government gave the impression of feeling sublimely superior to the growth of German force, which made our policy still more irritating. We drifted along, assuming that we were in no danger, and finally offered guarantees to Poland, Roumania and Greece, which helped to increase the punishment inflicted on them by Germans. If we did not mean that we would do anything for Poland, we should have left that question alone, and allowed the inevitable quarrel to develop between Germany and Russia. We humanitarians have often been reproved for wanting England to police Europe, and it amazed me when the Government pursued such a policy in an extreme form.

1919 saw the supreme chance of establishing a sane

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peace, but we lost it, owing, I suppose, to the same sublime confidence that we had nothing to fear from the resurrected German power. We gave Germany the most imperative motive for revenge by cutting the country in two parts. Whatever other ambition may have moved Hitler, the severing of Germany by the Polish Corridor ensured the arrival of a conflict. No self-respecting nation could accept such humiliation. The effective way to avoid war would have been close friendship between England and Germany, and this we would not give. It would indeed have required an almost Christian readiness to abandon our unique prestige and to share colonial privilege with a partner who was pushing and brusque. But having created the incentive to revenge, we ought to have made the sacrifice, to avoid world war.

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The German Danger

Papen. Extremely charming.

Goebbels, who suggested a professor at the School of Economics.

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Chapter XII

CHAPTER X~~I ANGLO-GERMAN~~ RELATIONS

The German Danger

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The logical course was either to aim at avoiding a clash or to ensure security by superior force. As we could not be sure of the latter, it was reasonable to urge the former. German politicians are of course difficult to deal with, and there were men like Tirpitz who wanted war. Military factors always need restraining, and on the German side they were less restrained than in other countries, because pride in war is widespread in Germany. On our side it was natural to feel Germany to be a parvenu, on their side it was natural to be jealous of the British Empire. We were inclined to deny them equal status. Friction arose from the time of the Jameson Raid, and it increased in the days of Algeciras. However, the prospect of peace was hopeful until 1908, when Grey decided to quarrel with Austria about the annexation of Bosnia. It was a technical point, since she had governed Bosnia since 1878, and everyone who travelled there, as I did in 1902, knew it to be the only decent government in the Balkans. Grey reversed the British tradition of friendliness to Austria, which had

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I remember seeing at the Agadir crisis the intense feeling in Berlin on the question of colonies. Shop windows showed maps colouring the world largely red, which succeeded in rousing patriotic German pride at a comparative total denial to German colonial claims. The ambition was exactly what our own would have been, if in their shoes; and with their military power, most of us would have favoured an attempt to right the injustice by force, supposing that it could not be done otherwise. National pride may be foolish, but we have not regarded it so, anyhow since the days of Kipling. We had annoyed the Germans by deterring France from concessions after Agadir. Maurice de Bunsen, then Ambassador at Madrid, wrote me that we were "more French than the French."

Then came the war. Many historians hold that we were responsible for encouraging Russia to mobilise and back Serbia, whose Government is now known to be

responsible for the murder of the Archduke at Sarajevo. However that may be, there was nothing to do for the prevention of war in the future, except to win the war, and arrange a durable settlement. I had something to do in the former direction when I was asked by Lloyd George and Churchill to go to Bulgaria, and use what influence I had there to keep her neutral or even to bring her to our side. I have told elsewhere what I have to say about this business.

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of American relief work, gave us lunch at a restaurant in the Elysee, and I remember the floods of cream which were in evidence. As Central Europe was then largely starving, and the German babies were without milk, the charms of the cream with which Paris abounded ~~made an impression~~ were lost on us. The great space at the foot of the Elysee held a great pile of captured cannons, and everything was in harmony with the spirit of punitive triumph.

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by sending the ultimatum to Serbia which began the war. I asked one who had been a Minister then if he had realized at the time that the ultimatum would mean war. He said certainly he did, and that they had hoped for it.

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In the subsequent years I went often to Germany. The French policy of pin-pricks was the main feature, and the most alarming side that I saw was west African soldiers of the most pronounced negro type, swaggering in their position of rulers over the Germans, at Mainz. When the Ruhr had been invaded, the responsible man, Poincaré, was invited to London, in the hopes of showing him reason, but he was found absolutely intractable, as members of the Government told me, and the conference was broken off.

After we had been in office in 1924, I had an interesting experience when Ramsay was invited to address the French Institute about the Labour Party. He was nervous of going himself and got me to go in his place. I saw several leading men and was more

than ever amazed at the French want of logic. They admitted that their policy of pinpricks ensured the hostility of Germany, and that Germany would eventually be stronger than France. In fact they agreed that their policy was suicidal, but they seemed blind to this point of view, and replied in effect, "Yes, it is fatal, but we will bully them as long as we can."

One year I went with Ben Riley to Danzig. The Poles naturally claimed the "Corridor" to the sea, but they made no attempt to diminish German resentment, which was the only possible way of avoiding conflict, once the German territory had been cut in two. To this day I do not understand how a clever man like Balfour could have thought that Germany would ever accept a policy comparable to the severing of England from Scotland by a hostile country, without a fight. Throughout these years, the League of Nations Union was insisting that unless we and the Allies were loyal to the League in regard to armaments and so on, Germany would be free to arm. I often spoke for the Union, and often think that if their advice had been followed Hitler would have remained obscure.

Our second term of government gave Henderson a chance, as Foreign Secretary, to improve matters by withdrawing British troops from the Rhine. Unfortunately

he decided not to approve of the German proposal to make a customs union with Austria, but to refer it as a legal question to the International Court at The Hague. The Court decided that it was technically illegal, and the Allies appeared to Germany as obstructing every legitimate German claim. The result of this was the conversion to Hitlerism of countless Germans who, until then, had hated the upstart Hitler.

It was an enormous shock when, in the beginning of 1933, Hindenburg made Hitler Chancellor, presumably hoping that responsibility would produce sanity. But a reign of terror immediately began. In the spring I went to Berlin and saw several Ministers, in company

with Evans and Ben Riley. The British Quakers' agents had acquired a strong position, and I thought it just worth while to appeal to the Nazis to let them visit the concentration camps, which had already begun their dirty work, and to urge that British opinion, which they then strongly desired, would be alienated by illegal violence, which was also contrary to German tradition. After seeing Goebbels, Rosenburg, von Papen and Gen. Blomberg, we got an interview with Hitler, but it was a forlorn hope, as I had realized. He declared that everybody loved him, and that if he went into the Linden a hundred thousand people would crowd to acclaim him. He soon took to raving against the Communists, and violently asserted that every Communist was a criminal. He shouted in this strain as if we were a public meeting, and we broke off the talk.

The Hitler period is familiar to all, because the danger became evident and was the chief feature of the time. To keep the peace was still more a failing hope than before, but the game was not wholly lost, at least in the eyes of our Ministers who did not prepare for war. Actual conflict might be avoided by good relations on the personal side, e.g. with the German representatives in London. My friends and I thought it worth while to make speeches in this direction in the Lords, and Lothian was

a powerful advocate in this line. I thought it a good thing to keep in touch with German Ministers. Hoesch in particular was a rational man, and when he died suddenly some suggested that his amiable countrymen in the Nazi Party had poisoned him. Dirksen had a good name as a professional diplomat, and when I lunched with him at the Embassy he expressed distress at the persecution of the Jews which I think was genuine. Ribbentrop was more important than any of them, but he was certainly a difficult and wooden-minded man. Some people handled him sensibly. Sydney Clive, who was Chamberlain of the Diplomatic Corps, had him to stay, and shoot. Others showed their dislike, and the Press made every possible occasion for offence. Our own Foreign Secretary failed to correct this. Here is an illustration. The German Embassy occupies two of a line of houses which have common rights to the terrace overlooking St. James's Park. Ribbentrop wanted to make the terrace opposite his houses more private, and, as they are the end houses, this was easy and perfectly proper. Instead of putting this through as we would have done for the Russians or the French, Ribbentrop was told that he must arrange it with the neighbouring householders if he could. It is quite possible that this might turn the scale in the mind

of a rather stupid man, and lead him to decide that nothing could be done with these infernal, insular-minded British.

Perhaps it was too late when Chamberlain attempted appeasement, and sent Neville Henderson to Berlin, but it raised hopes. I had known Henderson and stayed with him when he was Minister at Belgrade, and saw him more than once at Berlin ~~up to 1938~~. When he first took up his post, he discussed with the Head of the Foreign Office the way to show friendliness at Berlin, ~~and the reply was~~ Vansittart replied that on no account should we make any attempt at friendliness whatever. Imagine Ribbentrop talks with Vansittart! As the chief contact of a foreign diplomat is with the Head of the Foreign Office, one can see what stupendous consequences might result from this ~~apparently~~ small personal factor.

In these years our want of logic rivalled that of the French. We sublimely offered guarantees to Poland and Roumania, and committed ourselves to war as if we had boundless power in Eastern Europe, when in fact we ~~were helpless~~ had none. If it is true that we did this as the result of French insistence, that is no excuse. (If it is true that) In 1940 we were in danger of actually losing our independence, that is the measure of our madness in defying German action in the East without due preparation. Baldwin and Chamberlain must be held

responsible, because they knew the facts and concealed them from the country. They were either blind, or reckless, or they were like members of the Group Movement who have been given guidance superior to reason. The latter seems to me to be the least indefensible of the excuses. How men with very good brains can act as if they were, at the best, misguided mystics is a thing which I can never understand.

In subsequent years I went several times to Berlin, and also to the de Bunsens near Cologne, and the Bismarcks in Pomerania. In '38 I went to see Henderson, and on arriving in the evening found an invitation to dine at the Embassy. I was tired enough with the journey and would gladly have got off, but of course answered that I would go. Having got there, and hoping to get away fairly early, I found it was a large party, with the Londonderrys expected, and they were about an hour late. However I forgave Lord L. in the end, because we had a long and useful talk after dinner. The colonial question was then to the front, and it was rather an episode that the Aga Khan was seeing Ministers on the same lines as myself. This famous winner of the Derby invited me to meet him at the Adlon, and was quite a novel sort of ally for me to work with. In these years it seemed to me madness neither to keep overwhelming force, nor to attempt a <u>modus vivendi</u>. One could not be surprised

at Hitler leaving the League of Nations when Sir John Simon, the Foreign Secretary, declared that the Allies were not bound to disarmament by the Versailles treaty in the sense that everyone had understood. We had many debates in the Lords, and I reminded noble Lords several times of the ~~German point of view~~ Allies' responsibility for bad relations through the blockade, the Ruhr occupation, the ~~control by~~ French use of negroes troops on the Rhine. The ablest of the small group who took our rational view was Lord Lothian (afterwards ambassador to America) & I was thrilled one day by him ~~and I was thrilled one day by Lord Lothian~~ alluding to "the admirable speech of my noble friend Lord N.-B.". ~~noble friend, Lord N.-B.".~~ He was very active and went to see Hitler, escorted and interpreted by my former secretary, Conwall-Evans. as also did Lloyd George soon afterwards.

p 195 - good copy

Perhaps peace was impossible after 1933, and it was generally felt that Hitler meant to fight. Many pacifists thought not, but I felt it probable that he and his colleagues, Goering and Goebbels, were the sort of men who would be attracted to a great gamble; and to gamble with the chance of bringing down the British Empire would be the greatest gamble in history. But I held that if you are dealing with a savage bull, you don't wave a red flag in front of him, but keep him quiet as long as you can, while risking nothing. Hitler proclaimed his hope of friendship with England, & he had joined the League ~~at one time~~. It would probably have made a great difference if the English Press had been restrained from continually jeering at him in a way that no other European press was doing.

The attitude of the Labour Party seemed to me very illogical and also dangerous. They adopted the most ~~violent and~~ provocative anti-German expressions, and at the same time they opposed preparation for war, while they reconciled their own minds by declaring that we should appeal to the League to take action against Italy over the Abyssinian question. Yet they knew that the League could do nothing except with British forces. I could only excuse this on the ground that it had been a great effort to adapt the peace-loving Labour view to the use of force as part of

the League programme. It was unrealistic, and I felt that Hitler was probably ready to go to war. As an illustration of my attitude, I reported to high authority what I saw in 1935 of the air base in the Isle of Sylt, when I went there with Rufus to meet the Bismarcks.

Of course it was the Government who were responsible for informing the country, and Baldwin was far more to blame; but it was natural that Conservatives defended Baldwin, on the grounds that the Labour Party had influenced public opinion, making it difficult for him to adopt war preparation.

The Foreign Office was violently anti-German, and we gave the impression of being sublimely superior to the growth of German force, which made our policy seem still more irritating. We drifted along, assuming that we were in no danger, and finally offered guarantees, which helped to increase the punishment inflicted on Poland, Roumania and Greece. If we did not mean that we would do anything for Poland, we should have left that question alone, and allowed the inevitable quarrel to develope between Germany and Russia.

We humanitarians have often been reproved for wanting England to police Europe, and it amazed me when the Government pursued such a policy in an extreme form.

1919 saw the supreme chance of establishing a sane

peace, but we lost it, owing, I suppose, to the same sublime confidence that we had nothing to fear from resurrected German power. We gave Germany the most imperative motive for revenge by cutting the country into two parts. Whatever other ambition may have moved Hitler, the severing of Germany by the Polish Corridor ensured the arrival of a conflict, whatever government arose in Germany. The only possible way to avoid it would have been close friendship between England and Germany, which we did not mean to give. I hope and pray that the partition may be reversed, and roland given an access to the sea east of East Prussia. War must otherwise come again.

P. 198 - Good copy

Extract 199

The German Danger.

Papen. Extremely charming.

Goebbels, who suggested a professor at the School of Economics.

Col House re WB
an interesting reminder!

Pl ret

From " The Intimate Papers of Colonel House."

Vol. 2?

Page 265.

Note by House from his Diary saying what he told Lord Noel-Buxton about the difficulty of working with the Allies. Wilson made the offer to mediate, and fight Germany if she rejected Wilson's terms. Grey would not follow this up.

" When Noel-Buxton was here (the Colonel wrote, June 29,1916), I told him how impossible it was to satisfy the Allies. It is always something more. I thought if we went to war, the Allies, after welcoming us warmly and praising us beyond our deserts, would later, when they found we were not furnishing as many men (or any men, for that matter, for we have none), would begin to chide us just as the French did the English, and say we were not spilling our blood, that we were shirkers, etc., etc. Nothing which it would be possible to do within a year after we entered the war could please them.

" It was tiresome, I told Buxton, to hear the English declare they were fighting for Belgium and that they entered the war for that purpose. I asked if in his opinion Great Britain would ~~not~~ have gone into the war on the side of the Allies even if France had violated Belgium, or, indeed whether Great Britain would not have gone into the war on the side of the Allies even if France had violated Belgium. In my opinion, the purpose of Great Britain's entrance into the war was quite different from that.

The stress of the situation compelled her to side with France and Russia and against the Central Powers. Primarily it was because Germany insisted upon having a dominant army and a dominant navy, something Great Britain could not tolerate in safety to herself."

From "The Intimate Letters of Colonel House." 3

Vol. 11. page 317.

Note of his talk with Wilson over differences with England. Showed him letters from Sir Edward Grey, Lord Bryce, Lord Noel-Buxton and others.

" The President came to my sitting-room in the morning (noted Colonel House on September 24, 1916), and we spent several hours over foreign affairs, principally our differences with Great Britain. Page had left a mass of memoranda, which the President read aloud. I also gave him my last letters from Sir Edward Grey, Lord Bryce, Noel-Buxton, and others. It was my opinion that the real difference with Great Britain now was that the United States had undertaken to build a great navy; that our commerce was expanding beyond all belief; and we were rapidly taking the position Germany occupied before the war. No one in England would probably admit that the things I mentioned were causing the growing irritation against us, but it was a fact nevertheless. The President replied: 'Let us build a navy bigger than hers and do what we please.' I reminded him that Germany had undertaken to do that and Great Britain had checked her before she could accomplish her purpose, and in the spring of 1914 I had predicted that she would. I thought it unlikely the British would be willing to permit us to build a navy equal to theirs if they could prevent it."

Note

to

The German Danger

I remember Ribbentrop letting himself go in conversation with me about his envy of British Imperial good fortune. He was quite eloquent about the feelings aroused in him when he attended the Lord Mayor's Banquet, and realised the various possessions which underlay Brtish wealth and power. The German outlook was natural, and is much better described in Churchill's account of Kaiser William.

The German Danger

About 1937 I thought of a new approach to Hitler in regard to Concentration Camps. Public action had proved quite useless, so I asked Doctor Temple, tyen Archbishop of York, to join in a personal appeal to Hitler, using the argument that we were desirous of seeing good-will towards Hermany in this country. I sent a letter on these lines to Ribbentrop, and he responded by sending over an important messenger in the shape of a certain Count Dohna, a well-known Junker. He annoounced himself through Evans when we were at Cromer for the August holidays, and he was so determined to see me that he came to stay with us. We talked far into the night, and he explained that Ribbentrop wanted to convey the Nazi point of view better than could be done by letters. He drove home the point that Nazism represented a complete rejection of ideas hitherto accepted as fundamental: not lonly what was liberal, also what was humane had no use for the Nazis, and therefore we must inderstand that our arguments about atrocities and camps made no appeal at all.

ch X
Anglo German Relations

CHAPTER X ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS

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In 1910, when I first felt the extreme urgency of the subject, very few people regarded war as unavoidable, and I was encouraged by the views of important British ambassadors to see that relations with Germany could be affected for the better.

The logical course was either to aim at avoiding a clash or to ensure security by superior force. As we could not be sure of the latter, it was reasonable to urge the former. German politicians are of course difficult to deal with, and there were men like Tirpitz who wanted war. Military factors always need restraining, and on the German side they were less restrained than in other countries, because pride in war is widespread in Germany. On our side it was natural to feel Germany to be a parvenu, on their side it was natural to be jealous of the British Empire. We were inclined to deny them equal status. Friction arose from the time of the Jameson Raid, and it increased in the days of Algeciras. However, the prospect of peace was hopeful until 1908, when Grey decided to quarrel with Austria about the annexation of Bosnia. It was a technical point, since she had governed Bosnia since 1878, and everyone who travelled there, as I did in 1902, knew it to be the only decent government in the Balkans. Grey reversed the British tradition of friendliness to Austria, which had

been so marked that I remember Dilke, speaking in the House, quoting the saying that if the Austro-Hungarian Empire did not exist, it would be necessary for us to create it. Lord Courtenay and others condemned Grey's action. It led to the crisis in which Germany backed Austria, as, in the Kaiser's words, "her ally in shining armour", and Russia was humiliated. War was brought definitely nearer.

I remember seeing at the Agadir crisis the intense feeling in Berlin on the question of colonies. Shop windows showed maps colouring the world largely red, which succeeded in rousing patriotic German pride at a comparative total denial to German colonial claims. The ambition was exactly what our own would have been, if in their shoes; and with their military power, most of us would have favoured an attempt to right the injustice by force, supposing that it could not be done otherwise. National pride may be foolish, but we have not regarded it so, anyhow since the days of Kipling.

We had annoyed the Germans by deterring France from concessions after Agadir. Maurice de Bunsen, then Ambassador at Madrid, wrote me that we were more French than the French.

Then came the war. Many historians hold that we were responsible for encouraging Russia to mobilise and back Serbia, whose Government is now known to be

responsible for the murder of the Archduke at Sarajevo. However that may be, there was nothing to do for the prevention of war in the future, except to win the war, and arrange a durable settlement. I had something to do in the former direction when I was asked by Lloyd George and Churchill to go to Bulgaria, and use what influence I had there to keep her neutral or even to bring her to our side. I have told elsewhere what I have to say about this business.

For a time I worked in the Admiralty, but soon I saw that there was much to do in the cause of a durable settlement after the war. Those of us who foresaw that a knockout victory would mean a peace humiliating to Germany, and would further lead to a war of revenge, in fact more sacrifice for a worse result, had a hard job. Even the reasonable Cecil thought that a knock-out could be followed by a durable settlement. Lord Lansdowne in 1917 argued for such a settlement by negotiation but even he was rejected, and the result was the humiliation of Germany, the German thirst for revenge, and the war of '39.

It was difficult to believe that men so much cleverer than myself could be in the wrong. How often have I had to regret that we of the minority proved right. In the House of Commons, I did not work with men like

Ramsay and Snowden, who were definitely anti-war, but thought it better to attack the different aims on which the policy of the knock-out was based, e.g. the plan of carving up Austria and depriving Germany of colonies. Walter Long, in debate, while attacking Ramsay and the Union of Democratic Control, distinguished between them and me, saying that I was sound on the prosecution of the war, and should therefore be listened to, so that he would treat my arguments seriously. I was therefore apparently successful in my tactics. I pursued them by getting Lloyd George to breakfast at Rutland Gate, and putting before him maps showing how devolution of power in Austria-Hungary would satisfy real national claims, and would also keep Austro-Hungary from Germany. I invited Willie Buckler of the American Embassy to breakfast, in order to remind L.G. of the United States in connection with their policy. L.G. was very charming and admired the carrots which we were growing in our back garden, and told us stories of breakfasts at the Palace; once one of the princes, then a young boy, had refused to eat his porridge, and on being pressed by the Queen, exclaimed "got lumps in it !" L.G. took care not to seem hostile, but he was really committed to the knock-

out policy which justified his seizing the Premiership. In the early days of the L.G. Government, that is December 1918, a speech by Balfour seemed to say that the Government was intending to negotiate with Austria; about this time Smuts met the Austrian representative. However, before the House met again after the Christmas recess, they had become committed to the "delenda Austria" policy, and when I raised the question in the House, Balfour made this plain. Mazaryk, who contended with me in the columns of the "Statesman", had made an impression on ministers, and enabled them to use Czechoslovakia as an argument for destroying Austria. We only knew after the war that Balfour had said, in a memorandum to the Cabinet, that to destroy Austria would mean a stronger Germany, because all the German land would become united. When we had obtained the knock-out, we went further than breaking up Austria; we cut Germany in two by creating the Polish Corridor. To this day I do not understand how ministers thought that a Germany cut in half by the Corridor would settle down to contented peace.

The deplorable election, immediately following the war, produced what was called a "Parliament of hard-faced men". 1919 was the critical time, and the knock-

out election showed itself in the grotesque settlement. L.G. argued for sensible terms, but was overruled by the threatening message sent to him by about half the members of the House of Commons, demanding that he should show no weakness. Among these, oddly enough, were Halifax and Sam Hoare. Such was the blindness caused by victory, even among thinking men. Liberal and Labour had been unseated as I was, by the election, and no serious obstacle could be made to the policy of Versailles. Further, the treaty with Germany had been dictated with every circumstance of humiliation.

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of American relief work, gave us lunch at a restaurant in the Elysee, and I remember the floods of cream which were in evidence. As Central Europe was then largely starving, and the German babies were without milk, the cream with which Paris abounded made an impression on us. The great space at the foot of the Elysee held a great pile of captured cannons, and everything was in harmony with the spirit of punitive triumph.

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than ever amazed at the French want of logic. They admitted that their policy of pinpricks ensured the hostility of Germany, and that Germany would eventually be stronger than France. In fact they agreed that their policy was suicidal, but they seemed blind to this point of view, and replied in effect, "Yes, it is fatal, but we will bully them as long as we can."

One year I went with Ben Riley to Danzig. The Poles naturally claimed the Corridor to the sea, but they made no attempt to diminish German resentment, which was the only possible way of avoiding conflict once the German territory had been cut in two. To this day I do not understand how a clever man like Balfour could have thought that Germany would ever accept a policy comparable to the severing of England from Scotland by a hostile country, without a fight. Throughout these years, the League of Nations Union was insisting that unless we and the Allies were loyal to the League in regard to armaments and so on, Germany would be free to arm. I often spoke for the Union, and often think that if their advice had been followed Hitler would have remained obscure.

Our second term of government gave Henderson a chance, as Foreign Secretary, to improve matters by withdrawing British troops from the Rhine. Unfortunately

he decided not to approve of the German proposal to make a customs union with Austria, but to refer it as a legal question to the International Court at The Hague. The Court decided that it was technically illegal, and the Allies appeared to Germany as obstructing every legitimate German claim. The result of this was the conversion to Hitlerism of countless Germans who, until then, had hated the upstart Hitler.

It was an enormous shock when, in the beginning of 1933, Hindenburg made Hitler Chancellor, presumably hoping that responsibility would produce sanity. But a reign of terror immediately began. In the spring I went to Berlin and saw several Ministers, in company

with Evans and Ben Riley. The British Quakers' agents had acquired a strong position, and I thought it just worth while to appeal to the Nazis to let them visit the concentration camps, which had already begun their dirty work, and to urge that British opinion, which they then strongly desired, would be alienated by illegal violence, which was so contrary to German tradition. After seeing Goebbels, Rosenburg, von Papen and Gen. Blomberg, we got an interview with Hitler, but it was a forlorn hope, as I had realized. He declared that everybody loved him, and that if he went into the Linden a hundred thousand people would crowd to acclaim him. He soon took to raving against the Communists, and violently asserted that every Communist was a criminal. He shouted in this strain as if we were a public meeting, and we broke off the talk.

The Hitler period is familiar to all, because the danger became evident and was the chief feature of the time. To keep the peace was still more a failing hope than before, but the game was not wholly lost, at least in the eyes of our Ministers who did not prepare for war. Actual conflict might be avoided by good relations on the personal side, e.g. with the German representatives in London. My friends and I thought it worth while to make speeches in this direction in the Lords, and Lothian was

a powerful advocate in this line. I thought it a good thing to keep in touch with German Ministers. Hoesch in particular was a rational man, and when he died suddenly some suggested that his amiable countrymen in the Nazi Party had poisoned him. Dirksen had a good name as a professional diplomat, and when I lunched with him at the Embassy he expressed distress at the persecution of the Jews which I think was genuine. Ribbentrop was more important than any of them, but he was certainly a difficult and wooden-minded man. Some people handled him sensibly. Sydney Clive, who was Chamberlain of the Diplomatic Corps, had him to stay and shoot. Others showed their dislike, and the Press made every possible occasion for offence. Our own Foreign Secretary failed to correct this. Here is an illustration. The German Embassy occupies two of a line of houses which have common rights to the terrace overlooking St. James's Park. Ribbentrop wanted to make the terrace opposite his houses more private, and, as they are the end houses, this was easy and perfectly proper. Instead of putting this through as we would have done for the Russians or the French, Ribbentrop was told that he must arrange it with the neighbouring householders if he could. It is quite possible that this might turn the scale in the mind

of a rather stupid man, and lead him to decide that nothing could be done with these infernal, insular-minded British.

Perhaps it was too late when Chamberlain attempted appeasement, and sent Neville Henderson to Berlin, but it raised hopes. I had known Henderson and stayed with him when he was Minister at Belgrade, and saw him more than once at Berlin up to 1938. When he first took up his post, he discussed with the Head of the Foreign Office the way to show friendliness at Berlin, and the reply was that on no account should we make any attempt at friendliness whatever. As the chief contact of a foreign diplomat is with the Head of the Foreign Office, one can see what stupendous consequences might result from this apparently small personal factor.

In these years our want of logic rivalled that of the French. We sublimely offered guarantees to Poland and Roumania, and committed ourselves to war as if we had boundless power in Eastern Europe, when in fact we were helpless. If it is true that we did this as the result of French insistence, that is no excuse. If it is true that in 1940 we were in danger of actually losing our independence, that is the measure of our madness in defying German action in the East without due preparation. Baldwin and Chamberlain must be held

responsible, because they knew the facts and concealed them from the country. They were either blind or reckless, or they were like members of the Group Movement who have been given guidance superior to reason. The latter seems to me to be the least indefensible of the excuses. How men with very good brains can act as if they were,at the best, misguided mystics is a thing which I can never understand.

In subsequent years I went several times to Berlin, and also to the de Bunsens near Cologne, and the Bismarcks in Pomerania. In '38 I went to see Henderson, and on arriving in the evening found an invitation to dine at the Embassy. I was tired enough with the journey and would gladly have got off, but of course answered that I would go. Having got there, and hoping to get away fairly early, I found it was a large party, with the Londonderrys expected, and they were about an hour late. However I forgave Lord L. in the end, because we had a long and useful talk after dinner. The colonial question was then to the front, and it was rather an episode that the Aga Khan was seeing Ministers on the same lines as myself. This famous winner of the Derby invited me to meet him at the Adlon, and was quite a novel sort of ally for me to work with. In these years it seemed to me madness neither to keep overwhelming force, nor to attempt a <u>modus vivendi</u>. One could not be surprised

at Hitler leaving the League of Nations when Sir John Simon, the Foreign Secretary, declared that the Allies were not bound in the sense that everyone had understood. We had many debates in the Lords, and I reminded noble Lords of the German point of view, the blockade, the Ruhr, the control by negro troops; and I was thrilled one day by Lord Lothian alluding to "the admirable speech of my noble friend, Lord N.-B.". He was very active and went to see Hitler, escorted and interpreted by my secretary, Conwall Evans.

Perhaps peace was impossible after 1933, and it was generally felt that Hitler meant to fight. Pacifists thought not, but I felt it probable that he and his colleagues, Goering and Goebbels, were the sort of men who would be attracted to a great gamble, and to gamble with the chance of bringing down the British Empire would be the greatest gamble in history. But I held that if you are dealing with a mad bull, you don't wave a red flag in front of him, but keep him quiet as long as you can. Hitler proclaimed his hope of friendship with England. He had joined the League at one time. It would probably have made a great difference if the English Press had been restrained from continually jeering at him in a way that no other European press was doing.

The attitude of the Labour Party seemed to me very illogical and also dangerous. They adopted the most violent and provocative anti-German expressions, and at the same time they opposed preparation for war, while they reconciled their own minds by declaring that we should appeal to the League to take action against Italy over the Abyssinian question. They knew that the League could do nothing except with British forces. I could only excuse this on the ground that it had been an effort to adapt the Labour view to the use of force as part of

the League programme. It was unrealistic, and I felt that Hitler was probably ready to go to war. As an illustration of my attitude, I reported to high authority what I saw in 1935 of the air base in the Isle of Sylt, when I went there with Rufus to meet the Bismarcks. Of course it was the Government who were responsible for informing the country, and Baldwin was far more to blame; but it was natural that Conservatives defended Baldwin, on the grounds that the Labour Party had influenced public opinion, making it difficult for him to adopt war preparation.

The Foreign Office was violently anti-German, and we gave the impression of being sublimely superior to the growth of German force, which made our policy seem still more irritating. We drifted along, assuming that we were in no danger, and finally offered guarantees, which helped to increase the punishment inflicted on Poland, Roumania and Greece. If we did not mean that we would do anything for Poland, we should have left that question alone, and allowed the inevitable quarrel to develope between Germany and Russia.

We humanitarians have often been reproved for wanting England to police Europe, and it amazed me when the Government pursued such a policy in an extreme form.

1919 saw the supreme chance of establishing a sane

peace, but we lost it, owing, I suppose, to the same sublime confidence that we had nothing to fear from resurrected German power. We gave Germany the most imperative motive by cutting the country into two parts. Whatever other ambition may have moved Hitler, the severing of Germany by the Polish Corridor ensured the arrival of a conflict, whatever government arose in Germany. The only possible way to avoid it would have been close friendship between England and Germany, which we did not mean to give. I hope and pray that the partition may be reversed,and Poland given an access to the sea east of East Prussia. War must otherwise come again.

THE GERMAN DANGER

ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS

In 1910, when I first felt the extreme urgency of the Anglo-German problem, very few people regarded war as unavoidable, and I was encouraged by the view of important people, e.g. certain ambassadors, to see that relations with Germany could be affected for the better by action in Parliament.

The logical course was either to aim at avoiding a clash or to ensure security by superior force. As we could not be fully sure of the latter, it was reasonable to urge the former as well. German politicians are of course difficult to deal with, and there were men like Tirpitz who wanted war. Military factors always need restraining, and on the German side they were less restrained than in other countries, because pride in war is widespread in Germany. On our side it was natural to feel Germany to be a parvenu; on their side it was natural to be jealous of the British Empire. We were inclined to deny them equal status. Friction arose from the time of the Jameson Raid, and it increased in the days of Algeciras. However, the prospect of peace was hopeful until 1908, when Grey decided to quarrel with Austria about the annexation of Bosnia. It was a technical point, since she had governed Bosnia since 1878, and everyone who travelled there, as I did in 1902, knew it to be the only decent government in the Balkans. Grey reversed the British

tradition of friendliness to Austria, which had been so marked that I remember Dilke, speaking in the House, quoting the saying that if the Austro-Hungarian Empire did not exist, it would be necessary for us to create it. Lord Courtney and others condemned Grey's action. It led to the crisis in which Germany backed Austria, as, in the Kaiser's words, "her ally in shining armour", and Russia was humiliated. War was brought definitely nearer.

In 1911 came the Agadir crisis. In August I was at Berlin, and found feeling running high on the question of colonies. Shop windows displayed maps colouring the world largely red and showing the tiny German area. The denial of German colonial claims succeeded in rousing patriotic pride and jealousy. The ambition was exactly what our own would have been, if in their shoes; and most of us would have favoured an attempt to right the injustice by force, supposing that it could not be done otherwise. National pride may be foolish, but we Britons have not regarded it so, anyhow since the days of Kipling. What made our action specially annoying to the Germans in 1911 was that we deterred France from making concessions after Agadir. Maurice de Bunsen, then Ambassador at Madrid, had written to me regretting that we were " more French than the French".

Our ambassador, Sir Edward Goschen, was in despair

over the effect of a speech by L.G., regarded by Germans as a threat. Goschen said to me, "it has undone all my work". I wrote an article in the Contemporary Review on the situation in Berlin, and one evening when we were going through the voting lobby at the House, L.G. talked to me about this article and said: "You would have hit me much harder if you had not been a friend of mine".

In the following two years things seemed to improve. Perhaps war would never have come if the Serb Government had not aided (as is now known) the assassination of the Arch-Duke. But there were many explosions ready to go off when the match was struck. The ultimatum to Serbia was the work of Hungarian rather than Austrian Ministers.

In August I met one of these firebrands, and asked him if he had not realised that the ultimatum would mean general war. He replied, "Of course I did". That type of mind was not so rare on the continent as one might think from our English point of view.

Then came the war. Many historians hold that we were responsible for encouraging Russia to mobilise and back Serbia, whose Government is now thought to have been responsible for encouraging the murder of the Archduke at Sarajevo. However that may be, there was nothing to do for the prevention of war in the future, except to win the war, and arrange for a durable settlement. I had something

to do in the former direction when I was asked by Lloyd George and Churchill to go to Bulgaria, and use what influence I had there to keep her neutral or even to bring her to our side. I have told elsewhere what I have to say about this business.

When my Balkan work was finished I worked in the diplomatic department of the Admiralty, but soon I saw that there was much to do in the cause of a durable settlement after the war. Those of us who foresaw that a knockout victory would mean a peace of humiliation, and would therefore lead to a war of revenge, in fact would mean more sacrifice for a worse result, had a hard job. Even the peaceloving Cecil thought that a knockout could be followed by a reasonable settlement. Lord Lansdowne in 1917 argued for such a settlement by negotiation but even he, with his great prestige, was flouted; and the result was the humiliating peace, the blockade by which children were starved though the war was over, the German thirst for revenge, and the war of '39. It was difficult to believe that men so much cleverer than myself could be less far-seeing. How often have I had to regret that we of the minority proved right. What a joy if our fears were unjustified!

In the House of Commons I did not work with men like Macdonald and Snowden, who were definitely anti-war, but thought it better to attack the different aims on which

the policy of the knock-out was based, e.g. the plan of carving up Austria and depriving Germany of colonies. Walter Long, in debate, while attacking Ramsay and the Union of Democratic Control, distinguished between them and me, saying that I was sound on the prosecution of the war, and should therefore be listened to, so that he would treat my arguments seriously. I was so far successful in my tactics. I pursued them by getting Lloyd George to breakfast at Rutland Gate, and putting before him maps showing how devolution of power in Austria-Hungary would satisfy national claims, and would also lead Austro-Hungary to detach herself from Germany and make peace. I invited Willie Buckler of the American Embassy to meet Lloyd George at this breakfast, in order to remind him of the United States in connection with their policy. L.G. was very charming. He admired the carrots which we were growing in our back garden, and told us stories of breakfasts at the Palace; one of the princes, then a young boy, had refused to eat his porridge, and on being pressed by the Queen, exclaimed, "Got lumps in it"! L.G. took care not to seem hostile to my proposals, but he was really committed to the knock-out policy which justified his seizing the premiership. In the early days of the L.G. Government, in December 1916, a speech by Balfour seemed to say that the Government was intending to negotiate with Austria; and about this time Smuts met the Austrian representative.

However, before the House met again after the Christmas recess, they had become committed to the "delenda Austria" policy, and when I raised the question in the House, Balfour made this plain. Mazaryk, who contended with me in the columns of the "Statesman", had made an impression on Ministers, and enabled them to use the plan of a Czechoslovak plus state as an argument for destroying Austria.

This reminds me of an odd experience of those days. L.G. needed friends when he had ousted Asquith, and got a rich supporter to invite five or six to dine at the Ritz Hotel. To my surprise I was one of these, and I felt justified in accepting though I had no intention of backing L.G. Neil Primrose, his new Chief Whip, made freat fun at this dinner of the invention of Czechoslovakia; the device for justifying L.G.'s policy appealed to a cynical sense of fun.

We only knew after the war that Balfour had said, in a memorandum to the Cabinet, that to destroy Austria would mean a stronger Germany, because all the German land would become united. When we had obtained the knock-out, we went further than breaking up Austria; we cut Germany in two by creating the Polish Corridor. To this day I do not understand how Ministers thought that a Germany cut in half by the Corridor would settle down to a lasting peace. It was almost as if a victorious Germany cut off Scotland by a German belt, and

England were to accept the situation.

The deplorable election, immediately following the war produced what was called a "Parliament of hard-faced business men". 1919 was the critical time, and the knock-out election resulted in the policy of Clemenceau. L.G. argued for sensible terms, but was overruled by the threatening message sent to him by about half the members of the House of Commons, demanding that he should show "no weakness". Among these, oddly enough, were Halifax and Sam Hoare. Such was the blindness caused by victory, even among thinking men. Liberal and Labour had been unseated, as I was, by the election, and no serious resistance could be made to the policy of Versailles. Further, the treaty with Germany was dictated with every circumstance of humiliation.

The Paris Conference lost interest when the fate of the smaller enemy countries came up for settlement in the succeeding summer, after the big leaders had gone home. But I went to Paris in August because the case of Bulgaria was coming on, and her faithful friend, Bourchier, begged me to join him. Balfour was in charge for England, Henry White for America. His half-brother, Willie Buckler, took me to lunch with White at the Crion Hotel. White was perfectly sound from my point of view, but the Americans seemed to have no force in putting their ideas forward, apparently fearing to be regarded as amateurs beside the

French and British diplomats. Arthur Ponsonby (my nephew) was with me and we had an interesting time. Hoover, who was in control of American relief work, gave us lunch at a restaurant in the Elysee, and I remember the floods of cream which were in evidence. As Central Europe was then largely starving, and the German babies were without milk, the charms of the cream with which Paris abounded were lost on us. The space at the foot of the Elysee held a great pile of captured cannons, and everything was in harmony with the spirit of punitive triumph.

One day the Bulgarian delegates were brought to Paris, and placed in a house like prisoners, not being allowed contact with anyone. Stamboliski, their Premier, had opposed the war, and risked his life in doing so, but he had been addressed by the French general who signed the Armistice with Bulgaria as "sale cochon". With him as secretary was Miss Stancioff, whom Charlie and I had seen in Paris on the way back from the Balkans in 1915, when she was nursing the French wounded, and who became afterwards a great friend of ours in London, when her father was appointed Minister there.

Arthur and I went to Vienna, and there visited hospitals and saw the distress which prevailed. All the men seemed to carrying knapsacks in which to place any food they might obtain by going out to farms in the country. As we entered Vienna in a luxury train, we were dining in

the restaurant, and the starving Austrians relieved their feelings by spitting at the windows. It was not easy to enjoy our dinner, realising their point of view.

Through the help of an English doctor who was due in Budapest, we got a chance of going on to Budapest in his special train consisting of one carriage. The city was in disorder, and when we got to the hotel (Hotel Hungaria) Arthur, who was to follow with the luggage, did not turn up. Roumanian troops were in occupation of the town, and nobody could answer for their conduct. I was intensely alarmed, knowing Balkan ways. I forced my way into the H.Q. of the Roumanian general, and got him to concern himself with the matter, and in time Arthur reappeared. The hunger was even greater than at Vienna, and at the hospitals we saw the babies still covered with the newspapers which, for a long time, had been their only blankets. The Roumanians had stolen all the hospital supplies, including the milk. It was a fearful situation for the proud Hungarians to be under the thumb of Balkan upstarts. One day we were in a house facing the old bridge to the ancient capital which crosses the Danube, when band musuc was heard, and we saw Roumanian troops marching on to the bridge. No one had thought that the old city would be so degraded, and the Hungarians were deeply moved. However, they must have seen that they had

brought it upon themselves by sending the uptimatum to Serbia which began the war. I asked one who had been a Minister then if he had realised at the time that the ultimatum would mean war, He said certainly he did, and that they had hoped for it.

We could not return to Vienna by train, because the Roumanians wanted to be safe from attack from the West, and had announced that any train crossing the bridge would be shelled.

Getting back to Paris, I wrote to Mr. Balfour about the distress, as he could give orders. He asked me to lunch, and we had a very interesting talk, Philip Kerr (afterwards Lothian) being with us. I learnt later that ample stores were quickly sent ot the hospitals in Vienna and Budapest. I attempted to make Balfour keen to help the victims of the Roumanians by telling him of the unattractive aspect of their civilisation at Bucarest. I mentioned a particular Minister in the lounge of the chief hotel, holding the hand of a demi-monde while talking to a foreign diplomat. I ought to have remembered that A.J.B. hated earnestness. To pull me up he interjected,"I wish I could have held one too !"

In 1920 I went to Berlin with Ramsay and Joe King. We stayed at the magnificent Kaiserhof Hotel, and it was strange to be in such a princely place with hardly any food. The substitute for jam was unspeakably nasty. We

were amazed at the apparent absence of any hostile feeling among Germans. People seemed cowed, perhaps through hunger; many were going about with little on except an overcoat. The Quakers and Americans were still doing relief work on a great scale. Ramsay did not like being taken to see these things, but when we went on to Geneva for the International Labour Conference, we persuaded him to address a meeting about it. It was characteristic of him that he then made a most moving speech, and showed that he had observed every little detail.

In the subsequent years I went often to Germany. The French policy of pin-pricks was the main feature of the situation, and the most alarming sight that I saw was at Mainz, where West African soldiers of the most pronounced negro type, swaggered about, happy in their position of rulers over the Germans. When the Ruhr had been invaded, the man responsible for that folly, Poincare, was invited to London in the hopes of showing him reason, but he was found absolutely intractable, as members of our Government told me, and the conference was broken off.

After we had been in office in 1924, I had an interesting experience in regard to France. Ramsay was invited to address the French Institute about the Labour Party, but he was nervous of going himself and got me to

go in his place. I saw several leading men and was more than ever amazed at the French want of logic. They admitted that their policy of pinpricks ensured the hostility of Germany, and that Germany would eventually be stronger than France. In fact they agreed that their policy was suicidal, but they seemed blind to reason and replief, "Yes, it is fatal, but we will bully them as long as we can".

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so the Allies appeared to Germany as obstructing every legitimate German claim. The result of this was the conversion to Hitlerism of countless Germans who, until then, had hated the upstart Hitler.

Insert art. 'Pacifism' written for V's Ch on CRB

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begun their dirty work, and to urge that British friendship, which they then strongly desired, would be alienated by illegal violence, which was also contrary to German tradition. After seeing Goebbels, Rosenburg, von Papen and General Blomberg, we got an interview with Hitler, but it was a forlorn hope, as I had realised. He declared that everybody loved him and that if he went into the Lindon a hundred thousand people would crowd to acclaim him. He soon took to raving against the Communists, and violently asserted that every Communist was a criminal. He shouted in this strain as if we were a public meeting, and we broke off the talk.

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than once at Berlin. When he first took up his post, he discussed with the Head of the Foreign Office the way to show friendliness at Berlin. Vansittart replied that on no account should we make any attempt at friendliness whatever. Imagine Ribbentrop's talks with Vansittart! As the chief contact of a foreign diplomat is with the Head of the Foreign Office, one can see what stupendous consequences might result from this personal factor.

In these years our want of logic rivalled that of the French. We headed for war without preparing for it. We sublimely offered guarantees to Poland and Roumania, and committed ourselves to the struggle as if we had boundless power in Eastern Europe, when in fact we had none. If it is true that we did this as the result of French insistence, that is no excuse. In 1940 we were in danger of actually losing our independence, and that is the measure of our madness in defying German action in the East without due preparation. Baldwin and Cahmberlain must be held responsible, because they had power, they knew the facts, and they concealed them from the country. They were either blind, or reckless, or criminally complacent. The latter seems to me to be the least indefensible of the excuses. How men with very good brains can act as if they were, at the best, misguided mystics is a thing which I can never understand.

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Berlin, and also to the de Bunsens near Cologne, and the Bismarcks in Pomerania. In '38 I went to see Henderson, and on arriving in the evening found an invitation to dine at the Embassy at 8. I was tired enough with the hourney and would gladly have got off, but of course answered that I would go. Having got there, and hoping to get away fairly early, I found it was a large party to meet Lor Londonderry, who was an apostle of friendship with Hitler. He was an hour late, and by 9.30. I was quite exhausted. However I forgave Lord Londonderry in the end, because we had a long and useful talk after dinner.

The colonial question was then to the front, and it was rather an episode that the Agha Khan was seeing German Ministers on the same lines as myself. This famous winner of the Derby invited me to meet him at the Adlon, and proved quite attractive. He was a novel sort of ally for me to work with.

In these years it seemed to me a mystery that our Government was content neither to keep overwhelming force, nor to attempt a modus vivendi. One could not be surprised at Hitler leaving the League of Nations when Sir John Simon, the Foreign Secretary, declared that the Allies were not bound to disarmament by the Versailles Treaty in the sense that everyone had understood. We had many debates in the Lords, and I several times reminded noble Lords of the

Allies' responsibility for bad relations, through the Blockade, the Ruhr Occupation, and the French use of Negro troops on the Rhine. The ablest of the small group who took our rational view was Lord Lothian (afterwards ambassador to America) and I was thrilled one day by his alluding to "the admirable speech of my noble friend Lord Noel-Buston." He was very active and went to see Hitler, escorted and interpreted by my former secretary, Conwil Evans, as also did Lloyd George soon afterwards.

Insert art on 'Lothianism' (written for CKL memoir)

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The attitude of the Labour Party seemed to me very illogical. They adopted the most provocative anti-German expressions, and at the same time they opposed preparation for war, while they reconciled their own minds by declaring that we should appeal to the League to take action, e.g. against Italy over the Abyssianian question. Yet they knew that the League could do nothing except with British forces. I could only excuse this on the ground that it had been a great effort to adopt the peace-loving Labour view to the use of force as part of the League programme. To shrink from applying this to action by England, apart from the League,

was natural, but it was unrealistic. Of course it was the Government who were responsible for informing the country, and Baldwin was far more to blame; but it was natural that Conservatives defended Baldwin, on the grounds that the Labour Party had influenced public opinion, making it difficult for him to adopt war preparation. I myself felt that Hitler was probably ready to go to war, and I deplored the complacency which prevailed. I reported, for instance, what I saw in 1935 of the air base on the isle of Sylt, when I went there with Rufus to meet the Bismarcks.

The Foreign Office was violently anti-German, and the Government gave the impression of feeling sublimely superior to the growth of German force, which made our policy still more irritating. We drifted along, assuming that we were in no danger, and finally offered guarantees to Poland, Roumania and Greece, which helped to increase the punishment inflicted on them by Germans. If we did not mean that we would do anything for Poland, we should have left that question alone, and allowed the inevitable quarrel to develope between Germany and Russia. We humanitarians have often been reproved for wanting England to police Europe, and it amazed me when the Government pursued such a policy in an extreme form.

1919 saw the supreme chance of establishing a sane

peace, but we lost it, owing, I suppose, to the same sublime confidence that we had nothing to fear from the resurrected German power. We gave Germany the most imperative motive for revenge by cutting the country in two parts. Whatever other ambition may have moved Hitler, the severing of Germany by the Polish Corridor ensured the arrival of a conflict. No self-respecting nation could accept such humiliation. The effective way to avoid war would have been close friendship between England and Germany, and this we would not give. It would indeed have required an almost Christian readiness to abandon our unique prestige and to share colonial privilege with a partner who was pushing and brusque. But having created the incentive to revenge, we ought to have made the sacrifice to avoid war.

End 1. Chap XII Good copy

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From: "The Intimate Papers of Colonel House." Vol.2.

June 1916

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Note by House from his Diary saying what he told Noel Buxton about the difficulty of working with the Allies. Wilson made the offer to mediate, and fight Germany if she rejected Wilson's terms. Grey would not follow this up.

" When Noel-Buxton was here" (the Colonel wrote, June 29, 1916) "I told him how impossible it was to staisfy the Allies. It is always something more. I thought if we went to war, the Allies, after welcoming us warmly and praising us beyond our deserts, would later, when they found we were not furnishing as many men (or any men, for that matter, for we have none), would begin to chide us just as the French did the English, and say we were not spilling our blood, that we were shirkers, etc., etc., Nothing which it would be possible to do within a year after we entered the war could please them.

" It was tiresome, I told Buxton, to hear the English declare they were fighting for Belgium and they entered the war for that purpose. I asked if in his opinion Great Britain would have gone into the war on the side of the Allies even if France had violated Belgium, or indeed whether Great Britain would not have gone into the war on the side

of the Allies even if France had violated Belgium. In my opinion, the purpose of Great Britain's entrance into the war was quite different from that. The stress of the situation compelled her to side with France and Russia and against the Central Powers. Primarily it was because Germany insisted upon having a dominant army and a dominant navy, something Great Britain could not tolerate in safety to herself."

Vol. II. Page 317. (Intimate Letters of Colonel House)
Sept. 24, 1916.

Note of his talk with Wilson over differences with England. Showed him letters from Sir Edward Grey, Lord Bryce, Noel Buxton, and others.

" The President came to my sitting room in the morning ", (noted Colonel on September 24),"and we spent several hours over foreign affairs, principally our differences with Great Britain. Page had left a mass of memoranda, which the President read aloud. I also gave him my last letters from Sir Edward Grey, Lord Bryce, Noel-Buxton, and others. It was my opinion that the real difference with Great Britain now was that the United States had undertaken to build a great navy; that our commerce was expanding beyond all belief; and we were rapidly taking the position Germany occupied before the war. No one in England would probably admit that the things I mentioned were causing the growing irritation against us, but it was a fact nevertheless. The President replied: 'Let us build a navy bigger than hers and do what we please'. I reminded him that Germany had undertaken to do that and Great Britain had checked her before she could accomplish her purpose, and in the Spring of 1914 I had predicted that she would. I thought it unlikely the British would be willing to permit us to build a navy equal to theirs if they could prevent it."

The German Danger.

About 1937 I thought of a new approach to Hitler in regard to Concentration Camps. Public action had proved quite useless, so I asked Doctor Temple, then Archbishop of York, to join in a personal appeal to Hitler, using the argument that we were desirous of seeing good-will towards Germany in this country. I sent a letter on these lines to Ribbentrop, and he responded by sending over an important messenger in the shape of a certain Count Dohna, a well-known Junker. He announced himself through Evans when we were at Cromer for the August holidays, and he was so determined to see me that he came to stay with us. We talked far into the night, and he explained that Ribbentrop wanted to convey the Nazi point of view better than could be done by letters. He drove home the point that Nazism represented a complete rejection of ideas hitherto accepted as fundamental; not only what was liberal, also what was humane had no use for the Nazis, and therefore we must understand that our arguments about atrocities and camps made no appeal at all.

Germany

I remember Ribbentrop letting himself go in conversation with me about his envy of British Imperial good fortune. He was quite eloquent about the feelings aroused in him when he attended the Lord Mayor's Banquet, and realised the various possessions which underlay British wealth and power. The German outlook was natural, and is much better described in Churchill's account of Kaiser William.

CHAPTER XII

THE GERMAN DANGER

In 1910, when I first felt the extreme urgency of the Anglo-German problem, very few people regarded war as unavoidable, and I was encouraged by the view of important people, e.g. certain ambassadors, to see that relations with Germany could be affected for the better by action in Parliament.

The logical course was either to aim at avoiding a clash or to ensure security by superior force. As we could not be fully sure of the latter, it was reasonable to urge the former as well. German politicians are of course difficult to deal with, and there were men like Tirpitz who wanted war. Military factors always need restraining, and on the German side they were less restrained than in other countries, because pride in war is widespread in Germany. On our side it was natural to feel Germany to b be a parvenu; on their side it was natural to be jealous of the British Empire. We were inclined to deny them equal status. Friction arose from the time of the Janeson Raid, and it increased in the days of Algeciras. However, the prospect of peace was hopeful until 1908, when Grey decided to quarrel with Austria about the annexation of Bosnia. It was a techinical point, since she had governed Bosnia since 1878, and every one who travelled there, as I did in 1902, knew it to be the only decent

BISHOP GORE

Religion

I suppose it was another case of my fluidity of views that I could be at the same time an ardent follower of both Barnett and Gore. Gore's high Catholicism must have jarred Barnett's latitudinarian views. The Christian Social Union, of which Gore was the leader, was extraordinarily welcome to me, wanting as I did to connect political and philanthropic activity with religion. Gore at that time was an extremely popular preacher. Both manner and matter were most attractive. His voice in preaching was irresistible.

Balkans

I valued the C.S.U. in connexion with Temperance reform, but I got to know Gore better in regard to the problem of Turkish disorder. I remember lunching with him in his house in the Cloister overlooking the Westminster Canon's garden when I returned from the Balkans in 1899. It was a chance which led me to go there and to learn that Macedonia had been restored to the Turks by the British Government. This shocking fact did not seem to be appreciated by anyone whom I knew except Gore, whose keen sense of humanity had been profoundly moved a few years before by the Armenian massacres. He became intensely friendly to me and an eager supporter of the Balkan Committee. His way of addressing a meeting on the subject of massacres and atrocities was most moving, and his keen approval certainly furnished another influence on my life because he was a very great man. His friendship gave me confidence.

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government in the Balkans. Grey reversed the British tradition of friendliness to Austria, which had been so marked that I remember Dilke, speaking in the House, quoting the saying that if the Austro-Hungarian Empire did not exist, it would be necessary for us to create it. Lord Courtney and others condemned Grey's action. It led to the crisis in which Germany backed Austria, as, in the Kaiser's words, "her ally in shining armour", and Russia was humiliated. War was brought definitely nearer.

"In 1911 came the Agadir crisis. In August I was at Berlin, and found feeling running high on the question of colonies. Shop windows displayed maps colouring the world largely red, and showing the tiny German area. The denial of German colonial claims succeeded in rousing patriotic pride and jealousy. The ambition was exactly what our own would have been, if in their shoes; and most of us would have favoured an attempt to right the injustice by force, supposing that it could not be done otherwise. National pride may be foolish, but we Britons have not regarded it so, anyhow since the days of Kipling." What made our action specially annoying to the Germans in 1911 was that we deterred France from making concessions after Agadir. Maurice de Bunsen, then Ambassador at Madrid, had written to me regretting that we were "more French than the French".

Our ambassador, Sir Edward Goschen, was in despair

over the affect of a speech by L.G., regarded by Germans as a threat. Goschen said to me, "it has undone all my work". I wrote an article in the Contemporary Review on the situation in Berlin, and one evening when we were going through the voting lobby at the House, L.G. talked to me about this article and said, " You would have hit me much harder if you had not been a friend of mine".

Noel Buxton wrote of the last months of peace:

"In the following two years things seemed to improve. Perhaps war would never have come if the Serb Government had not aided (as is now known) the assassination of the Archduke. But there were many explosions ready to go off when the match was struck. The ultimatum to Serbia was the work of Hungarian rather than Austrian Ministers.

In August 1914 I met one of these firebrands, and asked him if he had not realised that the ultimatum would mean general war. He replied, "Of course, I did". That type of mind was not so rare on the continent as one might think from our English point of view.

Then came the war. Many historians hold that we were responsible for encouraging Russia to mobliise and back Serbia, whose Government is now known to have been responsible for encouraging the murder of the Archduke at Sarajevo. However that may be, there was nothing to do for the prevention of war in the future, except to win the war, and and arrange for a durable settlement." I had something

so the Allies appeared to Germany as obstructing every legitimate German claim. The result of this was the conversion to Hitlerism of countless Germans who, until then, had hated the upstart Hitler.

"Nevertheless", he writes, "it

~~It~~ was an enormous shock when, in the beginning of 1933 Hindenburg made Hitler Chancellor, presumably hoping that responsibility would produce sanity. But a reign of terror immediately began. In the Spring I went to Berlin and saw several Ministers, in company with Evans and Ben Riley. The British Quakers' agent in Berlin had acquired a strong position through the Quaker relief work, and I thought it just worth while to appeal to the Nazis to let us visit the concentration camps, which had already begun their dirty work, and to urge that British friendship, which they then strongly desired, would be alienated by ~~xxx~~x illegal violence, which was also contrary to German

ENTERPRISE

On the title page of the Liberator's Life is one of his sayings, exhorting to energy. I wish I had followed his advice, especially in regard to enterprise. I have no excuse, because Edie was always reminding us to be enterprising. I regret now that I did not think more of enterprise, as opposed to reason and caution, in many things: e.g. travelling with Ramsay Macdonald, who invited me seperal times; travelling with Bryce in Macedonia; and with Sir John Harris in Africa; going as Chariman to the Pacific Countries Institute when it met in China; and, perhaps most, decliining the Governorship of New Zealand. This occurred six months after the formation of the Labour Government in 1929. It seemed at the time more important to remain in the Cabinet, but difficulties there proved very great, and I soon afterwards accepted the Governorship of Australia. But in the end the Labour Government there decided to appoint the Australian Chief Justice, so nobody was sent out, and Ramsay expressed his regret that his offer had come to nothing.

In all these things I was deterred, I suppose, by love of order and routine, and by a certain amount of laziness, but I think that some unreasoning enterprise would have been better. Let my descendants be warned by my mistak

~~PARENTS~~

It was a great feature of my parents' character that almost any week-end in summer you could find a large crowd from some East End institution swarming about the garden, especially crowded round the enormous see-saw under the ilex. These finally departed in huge brakes drawn by teams of horses, and hardly had they gone before the week-end party of visitors arrived. As my Mother was all the time confined to her sofa in the garden, it was a remarkable feat.