

conflict which present crisis might possibly produce, would enable him to look forward to realisation of his desire.

In reply to his Excellency's enquiry how I thought his request would appeal to you, I said that I did not think it probable that at this stage of events you would care to bind yourself to any course of action and that I was of opinion that you would desire to retain full liberty.

Our conversation upon this subject having come to an end, I communicated the contents of your telegram of to-day* to his Excellency, who expressed his best thanks to you.

* See No. 77.

No. 86.

Sir R. Rodd, British Ambassador at Rome, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)
(Telegraphic.)

Rome, July 29, 1914.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs thinks that moment is past for any further discussions on basis of Servian note, in view of communication made to-day by Russia at Berlin regarding partial mobilisation. The utmost he now hopes for is that Germany may use her influence at Vienna to prevent or moderate any further demands on Servia.

No. 87.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris.

Foreign Office, July 29, 1914.

Sir,

AFTER telling M. Cambon* to-day how grave the situation seemed to be, I told him that I meant to tell the German Ambassador to-day that he must not be misled by the friendly tone of our conversations into any sense of false security that we should stand aside if all the efforts to preserve the peace, which we were now making in common with Germany, failed. But I went on to say to M. Cambon* that I thought it necessary to tell him also that public opinion here approached the present difficulty from a quite different point of view from that taken during the difficulty as to Morocco a few years ago. In the case of Morocco the dispute was one in which France was primarily interested, and in which it appeared that Germany, in an attempt to crush France, was fastening a quarrel on France on a question that was the subject of a special agreement between France and us. In the present case the dispute between Austria and Servia was not one in which we felt called to take a hand. Even if the question became one between Austria and Russia we should not feel called upon to take a hand in it. It would then be a question of the supremacy of Teuton or Slav—a struggle for supremacy in the Balkans; and our idea had always been to avoid being drawn into a war over a Balkan question. If Germany became involved and France became involved, we had not made up our minds what we should do; it was a case that we should have to consider. France would then have been drawn into a quarrel which was not hers, but in which, owing to her alliance, her honour and interest obliged her to engage. We were free from engagements, and we should have to decide what British interests required us to do. I thought it necessary to say that, because, as he knew, we were taking all precautions with regard to our fleet, and I was about to warn Prince Lichnowsky† not to count on our standing aside, but it would not be fair that I should let M. Cambon be misled into supposing that this meant that we had decided what to do in a contingency that I still hoped might not arise.

M. Cambon said that I had explained the situation very clearly. He understood it to be that in a Balkan quarrel, and in a struggle for supremacy between Teuton and Slav we should not feel called to intervene; should other issues be raised, and Germany and France become involved, so that the question became one of the hegemony of Europe, we should then decide what it was necessary for us to do. He seemed quite prepared for this announcement, and made no criticism upon it.

* French Ambassador in London.

† German Ambassador in London.

He said French opinion was calm, but decided. He anticipated a demand from Germany that France would be neutral while Germany attacked Russia. This assurance France, of course, could not give; she was bound to help Russia if Russia was attacked.

I am, &c.,
E. GREY.

No. 88.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

Foreign Office, July 29, 1914.

Sir,

I TOLD the German Ambassador this afternoon of the information that I had received, that Russia had informed Germany respecting her mobilisation. I also told him of the communication made by Count Benckendorff,* that the Austrian declaration of war manifestly rendered vain any direct conversations between Russia and Austria. I said that the hope built upon those direct conversations by the German Government yesterday had disappeared to-day. To-day the German Chancellor was working in the interest of mediation in Vienna and St. Petersburg. If he succeeded, well and good. If not, it was more important than ever that Germany should take up what I had suggested to the German Ambassador this morning, and propose some method by which the four Powers should be able to work together to keep the peace of Europe. I pointed out, however, that the Russian Government, while desirous of mediation, regarded it as a condition that the military operations against Serbia should be suspended, as otherwise a mediation would only drag on matters, and give Austria time to crush Serbia. It was, of course, too late for all military operations against Serbia to be suspended. In a short time, I supposed, the Austrian forces would be in Belgrade, and in occupation of some Servian territory. But even then it might be possible to bring some mediation into existence, if Austria, while saying that she must hold the occupied territory until she had complete satisfaction from Serbia, stated that she would not advance further, pending an effort of the Powers to mediate between her and Russia.

The German Ambassador said that he had already telegraphed to Berlin what I had said to him this morning.

I am, &c.,
E. GREY.

* Russian Ambassador in London.

No. 89.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

Foreign Office, July 29, 1914.

Sir,

AFTER speaking to the German Ambassador this afternoon about the European situation, I said that I wished to say to him, in a quite private and friendly way, something that was on my mind. The situation was very grave. While it was restricted to the issues at present actually involved we had no thought of interfering in it. But if Germany became involved in it, and then France, the issue might be so great that it would involve all European interests; and I did not wish him to be misled by the friendly tone of our conversation—which I hoped would continue—into thinking that we should stand aside.

He said that he quite understood this, but he asked whether I meant that we should, under certain circumstances, intervene?

I replied that I did not wish to say that, or to use anything that was like a threat or an attempt to apply pressure by saying that, if things became worse, we should intervene. There would be no question of our intervening if Germany was not involved, or even if France was not involved. But we knew very well, that if the issue did become such that we thought British interests required us to intervene, we must intervene at once, and the decision would have to be very rapid, just as the decisions of other Powers had to be. I hoped that the friendly tone of our conversations would continue as at present, and that I should be able to keep as closely in touch with the German

Government in working for peace. But if we failed in our efforts to keep the peace, and if the issue spread so that it involved practically every European interest, I did not wish to be open to any reproach from him that the friendly tone of all our conversations had misled him or his Government into supposing that we should not take action, and to the reproach that, if they had not been so misled, the course of things might have been different.

The German Ambassador took no exception to what I had said; indeed, he told me that it accorded with what he had already given in Berlin as his view of the situation.

I am, &c.,

E. GREY.

No. 90.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

Foreign Office, July 29, 1914.

Sir,

IN addition to what passed with the German Ambassador this morning, as recorded in my telegram of the 29th July* to your Excellency, I gave the Ambassador a copy of Sir Rennell Rodd's† telegram of the 28th July‡ and of my reply to it.§ I said I had begun to doubt whether even a complete acceptance of the Austrian demands by Servia would now satisfy Austria. But there appeared, from what the Marquis di San Giuliano¶ had said, to be a method by which, if the Powers were allowed to have any say in the matter, they might bring about complete satisfaction for Austria, if only the latter would give them an opportunity. I could, however, make no proposal, for the reasons I have given in my telegram to you, and could only give what the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs had said to the German Ambassador for information, as long as it was understood that Austria would accept no discussion with the Powers over her dispute with Servia. As to mediation between Austria and Russia, I said it could not take the form simply of urging Russia to stand on one side while Austria had a free hand to go to any length she pleased. That would not be mediation, it would simply be putting pressure upon Russia in the interests of Austria. The German Ambassador said the view of the German Government was that Austria could not by force be humiliated, and could not abdicate her position as a Great Power. I said I entirely agreed, but it was not a question of humiliating Austria, it was a question of how far Austria meant to push the humiliation of others. There must, of course, be some humiliation of Servia, but Austria might press things so far as to involve the humiliation of Russia.

The German Ambassador said that Austria would not take Servian territory, as to which I observed that, by taking territory while leaving nominal Servian independence, Austria might turn Servia practically into a vassal State, and this would affect the whole position of Russia in the Balkans.

I observed that when there was danger of European conflict it was impossible to say who would not be drawn into it. Even the Netherlands apparently were taking precautions.

The German Ambassador said emphatically that some means must be found of preserving the peace of Europe.

I am, &c.,

E. GREY.

* See No. 84.

§ See No. 81.

† British Ambassador in Rome.

¶ Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

‡ See No. 64.

No. 91.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir M. de Bunsen, Ambassador at Vienna.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 29, 1914.

THE Austrian Ambassador told me to-day he had ready a long memorandum, which he proposed to leave, and which he said gave an account of the conduct of Serbia towards Austria, and an explanation of how necessary the Austrian action was.

I said that I did not wish to discuss the merits of the question between Austria and Serbia. The news to-day seemed to me very bad for the peace of Europe. The Powers were not allowed to help in getting satisfaction for Austria, which they might get if they were given an opportunity, and European peace was at stake.

Count Mensdorff* said that the war with Serbia must proceed. Austria could not continue to be exposed to the necessity of mobilising again and again, as she had been obliged to do in recent years. She had no idea of territorial aggrandisement, and all she wished was to make sure that her interests were safeguarded.

I said that it would be quite possible, without nominally interfering with the independence of Serbia or taking away any of her territory, to turn her into a sort of vassal State.

Count Mensdorff* deprecated this.

In reply to some further remarks of mine, as to the effect that the Austrian action might have upon the Russian position in the Balkans, he said that, before the Balkan war, Serbia had always been regarded as being in the Austrian sphere of influence.

I am, &c.,
E. GREY.

* Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in London.

No. 92.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir R. Rodd, British Ambassador at Rome.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 29, 1914.

THE Italian Ambassador made to me to-day a communication from the Marquis di San Giuliano* suggesting that the German objections to the mediation of the four Powers, a mediation that was strongly favoured by Italy, might be removed by some change in the form of procedure.

I said that I had already anticipated this by asking the German Government to suggest any form of procedure under which the idea of mediation between Austria and Russia, already accepted by the German Government in principle, could be applied.

I am, &c.,
E. GREY.

* Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

No. 93.

Telegrams communicated by Count Benckendorff, Russian Ambassador in London, July 30, 1914.

(1.)

*Russian Ambassador at Vienna to M. Sazonof.**

Vienne,

le 15 (28) juillet, 1914.

(Translation.)

Vienna, July 15 (28), 1914.

(Télégraphique.)

J'AI entretenu aujourd'hui le Comte Berchtold† dans le sens des instructions de votre Excellence. Je lui fis observer, en termes les plus amicaux, combien il était désirable de trouver une solution qui, en consolidant les bons rapports entre l'Autriche-Hongrie et la Russie, donnerait à la Monarchie austro-hon-

(Telegraphic.)

I SPOKE to Count Berchtold† to-day in the sense of your Excellency's instructions. I brought to his notice, in the most friendly manner, how desirable it was to find a solution which, while consolidating good relations between Austria-Hungary and Russia, would give to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy genuine

* Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

† Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

groise des garanties sérieuses pour ses rapports futurs avec la Serbie.

J'attirais l'attention du Comte Berchtold† sur tous les dangers pour la paix de l'Europe, qu'entraînerait un conflit armé entre l'Autriche-Hongrie et la Serbie.

Le Comte Berchtold† me répondit qu'il se rendait parfaitement compte du sérieux de la situation et des avantages d'une franche explication avec le Cabinet de Saint-Petersbourg. Il me dit que d'un autre côté le Gouvernement austro-hongrois, qui ne s'était décidé que très mal volontiers aux mesures énergiques qu'il avait prises contre la Serbie, ne pouvait plus ni reculer, ni entrer en discussion aucune des termes de la note austro-hongroise.

Le Comte Berchtold† ajouta que la crise était devenue si aigue, et que l'excitation de l'opinion publique avait atteint tel degré, que le Gouvernement, le voulait-il, ne pouvait plus y consentir, d'autant moins, me dit-il, que la réponse même de la Serbie donne la preuve du manque de sincérité de ses promesses pour l'avenir.

guarantees for its future relations with Servia.

I drew Count Berchtold's† attention to all the dangers to the peace of Europe which would be involved by an armed conflict between Austria-Hungary and Servia.

Count Berchtold† replied that he was well aware of the gravity of the situation and of the advantages of a frank explanation with the St. Petersburg Cabinet. He told me that, on the other hand, the Austro-Hungarian Government, who had only decided much against their will on the energetic measures which they had taken against Servia, could no longer recede, nor enter into any discussion about the terms of the Austro-Hungarian note.

Count Berchtold† added that the crisis had become so acute, and that public opinion had risen to such a pitch of excitement, that the Government, even if they wished it, could no longer consent to such a course. This was all the more impossible, he said, inasmuch as the Servian reply itself furnished proof of the insincerity of Servia's promises for the future.

† Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

(2.)

M. Sazonof, Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, to Count Benckendorff, Russian Ambassador in London.

*Saint-Petersbourg,
le 16 (29) juillet, 1914.*

(Télégraphique.)

L'Ambassadeur d'Allemagne m'informe, au nom du Chancelier, que l'Allemagne n'a pas cessé d'exercer à Vienne une influence modératrice et qu'elle continuera cette action même après la déclaration de guerre. Jusqu'à ce matin il n'y avait aucune nouvelle que les armées autrichiennes aient franchi la frontière serbe. J'ai prié l'Ambassadeur de transmettre au Chancelier mes remerciements pour la teneur amicale de cette communication. Je l'ai informé des mesures militaires prises par la Russie, dont aucune, lui dis-je, n'était dirigée contre l'Allemagne; j'ajoutais qu'elles ne préjugeaient pas non plus des mesures agressives contre l'Autriche-Hongrie, ces mesures s'expliquant par la mobilisation de la plus grande partie de l'armée austro-hongroise.

L'Ambassadeur se prononçant en faveur d'explications directes avec le Cabinet de Vienne et nous, je répondis que j'y étais tout disposé, pour peu que les conseils du Cabinet de Berlin dont il parlait trouvent écho à Vienne.

*St. Petersburg,
July 16 (29), 1914.*

(Telegraphic.)

THE German Ambassador informs me, in the name of the Chancellor, that Germany has not ceased to exercise a moderating influence at Vienna, and that she will continue to do so even after the declaration of war. Up to this morning there had been no news that the Austrian army has crossed the Servian frontier. I have begged the Ambassador to express my thanks to the Chancellor for the friendly tenor of this communication. I have informed him of the military measures taken by Russia, none of which, I told him, were directed against Germany; I added that neither should they be taken as aggressive measures against Austria-Hungary, their explanation being the mobilisation of the greater part of the Austro-Hungarian army.

The Ambassador said that he was in favour of direct explanations between the Austrian Government and ourselves, and I replied that I, too, was quite willing, provided that the advice of the German Government, to which he had referred, found an echo at Vienna.

En même temps je signalais que nous étions tout disposés à accepter le projet d'une conférence des quatre Puissances, un projet auquel, paraissait-il, l'Allemagne ne sympathisait pas entièrement.

Je dis que, dans mon opinion, le meilleur moyen pour mettre à profit tous les moyens propres à produire une solution pacifique, consisterait en une action parallèle des pourparlers d'une conférence à quatre de l'Allemagne, de la France, de l'Angleterre et de l'Italie et d'un contact direct entre l'Autriche-Hongrie et la Russie, à l'instar à peu près de ce qui avait eu lieu aux moments les plus critiques de la crise de l'an dernier.

Je dis à l'Ambassadeur qu'après les concessions faites par la Serbie, un terrain de compromis pour les questions restées ouvertes ne serait pas très difficile à trouver, à condition toutefois de quelque bonne volonté de la part de l'Autriche et à condition que toutes les Puissances usent de toute leur influence dans un sens de conciliation.

I said at the same time that we were quite ready to accept the proposal for a conference of the four Powers, a proposal with which, apparently, Germany was not in entire sympathy.

I told him that, in my opinion, the best manner of turning to account the most suitable methods of finding a peaceful solution would be by arranging for parallel discussions to be carried on by a conference of the four Powers—Germany, France, England, and Italy—and by a direct exchange of views between Austria-Hungary and Russia on much the same lines as occurred during the most critical moments of last year's crisis.

I told the Ambassador that, after the concessions which had been made by Serbia, it should not be very difficult to find a compromise to settle the other questions which remained outstanding, provided that Austria showed some goodwill and that all the Powers used their entire influence in the direction of conciliation.

(3.)

M. Sazonof, Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, to Count Benckendorff, Russian Ambassador in London.

*Saint-Petersbourg,
le 16 (29) juillet, 1914.*

*St. Petersburg,
July 16 (29), 1914.*

(Télégraphique.)

Lors de mon entretien avec l'Ambassadeur d'Allemagne, dont traite mon télégramme précédent, je n'avais pas encore reçu le télégramme du 15 (28) juillet de M. Schébéko.*

Le contenu de ce télégramme constitue un refus du Cabinet de Vienne de procéder à un échange d'idées direct avec le Gouvernement Impérial.

Dès lors, il ne nous reste plus qu'à nous en remettre entièrement au Gouvernement britannique pour l'initiative des démarches qu'il jugera utile de provoquer.

(Telegraphic.)

AT the time of my interview with the German Ambassador, dealt with in my preceding telegram, I had not yet received M. Schébéko's* telegram of the 15th (28th) July.

The contents of this telegram constitute a refusal of the Vienna Cabinet to agree to a direct exchange of views with the Imperial Government.

From now on, nothing remains for us to do but to rely entirely on the British Government to take the initiative in any steps which they may consider advisable.

* Russian Ambassador at Vienna.

No. 94.

*Sir M. de Bunsen, British Ambassador at Vienna, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received July 30.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, July 29, 1914.

I LEARN that mobilisation of Russian corps destined to carry out operations on Austrian frontier has been ordered. My informant is Russian Ambassador. Ministry for Foreign Affairs here has realised, though somewhat late in the day, that Russia will not remain indifferent in present crisis. I believe that the news of Russian mobilisation will not be a surprise to the Ministry, but so far it is not generally known in Vienna this evening. Unless mediation, which German Government declared themselves ready to offer in concert with three other Great Powers not immediately interested in the Austro-Servian dispute, be brought to bear forthwith,

irrevocable steps may be taken in present temper of this country. German Ambassador feigns surprise that Servian affairs should be of such interest to Russia. Both my Russian and French colleagues have spoken to him to-day. Russian Ambassador expressed the hope that it might still be possible to arrange matters, and explained that it was impossible for Russia to do otherwise than take an interest in the present dispute. Russia, he said, had done what she could already at Belgrade to induce Servian Government to meet principal Austrian demands in a favourable spirit; if approached in a proper manner, he thought she would probably go still further in this direction. But she was justly offended at having been completely ignored, and she could not consent to be excluded from the settlement. German Ambassador said that if proposals were put forward which opened any prospect of possible acceptance by both sides, he personally thought that Germany might consent to act as mediator in concert with the three other Powers.

I gather from what Russian Ambassador said to me that he is much afraid of the effect that any serious engagement may have upon Russian public opinion. I gathered, however, that Russia would go a long way to meet Austrian demands on Servia.

No. 95.

Sir M. de Bunsen, British Ambassador at Vienna, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received July 30.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, July 30, 1914.

RUSSIAN Ambassador hopes that Russian mobilisation will be regarded by Austria as what it is, viz., a clear intimation that Russia must be consulted regarding the fate of Servia, but he does not know how the Austrian Government are taking it. He says that Russia must have an assurance that Servia will not be crushed, but she would understand that Austria-Hungary is compelled to exact from Servia measures which will secure her Slav provinces from the continuance of hostile propaganda from Servian territory.

The French Ambassador hears from Berlin that the German Ambassador at Vienna is instructed to speak seriously to the Austro-Hungarian Government against acting in a manner calculated to provoke a European war.

Unfortunately the German Ambassador is himself so identified with extreme anti-Russian and anti-Servian feeling prevalent in Vienna that he is unlikely to plead the cause of peace with entire sincerity.

Although I am not able to verify it, I have private information that the German Ambassador knew the text of the Austrian ultimatum to Servia before it was despatched and telegraphed it to the German Emperor. I know from the German Ambassador himself that he endorses every line of it.

No. 96.

Sir M. de Bunsen, British Ambassador at Vienna, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received July 30.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, July 30, 1914.

THE Russian Ambassador gave the French Ambassador and myself this afternoon at the French Embassy, where I happened to be, an account of his interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, which he said was quite friendly. The Minister for Foreign Affairs had told him that as Russia had mobilised, Austria must, of course, do the same. This, however, should not be regarded as a threat, but merely as the adoption of military precautions similar to those which had been taken across the frontier. He said he had no objection to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg continuing their conversations, although he did not say that they could be resumed on the basis of the Servian reply.

On the whole, the Russian Ambassador is not dissatisfied. He had begun to make his preparations for his departure on the strength of a rumour that Austria would declare war in reply to mobilisation. He now hopes that something may yet be done to prevent war with Austria.

Sir G. Buchanan, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received July 30.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, July 30, 1914.

FRENCH Ambassador and I visited Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning. His Excellency said that German Ambassador had told him yesterday afternoon that German Government were willing to guarantee that Servian integrity would be respected by Austria. To this he had replied that this might be so, but nevertheless Serbia would become an Austrian vassal, just as, in similar circumstances, Bokhara had become a Russian vassal. There would be a revolution in Russia if she were to tolerate such a state of affairs.

M. Sazonof* told us that absolute proof was in possession of Russian Government that Germany was making military and naval preparations against Russia—more particularly in the direction of the Gulf of Finland.

German Ambassador had a second interview with Minister for Foreign Affairs at 2 A.M., when former completely broke down on seeing that war was inevitable. He appealed to M. Sazonof* to make some suggestion which he could telegraph to German Government as a last hope. M. Sazonof* accordingly drew up and handed to German Ambassador a formula in French, of which following is translation:—

"If Austria, recognising that her conflict with Servia has assumed character of question of European interest, declares herself ready to eliminate from her ultimatum points which violate principle of sovereignty of Servia, Russia engages to stop all military preparations."

Preparations for general mobilisation will be proceeded with if this proposal is rejected by Austria, and inevitable result will be a European war. Excitement here has reached such a pitch that, if Austria refuses to make a concession, Russia cannot hold back, and now that she knows that Germany is arming, she can hardly postpone, for strategical reasons, converting partial into general mobilisation.

* Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received July 30.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, July 30, 1914.

SECRETARY of State informs me that immediately on receipt of Prince Lichnowsky's* telegram recording his last conversation with you he asked Austro-Hungarian Government whether they would be willing to accept mediation on basis of occupation by Austrian troops of Belgrade or some other point and issue their conditions from here. He has up till now received no reply, but he fears Russian mobilisation against Austria will have increased difficulties, as Austria-Hungary, who has as yet only mobilised against Servia, will probably find it necessary also against Russia. Secretary of State says if you can succeed in getting Russia to agree to above basis for an arrangement and in persuading her in the meantime to take no steps which might be regarded as an act of aggression against Austria he still sees some chance that European peace may be preserved.

He begged me to impress on you difficulty of Germany's position in view of Russian mobilisation and military measures which he hears are being taken in France. Beyond recall of officers on leave—a measure which had been officially taken after, and not before, visit of French Ambassador yesterday—Imperial Government had done nothing special in way of military preparations. Something, however, would have soon to be done, for it might be too late, and when they mobilised they would have to mobilise on three sides. He regretted this, as he knew France did not desire war, but it would be a military necessity.

His Excellency added that telegram† received from Prince Lichnowsky* last night contains matter which he had heard with regret, but not exactly with surprise, and at all events he thoroughly appreciated frankness and loyalty with which you had spoken.

* German Ambassador in London.

† See No. 102.

He also told me that this telegram had only reached Berlin very late last night; had it been received earlier Chancellor would, of course, not have spoken to me in the way he had done.

No. 99.

Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris, to Sir Edward Grey.—

(Received July 30.)

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, July 30, 1914.

PRESIDENT of the Republic tells me that the Russian Government have been informed by the German Government that unless Russia stops her mobilisation Germany would mobilise. But a further report, since received from St. Petersburg, states that the German communication had been modified, and was now a request to be informed on what conditions Russia would consent to demobilisation. The answer given is that she agrees to do so on condition that Austria-Hungary gives an assurance that she will respect the sovereignty of Serbia and submit certain of the demands of the Austrian note, which Serbia has not accepted, to an international discussion.

President thinks that these conditions will not be accepted by Austria. He is convinced that peace between the Powers is in the hands of Great Britain. If His Majesty's Government announced that England would come to the aid of France in the event of a conflict between France and Germany as a result of the present differences between Austria and Serbia, there would be no war, for Germany would at once modify her attitude.

I explained to him how difficult it would be for His Majesty's Government to make such an announcement, but he said that he must maintain that it would be in the interests of peace. France, he said, is pacific. She does not desire war, and all that she has done at present is to make preparations for mobilisation so as not to be taken unawares. The French Government will keep His Majesty's Government informed of everything that may be done in that way. They have reliable information that the German troops are concentrated round Thionville and Metz ready for war. If there were a general war on the Continent it would inevitably draw England into it for the protection of her vital interests. A declaration now of her intention to support France, whose desire it is that peace should be maintained, would almost certainly prevent Germany from going to war.

No. 100.

Sir R. Rodd, British Ambassador at Rome, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 30.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, July 30, 1914.

GERMAN Ambassador told me last night that he thought Germany would be able to prevent Austria from making any exorbitant demands if Serbia could be induced to submit, and to ask for peace early, say, as soon as the occupation of Belgrade had been accomplished.

I made to his Excellency the personal suggestion that some formula might be devised by Germany which might be acceptable for an exchange of views.

I see, however, that you have already made this suggestion.

No. 101.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, July 30, 1914.

YOUR telegram of 29th July.*

His Majesty's Government cannot for a moment entertain the Chancellor's proposal that they should bind themselves to neutrality on such terms.

What he asks us in effect is to engage to stand by while French colonies are taken and France is beaten so long as Germany does not take French territory as distinct from the colonies.

From the material point of view such a proposal is unacceptable, for France, without further territory in Europe being taken from her, could be so crushed as to lose her position as a Great Power, and become subordinate to German policy.

* See No. 85.

Altogether apart from that, it would be a disgrace for us to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France, a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover.

The Chancellor also in effect asks us to bargain away whatever obligation or interest we have as regards the neutrality of Belgium. We could not entertain that bargain either.

Having said so much it is unnecessary to examine whether the prospect of a future general neutrality agreement between England and Germany offered positive advantages sufficient to compensate us for tying our hands now. We must preserve our full freedom to act as circumstances may seem to us to require in any such unfavourable and regrettable development of the present crisis as the Chancellor contemplates.

You should speak to the Chancellor in the above sense, and add most earnestly that the one way of maintaining the good relations between England and Germany is that they should continue to work together to preserve the peace of Europe; if we succeed in this object, the mutual relations of Germany and England will, I believe, be *ipso facto* improved and strengthened. For that object His Majesty's Government will work in that way with all sincerity and goodwill.

And I will say this: If the peace of Europe can be preserved, and the present crisis safely passed, my own endeavour will be to promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, and ourselves, jointly or separately. I have desired this and worked for it, as far as I could, through the last Balkan crisis, and, Germany having a corresponding object, our relations sensibly improved. The idea has hitherto been too Utopian to form the subject of definite proposals, but if this present crisis, so much more acute than any that Europe has gone through for generations, be safely passed, I am hopeful that the relief and reaction which will follow may make possible some more definite rapprochement between the Powers than has been possible hitherto.

No. 102.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, July 30, 1914.

I HAVE warned Prince Lichnowsky* that Germany must not count upon our standing aside in all circumstances. This is doubtless the substance of the telegram from Prince Lichnowsky* to German Chancellor, to which reference is made in the last two paragraphs of your telegram of 30th July.†

* German Ambassador in London.

† See No. 98.

No. 103.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, July 30, 1914.

GERMAN Ambassador informs me that German Government would endeavour to influence Austria, after taking Belgrade and Servian territory in region of frontier, to promise not to advance further, while Powers endeavoured to arrange that Servia should give satisfaction sufficient to pacify Austria. Territory occupied would of course be evacuated when Austria was satisfied. I suggested this yesterday as a possible relief to the situation, and, if it can be obtained, I would earnestly hope that it might be agreed to suspend further military preparations on all sides.

Russian Ambassador has told me of condition laid down by M. Sazonof,* as quoted in your telegram of the 30th July,† and fears it cannot be modified; but if Austrian advance were stopped after occupation of Belgrade, I think Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs' formula might be changed to read that the Powers would examine how Servia could fully satisfy Austria without impairing Servian sovereign rights or independence.

If Austria, having occupied Belgrade and neighbouring Servian territory, declares herself ready, in the interest of European peace, to cease her advance and

* Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

† See No. 97.

to discuss how a complete settlement can be arrived at, I hope that Russia would also consent to discussion and suspension of further military preparations, provided that other Powers did the same.

It is a slender chance of preserving peace, but the only one I can suggest if Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs can come to no agreement at Berlin. You should inform Minister for Foreign Affairs.

No. 104.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris.
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, July 30, 1914.

YOU should inform the Minister for Foreign Affairs of my telegram to Sir G. Buchanan* of to-day,† and say that I know that he has been urging Russia not to precipitate a crisis. I hope he may be able to support this last suggestion at St. Petersburg.

* British Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

† See No. 103.

No. 105.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris.

Foreign Office, July 30, 1914.

Sir,

M. CAMBON* reminded me to-day of the letter I had written to him two years ago, in which we agreed that, if the peace of Europe was seriously threatened, we would discuss what we were prepared to do. I enclose for convenience of reference copies of the letter in question and of M. Cambon's reply. He said that the peace of Europe was never more seriously threatened than it was now. He did not wish to ask me to say directly that we would intervene, but he would like me to say what we should do if certain circumstances arose. The particular hypothesis he had in mind was an aggression by Germany on France. He gave me a paper, of which a copy is also enclosed, showing that the German military preparations were more advanced and more on the offensive upon the frontier than anything France had yet done. He anticipated that the aggression would take the form of either a demand that France should cease her preparations, or a demand that she should engage to remain neutral if there was war between Germany and Russia. Neither of these things could France admit.

I said that the Cabinet was to meet to-morrow morning, and I would see him again to-morrow afternoon.

I am, &c.,

E. GREY.

* French Ambassador in London.

Enclosure 1 in No. 105.

Sir Edward Grey to M. Cambon, French Ambassador in London.

My Dear Ambassador,

Foreign Office, November 22, 1912.

FROM time to time in recent years the French and British naval and military experts have consulted together. It has always been understood that such consultation does not restrict the freedom of either Government to decide at any future time whether or not to assist the other by armed force. We have agreed that consultation between experts is not, and ought not to be regarded as, an engagement that commits either Government to action in a contingency that has not arisen and may never arise. The disposition, for instance, of the French and British fleets respectively at the present moment is not based upon an engagement to co-operate in war.

You have, however, pointed out that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, it might become essential to know whether it could in that event depend upon the armed assistance of the other.

I agree that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, or something that threatened the general peace, it should immediately discuss with the other whether both Governments should act together to prevent aggression and to preserve peace, and, if so, what measures they would be prepared to take in common. If these measures involved action, the plans of the General Staffs would at once be taken into consideration, and the Governments would then decide what effect should be given to them.

Yours, &c.,

E. GREY.

Enclosure 2 in No. 105.

M. Cambon, French Ambassador in London, to Sir Edward Grey.

*L'Ambassade de France,
Londres,
ce 23 novembre, 1912.*

(Translation.)
*French Embassy, London.
November 23, 1912.*

Cher Sir Edward,

PAR votre lettre en date d'hier, 22 novembre, vous m'avez rappelé que, dans ces dernières années, les autorités militaires et navales de la France et de la Grande-Bretagne s'étaient consultées de temps en temps; qu'il avait toujours été entendu que ces consultations ne restreignaient pas la liberté, pour chaque Gouvernement, de décider dans l'avenir s'ils se prêteraient l'un l'autre le concours de leurs forces armées; que, de part et d'autre, ces consultations entre spécialistes n'étaient et ne devaient pas être considérées comme des engagements obligeant nos Gouvernements à agir dans certains cas; que cependant je vous avais fait observer que, si l'un ou l'autre des deux Gouvernements avait de graves raisons d'appréhender une attaque non provoquée de la part d'une tierce Puissance, il deviendrait essentiel de savoir s'il pourrait compter sur l'assistance armée de l'autre.

Votre lettre répond à cette observation, et je suis autorisé à vous déclarer que, dans le cas où l'un de nos deux Gouvernements aurait un motif grave d'appréhender soit l'aggression d'une tierce puissance, soit quelque événement menaçant pour la paix générale, ce Gouvernement examinerait immédiatement avec l'autre si les deux Gouvernements doivent agir de concert en vue de prévenir l'agression ou de sauvegarder la paix. Dans ce cas, les deux Gouvernements délibéreraient sur les mesures qu'ils seraient disposés à prendre en commun; si ces mesures comportaient une action, les deux Gouvernements prendraient aussitôt en considération les plans de leurs états majors et décideraient alors de la suite qui devrait être donnée à ces plans.

Votre sincèrement dévoué,
PAUL CAMBON.

Dear Sir Edward,

YOU reminded me in your letter of yesterday, 22nd November, that during the last few years the military and naval authorities of France and Great Britain had consulted with each other from time to time; that it had always been understood that these consultations should not restrict the liberty of either Government to decide in the future whether they should lend each other the support of their armed forces; that, on either side, these consultations between experts were not and should not be considered as engagements binding our Governments to take action in certain eventualities; that, however, I had remarked to you that, if one or other of the two Governments had grave reasons to fear an unprovoked attack on the part of a third Power, it would become essential to know whether it could count on the armed support of the other.

Your letter answers that point, and I am authorised to state that, in the event of one of our two Governments having grave reasons to fear either an act of aggression from a third Power, or some event threatening the general peace, that Government would immediately examine with the other the question whether both Governments should act together in order to prevent the act of aggression or preserve peace. If so, the two Governments would deliberate as to the measures which they would be prepared to take in common; if those measures involved action, the two Governments would take into immediate consideration the plans of their general staffs and would then decide as to the effect to be given to those plans.

Yours, &c.,
PAUL CAMBON.

Enclosure 3 in No. 105.

French Minister for Foreign Affairs to M. Cambon, French Ambassador in London.

L'ARMÉE allemande a ses avant-postes sur nos bornes-frontières, hier; par deux fois des patrouilles allemandes ont pénétré sur notre territoire. Nos avant-postes sont en retraite à 10 kilom. en arrière de la frontière. Les popula-

(Translation.)

THE German Army had its advance-posts on our frontiers yesterday; German patrols twice penetrated on to our territory. Our advance-posts are withdrawn to a distance of 10 kilom. from the frontier. The local population is pro-

tions ainsi abandonnées à l'attaque de l'armée adverse protestent; mais le Gouvernement tient à montrer à l'opinion publique et au Gouvernement britannique que l'agresseur ne sera en aucun cas la France. Tout le 16^e Corps de Metz renforcé par une partie du 8^e venu de Trèves et de Cologne occupe la frontière de Metz au Luxembourg. Le 15^e Corps d'Armée de Strasbourg a serré sur la frontière. Sous menace d'être fusillés les Alsaciens-Lorrains des pays annexés ne peuvent pas passer la frontière; des réservistes par dizaines de milliers sont rappelés en Allemagne; c'est le dernier stade avant la mobilisation: or, nous n'avons rappelé aucun réserviste.

Comme vous le voyez, l'Allemagne l'a fait. J'ajoute que toutes nos informations concordent pour montrer que les préparatifs allemands ont commencé samedi,* le jour même de la remise de la note autrichienne.

Ces éléments, ajoutés à ceux contenus dans mon télégramme d'hier, vous permettent de faire la preuve au Gouvernement britannique de la volonté pacifique de l'un et des intentions agressives de l'autre.

* Sic: in original. The actual date of the presentation of the Austrian ultimatum was, in fact, Thursday, July 23. The Servian reply was dated Saturday, July 25, and it is clearly to the latter document that reference is intended.

testing against being thus abandoned to the attack of the enemy's army, but the Government wishes to make it clear to public opinion and to the British Government that in no case will France be the aggressor. The whole 16th corps from Metz reinforced by a part of the 8th from Treves and Cologne, is occupying the frontier at Metz on the Luxembourg side. The 15th army corps from Strassburg has closed up on the frontier. The inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine are prevented by the threat of being shot from crossing the frontier. Reservists have been called back to Germany by tens of thousands. This is the last stage before mobilisation, whereas we have not called back a single reservist.

As you see, Germany has done so. I would add that all my information goes to show that the German preparations began on Saturday,* the very day on which the Austrian note was handed in.

These facts, added to those contained in my telegram of yesterday, will enable you to prove to the British Government the pacific intentions of the one party and the aggressive intentions of the other.

No. 106.

Sir R. Rodd, British Ambassador at Rome, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received July 31.)

(Telegraphic.)

Rome, July 30, 1914.

I LEARNED from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who sent for me this evening, that the Austrian Government had declined to continue the direct exchange of views with the Russian Government. But he had reason to believe that Germany was now disposed to give more conciliatory advice to Austria, as she seemed convinced that we should act with France and Russia, and was most anxious to avoid issue with us.

He said he was telegraphing to the Italian Ambassador at Berlin to ask the German Government to suggest that the idea of an exchange of views between the four Powers should be resumed in any form which Austria would consider acceptable. It seemed to him that Germany might invite Austria to state exactly the terms which she would demand from Servia, and give a guarantee that she would neither deprive her of independence nor annex territory. It would be useless to ask for anything less than was contained in the Austrian ultimatum, and Germany would support no proposal that might imply non-success for Austria. We might, on the other hand, ascertain from Russia what she would accept, and, once we knew the standpoints of these two countries, discussions could be commenced at once. There was still time so long as Austria had received no check. He in any case was in favour of continuing an exchange of views with His Majesty's Government if the idea of discussions between the four Powers was impossible.

No. 107.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received July 31.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, July 30, 1914.

I DO not know whether you have received a reply from the German Government to the communication* which you made to them through the German Ambassador in London asking whether they could suggest any method by which the four Powers could use their mediating influence between Russia and Austria. I was informed last night that they had not had time to send an answer yet. To-day, in reply to an enquiry from the French Ambassador as to whether the Imperial Government had proposed any course of action, the Secretary of State said that he had felt that time would be saved by communicating with Vienna direct, and that he had asked the Austro-Hungarian Government what would satisfy them. No answer had, however, yet been returned.

The Chancellor told me last night that he was "pressing the button" as hard as he could, and that he was not sure whether he had not gone so far in urging moderation at Vienna that matters had been precipitated rather than otherwise.

* See No. 84.

No. 108.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received July 31.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, July 31, 1914.

CHANCELLOR informs me that his efforts to preach peace and moderation at Vienna have been seriously handicapped by the Russian mobilisation against Austria. He has done everything possible to attain his object at Vienna, perhaps even rather more than was altogether palatable at the Ballplatz. He could not, however, leave his country defenceless while time was being utilised by other Powers; and if, as he learns is the case, military measures are now being taken by Russia against Germany also, it would be impossible for him to remain quiet. He wished to tell me that it was quite possible that in a very short time, to-day perhaps, the German Government would take some very serious step; he was, in fact, just on the point of going to have an audience with the Emperor.

His Excellency added that the news of the active preparations on the Russo-German frontier had reached him just when the Czar had appealed to the Emperor, in the name of their old friendship, to mediate at Vienna, and when the Emperor was actually conforming to that request.

No. 109.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received July 31.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, July 31, 1914.

I READ to the Chancellor this morning your answer to his appeal for British neutrality in the event of war, as contained in your telegram of yesterday.* His Excellency was so taken up with the news of the Russian measures along the frontier, referred to in my immediately preceding telegram, that he received your communication without comment. He asked me to let him have the message that I had just read to him as a memorandum, as he would like to reflect upon it before giving an answer, and his mind was so full of grave matters that he could not be certain of remembering all its points. I therefore handed to him the text of your message on the understanding that it should be regarded merely as a record of conversation, and not as an official document.

His Excellency agreed.

* See No. 101.

No. 110.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg.
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 31, 1914.*

I LEARN from the German Ambassador that, as a result of suggestions by the German Government, a conversation has taken place at Vienna between the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Russian Ambassador. The Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg has also been instructed that he may converse with the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and that he should give explanations about the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia, and discuss suggestions and any questions directly affecting Austro-Russian relations. If the Russian Government object to the Austrians mobilising eight army corps, it might be pointed out that this is not too great a number against 400,000 Servians.

The German Ambassador asked me to urge the Russian Government to show goodwill in the discussions and to suspend their military preparations.

It is with great satisfaction that I have learnt that discussions are being resumed between Austria and Russia, and you should express this to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and tell him that I earnestly hope he will encourage them.

I informed the German Ambassador that, as regards military preparations, I did not see how Russia could be urged to suspend them unless some limit were put by Austria to the advance of her troops into Serbia.

No. 111.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 31, 1914.*

I HOPE that the conversations which are now proceeding between Austria and Russia may lead to a satisfactory result. The stumbling-block hitherto has been Austrian mistrust of Servian assurances, and Russian mistrust of Austrian intentions with regard to the independence and integrity of Serbia. It has occurred to me that, in the event of this mistrust preventing a solution being found by Vienna and St. Petersburg, Germany might sound Vienna, and I would undertake to sound St. Petersburg whether it would be possible for the four disinterested Powers to offer to Austria that they would undertake to see that she obtained full satisfaction of her demands on Serbia, provided that they did not impair Servian sovereignty and the integrity of Servian territory. As your Excellency is aware, Austria has already declared her willingness to respect them. Russia might be informed by the four Powers that they would undertake to prevent Austrian demands going the length of impairing Servian sovereignty and integrity. All Powers would of course suspend further military operations or preparations.

You may sound the Secretary of State about this proposal.

I said to German Ambassador this morning that if Germany could get any reasonable proposal put forward which made it clear that Germany and Austria were striving to preserve European peace, and that Russia and France would be unreasonable if they rejected it, I would support it at St. Petersburg and Paris, and go the length of saying that if Russia and France would not accept it His Majesty's Government would have nothing more to do with the consequences; but otherwise, I told German Ambassador that if France became involved we should be drawn in.

You can add this when sounding Chancellor or Secretary of State as to proposal above.

No. 112.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received July 31.)

(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, July 31, 1914.*

ACCORDING to information just received by German Government from their Ambassador at St. Petersburg, whole Russian army and fleet are being mobilised.

Chancellor tells me that "Kriegsgefahr"* will be proclaimed at once by German Government, as it can only be against Germany that Russian general mobilisation is directed. Mobilisation would follow almost immediately. His Excellency added in explanation that "Kriegsgefahr"* signified the taking of certain precautionary measures consequent upon strained relations with a foreign country.

This news from St. Petersburg, added his Excellency, seemed to him to put an end to all hope of a peaceful solution of the crisis. Germany must certainly prepare for all emergencies.

I asked him whether he could not still put pressure on the authorities at Vienna to do something in general interests to reassure Russia and to show themselves disposed to continue discussions on a friendly basis. He replied that last night he had begged Austria to reply to your last proposal, and that he had received a reply to the effect that Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs would take wishes of the Emperor this morning in the matter.

* "Imminence of War."

No. 113.

Sir G. Buchanan, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received July 31.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, July 31, 1914.

IT has been decided to issue orders for general mobilisation.

This decision was taken in consequence of report received from Russian Ambassador in Vienna to the effect that Austria is determined not to yield to intervention of Powers, and that she is moving troops against Russia as well as against Serbia.

Russia has also reason to believe that Germany is making active military preparations, and she cannot afford to let her get a start.

No. 114.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris, and Sir E. Goschen,
British Ambassador at Berlin.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, July 31, 1914.

I STILL trust that situation is not irretrievable, but in view of prospect of mobilisation in Germany it becomes essential to His Majesty's Government, in view of existing treaties, to ask whether French (German) Government are prepared to engage to respect neutrality of Belgium so long as no other Power violates it.

A similar request is being addressed to German (French) Government. It is important to have an early answer.

No. 115.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Villiers, British Minister at Brussels.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, July 31, 1914.

IN view of existing treaties, you should inform Minister for Foreign Affairs that, in consideration of the possibility of a European war, I have asked French and German Governments whether each is prepared to respect the neutrality of Belgium provided it is violated by no other Power.

You should say that I assume that the Belgian Government will maintain to the utmost of their power their neutrality, which I desire and expect other Powers to uphold and observe.

You should inform the Belgian Government that an early reply is desired.

No. 116.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, July 31, 1914.

I HAVE received your telegram of yesterday's date.*

Nobody here feels that in this dispute, so far as it has yet gone, British treaties or obligations are involved. Feeling is quite different from what it was during the Morocco question. That crisis involved a dispute directly involving France, whereas in this case France is being drawn into a dispute which is not hers.

I believe it to be quite untrue that our attitude has been a decisive factor in situation. German Government do not expect our neutrality.

We cannot undertake a definite pledge to intervene in a war. I have so told the French Ambassador, who has urged His Majesty's Government to reconsider this decision.

I have told him that we should not be justified in giving any pledge at the present moment, but that we will certainly consider the situation again directly there is a new development.

* See No. 99.

No. 117.

Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 31.)

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, July 31, 1914.

AT 7 o'clock this evening I was sent for by Minister for Foreign Affairs. When I arrived the German Ambassador was leaving his Excellency.

German Ambassador had informed his Excellency that, in view of the fact that orders had been given for the total mobilisation of Russian army and fleet, German Government have in an ultimatum which they have addressed to the Russian Government required that Russian forces should be demobilised.

The German Government will consider it necessary to order the total mobilisation of the German army on the Russian and French frontiers if within twelve hours the Russian Government do not give an undertaking to comply with German demand.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs asks me to communicate this to you, and enquires what, in these circumstances, will be the attitude of England.

German Ambassador could not say when the twelve hours terminates. He is going to call at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to-morrow (Saturday) at 1 P.M. in order to receive the French Government's answer as to the attitude they will adopt in the circumstances.

He intimated the possibility of his requiring his passports.

I am informed by the Russian Ambassador that he is not aware of any general mobilisation of the Russian forces having taken place.

No. 118.

Sir M. de Bunsen, British Ambassador at Vienna, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 31.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, July 31, 1914.

I AM informed by Count Forgach, Under-Secretary of State, that although Austria was compelled to respond to Russian mobilisation, which he deplored, the Austrian Ambassador in London has received instructions to inform you that mobilisation was not to be regarded as a necessarily hostile act on either side. Telegrams were being exchanged between the Emperor of Russia and the German Emperor, and conversations were proceeding between Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg and Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs. A general war might, he seriously hoped, be staved off by these efforts. On my expressing my fear that Germany would mobilise, he said that Germany must do something, in his opinion, to secure her

position. As regards Russian intervention on behalf of Serbia, Austria-Hungary found it difficult to recognise such a claim. I called his attention to the fact that during the discussion of the Albanian frontier at the London Conference of Ambassadors the Russian Government had stood behind Serbia, and that a compromise between the views of Russia and Austria-Hungary resulted with accepted frontier line. Although he spoke in a conciliatory tone, and did not regard the situation as desperate, I could not get from him any suggestion for a similar compromise in the present case. Count Forgach is going this afternoon to see the Russian Ambassador, whom I have informed of the above conversation.

The Russian Ambassador has explained that Russia has no desire to interfere unduly with Serbia; that, as compared with the late Russian Minister, the present Minister at Belgrade is a man of very moderate views; and that, as regards Austrian demands, Russia had counselled Serbia to yield to them as far as she possibly could without sacrificing her independence. His Excellency is exerting himself strongly in the interests of peace.

No. 119.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 31, 1914.

M. CAMBON* referred to-day to a telegram that had been shown to Sir Arthur Nicolson† this morning from the French Ambassador in Berlin, saying that it was the uncertainty with regard to whether we would intervene which was the encouraging element in Berlin, and that, if we would only declare definitely on the side of Russia and France, it would decide the German attitude in favour of peace.

I said that it was quite wrong to suppose that we had left Germany under the impression that we would not intervene. I had refused overtures to promise that we should remain neutral. I had not only definitely declined to say that we would remain neutral, I had even gone so far this morning as to say to the German Ambassador that, if France and Germany became involved in war, we should be drawn into it. That, of course, was not the same thing as taking an engagement to France, and I told M. Cambon of it only to show that we had not left Germany under the impression that we would stand aside.

M. Cambon then asked me for my reply to what he had said yesterday.

I said that we had come to the conclusion, in the Cabinet to-day, that we could not give any pledge at the present time. Though we should have to put our policy before Parliament, we could not pledge Parliament in advance. Up to the present moment, we did not feel, and public opinion did not feel, that any treaties or obligations of this country were involved. Further developments might alter this situation and cause the Government and Parliament to take the view that intervention was justified. The preservation of the neutrality of Belgium might be, I would not say a decisive, but an important factor, in determining our attitude. Whether we proposed to Parliament to intervene or not to intervene in a war, Parliament would wish to know how we stood with regard to the neutrality of Belgium, and it might be that I should ask both France and Germany whether each was prepared to undertake an engagement that she would not be the first to violate the neutrality of Belgium.

M. Cambon repeated his question whether we would help France if Germany made an attack on her.

I said that I could only adhere to the answer that, as far as things had gone at present, we could not take any engagement.

M. Cambon urged that Germany had from the beginning rejected proposals that might have made for peace. It could not be to England's interest that France should be crushed by Germany. We should then be in a very diminished position with regard to Germany. In 1870 we had made a great mistake in allowing an enormous increase of German strength, and we should now be repeating the mistake. He asked me whether I could not submit his question to the Cabinet again.

* French Ambassador in London.

† British Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

I said that the Cabinet would certainly be summoned as soon as there was some new development, but at the present moment the only answer I could give was that we could not undertake any definite engagement.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

No. 120.

Sir G. Buchanan, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received August 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, July 31, 1914.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs sent for me and French Ambassador and asked us to telegraph to our respective Governments subjoined formula as best calculated to amalgamate proposal made by you in your telegram of 30th July* with formula recorded in my telegram of 30th July.† He trusted it would meet with your approval:—

“Si l’Autriche consentira à arrêter marche des ses troupes sur le territoire serbe, si, reconnaissant que le conflit austro-serbe a assumé le caractère d’une question d’intérêt européen, elle admet que les Grandes Puissances examinent la satisfaction que la Serbie pourrait accorder au Gouvernement d’Autriche-Hongrie sans laisser porter atteinte à ses droits d’État souverain et à son indépendance, la Russie s’engage à conserver son attitude expectante.”‡

His Excellency then alluded to the telegram sent to German Emperor by Emperor of Russia in reply to the former’s telegram. He said that Emperor Nicholas had begun by thanking Emperor William for his telegram and for the hopes of peaceful solution which it held out. His Majesty had then proceeded to assure Emperor William that no intention whatever of an aggressive character was concealed behind Russian military preparations. So long as conversation with Austria continued, His Imperial Majesty undertook that not a single man should be moved across the frontier; it was, however, of course impossible, for reasons explained, to stop a mobilisation which was already in progress.

M. Sazonoff§ said that undoubtedly there would be better prospect of a peaceful solution if the suggested conversation were to take place in London, where the atmosphere was far more favourable, and he therefore hoped that you would see your way to agreeing to this.

His Excellency ended by expressing his deep gratitude to His Majesty’s Government, who had done so much to save the situation. It would be largely due to them if war were prevented. The Emperor, the Russian Government, and the Russian people would never forget the firm attitude adopted by Great Britain.

* See No. 103.

† See No. 97.

‡ TRANSLATION.—“If Austria will agree to check the advance of her troops on Servian territory; if, recognising that the dispute between Austria and Servia has assumed a character of European interest, she will allow the Great Powers to look into the matter and determine whether Servia could satisfy the Austro-Hungarian Government without impairing her rights as a sovereign State or her independence, Russia will undertake to maintain her waiting attitude.”

§ Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

No. 121.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received August 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, July 31, 1914.

YOUR telegram of 31st July.*

I spent an hour with Secretary of State urging him most earnestly to accept your proposal and make another effort to prevent terrible catastrophe of a European war.

* See No. 111.

He expressed himself very sympathetically towards your proposal, and appreciated your continued efforts to maintain peace, but said it was impossible for the Imperial Government to consider any proposal until they had received an answer from Russia to their communication of to-day; this communication, which he admitted had the form of an ultimatum, being that, unless Russia could inform the Imperial Government within twelve hours that she would immediately countermand her mobilisation against Germany and Austria, Germany would be obliged on her side to mobilise at once.

I asked his Excellency why they had made their demand even more difficult for Russia to accept by asking them to demobilise in south as well. He replied that it was in order to prevent Russia from saying all her mobilisation was only directed against Austria.

His Excellency said that if the answer from Russia was satisfactory he thought personally that your proposal merited favourable consideration, and in any case he would lay it before the Emperor and Chancellor, but he repeated that it was no use discussing it until the Russian Government had sent in their answer to the German demand.

He again assured me that both the Emperor William, at the request of the Emperor of Russia, and the German Foreign Office had even up till last night been urging Austria to show willingness to continue discussions—and telegraphic and telephonic communications from Vienna had been of a promising nature—but Russia's mobilisation had spoilt everything.

No. 122.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—

(Received August 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, July 31, 1914.

NEUTRALITY of Belgium, referred to in your telegram of 31st July to Sir F. Bertie.*

I have seen Secretary of State, who informs me that he must consult the Emperor and the Chancellor before he could possibly answer. I gathered from what he said that he thought any reply they might give could not but disclose a certain amount of their plan of campaign in the event of war ensuing, and he was therefore very doubtful whether they would return any answer at all. His Excellency, nevertheless, took note of your request.

It appears from what he said that German Government consider that certain hostile acts have already been committed by Belgium. As an instance of this, he alleged that a consignment of corn for Germany had been placed under an embargo already.

I hope to see his Excellency to-morrow again to discuss the matter further, but the prospect of obtaining a definite answer seems to me remote.

In speaking to me to-day the Chancellor made it clear that Germany would in any case desire to know the reply returned to you by the French Government.

* See No. 114.

No. 123.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 1, 1914.

I TOLD the German Ambassador to-day that the reply* of the German Government with regard to the neutrality of Belgium was a matter of very great regret, because the neutrality of Belgium affected feeling in this country. If Germany could see her way to give the same assurance as that which had been given by France it would materially contribute to relieve anxiety and tension here. On the other hand, if there were a violation of the neutrality of Belgium by one combatant while the other respected it, it would be extremely difficult to restrain public feeling in this country. I said that we had been discussing this question at a Cabinet meeting, and as I was authorised to tell him this I gave him a memorandum of it.

* See No. 122.

He asked me whether, if Germany gave a promise not to violate Belgium neutrality we would engage to remain neutral.

I replied that I could not say that; our hands were still free, and we were considering what our attitude should be. All I could say was that our attitude would be determined largely by public opinion here, and that the neutrality of Belgium would appeal very strongly to public opinion here. I did not think that we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone.

The Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could not formulate conditions on which we would remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her colonies might be guaranteed.

I said that I felt obliged to refuse definitely any promise to remain neutral on similar terms, and I could only say that we must keep our hands free.

I am, &c.,

E. GREY.

No. 124.

Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, July 31, 1914.

ON the receipt at 8-30 to-night of your telegram of this afternoon,* I sent a message to Minister for Foreign Affairs requesting to see him. He received me at 10-30 to-night at the Elysée, where a Cabinet Council was being held. He took a note of the enquiry as to the respecting by France of the neutrality of Belgium which you instructed me to make.

He told me that a communication had been made to you by the German Ambassador in London of the intention of Germany to order a general mobilisation of her army if Russia do not demobilise at once. He is urgently anxious as to what the attitude of England will be in the circumstances, and begs an answer may be made by His Majesty's Government at the earliest moment possible.

Minister for Foreign Affairs also told me that the German Embassy is packing up.

* See No. 114.

No. 125.

Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, July 31, 1914.

MY immediately preceding telegram.*

Political Director has brought me the reply of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to your enquiry respecting the neutrality of Belgium. It is as follows:—

French Government are resolved to respect the neutrality of Belgium, and it would only be in the event of some other Power violating that neutrality that France might find herself under the necessity, in order to assure defence of her own security, to act otherwise. This assurance has been given several times. President of the Republic spoke of it to the King of the Belgians, and the French Minister at Brussels has spontaneously renewed the assurance to the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day.

* See No. 124.

No. 126.

Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, August 1, 1914.

I HAVE had conversation with the Political Director, who states that the German Ambassador was informed, on calling at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs this morning, that the French Government failed to comprehend the reason which

prompted his communication of yesterday evening. It was pointed out to his Excellency that general mobilisation in Russia had not been ordered until after Austria had decreed a general mobilisation, and that the Russian Government were ready to demobilise if all Powers did likewise. It seemed strange to the French Government that in view of this and of the fact that Russia and Austria were ready to converse, the German Government should have at that moment presented an ultimatum at St. Petersburg requiring immediate demobilisation by Russia. There were no differences at issue between France and Germany, but the German Ambassador had made a menacing communication to the French Government and had requested an answer the next day, intimating that he would have to break off relations and leave Paris if the reply were not satisfactory. The Ambassador was informed that the French Government considered that this was an extraordinary proceeding.

The German Ambassador, who is to see the Minister for Foreign Affairs again this evening, said nothing about demanding his passports, but he stated that he had packed up.

No. 127.

Sir M. de Bunsen, British Ambassador at Vienna, to Sir Edward Grey.—

(Received August 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, August 1, 1914.

GENERAL mobilisation of army and fleet.

No. 128.

Sir F. Villiers, British Minister at Brussels, to Sir Edward Grey.—

(Received August 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Brussels, August 1, 1914.

BELGIAN neutrality.

The instructions conveyed in your telegram of yesterday* have been acted upon.

Belgium expects and desires that other Powers will observe and uphold her neutrality, which she intends to maintain to the utmost of her power. In so informing me, Minister for Foreign Affairs said that, in the event of the violation of the neutrality of their territory, they believed that they were in a position to defend themselves against intrusion. The relations between Belgium and her neighbours were excellent, and there was no reason to suspect their intentions; but he thought it well, nevertheless, to be prepared against emergencies.

* See No. 115.

No. 129.

Minister of State, Luxemburg, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 2.)

(Translation.)

Luxemburg, 2 août, 1914.

Luxemburg, August 2, 1914.

(Télégraphique.)

(Telegraphic.)

MINISTRE d'État du Luxembourg Eyschen vient de recevoir par l'intermédiaire du Ministre d'Allemagne à Luxembourg, M. de Buch, un télégramme du Chancelier de l'Empire allemand Bethmann-Hollweg disant que les mesures militaires à Luxembourg ne constituent pas un acte hostile contre le Luxembourg, mais sont uniquement des mesures destinées à assurer contre attaque éventuelle d'une armée française. L'exploitation des voies ferrées affermées à l'Empire Luxembourg recevra complète indemnité pour dommages éventuels.

THE Luxemburg Minister of State, Eyschen, has just received through the German Minister in Luxemburg, M. de Buch, a telegram from the Chancellor of the German Empire, Bethmann-Hollweg, to the effect that the military measures taken in Luxemburg do not constitute a hostile act against Luxemburg, but are only intended to insure against a possible attack of a French army. Full compensation will be paid to Luxemburg for any damage caused by using the railways which are leased to the Empire.

No. 130.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 1, 1914.

WE are informed that authorities at Hamburg have forcibly detained steamers belonging to the Great Central Company and other British merchant-ships.

I cannot ascertain on what ground the detention of British ships has been ordered.

You should request German Government to send immediate orders that they should be allowed to proceed without delay. The effect on public opinion here will be deplorable unless this is done. His Majesty's Government, on their side, are most anxious to avoid any incident of an aggressive nature, and the German Government will, I hope, be equally careful not to take any step which would make the situation between us impossible.

No. 131.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 1, 1914.

I STILL believe that it might be possible to secure peace if only a little respite in time can be gained before any Great Power begins war.

The Russian Government has communicated to me the readiness of Austria to discuss with Russia and the readiness of Austria to accept a basis of mediation which is not open to the objections raised in regard to the formula which Russia originally suggested.

Things ought not to be hopeless so long as Austria and Russia are ready to converse, and I hope that German Government may be able to make use of the Russian communications referred to above, in order to avoid tension. His Majesty's Government are carefully abstaining from any act which may precipitate matters.

No. 132.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 1, 1914.

FOLLOWING telegram from M. Sazonof* to Count Benckendorff† of the 31st July communicated to me to-day:—

“(Urgent.)

“Formule amendée conformément à la proposition anglaise: ‘Si Autriche consent à arrêter la marche de ses troupes sur le territoire serbe et si, reconnaissant que le conflit austro-serbe a assumé le caractère d’une question d’intérêt européen, elle admet que les Grandes Puissances examinent la satisfaction que la Serbie pourrait accorder au Gouvernement austro-hongrois sans laisser porter atteinte à ses droits d’État souverain et à son indépendance, la Russie s’engage à conserver son attitude expectante.’”‡

(Above communicated to all the Powers.)

* Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

† Russian Ambassador in London.

‡ TRANSLATION.—“Formula amended in accordance with the English proposal: ‘If Austria consents to stay the march of her troops on Servian territory, and if, recognising that the Austro-Servian conflict has assumed the character of a question of European interest, she admits that the Great Powers may examine the satisfaction which Servia can accord to the Austro-Hungarian Government without injury to her sovereign rights as a State and to her independence, Russia undertakes to preserve her waiting attitude.’”

No. 133.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 1, 1914.

M. DE ETTER* came to-day to communicate the contents of a telegram from M. Sazonof,† dated the 31st July, which are as follows:—

* Counsellor of Russian Embassy in London.

† Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

"The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador declared the readiness of his Government to discuss the substance of the Austrian ultimatum to Servia. M. Sazonof replied by expressing his satisfaction, and said it was desirable that the discussions should take place in London with the participation of the Great Powers.

"M. Sazonof hoped that the British Government would assume the direction of these discussions. The whole of Europe would be thankful to them. It would be very important that Austria should meanwhile put a stop provisionally to her military action on Servian territory."

(The above has been communicated to the six Powers.)

No. 134.

Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, August 1, 1914.

PRESIDENT of the Republic has informed me that German Government were trying to saddle Russia with the responsibility; that it was only after a decree of general mobilisation had been issued in Austria that the Emperor of Russia ordered a general mobilisation; that, although the measures which the German Government have already taken are in effect a general mobilisation, they are not so designated; that a French general mobilisation will become necessary in self-defence, and that France is already forty-eight hours behind Germany as regards German military preparations; that the French troops have orders not to go nearer to the German frontier than a distance of 10 kilom. so as to avoid any grounds for accusations of provocation to Germany, whereas the German troops, on the other hand, are actually on the French frontier and have made incursions on it; that, notwithstanding mobilisations, the Emperor of Russia has expressed himself ready to continue his conversations with the German Ambassador with a view to preserving the peace; that French Government, whose wishes are markedly pacific, sincerely desire the preservation of peace and do not quite despair, even now, of its being possible to avoid war.

No. 135.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 1, 1914.

INFORMATION reaches me from a most reliable source that Austrian Government have informed German Government that though the situation has been changed by the mobilisation of Russia they would in full appreciation of the efforts of England for the preservation of peace be ready to consider favourably my proposal for mediation between Austria and Servia. The effect of this acceptance would naturally be that the Austrian military action against Servia would continue for the present, and that the British Government would urge upon Russian Government to stop the mobilisation of troops directed against Austria, in which case Austria would naturally cancel those defensive military counter-measures in Galicia, which have been forced upon Austria by Russian mobilisation.

You should inform Minister for Foreign Affairs and say that if, in the consideration of the acceptance of mediation by Austria, Russia can agree to stop mobilisation, it appears still to be possible to preserve peace. Presumably the matter should be discussed with German Government, also by Russian Government.

No. 136.

Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, August 1, 1914.

MINISTER of War informed military attaché this afternoon that orders had been given at 3-40 for a general mobilisation of the French Army. This became necessary because the Minister of War knows that, under the system of "Kriegszustand,"

* "State of war."

the Germans have called up six classes. Three classes are sufficient to bring their covering troops up to war strength, the remaining three being the reserve. This, he says, being tantamount to mobilisation, is mobilisation under another name.

The French forces on the frontier have opposed to them eight army corps on a war footing, and an attack is expected at any moment. It is therefore of the utmost importance to guard against this. A zone of 10 kilom. has been left between the French troops and German frontier. The French troops will not attack, and the Minister of War is anxious that it should be explained that this act of mobilisation is one for purely defensive purposes.

No. 137.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir M. de Bunsen, British Ambassador at Vienna.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 1, 1914.

I SAW the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador this morning. He supplied me with the substance of a telegram which the Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs had sent to the Austrian Ambassador in Paris. In this telegram his Excellency was given instructions to assure the French Minister for Foreign Affairs that there was no intention in the minds of the Austro-Hungarian Government to impair the sovereign rights of Serbia or to obtain territorial aggrandisement. The Ambassador added that he was further instructed to inform the French Minister for Foreign Affairs that there was no truth in the report which had been published in Paris to the effect that Austria-Hungary intended to occupy the sanjak.

Count Mensdorff* called again later at the Foreign Office. He informed me of a telegram sent yesterday to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at St. Petersburg by Count Berchtold,† and gave me the substance.

It states that Count Berchtold begged the Russian Ambassador, whom he sent for yesterday, to do his best to remove the wholly erroneous impression in St. Petersburg that the "door had been banged" by Austria-Hungary on all further conversations. The Russian Ambassador promised to do this. Count Berchtold repeated on this occasion to the Russian Ambassador the assurance which had already been given at St. Petersburg, to the effect that neither an infraction of Servian sovereign rights nor the acquisition of Servian territory was being contemplated by Austria-Hungary.

Special attention was called by Count Mensdorff* to the fact that this telegram contains a statement to the effect that conversations at St. Petersburg had not been broken off by Austria-Hungary.

* Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in London.

† Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

No. 138.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received August 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, August 1, 1914.

YOUR telegram of to-day.*

I have communicated the substance of the above telegram to the Secretary of State, and spent a long time arguing with him that the chief dispute was between Austria and Russia, and that Germany was only drawn in as Austria's ally. If therefore Austria and Russia were, as was evident, ready to discuss matters and Germany did not desire war on her own account, it seemed to me only logical that Germany should hold her hand and continue to work for a peaceful settlement. Secretary of State said that Austria's readiness to discuss was the result of German influence at Vienna, and, had not Russia mobilised against Germany, all would have been well. But Russia by abstaining from answering Germany's demand that she should demobilise, had caused Germany to mobilise also. Russia had said that

* See No. 131.

her mobilisation did not necessarily imply war, and that she could perfectly well remain mobilised for months without making war. This was not the case with Germany. She had the speed and Russia had the numbers, and the safety of the German Empire forbade that Germany should allow Russia time to bring up masses of troops from all parts of her wide dominions. The situation now was that, though the Imperial Government had allowed her several hours beyond the specified time, Russia had sent no answer. Germany had therefore ordered mobilisation, and the German representative at St. Petersburg had been instructed within a certain time to inform the Russian Government that the Imperial Government must regard their refusal to an answer as creating a state of war.

No. 139.

Sir G. Buchanan, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received August 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburg, August 1, 1914.

MY telegram of 31st July.*

The Emperor of Russia read his telegram to the German Emperor to the German Ambassador at the audience given to his Excellency yesterday. No progress whatever was made.

In the evening M. Sazonoff† had an interview with the Austrian Ambassador who, not being definitely instructed by his Government, did his best to deflect the conversation towards a general discussion of the relations between Austria-Hungary and Russia instead of keeping to the question of Serbia. In reply the Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed his desire that these relations should remain friendly, and said that, taken in general, they were perfectly satisfactory; but the real question which they had to solve at this moment was whether Austria was to crush Serbia and to reduce her to the status of a vassal, or whether she was to leave Serbia a free and independent State. In these circumstances, while the Serbian question was unsolved, the abstract discussion of the relations between Austria-Hungary and Russia was a waste of time. The only place where a successful discussion of this question could be expected was London, and any such discussion was being made impossible by the action of Austria-Hungary in subjecting Belgrade, a virtually unfortified town, to bombardment.

M. Sazonoff† informed the French Ambassador and myself this morning of his conversation with the Austrian Ambassador. He went on to say that during the Balkan crisis he had made it clear to the Austrian Government that war with Russia must inevitably follow an Austrian attack on Serbia. It was clear that Austrian domination of Serbia was as intolerable for Russia as the dependence of the Netherlands on Germany would be to Great Britain. It was, in fact, for Russia a question of life and death. The policy of Austria had throughout been both tortuous and immoral, and she thought that she could treat Russia with defiance, secure in the support of her German ally. Similarly the policy of Germany had been an equivocal and double-faced policy, and it mattered little whether the German Government knew or did not know the terms of the Austrian ultimatum; what mattered was that her intervention with the Austrian Government had been postponed until the moment had passed when its influence would have been felt. Germany was unfortunate in her representatives in Vienna and St. Petersburg: the former was a violent Russophobe who had urged Austria on, the latter had reported to his Government that Russia would never go to war. M. Sazonoff was completely weary of the ceaseless endeavours he had made to avoid a war. No suggestion held out to him had been refused. He had accepted the proposal for a conference of four, for mediation by Great Britain and Italy, for direct conversation between Austria and Russia; but Germany and Austria-Hungary had either rendered these attempts for peace ineffective by evasive replies or had refused them altogether. The action of the Austro-Hungarian Government and the German preparations had forced the Russian Government to order mobilisation, and the mobilisation of Germany had created a desperate situation.

* See No. 120.

† Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

M. Sazonof added that the formula, of which the text is contained in my telegram of 31st July,* had been forwarded by the Russian Government to Vienna, and he would adhere to it if you could obtain its acceptance before the frontier was crossed by German troops. In no case would Russia begin hostilities first.

I now see no possibility of a general war being avoided unless the agreement of France and Germany can be obtained to keep their armies mobilised on their own sides of the frontier, as Russia has expressed her readiness to do, pending a last attempt to reach a settlement of the present crisis.

* See No. 120.

No. 140.

Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Paris, August 1, 1914.

THE Minister of War again sent for the military attaché this evening, as he said he wished to keep him informed of the situation. He laid great stress on the fact that the zone of 10 kilom., which he had arranged between the French troops and the German frontier, and which was still occupied by peasants, was a proof of the French endeavours to commit no provocative act.

No. 141.

Sir M. de Bunsen, British Ambassador at Vienna, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, August 1, 1914.

I AM to be received to-morrow by Minister for Foreign Affairs. This afternoon he is to see the French and Russian Ambassadors. I have just been informed by the Russian Ambassador of German ultimatum requiring that Russia should demobilise within twelve hours. On being asked by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs whether the inevitable refusal of Russia to yield to this curt summons meant war, the German Ambassador replied that Germany would be forced to mobilise if Russia refused. Russian Ambassador at Vienna thinks that war is almost inevitable, and that as mobilisation is too expensive to be kept for long, Germany will attack Russia at once. He says that the so-called mobilisation of Russia amounted to nothing more than that Russia had taken military measures corresponding to those taken by Germany. There seems to be even greater tension between Germany and Russia than there is between Austria and Russia. Russia would, according to the Russian Ambassador, be satisfied even now with assurance respecting Servian integrity and independence. He says that Russia had no intention to attack Austria. He is going again to-day to point out to the Minister for Foreign Affairs that most terrific consequences must ensue from refusal to make this slight concession. This time Russia would fight to the last extremity. I agree with his Excellency that the German Ambassador at Vienna desired war from the first, and that his strong personal bias probably coloured his action here. The Russian Ambassador is convinced that the German Government also desired war from the first.

It is the intention of the French Ambassador to speak earnestly to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day on the extreme danger of the situation, and to ask whether proposals to serve as a basis of mediation from any quarter are being considered. There is great anxiety to know what England will do. I fear that nothing can alter the determination of Austro-Hungarian Government to proceed on their present course, if they have made up their mind with the approval of Germany.

No. 142.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received August 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, August 1, 1914.

ORDERS have just been issued for the general mobilisation of the navy and army, the first day of mobilisation to be 2nd August.

No. 143.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received August 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, August 1, 1914.

DETENTION of British merchant ships at Hamburg.

Your telegram of 1st August* acted on.

Secretary of State, who expressed the greatest surprise and annoyance, has promised to send orders at once to allow steamers to proceed without delay.

* See No. 130.

No. 144.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received August 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, August 2, 1914.

SECRETARY of State has just informed me that, owing to certain Russian troops having crossed frontier, Germany and Russia are now in a state of war.

No. 145.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received August 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, August 2, 1914.

MY telegram of 1st August.*

Secretary of State informs me that orders were sent last night to allow British ships in Hamburg to proceed on their way. He says that this must be regarded as a special favour to His Majesty's Government, as no other foreign ships have been allowed to leave. Reason of detention was that mines were being laid and other precautions being taken.

* See No. 143.

No. 146.

Sir F. Villiers, British Minister at Brussels, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received August 2.)

(Telegraphic.)

Brussels, August 2, 1914.

THE news that a German force has entered Grand Duchy of Luxemburg has been officially confirmed to the Belgian Government.

Minister of State, Luxemburg, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 2.)

(Translation.)

Luxemburg, le 2 août, 1914.

(Télégraphique.)

J'AI l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de votre Excellence les faits suivants :

Dimanche, 2 août, de grand matin, les troupes allemandes, d'après les informations qui sont parvenues au Gouvernement Grand ducal à l'heure actuelle, ont pénétré sur le territoire luxembourgeois par les ponts de Wasserbillig et de Remich, se dirigeant spécialement vers le sud du pays et vers la ville de Luxembourg, capitale du Grand Duché. Un certain nombre de trains blindés avec des troupes et des munitions ont été acheminés par la voie de chemin de fer de Wasserbillig à Luxembourg, où l'on s'attend de les voir arriver. D'un instant à l'autre, ces faits impliquent des actes manifestement contraire à la neutralité du Grand Duché garantie par le Traité de Londres de 1867. Le Gouvernement luxembourgeois n'a pas manqué de protester énergiquement contre cette agression auprès des représentants de Sa Majesté l'Empereur d'Allemagne à Luxembourg. Une protestation identique va être transmise télégraphiquement au Secrétaire d'État pour les Affaires Etrangères à Berlin.

Luxemburg,

August 2, 1914.

(Telegraphic.)

I HAVE the honour to bring to your Excellency's notice the following facts:—

On Sunday, the 2nd August, very early, the German troops, according to the information which has up to now reached the Grand Ducal Government, penetrated into Luxembourg territory by the bridges of Wasserbillig and Remich, and proceeded particularly towards the south and in the direction of Luxembourg, the capital of the Grand Duchy. A certain number of armoured trains with troops and ammunition have been sent along the railway line from Wasserbillig to Luxembourg, where their arrival is expected. These occurrences constitute acts which are manifestly contrary to the neutrality of the Grand Duchy as guaranteed by the Treaty of London of 1867. The Luxemburg Government have not failed to address an energetic protest against this aggression to the representatives of His Majesty the German Emperor at Luxembourg. An identical protest will be sent by telegraph to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at Berlin.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 2, 1914.

AFTER the Cabinet this morning I gave M. Cambon* the following memorandum:—

"I am authorised to give an assurance that, if the German fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against French coasts or shipping, the British fleet will give all the protection in its power.

"This assurance is of course subject to the policy of His Majesty's Government receiving the support of Parliament, and must not be taken as binding His Majesty's Government to take any action until the above contingency of action by the German fleet takes place."

I pointed out that we had very large questions and most difficult issues to consider, and that Government felt that they could not bind themselves to declare war upon Germany necessarily if war broke out between France and Germany to-morrow, but it was essential to the French Government, whose fleet had long been concentrated in the Mediterranean, to know how to make their dispositions with their north coast entirely undefended. We therefore thought it necessary to give them this assurance. It did not bind us to go to war with Germany unless the German fleet took the action indicated, but it did give a security to France that would enable her to settle the disposition of her own Mediterranean fleet.

M. Cambon* asked me about the violation of Luxemburg. I told him the doctrine on that point laid down by Lord Derby and Lord Clarendon in 1867. He

* French Ambassador in London.

asked me what we should say about the violation of the neutrality of Belgium. I said that was a much more important matter; we were considering what statement we should make in Parliament to-morrow—in effect, whether we should declare violation of Belgian neutrality to be a *casus belli*. I told him what had been said to the German Ambassador on this point.

No. 149.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 2, 1914.

YOUR telegram of 1st August.*

I regret to learn that 100 tons of sugar was compulsorily unloaded from the British steamship "Sappho" at Hamburg and detained. Similar action appears to have been taken with regard to other British vessels loaded with sugar.

You should inform Secretary of State that, for reasons stated in my telegram of 1st August,† I most earnestly trust that the orders already sent to Hamburg to allow the clearance of British ships covers also the release of their cargoes, the detention of which cannot be justified.

* See No. 143.

† See No. 130.

No. 150.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received August 3.)

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, August 3, 1914.

YOUR telegram of 2nd August*: Detention of British ships at Hamburg.
No information available.

* See No. 149.

No. 151.

Sir F. Villiers, British Minister at Brussels, to Sir Edward Grey.—
(Received August 3.)

(Telegraphic.)

Brussels, August 3, 1914.

FRENCH Government have offered through their military attaché the support of five French army corps to the Belgian Government. Following reply has been sent to-day:—

"We are sincerely grateful to the French Government for offering eventual support. In the actual circumstances, however, we do not propose to appeal to the guarantee of the Powers. Belgian Government will decide later on the action which they may think it necessary to take."

No. 152.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador at Paris.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 3, 1914.

ON the 1st instant the French Ambassador made the following communication:—

"In reply to the German Government's intimation of the fact that ultimatums had been presented to France and Russia, and to the question as to what were the intentions of Italy, the Marquis di San Giuliano* replied:—

"The war undertaken by Austria, and the consequences which might result, had, in the words of the German Ambassador himself, an aggressive object. Both

* Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

were therefore in conflict with the purely defensive character of the Triple Alliance, and in such circumstances Italy would remain neutral.”

In making this communication, M. Cambon† was instructed to lay stress upon the Italian declaration that the present war was not a defensive but an aggressive war, and that, for this reason, the *casus fœderis* under the terms of the Triple Alliance did not arise.

I am, &c.,
E. GREY.

† French Ambassador in London.

No. 153.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 4, 1914.

THE King of the Belgians has made an appeal to His Majesty the King for diplomatic intervention on behalf of Belgium in the following terms:—

“Remembering the numerous proofs of your Majesty’s friendship and that of your predecessor, and the friendly attitude of England in 1870, and the proof of friendship you have just given us again, I make a supreme appeal to the diplomatic intervention of your Majesty’s Government to safeguard the integrity of Belgium.”

His Majesty’s Government are also informed that the German Government have delivered to the Belgian Government a note proposing friendly neutrality entailing free passage through Belgian territory, and promising to maintain the independence and integrity of the kingdom and its possessions at the conclusion of peace, threatening in case of refusal to treat Belgium as an enemy. An answer was requested within twelve hours.

We also understand that Belgium has categorically refused this as a flagrant violation of the law of nations.

His Majesty’s Government are bound to protest against this violation of a treaty to which Germany is a party in common with themselves, and must request an assurance that the demand made upon Belgium will not be proceeded with and that her neutrality will be respected by Germany. You should ask for an immediate reply.

No. 154.

Sir F. Villiers, British Minister at Brussels, to Sir Edward Grey.—

(Received August 4.)

(Telegraphic.)

Brussels, August 4, 1914.

GERMAN Minister has this morning addressed note to Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that as Belgian Government have declined the well-intentioned proposals submitted to them by the Imperial Government, the latter will, deeply to their regret, be compelled to carry out, if necessary by force of arms, the measures considered indispensable in view of the French menaces.

No. 155.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Villiers, British Minister at Brussels.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 4, 1914.

YOU should inform Belgian Government that if pressure is applied to them by Germany to induce them to depart from neutrality, His Majesty’s Government expect that they will resist by any means in their power, and that His Majesty’s Government will support them in offering such resistance, and that His Majesty’s Government in this event are prepared to join Russia and France, if desired, in offering to the Belgian Government at once common action for the purpose of resisting use of force by Germany against them, and a guarantee to maintain their independence and integrity in future years.

No. 156.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 4, 1914.

I CONTINUE to receive numerous complaints from British firms as to the detention of their ships at Hamburg, Cuxhaven, and other German ports. This action on the part of the German authorities is totally unjustifiable. It is in direct contravention of international law and of the assurances given to your Excellency by the Imperial Chancellor. You should demand the immediate release of all British ships if such release has not yet been given.

No. 157.

*German Foreign Secretary to Prince Lichnowsky, German Ambassador in London.—
(Communicated by German Embassy, August 4.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, August 4, 1914.

PLEASE dispel any mistrust that may subsist on the part of the British Government with regard to our intentions, by repeating most positively formal assurance that, even in the case of armed conflict with Belgium, Germany will, under no pretence whatever, annex Belgian territory. Sincerity of this declaration is borne out by fact that we solemnly pledged our word to Holland strictly to respect her neutrality. It is obvious that we could not profitably annex Belgian territory without making at the same time territorial acquisitions at expense of Holland. Please impress upon Sir E. Grey that German army could not be exposed to French attack across Belgium, which was planned according to absolutely unimpeachable information. Germany had consequently to disregard Belgian neutrality, it being for her a question of life or death to prevent French advance.

No. 158.

Sir F. Villiers, British Minister at Brussels, to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 4.)

(Telegraphic.)

Brussels, August 4, 1914.

MILITARY attaché has been informed at War Office that German troops have entered Belgian territory, and that Liège has been summoned to surrender by small party of Germans who, however, were repulsed.

No. 159.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador at Berlin.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 4, 1914.

WE hear that Germany has addressed note to Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that German Government will be compelled to carry out, if necessary, by force of arms, the measures considered indispensable.

We are also informed that Belgian territory has been violated at Gemmenich.

In these circumstances, and in view of the fact that Germany declined to give the same assurance respecting Belgium as France gave last week in reply to our request made simultaneously at Berlin and Paris, we must repeat that request, and ask that a satisfactory reply to it and to my telegram of this morning* be received here by 12 o'clock to-night. If not, you are instructed to ask for your passports, and to say that His Majesty's Government feel bound to take all steps in their power to uphold the neutrality of Belgium and the observance of a treaty to which Germany is as much a party as ourselves.

* See No. 153.

Sir E. Goschen, British Ambassador in Berlin, to Sir Edward Grey.

Sir,

London, August 8, 1914.

IN accordance with the instructions contained in your telegram of the 4th instant* I called upon the Secretary of State that afternoon and enquired, in the name of His Majesty's Government, whether the Imperial Government would refrain from violating Belgian neutrality. Herr von Jagow† at once replied that he was sorry to say that his answer must be "No," as, in consequence of the German troops having crossed the frontier that morning, Belgian neutrality had been already violated. Herr von Jagow again went into the reasons why the Imperial Government had been obliged to take this step, namely, that they had to advance into France by the quickest and easiest way, so as to be able to get well ahead with their operations and endeavour to strike some decisive blow as early as possible. It was a matter of life and death for them, as if they had gone by the more southern route they could not have hoped, in view of the paucity of roads and the strength of the fortresses, to have got through without formidable opposition, entailing great loss of time. This loss of time would have meant time gained by the Russians for bringing up their troops to the German frontier. Rapidity of action was the great German asset, while that of Russia was an inexhaustible supply of troops. I pointed out to Herr von Jagow that this *fait accompli* of the violation of the Belgian frontier rendered, as he would readily understand, the situation exceedingly grave, and I asked him whether there was not still time to draw back and avoid possible consequences, which both he and I would deplore. He replied that, for the reasons he had given me, it was now impossible for them to draw back.

During the afternoon I received your further telegram of the same date,‡ and, in compliance with the instructions therein contained, I again proceeded to the Imperial Foreign Office and informed the Secretary of State that unless the Imperial Government could give the assurance by 12 o'clock that night that they would proceed no further with their violation of the Belgian frontier and stop their advance, I had been instructed to demand my passports and inform the Imperial Government that His Majesty's Government would have to take all steps in their power to uphold the neutrality of Belgium and the observance of a treaty to which Germany was as much a party as themselves.

Herr von Jagow replied that to his great regret he could give no other answer than that which he had given me earlier in the day, namely, that the safety of the Empire rendered it absolutely necessary that the Imperial troops should advance through Belgium. I gave his Excellency a written summary of your telegram, and, pointing out that you had mentioned 12 o'clock as the time when His Majesty's Government would expect an answer, asked him whether, in view of the terrible consequences which would necessarily ensue, it were not possible even at the last moment that their answer should be reconsidered. He replied that if the time given were even twenty-four hours or more, his answer must be the same. I said that in that case I should have to demand my passports. This interview took place at about 7 o'clock. In a short conversation which ensued Herr von Jagow† expressed his poignant regret at the crumbling of his entire policy and that of the Chancellor, which had been to make friends with Great Britain, and then, through Great Britain, to get closer to France. I said that this sudden end to my work in Berlin was to me also a matter of deep regret and disappointment, but that he must understand that under the circumstances and in view of our engagements, His Majesty's Government could not possibly have acted otherwise than they had done.

I then said that I should like to go and see the Chancellor, as it might be, perhaps, the last time I should have an opportunity of seeing him. He begged me to do so. I found the Chancellor very agitated. His Excellency at once began a harangue, which lasted for about twenty minutes. He said that the step taken by His Majesty's Government was terrible to a degree; just for a word—"neutrality," a word which in war time had so often been disregarded—just for a scrap of paper Great Britain was going to make war on a kindred nation who desired nothing better than to be friends with her. All his efforts in that direction had been

* See No. 153.

† German Secretary of State.

‡ See No. 159.

rendered useless by this last terrible step, and the policy to which, as I knew, he had devoted himself since his accession to office had tumbled down like a house of cards. What we had done was unthinkable; it was like striking a man from behind while he was fighting for his life against two assailants. He held Great Britain responsible for all the terrible events that might happen. I protested strongly against that statement, and said that, in the same way as he and Herr von Jagow* wished me to understand that for strategical reasons it was a matter of life and death to Germany to advance through Belgium and violate the latter's neutrality, so I would wish him to understand that it was, so to speak, a matter of "life and death" for the honour of Great Britain that she should keep her solemn engagement to do her utmost to defend Belgium's neutrality if attacked. That solemn compact simply had to be kept, or what confidence could anyone have in engagements given by Great Britain in the future? The Chancellor said, "But at what price will that compact have been kept. Has the British Government thought of that?" I hinted to his Excellency as plainly as I could that fear of consequences could hardly be regarded as an excuse for breaking solemn engagements, but his Excellency was so excited, so evidently overcome by the news of our action, and so little disposed to hear reason that I refrained from adding fuel to the flame by further argument. As I was leaving he said that the blow of Great Britain joining Germany's enemies was all the greater that almost up to the last moment he and his Government had been working with us and supporting our efforts to maintain peace between Austria and Russia. I said that this was part of the tragedy which saw the two nations fall apart just at the moment when the relations between them had been more friendly and cordial than they had been for years. Unfortunately, notwithstanding our efforts to maintain peace between Russia and Austria, the war had spread and had brought us face to face with a situation which, if we held to our engagements, we could not possibly avoid, and which unfortunately entailed our separation from our late fellow-workers. He would readily understand that no one regretted this more than I.

After this somewhat painful interview I returned to the embassy and drew up a telegraphic report of what had passed. This telegram was handed in at the Central Telegraph Office a little before 9 P.M. It was accepted by that office, but apparently never despatched.*

At about 9-30 P.M. Herr von Zimmermann, the Under-Secretary of State, came to see me. After expressing his deep regret that the very friendly official and personal relations between us were about to cease, he asked me casually whether a demand for passports was equivalent to a declaration of war. I said that such an authority on international law as he was known to be must know as well or better than I what was usual in such cases. I added that there were many cases where diplomatic relations had been broken off, and, nevertheless, war had not ensued; but that in this case he would have seen from my instructions, of which I had given Herr von Jagow† a written summary, that His Majesty's Government expected an answer to a definite question by 12 o'clock that night and that in default of a satisfactory answer they would be forced to take such steps as their engagements required. Herr Zimmermann‡ said that that was, in fact, a declaration of war, as the Imperial Government could not possibly give the assurance required either that night or any other night.

In the meantime, after Herr Zimmermann‡ left me, a flying sheet, issued by the "Berliner Tageblatt," was circulated stating that Great Britain had declared war against Germany. The immediate result of this news was the assemblage of an exceedingly excited and unruly mob before His Majesty's Embassy. The small force of police which had been sent to guard the embassy was soon overpowered, and the attitude of the mob became threatening. We took no notice of this demonstration as long as it was confined to noise, but when the crash of glass and the landing of cobble stones into the drawing-room, where we were all sitting, warned us that the situation was getting unpleasant, I telephoned to the Foreign Office an account of what was happening. Herr von Jagow† at once informed the Chief

*This telegram never reached the Foreign Office.

†German Secretary of State.

‡German Under-Secretary of State.

of Police, and an adequate force of mounted police, sent with great promptness, very soon cleared the street. From that moment on we were well guarded, and no more direct unpleasantness occurred.

After order had been restored Herr von Jagow* came to see me and expressed his most heartfelt regrets at what had occurred. He said that the behaviour of his countrymen had made him feel more ashamed than he had words to express. It was an indelible stain on the reputation of Berlin. He said that the flying sheet circulated in the streets had not been authorised by the Government; in fact, the Chancellor had asked him by telephone whether he thought that such a statement should be issued, and he had replied, "Certainly not, until the morning." It was in consequence of his decision to that effect that only a small force of police had been sent to the neighbourhood of the embassy, as he had thought that the presence of a large force would inevitably attract attention and perhaps lead to disturbances. It was the "pestilential 'Tageblatt,'" which had somehow got hold of the news, that had upset his calculations. He had heard rumours that the mob had been excited to violence by gestures made and missiles thrown from the embassy, but he felt sure that was not true (I was able soon to assure him that the report had no foundation whatever), and even if it was, it was no excuse for the disgraceful scenes which had taken place. He feared that I would take home with me a sorry impression of Berlin manners in moments of excitement. In fact, no apology could have been more full and complete.

On the following morning, the 5th August, the Emperor sent one of His Majesty's aides-de-camp to me with the following message:—

"The Emperor has charged me to express to your Excellency his regret for the occurrences of last night, but to tell you at the same time that you will gather from those occurrences an idea of the feelings of his people respecting the action of Great Britain in joining with other nations against her old allies of Waterloo. His Majesty also begs that you will tell the King that he has been proud of the titles of British Field-Marshal and British Admiral, but that in consequence of what has occurred he must now at once divest himself of those titles."

I would add that the above message lost none of its acerbity by the manner of its delivery.

On the other hand, I should like to state that I received all through this trying time nothing but courtesy at the hands of Herr von Jagow* and the officials of the Imperial Foreign Office. At about 11 o'clock on the same morning Count Wedel handed me my passports—which I had earlier in the day demanded in writing—and told me that he had been instructed to confer with me as to the route which I should follow for my return to England. He said that he had understood that I preferred the route via the Hook of Holland to that via Copenhagen; they had therefore arranged that I should go by the former route, only I should have to wait till the following morning. I agreed to this, and he said that I might be quite assured that there would be no repetition of the disgraceful scenes of the preceding night as full precautions would be taken. He added that they were doing all in their power to have a restaurant car attached to the train, but it was rather a difficult matter. He also brought me a charming letter from Herr von Jagow couched in the most friendly terms. The day was passed in packing up such articles as time allowed.

The night passed quietly without any incident. In the morning a strong force of police was posted along the usual route to the Lehrter Station, while the embassy was smuggled away in taxi-cabs to the station by side streets. We there suffered no molestation whatever, and avoided the treatment meted out by the crowd to my Russian and French colleagues. Count Wedel met us at the station to say Good-bye on behalf of Herr von Jagow and to see that all the arrangements ordered for our comfort had been properly carried out. A retired colonel of the Guards accompanied the train to the Dutch frontier and was exceedingly kind in his efforts to prevent the great crowds which thronged the platforms at every station where we stopped from insulting us; but beyond the yelling of patriotic songs and a few jeers and insulting gestures we had really nothing to complain of during our tedious journey to the Dutch frontier.

* German Secretary of State.

Before closing this long account of our last days in Berlin I should like to place on record and bring to your notice the quite admirable behaviour of my staff under the most trying circumstances possible. One and all, they worked *night and day*, with scarcely any rest, and I cannot praise too highly the cheerful zeal with which counsellor, naval and military attachés, secretaries, and the two young attachés buckled to their work and kept their nerve with often a yelling mob outside and inside hundreds of British subjects clamouring for advice and assistance. I was proud to have such a staff to work with, and feel most grateful to them all for the invaluable assistance and support, often exposing them to considerable personal risk, which they so readily and cheerfully gave to me.

I should also like to mention the great assistance rendered to us all by my American colleague, Mr. Gerard,* and his staff. Undeterred by the hooting and hisses with which he was often greeted by the mob on entering and leaving the embassy, his Excellency came repeatedly to see me to ask how he could help us and to make arrangements for the safety of stranded British subjects. He extricated many of these from extremely difficult situations at some personal risk to himself, and his calmness and *savoir faire* and his firmness in dealing with the Imperial authorities gave full assurance that the protection of British subjects and interests could not have been left in more efficient and able hands.

I have, &c.

W. E. GOSCHEN.

* American Ambassador in Berlin.

No. 161.

Sir M. de Bunsen, British Ambassador in Vienna, to Sir Edward Grey.

Sir,

London, September 1, 1914.

THE rapidity of the march of events during the days which led up to the outbreak of the European war made it difficult, at the time, to do more than record their progress by telegraph. I propose now to add a few comments.

The delivery at Belgrade on the 23rd July of the Austrian note to Serbia was preceded by a period of absolute silence at the Ballplatz. Except Herr von Tschirscky,* who must have been aware of the tenour, if not of the actual words of the note, none of my colleagues were allowed to see through the veil. On the 22nd and 23rd July, M. Dumaine, French Ambassador, had long interviews with Baron Macchio, one of the Under-Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs, by whom he was left under the impression that the words of warning he had been instructed to speak to the Austro-Hungarian Government had not been unavailing, and that the note which was being drawn up would be found to contain nothing with which a self-respecting State need hesitate to comply. At the second of these interviews he was not even informed that the note was at that very moment being presented at Belgrade, or that it would be published in Vienna on the following morning. Count Forgach, the other Under-Secretary of State, had indeed been good enough to confide to me on the same day the true character of the note, and the fact of its presentation about the time we were speaking.

So little had the Russian Ambassador been made aware of what was preparing that he actually left Vienna on a fortnight's leave of absence about the 20th July. He had only been absent a few days when events compelled him to return. It might have been supposed that Duke Avarna, Ambassador of the allied Italian Kingdom, which was bound to be so closely affected by fresh complications in the Balkans, would have been taken fully into the confidence of Count Berchtold† during this critical time. In point of fact his Excellency was left completely in the dark. As for myself, no indication was given me by Count Berchtold of the impending storm, and it was from a private source that I received on the 15th July the forecast of what was about to happen which I telegraphed to you the following day. It is true that during all this time the "*Neue Freie Presse*" and other leading Viennese newspapers were using language which pointed unmistakably to war with Serbia. The official "*Fremdenblatt*," however, was more cautious, and till the note was

* German Ambassador at Vienna.

† Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

published, the prevailing opinion among my colleagues was that Austria would shrink from courses calculated to involve her in grave European complications.

On the 24th July the note was published in the newspapers. By common consent it was at once styled an ultimatum. Its integral acceptance by Serbia was neither expected nor desired, and when, on the following afternoon, it was at first rumoured in Vienna that it had been unconditionally accepted, there was a moment of keen disappointment. The mistake was quickly corrected, and as soon as it was known later in the evening that the Serbian reply had been rejected and that Baron Giesl* had broken off relations at Belgrade, Vienna burst into a frenzy of delight, vast crowds parading the streets and singing patriotic songs till the small hours of the morning.

The demonstrations were perfectly orderly, consisting for the most part of organised processions through the principal streets ending up at the Ministry of War. One or two attempts to make hostile manifestations against the Russian Embassy were frustrated by the strong guard of police which held the approaches to the principal embassies during those days. The demeanour of the people at Vienna and, as I was informed, in many other principal cities of the Monarchy, showed plainly the popularity of the idea of war with Serbia, and there can be no doubt that the small body of Austrian and Hungarian statesmen by whom this momentous step was adopted gauged rightly the sense, and it may even be said the determination, of the people, except presumably in portions of the provinces inhabited by the Slav races. There had been much disappointment in many quarters at the avoidance of war with Serbia during the annexation crisis in 1908 and again in connection with the recent Balkan war. Count Berchtold's† peace policy had met with little sympathy in the Delegation. Now the flood-gates were opened, and the entire people and press clamoured impatiently for immediate and condign punishment of the hated Serbian race. The country certainly believed that it had before it only the alternative of subduing Serbia or of submitting sooner or later to mutilation at her hands. But a peaceful solution should first have been attempted. Few seemed to reflect that the forcible intervention of a Great Power in the Balkans must inevitably call other Great Powers into the field. So just was the cause of Austria held to be, that it seemed to her people inconceivable that any country should place itself in her path, or that questions of mere policy or prestige should be regarded anywhere as superseding the necessity which had arisen to exact summary vengeance for the crime of Serajevo. The conviction had been expressed to me by the German Ambassador on the 24th July that Russia would stand aside. This feeling, which was also held at the Ballplatz, influenced no doubt the course of events, and it is deplorable that no effort should have been made to secure by means of diplomatic negotiations the acquiescence of Russia and Europe as a whole in some peaceful compromise of the Serbian question by which Austrian fears of Serbian aggression and intrigue might have been removed for the future. Instead of adopting this course the Austro-Hungarian Government resolved upon war. The inevitable consequence ensued. Russia replied to a partial Austrian mobilisation and declaration of war against Serbia by a partial Russian mobilisation against Austria. Austria met this move by completing her own mobilisation, and Russia again responded with results which have passed into history. The fate of the proposals put forward by His Majesty's Government for the preservation of peace is recorded in the White Paper on the European crisis.‡ On the 28th July I saw Count Berchtold and urged as strongly as I could that the scheme of mediation mentioned in your speech in the House of Commons§ on the previous day should be accepted as offering an honourable and peaceful settlement of the question at issue. His Excellency himself read to me a telegraphic report of the speech, but added that matters had gone too far; Austria was that day declaring war on Serbia, and she could never accept the conference which you had suggested should take place between the less interested Powers on the basis of the Serbian reply. This was a matter which must be settled directly between the two parties immediately concerned. I said His Majesty's Government would hear with regret that hostilities could not be arrested, as you feared they would lead to European complications. I disclaimed any British lack of sympathy with Austria in the matter of her legitimate grievances against Serbia, and pointed out that whereas Austria seemed to be making these the starting point of her policy, His Majesty's Government were

* Austro-Hungarian Minister at Belgrade.

† Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

‡ "Miscellaneous, No. 6 (1914)."

§ See Hansard, Vol. 65, No. 107, columns 931-933.

bound to look at the question primarily from the point of view of the maintenance of the peace of Europe. In this way the two countries might easily drift apart.

His Excellency said that he too was keeping the European aspect of the question in sight. He thought, however, that Russia would have no right to intervene after receiving his assurance that Austria sought no territorial aggrandisement. His Excellency remarked to me in the course of his conversation that, though he had been glad to co-operate towards bringing about the settlement which had resulted from the ambassadorial conferences in London during the Balkan crisis, he had never had much belief in the permanency of that settlement, which was necessarily of a highly artificial character, inasmuch as the interests which it sought to harmonise were in themselves profoundly divergent. His Excellency maintained a most friendly demeanour throughout the interview, but left no doubt in my mind as to the determination of the Austro-Hungarian Government to proceed with the invasion of Servia.

The German Government claim to have persevered to the end in the endeavour to support at Vienna your successive proposals in the interest of peace. Herr von Tschirsky* abstained from inviting my co-operation or that of the French and Russian Ambassadors in carrying out his instructions to that effect, and I had no means of knowing what response he was receiving from the Austro-Hungarian Government. I was, however, kept fully informed by M. Schebeko, the Russian Ambassador, of his own direct negotiations with Count Berchtold. M. Schebeko endeavoured on the 28th July to persuade the Austro-Hungarian Government to furnish Count Szapary† with full powers to continue at St. Petersburg the hopeful conversations which had there been taking place between the latter and M. Sazonof.‡ Count Berchtold§ refused at the time, but two days later (30th July), though in the meantime Russia had partially mobilised against Austria, he received M. Schebeko|| again, in a perfectly friendly manner, and gave his consent to the continuance of the conversations at St. Petersburg. From now onwards the tension between Russia and Germany was much greater than between Russia and Austria. As between the latter an arrangement seemed almost in sight, and on the 1st August I was informed by M. Schebeko|| that Count Szapary† had at last conceded the main point at issue by announcing to M. Sazonof‡ that Austria would consent to submit to mediation the points in the note to Servia which seemed incompatible with the maintenance of Servian independence. M. Sazonof,‡ M. Schebeko|| added, had accepted this proposal on condition that Austria would refrain from the actual invasion of Servia. Austria, in fact, had finally yielded, and that she herself had at this point good hopes of a peaceful issue is shown by the communication made to you on the 1st August by Count Mensdorff,¶ to the effect that Austria had neither "banged the door" on compromise nor cut off the conversations.†† M. Schebeko|| to the end was working hard for peace. He was holding the most conciliatory language to Count Berchtold§, and he informed me that the latter, as well as Count Forgach,‡‡ had responded in the same spirit. Certainly it was too much for Russia to expect that Austria would hold back her armies, but this matter could probably have been settled by negotiation, and M. Schebeko|| repeatedly told me he was prepared to accept any reasonable compromise.

Unfortunately these conversations at St. Petersburg and Vienna were cut short by the transfer of the dispute to the more dangerous ground of a direct conflict between Germany and Russia. Germany intervened on the 31st July by means of her double ultimatums to St. Petersburg and Paris. The ultimatums were of a kind to which only one answer is possible, and Germany declared war on Russia on the 1st August, and on France on the 3rd August. A few days' delay might in all probability have saved Europe from one of the greatest calamities in history.

Russia still abstained from attacking Austria, and M. Schebeko|| had been instructed to remain at his post till war should actually be declared against her by

* German Ambassador in Vienna.

† Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at St. Petersburg.

‡ Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

§ Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

|| Russian Ambassador in Vienna.

¶ Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in London.

†† See No. 137.

‡‡ Austro-Hungarian Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

the Austro-Hungarian Government. This only happened on the 6th August when Count Berchtold* informed the foreign missions at Vienna that "the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at St. Petersburg had been instructed to notify the Russian Government that, in view of the menacing attitude of Russia in the Austro-Servian conflict and the fact that Russia had commenced hostilities against Germany, Austria-Hungary considered herself also at war with Russia."

M. Schebekof left quietly in a special train provided by the Austro-Hungarian Government on the 7th August. He had urgently requested to be conveyed to the Roumanian frontier, so that he might be able to proceed to his own country, but was taken instead to the Swiss frontier, and ten days later I found him at Berne.

M. Dumaine, French Ambassador, stayed on till the 12th August. On the previous day he had been instructed to demand his passport on the ground that Austrian troops were being employed against France. This point was not fully cleared up when I left Vienna. On the 9th August, M. Dumaine had received from Count Berchtold* the categorical declaration that no Austrian troops were being moved to Alsace. The next day this statement was supplemented by a further one, in writing, giving Count Berchtold's assurance that not only had no Austrian troops been moved actually to the French frontier, but that none were moving from Austria in a westerly direction into Germany in such a way that they might replace German troops employed at the front. These two statements were made by Count Berchtold in reply to precise questions put to him by M. Dumaine, under instructions from his Government. The French Ambassador's departure was not attended by any hostile demonstration, but his Excellency before leaving had been justly offended by a harangue made by the Chief Burgomaster of Vienna to the crowd assembled before the steps of the town hall, in which he assured the people that Paris was in the throes of a revolution, and that the President of the Republic had been assassinated.

The British declaration of war on Germany was made known in Vienna by special editions of the newspapers about midday on the 4th August. An abstract of your speeches in the House of Commons, and also of the German Chancellor's speech in the Reichstag of the 4th August, appeared the same day, as well as the text of the German ultimatum to Belgium. Otherwise few details of the great events of these days transpired. The "Neue Freie Presse" was violently insulting towards England. The "Fremdenblatt" was not offensive, but little or nothing was said in the columns of any Vienna paper to explain that the violation of Belgium neutrality had left His Majesty's Government no alternative but to take part in the war.

The declaration of Italian neutrality was bitterly felt in Vienna, but scarcely mentioned in the newspapers.

On the 5th August I had the honour to receive your instruction of the previous day preparing me for the immediate outbreak of war with Germany, but adding that, Austria being understood to be not yet at that date at war with Russia and France, you did not desire me to ask for my passport or to make any particular communication to the Austro-Hungarian Government. You stated at the same time that His Majesty's Government of course expected Austria not to commit any act of war against us without the notice required by diplomatic usage.

On Thursday morning, the 13th August, I had the honour to receive your telegram of the 12th, stating that you had been compelled to inform Count Mensdorff,† at the request of the French Government, that a complete rupture had occurred between France and Austria, on the ground that Austria had declared war on Russia who was already fighting on the side of France, and that Austria had sent troops to the German frontier under conditions that were a direct menace to France. The rupture having been brought about with France in this way, I was to ask for my passport, and your telegram stated, in conclusion, that you had informed Count Mensdorff that a state of war would exist between the two countries from midnight of the 12th August.

After seeing Mr. Penfield, the United States Ambassador, who accepted immediately in the most friendly spirit my request that his Excellency would take charge provisionally of British interests in Austria-Hungary during the unfortunate interruption of relations, I proceeded, with Mr. Theo Russell, Counsellor of His Majesty's Embassy, to the Ballplatz. Count Berchtold* received me at midday. I delivered my message, for which his Excellency did not seem to be unprepared, although he told me that a long telegram from Count Mensdorff‡ had just come in but had not

* Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

† Russian Ambassador in Vienna.

‡ Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in London.

yet been brought to him. His Excellency received my communication with the courtesy which never leaves him. He deplored the unhappy complications which were drawing such good friends as Austria and England into war. In point of fact, he added, Austria did not consider herself then at war with France, though diplomatic relations with that country had been broken off. I explained in a few words how circumstances had forced this unwelcome conflict upon us. We both avoided useless argument. Then I ventured to recommend to his Excellency's consideration the case of the numerous stranded British subjects at Carlsbad, Vienna, and other places throughout the country. I had already had some correspondence with him on the subject, and his Excellency took a note of what I said, and promised to see what could be done to get them away when the stress of mobilisation should be over. Count Berchtold agreed to Mr. Phillpotts, till then British Consul at Vienna under Consul-General Sir Frederick Duncan, being left by me at the Embassy in the capacity of Chargé des Archives. He presumed a similar privilege would not be refused in England if desired on behalf of the Austro-Hungarian Government. I took leave of Count Berchtold with sincere regret, having received from the day of my arrival in Vienna, not quite nine months before, many marks of friendship and consideration from his Excellency. As I left I begged his Excellency to present my profound respects to the Emperor Francis Joseph, together with an expression of my hope that His Majesty would pass through these sad times with unimpaired health and strength. Count Berchtold was pleased to say he would deliver my message.

Count Walterskirchen, of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office, was deputed the following morning to bring me my passport and to acquaint me with the arrangements made for my departure that evening (14th August). In the course of the day Countess Berchtold and other ladies of Vienna society called to take leave of Lady de Bunsen at the embassy. We left the railway station by special train for the Swiss frontier at 7 P.M. No disagreeable incidents occurred. Count Walterskirchen was present at the station on behalf of Count Berchtold. The journey was necessarily slow, owing to the encumbered state of the line. We reached Buchs, on the Swiss frontier, early in the morning of the 17th August. At the first halting place there had been some hooting and stone throwing on the part of the entraining troops and station officials, but no inconvenience was caused, and at the other large stations on our route we found that ample measures had been taken to preserve us from molestation as well as to provide us with food. I was left in no doubt that the Austro-Hungarian Government had desired that the journey should be performed under the most comfortable conditions possible, and that I should receive on my departure all the marks of consideration due to His Majesty's representative. I was accompanied by my own family and the entire staff of the embassy, for whose untiring zeal and efficient help in trying times I desire to express my sincere thanks. The Swiss Government also showed courtesy in providing comfortable accommodation during our journey from the frontier to Berne, and, after three days' stay there, on to Geneva, at which place we found that every provision had been made by the French Government, at the request of Sir Francis Bertie, for our speedy conveyance to Paris. We reached England on Saturday morning, the 22nd August.

I have, &c.,

MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

