Chapter Eight

THE EUROPEAN STATE SYSTEM IN THE CENTURY'S LAST DECADE

I. DROPPING THE PILOT

In 1890 Prince Bismarck was seventy-five years of age. For almost thirty years he had occupied in European public life a position comparable with Napoleon's or Metternich's earlier in the century. Indeed, the three decades from 1860 to 1890 might appropriately be labeled the Age of Bismarck.

It was not merely that his astute statesmanship had been instrumental in constructing the Hohenzollern Empire and maintaining it as the mightiest power on the Continent. It was also that Bismarck symbolized, and, through his curious suppleness of mind along with remarkable strength of character, actually gave guidance to, much of Europe's internal evolution during his generation. He, more than anyone else, had dissolved the dream of a federative Europe in the reality of "blood and iron" and the heat of intensified nationalism. A country gentleman by heritage and an ultra-reactionary by youthful conviction, he had learned to sympathize with, and to foster, the developing industrialization, and during the late 1860's and the decade of the '70's to patronize the moderate constitutionalism, the qualified political democracy, and the economic liberalism then fashionable with the middle classes. Moreover, his original ardent Prussianism he had transformed into an equally ardent but more comprehensive Germanism; and he had been the first statesman in Europe to recognize the force of the popular nationalist reaction which set in at the end of the '70's against economic liberalism, and the first to utilize it for state adoption of those policies of tariff protection and social legislation which characterized the '80's. Likewise, for patriotic as well as economic motives, he had overcome his early scruples against colonial enterprise

and had steered Germany into the overseas imperialism of that decade. The growing nationalistic intolerance he had also nicely exemplified and forwarded. Only to anti-Semitism had he given no official countenance: he was too reliant on Jewish banking friends. He had led the Kulturkampf against the Catholic Church in the '70's, and only gradually had he retreated in the face of gathering counter-attacks and then because he needed Catholic support for his economic policies. From studied efforts to Germanize the Poles in Prussia, however, he had never desisted, nor from campaigning against the Social Democrats. The Anti-Socialist Law which he put through the Reichstag in 1878 he had had repeatedly re-enacted up to 1890. And by reason of the enormous prestige which Germany enjoyed under Bismarck, whatever was done there was bound to be viewed as the norm for Europe.

Bismarck liked power, and he had grown accustomed to exercising it with little interference, or even supervision, by the much older and very grateful Hohenzollern King William I whom he had made German Emperor and who showered him with words of praise and material tokens of esteem.[1] Parliament had frequently irked him, but almost invariably since 1867 he had contrived to command some sort of majority in it for his pet legislative projects. Only twice—in 1878 and again in 1887—had such a majority failed him, and on those occasions he had dissolved the Reichstag, appealed to the country, and come off triumphant. With advancing age and steadily lengthening record of success in both domestic and foreign policy, he seemed to himself—and to a multitude of Germans—a quite indispensable "mayor of the palace" for a *"roi fainéant."* And being a good family man as well as a great statesman, he groomed his elder son, Herbert, to succeed him when death should at last supervene.[2]

[1] How the tokens had accumulated! Order of the Black Eagle in 1864; title of Count in 1865; the Hohenzollern Order in 1866; gift of $300,000 in 1867; two honorary army appointments in 1868; Iron Cross and Victory Medal in 1870; title of Prince and gift of a million dollars in 1871; some captured French cannon and a marble bust of William I in 1872, insignia in brilliants of the Order of the Black Eagle in 1873; grand cross of the Order of the Red Eagle in 1878; Ordre pour le Mérite in 1884; gift of $300,000 in 1885.

[2] Herbert von Bismarck (1849-1904) was private secretary to his father, 1871-81; counselor of the embassy at London, 1881-84, and at St. Petersburg, 1884-85; undersecretary of foreign affairs, 1885-86; and imperial minister of foreign affairs, 1886-90.

William I died in March 1888, at the over-ripe age of ninety-one; his son and heir, Frederick III, already an elderly and very sick man, died ninety-nine days later; and the next Hohenzollern in line, the grandson and namesake of William I, gave every indication for a year and a half that he would follow dutifully in grandfather's footsteps, which meant in Bismarck's. William II wired the old chancellor on January 1, 1890: "I pray God He may vouchsafe me, in my heavy responsibilities of reigning, your trusty and experienced advice these many years to come."

Nevertheless, while Bismarck soberly and confidently neared the age of seventy-five, William II was barely thirty-one and amazingly youthful in volatility and volubility; and their contrasting ages and temperaments augured ill for continuing harmony between them. As William expressed it, before the year was out, "it was a question whether the Hohenzollern dynasty or the Bismarck dynasty should rule."

Bismarck did not lack critics and outright opponents. William II's mother, a daughter of Queen Victoria, distrusted him and intrigued constantly against him, and so, to some extent, did the Emperor's uncle, the Grand Duke Frederick of Baden. Many officials, including men of his own nomination, were resentful of the old man's growing arbitrariness and secretiveness and jealous of his son's rapid promotion. A particularly scheming and influential dignitary in the foreign office, Baron von Holstein, opposed the Bismarckian policy of maintaining simultaneous (and, in his opinion, conflicting) alliances with Russia and Austria-Hungary; and in insinuating his dislike of Russia and depreciation of Bismarck into the impressionable mind of the youthful Emperor, he was steathily aided by a cabal of military courtiers, chief among whom was General von Waldersee, a favorite of William's. In the country at large, Adolf Stöcker and the anti-Semitic party complained that the chancellor was too friendly with Jews and Liberals and that his appointment of the liberal theologian Harnack to a chair at Berlin in 1888 was an affront to conservative German Protestantism. On the other hand, neither Social Democrats nor Catholic Centrists, to say nothing of Poles or Alsatians, had reason to love Bismarck, and the doctrinaire Liberals (the *Freisinnige*) were habitual and very

vocal critics of his repudiation of free trade and his flouting of full parliamentary government.

The Reichstag majority on which Bismarck relied from the election of 1887 to that of 1890 consisted of a *cartel* of Conservatives and National Liberals. It loyally voted the army bill and the tariff and old-age insurance measures he requested, but late in 1889 a cleavage developed over the question of the Anti-Socialist Law, which, unless re-enacted in the meantime, would automatically expire in June 1890. Bismarck, with the Conservatives, wanted it re-enacted this time, not for a specified term of years, but in perpetuity, while the National Liberals held out for another temporary re-enactment and with the Centrists, Freisinnige, and Social Democrats, who opposed it altogether, rejected the chancellor's proposal. Bismarck stuck to his guns, however. He was reverting in old age to something of the uncompromising conservatism of his youth, and he felt sure that the regular parliamentary elections, due in February 1890, would so strengthen the Conservative forces in the Reichstag as to open the eyes of the National Liberals to the need of preserving the *cartel* and renewing the Anti-Socialist Law just as he proposed.

The elections proved most upsetting. The Conservatives lost twenty-four seats, and the National Liberals fifty-seven, and the majority which the *cartel* had possessed in the previous Reichstag passed in the new one to the strange loose coalition of parties which were traditionally anti-Bismarckian and specifically inimical to any re-enactment of the Anti-Socialist Law. The Centrists (with Polish, Guelph, and Alsatian allies) gained thirteen seats, the Social Democrats twenty-four, and the Freisinnige forty-four.

Still Bismarck did not despair. He was not responsible to the Reichstag but only to the Emperor, and he speedily mapped a course of firm action. He would lay the anti-Socialist bill before the new Reichstag; if it refused assent (as he expected it would) he would have the Bundesrat dissolve it and call for new elections on a clear issue of national patriotism; and if, peradventure, these too turned out unfavorably, he would have the Emperor proclaim martial law and cow the country into acceptance of constitutional amendments abridging the democratic franchise and the rights of

parliament. This, at any rate, appears to have been the program which he put before William II and which in an interview on February 25 he was given to understand the Emperor agreed to. But the more William II thought it over, and the more he took counsel of officials jealous of the chancellor, the more convinced he became of the truth of the Grand Duke Frederick's suspicion that "it was nothing but a trick of old Bismarck, who wanted to pit Emperor and People against one another in order to make himself indispensable." It would mean civil war in Germany, William vividly imagined, a setback to social amelioration, and probably his own disgrace and deposition! It would be infinitely better to kill socialism with kindness than to try to suppress it with bullets.

Within a few days William II was completely hostile to Bismarck's program, and henceforth he applied to the elderly statesman a quick succession of sharp "pin-pricks" calculated to bring about his resignation and retirement. He peremptorily demanded the abrogation of a Prussian ordinance which made the prime minister the intermediary between the other ministers and the crown and which to Bismarck seemed essential to the orderly and consistent operation of government. He insisted upon seeing Bismarck on routine business in early morning hours without respect for his age, and disconcertingly neglected to answer important written communications from him. He got very excited about news that Bismarck, in an effort to construct a working majority in the new Reichstag, had had a "secret" conference with the Centrist leader, Windthorst, and irritably rebuked him for "scheming behind my back." He got still more excited about gossip that Russian military maneuvers then in progress were designed "to precipitate war"; he angrily accused Bismarck of withholding knowledge from him and from Austria of "this terrible threatening danger" and blocked the chancellor's plan of negotiating a renewal of the "reinsurance treaty" with Russia.

Stubbornly and irascibly Bismarck held on, until on March 17, 1890, William II sent him an emissary to demand his instant resignation. The next day the veteran statesman complied in a confidential and bitter twenty-page "request for retirement." This epistle William II did not make public. Instead, he gave out to the

press the letter he himself addressed to Bismarck on March 20. ". . . The reasons advanced for your decision convince me that further efforts to induce you to withdraw your request would be fruitless. I therefore comply with your wishes and grant you the requested discharge from your offices of Imperial Chancellor, President of the Cabinet, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, under pleasant circumstances and in the firm assurance that your advice and energy, your loyalty and devotion will not fail me and the fatherland in the future. . . . As a sign of my regard I bestow upon you the dignity of Duke of Lauenburg. I will also send you a life-size portrait of myself."

Two days later the young Emperor telegraphed the Grand Duke of Weimar: "I am as miserable as if I had again lost my grandfather. But by God's help it must be borne, even if I have to break down. The office of watch on the ship of state has fallen to me. The course remains as of old. Full steam ahead!"

On March 26 Bismarck was received in chilly farewell audience by the Emperor and Empress. On the 28th he went out to Charlottenburg and laid three roses on the grave of William I. On the 29th, amid a great popular demonstration, he drove with his wife and his sons (the Bismarck "dynasty") to the railway station in Berlin and departed for private life on his ancestral estates. The old experienced pilot was dropped, and Germany and all Europe experienced a queer sense of loss and bewilderment.

II. REFORMATION OF ALLIANCES

Bismarck's retirement synchronized with a change in international alignments. His cardinal policy of isolating France and thus restraining her from a "war of revenge" for the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine, he had successfully maintained for nineteen years by means of an increasingly complex web of alliances and understandings among the other great powers. Especially intricate had been his diplomacy in 1887, when he negotiated a five-year renewal of the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy and a three-year "reinsurance treaty" between Germany and Russia, and sponsored a special Mediterranean agreement among

Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Great Britain.[3] Still not content, however, he had proposed to Lord Salisbury in January 1889 the conclusion of a direct defensive alliance between Great Britain and Germany. The British premier had personally favored it in the face of fast-developing imperialist rivalry between England and France, and also between England and Russia; but he had had to acknowledge that, in view of existent colonial controversies between England and Germany, it would encounter embarrassing opposition in parliament and should therefore be "deferred." Bismarck had then urged at least an Anglo-German entente. In August he sent his Emperor on a loudly acclaimed visit to England, and William II returned with the much-prized honor and showy habiliments of "Admiral" of the British navy. Developments at London were promising.

It doubtless required a Bismarck's diplomatic experience, agility, and prestige to yoke all the great powers (save one) to Germany, and to reconcile their mutual jealousies and divergent interests sufficiently to keep them yoked. Even Bismarck had occasionally slipped, and during his last years in office he unwittingly helped to loosen those Russo-German ties which he had always deemed essential to the continuing isolation and impotence of France. At the very time when he arranged the "reinsurance treaty," pledging Russia or Germany, as the case might be, to observe benevolent neutrality if the other should be attacked by a third power, he had put through the Reichstag, at the behest of his Conservative supporters, a steep scaling up of the German tariff on agricultural imports, which adversely affected Russian landlords and made them especially responsive to anti-German propaganda of the Slavophiles. At the same time, to protect German investors who were particularly numerous among his National Liberal friends, he had forbidden the Reichsbank to accept Russian securities as collateral for loans, which practically estopped Russia from borrowing at Berlin the requisite foreign funds for domestic industrialization and drove her to seek them at Paris. In December 1888 a Russian loan of five hundred million francs was obtained in France, and some of the

[3] For these intricate arrangements, see above, pp. 44-45.

proceeds were spent on the building of strategic military railways near the German and Austrian frontiers.

Yet neither these provocations nor the growing strain in Austro-Russian relations, nor his own current flirtations with an England traditionally antagonistic to Russia, prevented Bismarck from hoping and planning for a renewal of the Russo-German "reinsurance treaty" when it should expire on June 18, 1890. Nor was there serious thought of not renewing the treaty on the part of the Tsar Alexander III and his pro-German foreign minister, Giers: they feared that without it Russia would be dangerously isolated, and the alternative of an alliance with flighty Republican France was still very distasteful to them. Indeed, they commissioned the Russian ambassador to Germany, Count Shuvalov, to negotiate a renewal of the treaty for a further term of six years, and he arrived at Berlin, for the purpose, on March 17, 1890—at the height of the crisis between Bismarck and William II. The next day Bismarck resigned, and three days later William II assured the somewhat troubled Shuvalov that no change of policy was contemplated and that the treaty would be renewed.

But the new German chancellor, General von Caprivi, and the new foreign secretary, Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, lacked experience and distrusted their ability to maintain the extraordinarily complicated system of alliances and agreements which they had taken over from Bismarck. In their perplexity they sought counsel of Baron von Holstein, who had no trouble in convincing them, and through them the Emperor, that the "reinsurance treaty" should not be renewed. If it were continued, they reasoned, it might operate against Austrian interests and impair the more fundamental Austro-German alliance, and, besides, it might embroil Germany in quarrels between Russia and Great Britain and militate against a desirable entente with the latter. There had been too much double-dealing by Bismarck. The need now was for a simpler and more open foreign policy, and for one which would command popular favor. Surely, almost all the parties in the Reichstag would greatly prefer alliances with Austria and Britain, to one with Russia.

So William II reversed himself, and advised Shuvalov and the

Tsar that, while he intended to remain on the friendliest terms with Russia, he would not renew the secret treaty. And so, in June 1890, ended the last of the special engagements which had long tied Russia to Germany. It was the first fruit of Bismarck's dismissal.

While William II and Caprivi thus abandoned the Russian alliance, they persevered with Bismarck's project for an entente, perhaps eventually an alliance, with England. They accordingly welcomed a suggestion from Lord Salisbury in May 1890 that, in return for colonial compensation in Africa, England might consent to the cession of her North Sea island of Heligoland; and in June the suggestion was carried into effect by a definitive Anglo-German agreement. Germany got Heligoland and a narrow corridor ("Caprivi's Finger," it was facetiously styled) connecting Southwest Africa with the Zambesi River; England got Zanzibar and the extensive territory of Uganda in East Africa. Carl Peters and other German imperialists protested bitterly against the agreement, but it was hailed by the governments concerned as removing sources of friction and inaugurating a real Anglo-German entente.

In May 1891 Germany renewed the Triple Alliance with Austria-Hungary and Italy for a term of twelve years, and the gala visit of a British squadron to Fiume and Venice in June 1891 advertised England's solidarity with Germany's allies. Rudini, the Italian premier of the day, labored hard to draw England formally into the Triple Alliance, and it was believed in Germany—and widely throughout Europe—that the Triple would very shortly become a Quadruple Alliance. Quite likely it would have become so if the British elections of 1892 had not turned Salisbury out of office and brought in again—if only briefly—the octogenarian Gladstone, who still cherished the memories of a "Little Englander."

To Russia the lapse of the "reinsurance treaty" had been annoying and disconcerting, but to that insult was added the seemingly permanent injury of an Anglo-German entente, perhaps even, it was imagined, of a secret and most formidable Quadruple Alliance. The injury was to Russia, and also to France. It was not simply that England's co-operation with Germany, Austria, and Italy would effectually isolate Russia as well as France and interpose insurmountable obstacles to the former's hegemony in the

Balkans no less than to the latter's recovery of Alsace-Lorraine. It was also that England and Germany together would be able to dominate the big imperialistic contest, which had got off to such a good start in the '80's, and to nose out Russia in Asia and France in Africa and Oceania. The obvious thing for Russia and France to do was to combine.

To such a combination there was some repugnance in France on the part of dyed-in-the-wool Jacobins, who regarded the Tsar as a kind of Satanic Majesty, and more in Russia on the part of the governing class, who habitually thought of Republican France as revolutionary, mercurial, and undependable. On the other hand, the French government, which in the early '90's was directed by moderate and conservative politicians, worked steadily and energetically, with the backing of a multitude of nationalistic patriots, to forge a Franco-Russian alliance; and to the same end contributed the propaganda of Russian Slavophiles and Pan-Slavists. By 1891 the French government was putting the screws on the Tsar and his harassed finance minister in the form of a veto on further loans from Paris until the receipt of political favors from St. Petersburg; and the visit of the British squadron to Fiume in June of that year clinched the matter with the Tsar and even with his foreign minister, Giers. The very next month they extravagantly welcomed the visit of a French squadron to Cronstadt, and while Alexander III bared his head to the playing of the *Marseillaise*, Giers talked politics with the admiral. An entente was arranged in August between the two governments, pledging each to "consult" with the other over any threat to peace. The French, not yet content, pressed for an outright military alliance, but its conclusion was delayed by the unsavory and engrossing Panama scandals of 1892 and not agreed to until after England had threatened France with war over Siam, and Germany had again increased her army.[4] In October 1893 the Russian fleet at last paid a return visit to Toulon, and at

[4] This army increase was provided for in a "quinquennate" (instead of the usual "septennate") which Caprivi put through the Reichstag by a vote of 201 to 185 in July 1893, after he had dissolved the Reichstag elected in 1890 with its hostile majority of Centrists, Social Democrats, and Freisinnige, and obtained, through patriotic appeals, a more amenable one with a larger representation of Conservatives and National Liberals. Caprivi was not such a bad disciple of his predecessor as the retired Bismarck in his chronic bitter revilings tried to make out.

the end of December Giers finally authorized the signing of a secret military convention. By its terms Russia promised France to employ all her forces against Germany if France should be attacked by Germany, or by Italy supported by Germany, and France promised to combat Germany if Russia should be assailed by Germany, or by Austria-Hungary supported by Germany. It was to last as long as the Triple Alliance.

Thus was consummated, as the second fruit of Bismarck's dismissal, what he had most feared: an end to French isolation; a Franco-Russian alliance. It marked, in subsequent popular opinion, the passing of the German hegemony associated with Bismarck's chancellorship, and the substitution, under Caprivi and his successors, of a balance of power between Dual Alliance and Triple Alliance.

The new alignment was not really as significant as it seemed. It did not materially change affairs. The Dual Alliance, no less than the Triple, was expressly "defensive," and though France derived from it a new sense of security and self-importance, it practically served to ease tension over Alsace-Lorraine. In actual military strength and efficiency the Dual Alliance was hardly a match, anyway, for the Triple Alliance, and what brought Russia and France together was not so much a common hostility to Germany as common imperialist rivalry with Great Britain. Russia, in particular, viewed the alliance as merely precautionary in respect of Germany; she certainly had no intention of risking war with Germany just to enable France to regain Alsace-Lorraine. It was against British hegemony outside Europe, rather than against German hegemony inside, that Russia wanted to direct the alliance, and in this she was largely successful during the '90's. France became a junior partner in the combination and for ten years subordinated anti-German feeling and policy to anti-British.

In truth, no sooner was the Franco-Russian Alliance arranged than Russia and Germany were negotiating a reciprocity treaty to lower the trade barriers which Bismarck's tariff of 1887 had reared between them; and despite vehement opposition from Prussian agrarians it was ratified by the Reichstag in March 1894 for a term

of ten years. Russia was newly tied, though in a different way, to Germany.

If England had actually joined the Triple Alliance, or if the expected Anglo-German entente of 1890 had really materialized, Germany as well as Britain would doubtless have been the object of Russian hostility, and cleavage between Triple and Dual Alliance would have been deeper. As it was, however, the Gladstone ministry, which took office in August 1892, was averse to entangling alliances or commitments on the Continent, and its foreign minister, Lord Rosebery,[5] a good imperialist withal, was convinced that the manifold world-wide interests of Britain could be served better by a free than by a fettered hand. Wherefore Rosebery remained deaf to the importunate pleas of the Italian premier, Rudini, in 1893; and in the spring of 1894 he rejected a similar plea from the Austrian foreign minister, Kalnóky, for British adherence to the Triple Alliance. The German chancellor was sorely disappointed with this repeated refusal to bring the Anglo-German entente of 1890 to what he thought was its natural fruition; and in the summer of 1894 he dealt a body blow to the entente itself by having Germany second France in vigorous and efficacious protest against an African deal between England and the Congo Free State.[6]

Henceforth, for several years, there was greater co-operation between Germany and the Dual Alliance than between either of them and England. In the spring of 1895 Germany united with Russia and France to compel Japan to revise her peace settlement with China, and by concerted action afterwards they severally acquired bases in China—to the obvious discomfiture of Britain. In

[5] On the final retirement of Gladstone in March 1894, Rosebery became prime minister and so remained until supplanted by the Conservatives under Salisbury in June 1895. Rosebery's ardent imperialism was in strange contrast with the surviving "Little Englandism" of his old Liberal chieftain, but both contributed to a policy of "splendid isolation" for Great Britain—a policy which Salisbury continued and boasted of after 1895.

[6] This deal, made by treaty in May 1894, awarded to King Leopold, as head of the Congo Free State, the "lease" of a huge tract of the Egyptian Sudan, which England did not then hold and on which France had designs, comprising the whole left side of the Nile from Lake Albert to Fashoda; and it awarded to England a "lease" of a corridor within the Congo Free State, connecting British Rhodesia with British East Africa and hemming in German East Africa. France and Germany between them exerted such pressure on Leopold that by August he repudiated the deal. England was thus deprived of a continuous land connection between the Cape and Cairo, and France was free to advance in the Sudan toward Fashoda and the upper Nile.

the autumn of 1895 Germany and Austria-Hungary made common cause with Russia and France against a plan which Lord Salisbury put forward for a virtual partition of the Ottoman Empire.[7] Then, at the turn of the year, when Dr. Jameson, with the connivance of Cecil Rhodes and Joseph Chamberlain, made his famous filibustering expedition into the Transvaal Republic—only to be taken prisoner by the Boers—the impetuous German Emperor, to the delight of the whole Continent and the chagrin of Great Britain, put the finishing touches on any Anglo-German entente by his equally famous telegram to the Boer President: "I express to you my sincere congratulations that you and your people, without appealing to the help of friendly Powers, have succeeded, by your own energetic action against the armed bands which invaded your country as disturbers of the peace, in restoring peace and in maintaining the independence of the country against attacks from without."

III. STABILITY AND FLUX IN THE STATE SYSTEM

The stability and peace of Europe, and some "system" in its interstate relations, had long been sought in three ways: through a concert of powers; through an hegemony of one power; or through a balancing of one set of allied powers by another. Just as the concert of Metternich's devising or Napoleon III's dreaming had been succeeded in the 1870's by the hegemony of Germany under Bismarck, so in the '90's, after his retirement, the "system" of Europe became ostensibly a balance of power between Triple and Dual Alliances. This balance, however, was precarious, in part because Great Britain could theoretically tip it one way or the other, and in part because neither of the counterweights was really solid or substantial. In other words, the European system of alliances in the '90's was not a system—except on ceremonial occasions

[7] Salisbury's plan, put forth in the midst of sorry Armenian and Macedonian massacres of 1895, must have made Disraeli turn over in his grave: it contemplated the surrender of Constantinople and the Straits to Russia, of the western Balkans to Austria, of Syria to France, of Tripoli to Italy, and of Egypt and Mesopotamia to England. It was now the turn of Russia, backed by Germany, to pose as the protector of the Sultan and of the "integrity" of his Empire. What actuated the general opposition was, of course, the thought of each power that it stood to gain more from a dying than from a dead Ottoman Empire. France was particularly solicitous about her big financial loans to the Sultan, and Germany was already entertaining the hope of becoming his trusty and well-paid counselor.

and for gullible persons. When the Emperors of Germany and Austria, the King of Italy, and their respective foreign ministers held periodic conferences with fanfare of trumpets and effulgence of gold braid, or when French and Russian generals and admirals banqueted together amid an incessant popping of champagne corks, the public which liked to read about such things, was easily tempted to overestimate their significance and to believe the chit-chat of journalists that a sinister move of the Dual Alliance was being checkmated by the Triple Alliance, or *vice versa*. Most readers simply overlooked or ignored the quiet commonplace negotiations and "deals" between members of different alliance groups—between Germany and Russia, Austria and Russia, Germany and France, Italy and France. Nor did they, as a rule, give much heed to the bickerings and divergencies between members of the same alliance group—between France and Russia, or Austria and Italy.

In reality, the solidarity of alliances, and certainly of Europe as a whole, was now quite incidental to the pursuit of particular national interests. This gained steadily in vigor, thanks both to intensifying nationalism within Europe and to ramifying imperialist competition without. The more nationalistic a state was and the more ambitious for colonial dominion (and of course the heavier its armaments), the greater was its claim to international prestige and to the rank of great power. Any alliance or entente it now might make with another was chiefly to advertise its greatness and enhance its prestige. That was precisely what France, for example, got from the Dual Alliance, or Italy from the Triple Alliance; and Germany's failure to get it from the abortive English entente sent her in quest of compensatory prestige through bewildering co-operation with her "sworn" foes, Russia and France.

Yet, however unstable and unsubstantial was the "system" of alliances in the '90's, most of the individual states, at least in western and central Europe, now possessed a seemingly superlative internal stability. With the exception of the Paris Commune of 1871 and a series of disorders at about the same time in "backward" Spain, there had been no revolutionary outbreaks in almost half a century. Each state was busily promoting the health and national well-being of its citizens, affording them all a free schooling, admitting

them to democratic participation in government, and in a hundred ways strengthening their loyalty. Moreover, for the security of its citizens against foreign invasion, each state now had a larger armed force than ever before, and a much more efficient police for the repression of violence and the preservation of order at home. All its multiplying functions the state was enabled to discharge by reason of contemporary progress of technology and the industrial arts; industrialization made vastly more wealth, and this provided the state with vastly more revenue. And the more things the state did, the better it seemed to do them, for, in last analysis, what contributed most to the political stability of Europe in the '90's was the high average of efficiency attained by the administrative bureaucracy and civil service of the several states. This, now pretty well developed, was an army in itself, with a good deal of "red tape," to be sure, but also with extraordinary *esprit de corps*, devotion to duty, and technical expertness; and while titular sovereigns and parliamentary leaders, chancellors and ministers, might come and go, the bureaucracy went on forever. It cemented and solidified the state, amid the flux of international alliances and the deliquescence of the Concert of Europe.

What did impair the orderly and consistent functioning of the state system of Europe in the '90's, especially in respect of international relations, was a remarkable dearth of first-rate statesmen and a growing tendency on the part of such statesmen as there were to bow before every fresh gust of "public opinion." It was a decade characterized, as we have elsewhere explained, by the "emergence of the masses," when newly literate multitudes took to devouring the new type of popular journalism, joining the new kinds of patriotic societies, engaging in "pressure politics," and otherwise forming and expressing opinion on public questions; and the preponderant part of this "public opinion" was likely to be more nationalist, more imperialistic, more jingoistic, than the informed judgment of responsible statesmen. Bismarck had skillfully guided and exploited "public opinion" for his own ends; he had been its master rather than its servant. William II, on the contrary, was very sensitive to popular favor or disfavor, and the successive chancellors whom he appointed to Bismarck's place were barometers,

so to speak, that recorded changes in the climate of public opinion and hence of the Emperor's mind.

Caprivi, a good military man but a totally inexperienced statesman, was made chancellor in 1890 to conciliate popular elements critical of certain Bismarckian policies, and then dismissed in 1894 because his own policy of tariff reciprocity, especially regarding Russia, aroused the hostility of landlords and the agricultural masses. The next chancellor, Prince Hohenlohe, was a fine gentleman with much administrative experience, but he was seventy-five years of age when appointed to the office, and from 1894 to his retirement in 1900 he was little more than an ornamental figurehead for such imperial favorites as the theatrical chief of the general staff, General von Waldersee, and the easygoing and easily adaptable foreign minister, Count von Bülow. It was natural, in the circumstances, not only that no titan of Bismarckian stature appeared on the German political scene in the '90's, but that German public policy, domestic and foreign, was notably opportunist and flighty.

It was much the same in other countries. An inordinate number of elderly men headed ministries and clung tenaciously to the trappings of power, which was apt to be actually exercised by younger lieutenants in closer touch with the popular electorate and consequently of different outlook. Gladstone was eighty-three when he resumed the British premiership in 1892, with a cabinet confusingly compounded of "little Englanders" like himself and ardent imperialists like his foreign minister, Lord Rosebery. Lord Salisbury was already sixty-five when he succeeded in 1895 to a seven-year premiership, and the natural caution of his years and temperament hardly counterbalanced the impetuosity of his colonial secretary, Joseph Chamberlain. Crispi was seventy-seven when the Italian offensive which he directed against Abyssinia broke down in 1896 and he was forced into retirement. Freycinet, French premier in the early stages of the Franco-Russian Alliance, was seventy when, after being implicated in the Panama Canal scandal, he returned to the war ministry in 1898. Giers, the Russian foreign minister, was seventy-five when he died in 1895.

It seemed as though every government was subject, in unusual degree, to "pressure politics," *pro* or *contra*, about whatever develop-

ment, as interpreted by the new sensational journalism, was absorbing for the moment the interest of the populace. In Germany it was pretty constant agrarian agitation, interspersed with spectacular imperialist forays in Africa, the Far East, the Near East. In Great Britain it was Irish home-rule bills and Queen's Jubilees, equally recurrent, and the "interests" and "honor" of the Empire, now steadfast and supreme. In France it was a series of *causes célèbres*—Panama scandal, Dreyfus affair, Déroulède's attempted *coup*—punctuated by almost annual cabinet crises and colonial expeditions. In Italy it was personal fortunes and financial peculations of politicians, spasmodic riots in Sicily and at Milan, and in 1896 an acute fluctuation of imperialist fervor as ten thousand Italian troops marched up the Abyssinian hills and then marched down again.

Nevertheless, despite dearth of first-rate leadership and fitfulness of policy, the states of western and central Europe gave every appearance in the '90's of a continuing and even increasing stability. It was somewhat different, however, with the empires of eastern Europe. For a variety of reasons these states were regarded as in a condition of flux. While the Hapsburg Empire still put up a showy front and was accounted a great power, and while everyone expected it to last as long as its venerated Emperor Francis Joseph, doubts were frequently expressed as to whether it could survive him. He was sixty in 1890, and in the previous year his only son Rudolf had killed his mistress and himself. During the ensuing decade, the conflict of nationalities within the empire grew ever more bitter and disturbing, and none of the numerous Austrian ministries which rose and fell seemed able or willing to effect a satisfactory compromise.

The Russian Empire was better off in that its dissident nationalities were minor and less troublesome. But while no one imagined that it would break up, or cease to be a great power, most outside observers felt that the railway construction and the industrialization which had been going forward within it by leaps and bounds during the reign of the Tsar Alexander III must perforce be followed by a radical recasting of its political and social institutions along liberal and democratic lines, a recasting which would involve most

serious strains and crises and which, if eventually consummated, would require almost superhuman strength and purpose on the part of its sovereign.

Alexander III was certainly a "strong man," but he employed his strength to shore up the reactionary autocracy and to beat down its assailants and critics. His son, who succeeded him in 1894, had not even the quality of strength. Indeed, Nicholas II was a peculiarly weak man, with a streak of petty obstinacy characteristic of weak men, and also with a cringing deference to his wife, a neurotic, hysterical woman, who, though a granddaughter of Queen Victoria and quite English in upbringing, displayed in Russia an almost insane devotion to autocracy and orthodoxy. Nicholas had neither the mind nor the will to reform anything; and in the absence of firm guidance from him, a sharp cleavage soon appeared among the ministers whom he inherited from his father and was presently reflected in the spread of partisanship and popular unrest throughout the empire. On the one hand, he kept as his finance minister Count Serge Witte,[8] whose vigorous patronage of public works, a stable gold currency, and a high protective tariff for domestic manufacturers helped immensely to speed up the large-scale industrialization and at the same time to arouse the jealousy and opposition of agricultural interests. On the other hand, the Tsar retained the "old-guard" minister of the interior, Plehve, and the procurator of the Holy Synod, Pobêdonostsev, both of whom were resolutely Slavophile, particularly sympathetic with reactionary landlords, and adept at detecting and penalizing any variation from the traditional norm. The more Witte fostered manufacturing and trade, the larger grew the cities at the expense of the countryside, and the more numerous were the bourgeois liberals and proletarian revolutionaries for his colleagues to become alarmed about and to prosecute. By the end of the '90's the conservative rural *zemstvos* were finding fault with the Tsar because he let Witte "sacrifice" agriculture, while the middle classes were giving ready ear to the protests of "westernizing" intellectuals against the tyranny and

[8] A native of the Caucasus and long identified with railway promotion in southern Russia, Witte had been made head of the department of railways in the imperial ministry of finance by Alexander III in 1888, and appointed minister of communications in 1892 and minister of finance in 1893. In this last post Witte succeeded Vishnegradski, who in turn had succeeded Bunge in 1887.

repression of the Tsardom. From opposite sides, the ground was being prepared for the advent of a Liberal party, demanding political reform, and perhaps, if necessary, political revolution. Besides, in 1898 a Social Democratic party was formed to convert the urban masses to Marxian Socialism, and in 1900 a Socialist Revolutionary party, to persuade the peasant masses to possess themselves of the land they tilled.

For the moment, the internal *malaise* of the Russian Empire was disguised to the outer world by the pomp of the imperial court and the seeming military might and diplomatic prestige of the Tsarist regime. Europe would not know how serious the disease was until a disastrous war should puncture the disguise, and that did not befall until 1905.

There was no disguising the illness of the Ottoman Empire in the '90's. The Sultan Abdul-Hamid II had been adroit in playing off one foreign power against another, and one subject nationality against another; but while he thus prolonged the empire upon its sick-bed, he could not raise it and make it stand alone. Its finances (including its debts) were regulated and administered by an international council representing foreign bondholders in France, England, Germany, Austria, and Italy.[9] Its army was "inspected" and "instructed" by a German general,[10] and its guns and ammunition were supplied by French, German, and English firms. Most of its public works were owned and operated by foreign *concessionnaires*; German bankers, for example, had obtained in 1889 the concession for the profitable railway line from Constantinople to Angora, and at the end of the '90's they were negotiating, through their government, for an extension of the line to Bagdad and Basra.

The Sultan, if frequently pestered by one or another of the European powers, was continually plagued by the dissident nationalities within his empire, and in the '90's these set in motion a new wave of disorder and revolt comparable with that in the 1870's

9 This "Council for the Administration of the Public Debt" had been established in December 1881, shortly after the War of 1877-1878. It directly administered all Turkish revenues from tobacco, salt, wine and spirits, commercial stamps, fisheries, and silk, and collected an average of ten million dollars every year for foreign bondholders, the largest number of whom were French.

10 Baron Colmar von der Goltz, a veteran of the Franco-Prussian War, began the reorganization of the Turkish army in 1883 and remained in charge of it until 1896, when he returned to Germany with the Turkish titles of Pasha and Field Marshal.

which had brought on the Russo-Turkish War. Roving bands of Bulgarians, Serbs, and Greeks terrorized Macedonia. Arab tribesmen flouted Turkish authority throughout Arabia. And in the autumn of 1894 Armenian nationalists, irked by the Sultan's failure to carry out "reforms" he had promised in 1878, provoked an uprising in the mountainous province of Bitlis. The uprising was quickly suppressed by the Sultan's faithful and fanatically Moslem Kurds, who wreaked vengeance upon the Christian Armenians by massacring from ten to twenty thousand of them.

This "Armenian massacre" raised a greater popular commotion in Europe, especially in England, than had the earlier "Bulgarian massacres," and this time the British government (rather than the Russian) took the lead in expostulating with the Sultan and threatening him with punitive action. Following an "investigation" by a special commission, Russia and France joined Britain in presenting to the Sultan in May 1895 an elaborate program of "reforms" to be applied to the Armenian districts. But knowing that with Russia and France the program was a mere gesture and that neither would back it with forceful intervention,[11] as Britain desired to do, the Sultan dilatorily withheld formal acceptance of it until October, and then postponed its publication. Meanwhile he tolerated and almost certainly incited further and worse massacres of Armenians at Constantinople, Trebizond, and elsewhere, so that in 1895-1896 the number of the victims mounted above forty thousand. In vain Great Britain proposed a partition of the Ottoman Empire. The powers of the Triple and Dual Alliances alike spurned the proposal, and the "Armenian massacres" stopped only when the attention of the Sultan—and of Europe—was diverted to another revolt, that of the Greeks on the island of Crete.

Here there had been recurrent rebellions. A new one broke out in 1896, sympathized with and abetted by the independent Greek kingdom on the mainland. In spite of repeated pleas of all six great powers to Greece to keep out of the conflict and let them arrange with the Sultan for appropriate "reforms" for Crete, the

11 The Russian government, which had Armenian subjects of its own whom it was trying to "Russify," was wary of helping Ottoman Armenians to possible independence or autonomy; and France, in the interest of her many holders of Turkish bonds, seconded her "ally."

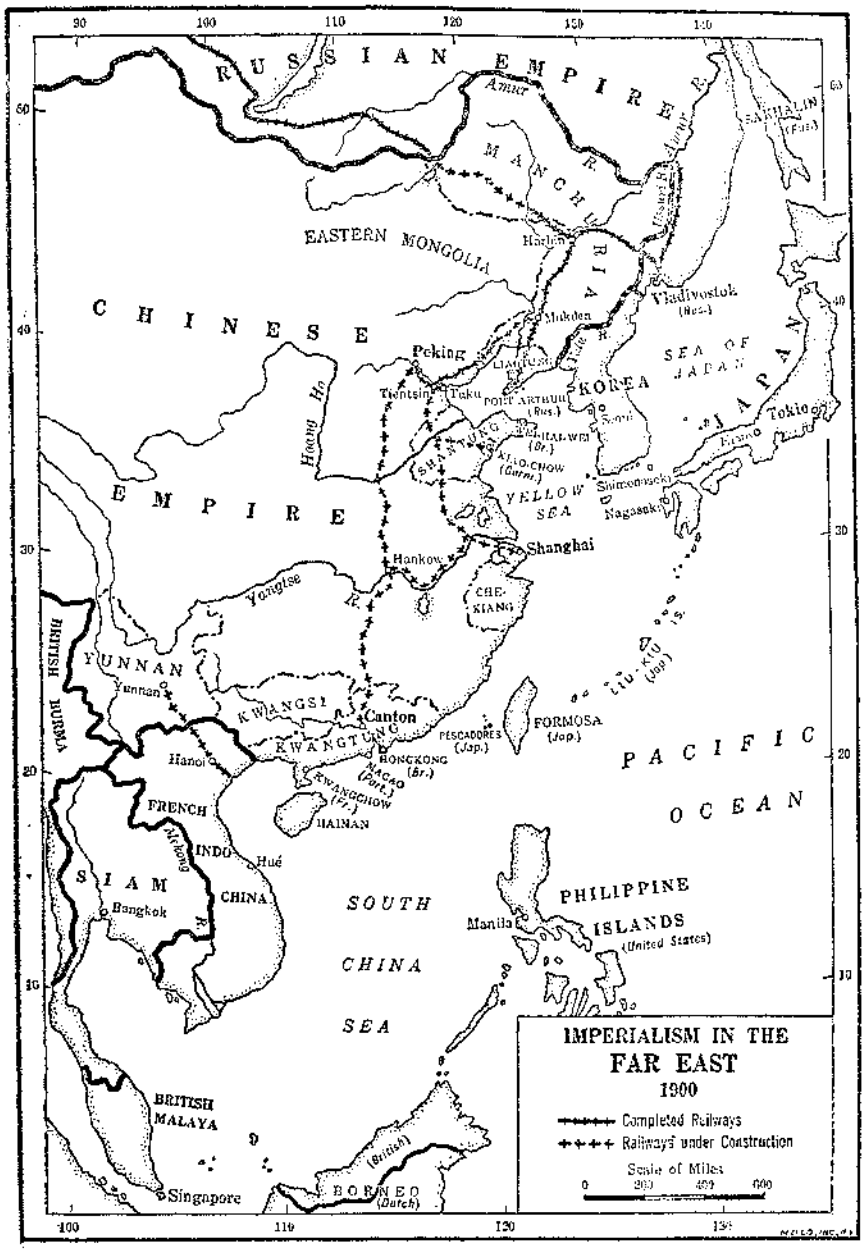
Greek government, responding to jingoistic public opinion, went to war with the Ottoman Empire in April 1897. The war was astonishingly brief. The German-trained Turkish army put the Greek forces to almost instant rout and quite inglorious flight, and within a month Greece sued for an armistice. The peace treaty, signed in December 1897, obligated Greece to pay the empire an indemnity of twenty million dollars and to rectify her northern frontier to the empire's advantage.

Yet though Greece was not permitted to annex Crete, the Ottoman Empire practically lost it. Russia was interested in the Greeks as she was not in the Armenians, and she therefore, together with France and Italy, joined Great Britain in compelling the Sultan to grant full autonomy to Crete and to withdraw Turkish troops from it. In November 1898, on the nomination of the four "Protecting Powers," Prince George of Greece was appointed governor. It proved that while the Ottoman Empire might still win a war, it could not win a peace.

IV. IMPACT OF JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES ON EUROPE

International relations and rivalries of the European great powers (with the exception of Austria-Hungary) had to do in the '90's less and less with strictly European affairs and more and more with the world politics of national imperialism. The "Near Eastern Question" no longer centered in the fate of the Sultan's European provinces, but concerned the whole Ottoman Empire in Asia and Africa; and the Graeco-Turkish War of 1897 over Crete was quite incidental to Franco-British quarreling over Egypt and the Upper Nile, to Russo-British disputings over Armenia and the Persian Gulf, or to Italian ambitions in Tripoli and German in Anatolia. Even in these larger aspects the "Near Eastern Question" was now dwarfed by other and more sensational questions of world power arising from mighty new imperialistic thrusts along the extensive north-and-south axis of Africa and in that vast and populous area of the Earth's surface known as the "Far East."

The "Far Eastern Question," involving the fate of the huge Chinese Empire, was brought to the fore rather dramatically in the '90's, not so much by any European power as by Japan. Hitherto


RUSSIAN EMPIRE
Amur R.
MANCHURIA
SAKHALIN (Rus.)
EASTERN MONGOLIA
Harbin
Vladivostok (Rus.)
CHINESE
Mukden
Peking
Liaotung Pen.
Liao R.
SEA OF JAPAN
JAPAN
Tientsin
Taku
PORT ARTHUR (Rus.)
KOREA
Seoul
Tokio
Hoang Ho
WEI-HAI-WEI (Br.)
SHANTUNG
KIAO-CHOW (Germ.)
Shimonoseki
Nagasaki
EMPIRE
YELLOW SEA
Hankow
Shanghai
Yangtse R.
CHE-KIANG
LIU-KU (Jap.)
BRITISH BURMA
YUNNAN
Yunnan
KWANGSI
Canton
FORMOSA (Jap.)
PESCADORES (Jap.)
PACIFIC
KWANGTUNG
Hanoi
HONGKONG (Br.)
MACAO (Port.)
KWANGCHOW (Fr.)
OCEAN
FRENCH
HAINAN
INDO
Mekong R.
Hué
SIAM
CHINA
Bangkok
SOUTH
PHILIPPINE
Manila
ISLANDS
(United States)
CHINA
SEA
BRITISH MALAYA
Singapore
BORNEO (British)
BORNEO (Dutch)
IMPERIALISM IN THE
FAR EAST
1900
Completed Railways
Railways under Construction
Scale of Miles
0 200 400 600

the relations of Europe with the Chinese Empire had been mainly commercial and missionary; and, although Great Britain had fairly early appropriated Hongkong, and Russia and France at different times had deprived China of nominal suzerainty respectively over the northern Maritime Province and over Annam in the far south, the empire as a whole had remained territorially intact. It was four times as large as the Ottoman Empire and twelve to fifteen times as populous, and its natural resources were incomparably greater.

How Japan from the '60's to the '90's underwent internal transformation, adopting the industrial, material, and military features of contemporary European civilization and becoming intensely nationalistic, constitutes one of the most extraordinary and fascinating chapters in human annals, but one which lies outside the purview of the present book, just as does the simultaneous and almost equally phenomenal development of the United States. Suffice it here to remark the bald fact that an Asiatic nation, and likewise an American nation, products themselves of "Europeanization," were sufficiently strong and assertive by the '90's to enter the characteristically European game of national imperialism and to take rank as great powers alongside the six in Europe.

Japan made her formal debut in a war against China in 1894-1895. For ten years previous China had been trying to re-establish suzerainty over the virtually independent kingdom of Korea, with such success that in 1894 the Korean government, confronted by domestic insurrection, was persuaded to invoke Chinese military assistance. And, though the insurrection was actually put down without their help, some three thousand Chinese soldiers established themselves in Korea. But already fully 90 per cent of Korea's foreign trade was with Japan, and Japanese companies operated most of Korea's banks and business enterprises, so that, simultaneously with the entrance of Chinese troops into the country, Japan, "to protect her interests," despatched thither an army of eight or ten thousand men. Matters reached a crisis on July 20, when Japan presented an ultimatum to the Korean monarch, demanding that he immediately repudiate Chinese suzerainty. Three days later a Japanese force seized the royal palace at Seoul and dictated to the

hapless monarch a change of ministers and policy. On August 1 Japan, "in concert with Korea," declared war against China.

It was generally believed at the time that, while Japan might score a few initial successes in Korea, China in the long run would triumph by means of a superior navy, an impregnable base at Port Arthur, and immensely greater resources of men and supplies. All the more staggering to Europe as well as to China, therefore, was Japan's uninterrupted succession of victories. The Chinese navy failed to prevent Japan from quickly and heavily reinforcing her troops on the mainland, and in mid-September, while these were winning the battle of Pingyang and clearing the Chinese out of Korea, the Japanese navy inflicted heavy losses upon the main Chinese fleet and drove the remnants to shelter at Port Arthur and Weihaiwei. Next month Japanese armies overcame Chinese resistance at the Yalu River on the Korean border and carried the war into Manchuria and also into the Liaotung peninsula to the south. In November, through co-operation of land and sea forces, the Japanese captured Port Arthur, and early in the new year they took Weihaiwei and destroyed the Chinese warships there. The way was open for an advance upon Peking, and the Chinese, apparently helpless and hopeless, sued for peace.

The resulting peace treaty of Shimonoseki, in April 1895, was dictated by Japan. It obligated China to renounce all claims to Korea; to cede to Japan Formosa, the Pescadores Islands, and the whole of the Liaotung Peninsula, including Port Arthur; to pay an indemnity of $150,000,000; to grant Japan most-favored-nation treatment; and to open seven new ports to international commerce. These were big profits from an enterprise which had cost Japan the lives of only about 4,000 men, of whom more had been victims of Manchurian winter weather than of Chinese guns.

The European great powers no longer had illusions of Chinese strength and Japanese weakness. The Russian government, particularly its finance minister and promoter of public works, Count Witte, was now very fearful lest victorious Japan might cut off a greatly desired warm-water outlet, through Manchuria, for the Trans-Siberian Railway, which was under construction. The French government was ready to back its Russian ally; and the German

Emperor, obsessed with forebodings about a "Yellow Peril" incarnate in Japan, was eager to support Russia in the Far East, since such support might serve to distract the Tsar from affairs nearer home and show him that Germany no less than France could be Russia's collaborator. All three powers accordingly stepped forward as China's "friends"; and on the morrow of the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, they united in demanding of Japan the retrocession of the Liaotung Peninsula to China. Japan hesitated. Conceivably she might get aid from Great Britain, for just as Britain had been pro-Chinese so long as China seemed to be the strongest bulwark in the Far East against Russia, so now, when Japan was proved stronger, Britain was becoming pro-Japanese. But Great Britain was unwilling to risk war, and in May 1895 Japan finally acceded to the demands of Russia, Germany, and France, and, in return for additional indemnity, surrendered the Liaotung Peninsula, including Port Arthur.

Japan clearly demonstrated by the war of 1894-1895 not only her military prowess and her right to be reckoned a great power, but also the impotence of the Chinese Empire to withstand invasion and dismemberment. Thus was invited a scramble of imperialistic powers for Chinese spoils, and the response was peculiarly hearty and voracious from the European powers which as China's "friends" had just restricted Japan's gains. In June 1895 France obtained a favorable "rectification" of her Tonkin frontier and a "sphere of influence" in three adjoining Chinese provinces. In June 1896 Russia secured the chartering of a Russo-Chinese bank and of a "Chinese Eastern Railway" as a short cut for the Trans-Siberian across Manchuria and into the Liaotung Peninsula. Meanwhile the German government was debating what port and "sphere of influence" it should demand for the "services" it had rendered China, and in the summer of 1896 Admiral von Tirpitz, in command of a German squadron, visited Kiaochow and recommended its acquisition. This was finally decided upon at Berlin in the summer of 1897, and a splendid opportunity to realize it was presented in the following November by the murder of two Catholic misisonaries of German nationality by some provincial gangsters in Shantung. German marines were immediately landed at Kiaochow, and from

Germany was sent out a supporting naval and military expedition amid frenzied huzzas and grandiloquent exchange of toasts between its commander, Prince Henry, and his brother, the Emperor William II. Said the Emperor: "May it be clear out there to the German merchant, and above all to the foreigner whose soil we may be on and with whom we shall have to deal, that the German Michael has planted his shield, adorned with the eagle of the Empire, firmly on that soil, in order once for all to afford protection to those who apply to him for it. . . . Should anyone attempt to affront us or to infringe our good rights, then strike out with mailed fist. . . ." Prince Henry, in reply, expressed a single purpose: "to proclaim and preach abroad to all who will hear, as well as to those who will not, the gospel of Your Majesty's anointed person."

China heard German guns, if not the gospel of anointment, and consented in March 1898, in compliance with an ultimatum, to lease the port of Kiaochow to Germany for a term of ninety-nine years and to reserve the province of Shantung as a German "sphere of influence." But the sound of German guns was the signal for China's other "friends" to make similar demands in March and April 1898. Russia got a lease of Port Arthur; France, of Kwangchow. And Great Britain, not professing any special solicitude for China and yet not willing to be outdone by Continental rivals, got a lease of Weihaiwei "for as long a period as Port Arthur shall remain in the possession of Russia," and, in addition, a ninety-nine-year lease of the Kowloon Peninsula opposite Hongkong and a "sphere of influence" in the rich Yangtze valley. The only power whose demand for territory the Chinese Empire ventured to deny was Italy, which had recently been routed out of Abyssinia and which in March 1899 put in a belated request for the lease of a port on the Chinese coast of Chekiang. A successful rebuff to Italy, however, was slight compensation for the grave loss of land and prestige which China had suffered since Japan pounced upon her in 1894. There was now, indeed, a Far Eastern Question of vast dimensions and import.

If Japan exerted novel influence on the international relations of Europe in the '90's, so did the United States. The latter's debut as a great power was not so sudden or surprising as Japan's, for

ever since the close of the American Civil War in 1865 Europe had been aware of the steady material development and increasing potential might of the United States. Not, however, until the end of the '80's did the American Republic show signs of overstepping her "Continental" frontiers and engaging in overseas imperialism. Then, in 1889, she thrust out into the Pacific by assuming a joint protectorate, with Germany and Great Britain, over the Samoan Islands. In the same year she convened at Washington the first of the Pan-American Conferences, not only as an instrumentality for the settlement of disputes between the numerous republics of the New World, but also as a means of warding off European imperialism from the Western Hemisphere and furthering her own imperial hegemony in it. In 1893 an attempt was made by American residents and naval forces in Hawaii to secure the annexation of that Pacific archipelago to the United States; and though it was then disavowed and thwarted by President Cleveland, it was eventually crowned with success under his more imperially minded successor, McKinley, who signed a congressional resolution formally annexing Hawaii in July 1898. Even Cleveland did not hesitate to put the Monroe Doctrine to a crucial test by threatening Great Britain with war in 1895-1896 unless the latter immediately submitted to international adjudication a long-standing boundary dispute between Venezuela and British Guiana. Great Britain, astonished and somewhat chagrined, more or less graciously acquiesced. The United States was obviously a great power, with interests and ambitions beyond her own North American shores.

Soon Great Britain was co-operating with the United States for much the same reason as with Japan: to offset the co-operation of her imperialist rivals on the European Continent—Germany, Russia, and France. In 1897 Lord Salisbury rejected a German proposal for vigorous joint protest against the impending American annexation of Hawaii, and at the beginning of 1898 his colonial secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, advocated formal alliances of Great Britain with both the United States and Japan and also a renewed effort to detach Germany from Russia and France and to tie her to Britain. Overtures to this latter end were actually made by the Salisbury

government, but they collapsed with the outbreak of the Spanish-American War.

Since 1895 Spain had been endeavoring to crush a revolt in Cuba; and her inability to do so, together with the harshness of the measures she took, had aroused a kind of crusading zeal in the United States for the "deliverance" of Cuba. This was touched off by the blowing up of the American battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor on February 16, 1898. Rightly or wrongly, Spain was blamed for the disaster, and without waiting for the conclusion of peaceful negotiations between the two governments, President McKinley on April 20 approved a congressional resolution demanding the withdrawal of Spain from Cuba. The Spanish government at Madrid responded by handing the American minister his passports, and on April 25 the United States declared war.

This war proved as one-sided as the Chinese-Japanese War. Naval superiority was with the United States, and it was decisive. On May 1 an American squadron under Admiral Dewey easily overpowered Spanish warships in Manila Bay, and on July 3, off the Cuban port of Santiago, the principal American fleet engaged and destroyed what effective naval force remained to Spain. Meanwhile American armies were being safely transported to Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the distant Philippines, and everywhere they were winning successes. Almost simultaneously with the fall of Manila on August 14, Spain sued for peace; and the war was formally terminated by the Treaty of Paris, signed on December 10, 1898.

On the European continent both popular and governmental sympathy during 1898 was pretty constantly pro-Spanish and anti-American. Most publicists, whether in Moscow, Berlin, or Paris, represented the United States as an upstart and bully, while the German government in particular posed as a "friend" of Spain in the hope of getting some such reward from her as had just been obtained from China. A strong German fleet, ostentatiously stationed in Manila Bay at the beginning of the war, was bothersome to Admiral Dewey and a source of apprehension to the American public, and only late in the war, after the United States had amply demonstrated its might, did Germany adopt a more discreet and conciliatory attitude.

On the other hand, Great Britain sympathized with the United States, as with Japan, perceiving in the victories of each a realization of Canning's old hope about a New World's redressing the balance of the Old, and a promise of decisive support for herself against any combination of European great powers. In the end Britain urged the United States to demand not merely the Spanish West Indies but also the big archipelago of the Philippines in the Far East. President McKinley hardly needed British prompting. He assured a delegation of Methodist clergymen who waited upon him that he had knelt in prayer about the Philippines and had been directed by God to take them. So, from the war of 1898 the United States obtained Puerto Rico, a protectorate over Cuba, and outright ownership of the Philippines and, as a naval base on the way thither from Hawaii, the island of Guam. And the toll paid by the victor was even less in this war than in the Chinese-Japanese War. Only eighteen American sailors had been killed, and only 469 American soldiers.

Germany again received some reward from the vanquished. As a result of secret arrangements in September 1898, she publicly purchased in the new year the job lot of Spanish possessions in the Pacific which the United States had overlooked—the Caroline, Pelew, and Marianne islands (except Guam). Thereby the historic Spanish Empire, save for a few insignificant stations in Africa, disappeared entirely from the map of the world. Germany, however, was but a residuary legatee. The principal heir was the United States, whose role henceforth was unmistakably that of an imperial great power in the Far East as well as in the Western Hemisphere. Germany recognized the fact by amicably agreeing in 1899 to a partition of the Samoan Islands between herself and the United States. And despite protest and rebellion of ungrateful natives in the Philippines, a thumping majority of the American people in the presidential election of 1900 joyously accepted the "manifest destiny" of the United States.

V. THE APOTHEOSIS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE—AND ENGLAND'S ISOLATION

In the summer of 1897—two years after the Chinese-Japanese War and less than a year before the Spanish-American War—London

staged a superlative pageant in celebration of Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee and of Britain's imperial predominance in a crowning age of imperialism. A procession, such as the world had not previously beheld, passed from Buckingham Palace up Constitution Hill, through Piccadilly, Trafalgar Square, the Strand and Fleet Street, to solemn service of Thanksgiving in St. Paul's. First went detachments of armed forces from beyond the seas: Dyak police from North Borneo, Maoris from New Zealand, Hausas from West Africa, twenty-six cavalrymen from Cape Colony, forty-two helmeted soldiers from Hongkong, black fighters in the employ of the Royal Niger Company, mounted Zaptiehs from Cyprus, a contingent of Rhodesian horse, men of Australia clad in brown, and Canadians in variant uniforms of thirty military organizations. Followed Dominion premiers in sober black and scores of colonial governors with swords and gold lace; next, representatives of all ranks of the royal navy; then, for the army of the United Kingdom, scarlet coats, Highland kilts, Coldstream Guards, Welsh Guards, Irish Guards, the Queen's own Hussars, Inniskilling Dragoons, generals and field marshals. After which went carriages with ministers and ambassadors accredited to the Court of St. James's, foreign princes, kings, and emperors, and the Queen's family—she had nine children, forty grandchildren, and thirty great-grandchildren. Finally passed Victoria, Queen and Empress, in coach of gold and crimson drawn by eight cream-colored horses and surrounded by a bodyguard of Indian soldiery.[12]

Victoria, obviously, had been properly named. She personified the victories of her generation, and indeed of her century; and she seemed immortal. For sixty years she had been Queen, and for twenty, Empress. Only Gladstone and Bismarck, of all the European statesmen she had known in the 1860's, were still alive. Both, however, were in enfeebled retirement, the former still penning ineffectual pleas for Armenians, and the latter querulously criticizing a government which had no further use for him. Gladstone died in May 1898, at the age of eighty-eight, and Bismarck in July of the same year at the age of eighty-three. Of reigning

[12] For this reference to the procession I am indebted to the impressive account of Professor Walter P. Hall in his *Empire to Commonwealth* (New York, 1928).

sovereigns of comparable age, there remained, besides Victoria, only Francis Joseph and Leo XIII. These, like her, would survive the turn of the century; but the Austrian Emperor was eleven years her junior, and Leo (nine years her senior) had not become Pope until she had been Queen some forty years.

And what, to the vast concourse of loyal Britishers who saw that procession on a summer's day of 1897, were the victories of Victoria's long reign? Victories of material progress, of industrial invention and production, yes; of emergence of the masses into literacy and political life, yes; of physical health and national wealth, yes. But above all, to sovereign and subjects alike, they were victories of world empire and of that sea power upon which such empire ultimately rested. Britain had been, of course, a relatively important colonial and naval power when Victoria came to the throne in 1837. Yet since then, and especially during the two decades of intensified European imperialism from 1877 to 1897, Britain had newly acquired more territory and population overseas than had all her Continental rivals lumped together, while in the later race of naval armaments she had outdistanced the combined efforts of any two of her competitors. By now, moreover, both navalism and imperialism were prime articles of faith and supreme objects of devotion in Britain. Of both, Queen Victoria was the popular embodiment, as Kipling was the popular laureate and the ministry of Salisbury and Chamberlain the popular official agency.

Nor was there any thought of Queen, ministry, or masses that the British Empire had reached its maximum in 1897. With stakes in every part of the world and with superabundant sea power, it simply must keep on expanding. It had only to set bounds to the imperialism of others—particularly Russia, France, and Germany. Current circumstances were propitious. Japan's success in 1895 against China, while revealing the latter's weakness and opening up the whole Far East to imperialistic enterprise, had made Japan a natural ally of Britain in opposing Russian ambitions in that quarter. In this very year of 1897 the Graeco-Turkish War promised Britain a stellar role, once more, in the chronic Near Eastern Question. Presently the Spanish-American War of 1898 would discomfit Britain's Continental rivals and bring the United States into Oceania

and the Far East as a counterweight there to Germany and France as well as to Russia. Britain got the lion's share of leases and concessions from the Chinese Empire in April 1898, just a few days before an American admiral won the battle of Manila Bay in the presence of a disapproving and disappointed German fleet.

But Britain's eyes in 1897-1898 were chiefly on Africa, particularly on the lengthy north-and-south axis from Egypt to the Cape of Good Hope. This axis had two glaring gaps. One, north of Cape Colony, comprised the practically independent Boer republics of Transvaal and Orange Free State. The other, immediately south of Egypt, embraced the huge Sudanese basin of the Upper Nile, which, since its conquest by the mad Mahdi and his fanatical Dervishes and the slaughter of General Gordon and a British garrison at Khartum in 1885, had been, for Europeans, a "no man's land."

In view of the pestilential climate and difficult terrain of the Sudan, and of the fierce fighting reputation of its wild Mahdi, Britain had been in no hurry to attempt its conquest. For some time she had been content to "reserve" it against appropriation by anyone else. In the '90's, however, France evinced what to the British government seemed an unholy and highly dangerous interest in the Sudan. Ever since Britain went into Egypt without France in 1882, the French government had been pressing the British to evacuate it, and now the government at Paris conceived the brilliant idea that if the French controlled the sources of the Nile, they could cut off the water supply of lower Egypt and compel British withdrawal. Besides, many French officials and publicists thought, in the grandiose imperialistic manner of the decade, how nice it would be to construct an all-French east-and-west axis from Somaliland on the Red Sea, right across the Sudan, to Senegal on the Atlantic.

At first, France resorted to diplomatic intrigues, in which she was seconded consistently by Russia and on occasion by Germany. When Great Britain "leased" a part of the Sudan to Leopold II of Belgium for his Congo Free State in 1894, France with German backing persuaded him to repudiate the "lease" and to seek eventual larger gains by opposing Britain. Then when Menelek of Abyssinia asserted claims in the Sudan and Britain tried to nullify them by encouraging Italy to undertake the subjugation of Abyssinia,

France with Russian approval supplied Menelek with the arms and munitions with which he routed the Italians at Adowa in March 1896.

On the eve of Adowa, the French government decided upon direct intervention in the Sudan, and selected an army captain, J. B. Marchand, to lead a military expedition thither. As Marchand was leaving Paris in May 1896 the foreign minister Hanotaux told him that "France is going to fire her pistol."[13] The plan, as evolved by Hanotaux, was for Marchand, with a small select body of Senegalese soldiers and French officers, to make the long journey eastward from Brazzaville in French Congo to Fashoda in the Sudan, where he would be reinforced by Abyssinian troops and a co-operating French expedition from Djibouti on the Red Sea.

After some delay occasioned by a native revolt, Marchand finally set out from Brazzaville with his little expedition in March 1897 on one of the most arduous and exciting adventures in human annals. He took along, up the Congo River, a small steamboat, the *Faidherbe,* which, with almost superhuman effort, was carried and dragged over the hilly watershed between the Congo and Nile basins. Eventually launching the boat on a tributary of the Upper Nile and aided by the spring rains of 1898, Marchand then coursed down to Fashoda. Here he arrived on July 10 and immediately hoisted a French flag on the ruins of an old Egyptian fort. In vain, however, he awaited the arrival of supporting columns from Djibouti and Abyssinia. These had been badly mismanaged, and by the time they could come to his assistance the British had moved in force and victoriously.

For the British government had been fully aware of the French plan and had already determined upon a counter-offensive. In October 1897 Field Marshal Lord Wolseley, the commander in chief of the British army and the man who had directed the original "occupation" of Egypt in 1882, ordered General Kitchener, the commander in Egypt, to make ready an Anglo-Egyptian force adequate for speedy "recovery" of Khartum and conquest of the entire Sudan; and in December the British ambassador at Paris warned Hanotaux

[13] General Mangin, "Lettres de la Mission Marchand," *Revue des Deux Mondes,* Sept. 15, 1931, pp. 241-283.

that "no other European Power than Great Britain has any claim to occupy any part of the valley of the Nile." With all despatch, Kitchener assembled an Anglo-Egyptian army of some 25,000 men and pushed a vigorous advance from Cairo up the Nile into the Sudan. In April 1898 he swept aside native resistance at Atbara, and on September 2, on the plain outside Omdurman, he decisively defeated 40,000 Dervishes. Ten thousand of the latter were killed and five thousand wounded, as against fifty killed and two hundred wounded in Kitchener's army. The British had Maxim rifles and the Dervishes hadn't.

The Khalifa, successor of the Mahdi, escaped the rout and slaughter of his followers, but his power was utterly broken. Kitchener occupied Khartum and proclaimed the Sudan an Anglo-Egyptian protectorate. It remained only to deal with the little French expedition at Fashoda. Continuing up the Nile, therefore, Kitchener arrived here and met Marchand on September 19. The Britisher and the Frenchman, with soldiers' mutual respect, had a whisky and soda together and amiably agreed that their respective flags should fly over different parts of the town pending final settlement between London and Paris.

The ensuing excitement in France and Britain over Fashoda eclipsed that over the Spanish-American War and the Far Eastern Question. Many persons in both countries shouted for war, and for a time neither government appeared at all conciliatory. France, however, was in no position to wage successful war. Russia would pledge her no military or naval assistance, and her own sea power was shockingly inferior to Britain's. Moreover, she was harassed internally by bitter partisan strife over the Dreyfus affair, while Britain was superbly united and resolute. In the circumstances Delcassé, Hanotaux's successor in the foreign office, reluctantly agreed to order French withdrawal from Fashoda, and on December 11, 1898, the French flag was hauled down and the valiant Marchand departed. An Anglo-French convention in the following March formally ended the dispute. France was allowed to retain Wadai (east of Lake Chad) but she had to renounce all claims to the Egyptian Sudan and recognize it as a British protectorate. Britain thus closed in the spring of 1899 one of the great gaps in her

imperial sway from Cairo to the Cape. She now had 2,600 miles of continuous territory southward from Alexandria on the Mediterranean to Mombasa on the Indian Ocean.

There was still the annoying Boer gap in the 2,000 miles from Cape Town northward to the Congo Free State. In British opinion, it too must be filled; and provocations for a British-Boer clash were plentiful in 1899. On the British side, both Sir Alfred Milner, the high commissioner for South Africa, and Joseph Chamberlain, the colonial secretary at London, saw eye to eye with the ultra-imperialist Cecil Rhodes; and these men, by fostering and airing the "grievances" of the British *Uitlanders* in the Transvaal—chiefly workers in the gold mines—and demanding their enfranchisement by the Boer government, aroused popular sympathy in England, as well as in Cape Colony, for a militantly aggressive policy toward the Boer Republic. On the Boer side, the attempted "Jameson raid" of December 1895 and the leniency shown its leader by the British courts had created a bitterness and an intransigence which found expression in the re-election of the veteran anti-*Uitlander* Paul Kruger to the presidency of the Transvaal in 1898 for another term of five years, and in the military alliance which he forthwith concluded with the Orange Free State. While British-Boer negotiations dragged on about enfranchising the *Uitlanders*, both sides prepared for war. The British imagined they could easily overwhelm the Boers if no third power made trouble; and Germany, as most likely to create difficulties, was bought off in August 1898 by a secret agreement concerning Portugal's empire. In case Portugal should be induced to surrender her colonies, Angola would be divided into three zones, the north and south going to Germany and the middle to Great Britain; the northern half of Mozambique would pass to Germany and the southern to Britain; and Germany would get Timor in the East Indies.[14]

By September 1899, negotiations between Boers and British reached an impasse. Kruger had offered, with some restrictions, to enfranchise *Uitlanders* after five years of residence in the Transvaal.

[14] But Britain later turned about and by a secret declaration of October 14, 1899, guaranteed to Portugal the territorial integrity of her empire in return for a pledge from Portugal that she would allow British warships to coal freely at her African port of Lorenzo Marquez and would not allow the shipment of arms thence to the Boers.

Chamberlain had demanded the five-year franchise without restrictions. Kruger had refused and Chamberlain had insisted. The only way out was war, and on October 9 it was precipitated by a Transvaal ultimatum which barely headed off a similar ultimatum from Britain. The Orange Free State immediately joined the Transvaal.

The British had no such easy contest with the Boers as they had just had with the Dervishes. General Buller, the commander of the British army, instead of concentrating it for an attack in superior force upon a single objective, split it into three separate expeditions which the more mobile Boers defeated piecemeal in December 1899. Whereupon the hapless Buller was recalled and Field Marshal Lord Roberts sent out as commander, with Kitchener as his chief of staff. Under this new leadership and with heavy reinforcements drawn from the whole British Empire, the tide of battle slowly changed. Boer besiegers of Kimberley and Ladysmith were driven off late in February 1900, and in September of this year the first and regular phase of the war closed with decisive Boer defeat in the open field, flight of Kruger, and proclamation of Britain's annexation of the Transvaal and Orange Free State. There followed, nevertheless, almost two years more of desultory guerrilla warfare before resistance of the hardy valorous Boers was finally overcome. During the struggle the British lost almost 6,000 killed and 23,000 wounded, while the number of Boers killed was 4,000. But two South African republics had lost their independence and been added to the ever-expanding British Empire.

Yet the Boer War cost the British government many anxious moments. The protracted and long uncertain fighting was bad enough in itself. Even worse was its effect upon Britain's international position. Her European rivals were elated by her military setbacks and by the evidence these afforded that she was not invulnerable. There were recurrent rumors and signs of diplomatic maneuvers at Berlin, St. Petersburg, and Paris looking toward joint intervention by Germany, Russia, and France. And in the United States, whose friendship Britain had sedulously cultivated in 1897-1898 and counted upon to offset the enmity of Europe, public opinion after the outbreak of the South African War was conspicuously pro-Boer and anti-British.

England was clearly isolated, and it was hardly the "splendid isolation" of which Salisbury was wont to boast. True, the British navy was still intact and supreme, and in assuring the uninterrupted transport of troops and supplies to South Africa and thus enabling the British at last to vanquish the Boers, it had signally performed the service which Mahan and other navalists ascribed to paramount sea power. But this lesson was taken to heart no less by Britain than by her rivals. There was a new spurt of naval construction in Russia and France, and likewise in the United States and Japan, while the German navy, already being strengthened in accordance with action of the Reichstag in 1898 in the midst of the Spanish-American War, would be strengthened immensely more by additional enactment of 1900 in the midst of the Boer War. England's isolation was becoming really perilous. As the century ended the British government began a new and serious search for friends.

VI. THE INTERNATIONAL PEACE CONFERENCE OF 1899

When the nineteenth century closed, there had been, for well-nigh thirty years previously, no war between European great powers. Yet there had been recurrent war scares and rumors of war, and some actual hostilities in the "backward" Balkans: between Russia and Turkey in 1877, between Serbia and Bulgaria in 1885, between Greece and Turkey in 1897. Latterly, too, there had been a veritable epidemic of imperialistic forcefulness overseas: in 1894-1895 the Chinese-Japanese War; in 1896 the Italian-Abyssinian War; in 1898 the aggressions of Germany, France, Russia, and Britain against China, the Spanish-American War, the British conquest of the Egyptian Sudan and dislodgement of France from Fashoda, and preparations for the Boer War of the next year. And the peace which still obtained among the great powers was more than ever an "armed peace."

On August 24 of the eventful year of 1898 the Tsar's foreign minister, Count Muraviev, communicated to the diplomatic corps at St. Petersburg an "imperial rescript" declaring that "the preservation of peace has become an object of international policy" and inviting their respective governments to participate in a conference on "possible reduction of the excessive armaments which weigh

upon all nations." The move was sensational, and doubly so by reason of its being made by Russia.

The Tsar Nicholas II had not been generally regarded as either a liberal or a pacifist, and yet he was now giving point and crystallization to latent aspirations for international peace on the part of a considerable body of liberals and humanitarians. Especially within England and the United States, where "militarism" was assumed to be non-existent and "navalism" to be purely "defensive," various peace societies were spreading among church and labor groups the conviction that, if only armies could be reduced in size and international disputes referred to arbitration, something like a millennium would ensue. The multiplying profits from industrialization could then be devoted more fully to popular education and enlightenment, and this would ensure the permanence of a peaceful order among the great as well as the lesser powers of Europe and confine whatever unfortunate struggles might be temporarily necessary to minor ones for the civilizing of barbarous peoples in out-of-the-way places of the world.

On the European Continent, where large armies were more usual than large navies, specifically pacifist propaganda was less in evidence, though the growing Marxian parties uniformly included in their electoral pronouncements attacks on "warmongering" and demands for limitation of armaments, and "bourgeois" parties paid at least lip service to the ideal of international peace. The Interparliamentary Union, which had been formed at Paris in 1889 by members of different European legislatures for periodic discussion of matters of common interest, had advocated from the outset an extension of international arbitration, and the first Pan-American Conference, held at Washington, also in 1889, had affirmed that "arbitration constitutes the public law of the American nations."

In the latter part of the '90's, moreover, several influential individuals, combining grave alarm over existent armaments with sublime faith in the ability of progressive nations, through concerted effort, to find better insurance against war, became earnest apostles of pacifism. There was, for example, the Norwegian dynamite manufacturer, Alfred Nobel; the Scottish-American steel magnate, Andrew Carnegie; the Russian-Jewish author of a six-volume

diatribe against war, Ivan Bloch; the brilliant French descendant of Benjamin Constant, the Baron D'Estournelles de Constant. These were all elated by the Tsar's apparent conversion; and in the autumn of 1898 a distinguished British publicist, William T. Stead, editor of the important *Review of Reviews* and erstwhile doughty champion of British navalism, toured the Continent to enlist all European states in the Tsar's "peace crusade."

Neither the Tsar nor his foreign minister quite merited the reputation for idealistic pacifism which their "rescript" gained them. They had been pushed into sponsoring it by the Russian finance minister, Count Witte, and he was actuated by very realistic considerations. Russia was a comparatively "backward" and hence a poor country, and what with maintaining an army and navy comparable with its vast size and population and building extensive railways and other essential, yet terribly costly, public works, its finances were strained to the utmost. Witte had been helped out by heavy borrowings from France, but the larger these were, the more interest he had to pay every year to Paris; and foreign loans might not always be obtainable. In 1898 he was almost beside himself. France had recently adopted the famous 75-millimeter artillery for her army, and now Germany was introducing a new rapid-firing field gun which could discharge six shells per minute, as against the single shell per minute fired by Russian guns. Obviously Russia must have artillery as good as Germany's, but to procure it would necessitate an immediate special outlay of fifty million dollars, which Germany or France (or Britain) could afford, but hardly Russia. Besides, there was increasing friction over Chinese railway concessions with both Japan and Great Britain, and Russia must not let them get ahead of her in the armaments race. So Witte conjured up the bright idea of coaxing Russia's rivals to suspend further additions to their armaments for a term of years—a "holiday" of ten years, he suggested. The idea appealed to the Tsar and to Muraviev, who appreciated that Austria-Hungary and Italy, being almost as hard-pressed financially as Russia, would most likely agree to it, and who hoped that perhaps Germany, France, and Britain could be cajolled into concurring.

The governments to which the Tsar made his proposal were as

realistic about it, in their several ways, as was Witte, and they were backed, in most instances, by a preponderance of public opinion which viewed Russia with suspicion and pacifism with horror. The French government, which had not been consulted in advance, was shocked by what seemed at first thought a deliberate attempt on the part of its ally to weaken French preparedness and to banish indefinitely any prospect of recovering Alsace-Lorraine, but on second thought, not wishing to offend the Tsar and satisfied that no harm would result, it promised, with customary politeness, to send a delegation to the projected conference. So did the twenty-four other powers invited—comprising all in Europe, Japan and China in the Far East, and the United States and Mexico in the New World—though behind the scenes few statesmen said anything good about the plan or its sponsor. At London Lord Salisbury thought it should not be taken "too seriously," and at Berlin William II termed it "utopian." Nevertheless, only the Italian government attached a condition to taking part in the conference: it would stay out if the Pope were invited. Russia obligingly accepted the condition, and Leo XIII had to deliver his own homily on peace within the walls of the Vatican.

At length on May 18, 1899, the Tsar's birthday, his much heralded Peace Conference opened at The Hague under the honorary presidency of Queen Wilhemina of the Netherlands, and remained in session until the end of July. Of all the delegates attending, only a few were sincerely attached to the cause of international peace, such as D'Estournelles among the French; Sir Julian Pauncefote, negotiator of an Anglo-American arbitration treaty, among the British; M. de Martens, distinguished authority on international law, among the Russian; and Andrew D. White among the American. Most of the delegates were wordy or simply ornamental old men, or else determined defenders of army and navy interests. These latter included a blunt-spoken German military expert, Colonel Schwarzhoff; a fire-eating British admiral, Sir John Fisher; and the world-famous author of *The Influence of Sea Power*, Captain Mahan of the United States Navy. Their labors in the Conference were more assiduous—and fruitful—than anyone else's.

The primary object of the Conference was dealt a mortal blow,

almost at the beginning, by Colonel Schwarzhoff. He could not understand why Germany should be expected to stint her own military might because other nations lacked the resources to equal it, nor why, with her new overseas responsibilities, she should be deterred from expanding her fleet. Indeed, so evidently difficult did he make the problem of limiting armaments or declaring a "holiday," that by common consent it was immediately dismissed as insoluble.

The Conference did do something. Thanks to some of its specialists in international law, it adopted a number of minor amendments and additions to the rules of war. The state and conditions of belligerency were defined; better treatment of war prisoners and of sick and wounded soldiers was prescribed; the Red Cross convention was extended to naval warfare; gas attacks and dumdum bullets were banned; the throwing of projectiles from balloons was prohibited for five years. But what finally aroused major interest and debate was the question of a permanent court of arbitration. There was general agreement that any such court should have no jurisdiction over cases which were "non-justiciable" or which involved any nation's "vital interest" or "honor." Over other cases, however, there was heated debate whether jurisdiction should be compulsory or voluntary. The German delegation for a time opposed the establishment of any court at all, and in the end agreed to it only after the other powers had accepted the voluntary principle. Even then the unbending Baron von Holstein resigned the key position he had long held in the German foreign office, as a solemn protest against what he deemed a sinister specter of international arbitration and a most dangerous flirtation with peace.

Altogether, the concrete results of the Hague Peace Conference of 1899 were not impressive. Count Witte got no relief for Russian finances, and no statesman elsewhere got any respite from piling up armaments. There was now, to be sure, a legally constituted list of jurists from which nations might select judges to adjudicate disputes between them, but recourse to arbitration was still entirely voluntary, and so too was acceptance of any arbitral decision.

Nonetheless the Hague Conference talked about peace, and undoubtedly set in motion among the general public in Europe and

America a pacifistic agitation of a character and intensity without previous parallel. By the time another Peace Conference met at The Hague in 1907, and still more by the time the League of Nations was inaugurated at Geneva in 1920, the Conference of 1899 was looked back upon as the first—and therefore highly significant—step in the devising of practical machinery for world peace. For the era from 1871 to 1900, let us remember, was an era both of developing machinery and of continuing humanitarian impulse.