

# **EUROPE IN THE MELTING POT**

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Europe in the Melting Pot by Gregory Mason

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**GREGORY MASON**

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## Introduction

If there are intelligent inhabitants on any planet other than this on which we roll through space, we may imagine them looking down at the earth just now and chuckling as they remark:

"Well, they are at it again on the earth. Tribes, races, and nations are again in the melting pot."

For, though war seems a serious and terrible thing to us who are in it or close to it, to disinterested observers at a great distance, if there are any, who have been watching war follow war on this globe for generation after generation, the whole thing may seem to indicate the pettiness rather than the greatness of humanity. For the old differences are being settled in the old way. Even some of the scenes and some of the actors in this drama have familiar names: Charleroi, Waterloo, Louvain; von der Goltz, and Pau.

One is struck with the futility of the whole thing. Must war succeed war with no apparent permanent result save a preparation of conditions out of which the next war may spring? The remark of Sir Edward Hamley, the English historian, concerning the results of the Crimean War, may seem in its despairing cynicism to be applicable to all wars. "Thus," said the historian, "had the great war been rounded off into an episode having no further connection with the future."

Is the great war of to-day, in which hundreds of thousands of lives are being lost, and the happiness of hundreds of thousands of families destroyed—is this a mere episode in the history of man?

It is easy to think that it is. It is easy to persuade one's self that the world is growing no better, that men to-day are the brutes of cave days, with a slightly keener intelligence that makes them more dangerous to each other. This is the familiar argument, heard on every street corner, in every club and tavern.

The track of history is so long that over the small section of it to which our near-sighted gaze is confined it may seem that man has gained nothing. But to a being with stronger vision—to a Martian with a telescope, if you will—it may be quite plain that man is far ahead of where he was ten thousand or twenty thousand years ago. In our struggle to gain what we call civilization for want of a better word, to supplant barbarism with reason, are we not like a party of explorers pushing through a vast tropical jungle to the sea? Caught in the tangled vegetation, struggling from one thicket only to find another ahead, they may conclude that there is no ocean and stop to die, while a man watching them from a balloon above knows that their goal is just ahead. We, in our march for progress, must keep stout hearts, for we may have come further than we dream. Certainly the burning of a city would not have horrified the world a thousand years ago as the burning of Louvain shocked it the other day. And cynics who gloat over the disregard of nations for the rules of warfare to-day, should remember that it is not long since there was not even a pretension to regulate the game of killing men.

As for fixing the responsibility for this war, it is easy and popular to blame one or two men or one or two nations. But that will not do. One or two nations may have planted the germs of trouble, they may have been responsible for the outbreak of the disease in a limited area; but it will not do to blame them for its rapid spread over most of the civilized world.

The fault is in the system—the system that demands that nations shall plunge into a war one after another to keep the sides even, to "maintain the balance of power," as the glib phrase goes.

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Under the system in vogue, under the accepted political philosophy of the militaristic nations, it is eminently right that every nation in the war today should be in it. Once Austria had attacked Serbia, the system demanded that Russia should side with the latter. Russia's presence in the fight made it imperative for Germany to plunge in; and to preserve the everlasting balance, England, France, and Japan felt called upon to enter the arena. Other motives may be given, and doubtless exist. England declared she must fight to protect little Belgium. But she was frank in saying that she was not concerned in the fate of small Serbia, powerless before great Austria. While Great Britain is to be commended for her defense of Belgium, the fact cannot be ignored that one of her motives at least is similar to an impelling motive of Germany and Japan—to keep the balance of power. Under the militaristic "system" those nations which cannot obtain a preponderance of power for themselves are eager to keep a preponderance of power out of the hands of their rivals.

We have tried two methods of keeping the international peace, and both have failed. We have tried putting each nation on its honor not to disturb the peace for unjust cause, or not to disturb it for any cause before submitting the issues to an impartial tribunal. But we are a long way yet from the day when the moral sense of nations will be sufficient guarantee of peace, if indeed, it ever will be. We have also tried the system which would suppress each nation by the threat or use of force by others. This is the system of alliances and balances, which has just been responsible for the development of a world war from a petty local squabble.

The third method is the police method. The advocates of this say that, just as individuals are induced to behave by the presence of national or civic police, so nations could be held in line by a strong international police. They point out that, as most individuals prefer private vengeance to the judgments of a law court, so do most nations, and that an international court is comparatively useless without a police arm to drag offenders before it. In the concrete, the proposal is that all peacefully inclined nations unite in a pact to stand together against all turbulent nations, making common cause against the disturbers when the latter refuse to submit to the decrees of arbitration. It is suggested that the united nations disarm to the point where their combined armament gives a fair margin of superiority over the combined armaments of all nations outside the peace pact.

The proposal sounds plausible. If it is a dream, it has more elements of practicality in it than the other dreams of peace advocates. Certainly it is worth trying, and, if the effect of the present war is to so disgust the great nations engaged in it with carnage and destruction that a sufficient number agree to enter this experiment for peace to afford it a fair chance of success, the horror and suffering and loss will not have been in vain and the great war will not be "rounded off into an episode having no connection with the future."

It is not the purpose of this book, however, to advocate any doctrine or dogma of either peace or war. Its purpose is rather to encourage those into whose hands it may come to look, on their own account, into the possible tendencies and developments of this war, and to give them a little more background upon which to base their own opinions than is given by the daily papers.

For certainly a changed Europe will come out of the crucible—indeed a changed world—for the alchemy of war is far-reaching in its effects. The work of past congresses and the decrees of past treaties will be set aside and the map of the world remade.

GREGORY MASON.

## Nine Nations Go To War

June 28—A Servian fanatic assassinated Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife, the Duchess of Hohenburg, at Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia.

July 23—Austria-Hungary sent an ultimatum to Servia demanding the punishment of the assassins and the abandonment of anti-Austrian propaganda in Servia, and demanding a satisfactory reply within forty-eight hours.

July 24—Russia joined Servia in asking for an extension of time for the latter's reply to the Austrian ultimatum.

July 25—Servia agreed to all the conditions in the ultimatum except that one providing that Austrian officials should participate in the inquiry to be conducted into the assassination of the Archduke.

July 26—Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Minister, proposed that a mediation conference be held in London by the diplomatic representatives of Germany, Italy, France and England. France and Italy accepted the proposal, Germany declined it.

July 28—Austria-Hungary declared war on Servia.

July 29—Belgrade was bombarded by Austro-Hungarian artillery and gunboats. France, Russia and Germany began preparations for war.

July 30—Emperor William asked the Czar to stop mobilizing his troops within twenty-four hours.

July 31—In a final attempt to stop a European war Czar Nicholas, Emperor William and King George exchanged personal telegrams. The German Government asked France if she would remain neutral in the event of a war between Russia and Germany, and demanded an answer within eighteen hours.

August 1—Germany declared war on Russia. Italy announced that she would remain neutral.

August 2—German soldiers entered Luxemburg, in violation of her neutrality, and without waiting for a declaration of war other Germans invaded France. At the same time Russians crossed the German frontier.

August 3—Germany asked Belgium to permit the passage of German troops through Belgian territory. Belgium refused.

August 4—England declared war on Germany and began to mobilize her army and navy. President Wilson proclaimed the neutrality of the United States. The Germans invaded Belgium.

August 5—President Wilson, acting under Article III of the Hague Convention, tendered his good offices to the warring nations.

August 6—Austria-Hungary declared war on Russia.

August 8—Montenegro declared war on Austria-Hungary. Portugal announced her readiness to support Great Britain.

August 9—Servia declared war on Germany.

August 10—France declared war on Austria-Hungary.

August 13—England declared war on Austria-Hungary.

August 16—Japan asked the Germans to reply by August 23 to an ultimatum which demanded the withdrawal of all German war vessels from Far East waters and the surrender to Japan by September 15 of the territory of Kiauchau.

August 23—Japan declared war on Germany.

August 25—Austria-Hungary declared war on Japan.

## An Analysis of the International Forces and Causes Involved in the War\*

**A**USTRIA, a great imperial European Power, with a population of fifty millions and a fighting force of about one million men, has attacked Serbia, an ancient but small inland kingdom in the Balkan Peninsula, with a population of three million and an army of two hundred thousand men. Why does a conflict, apparently so unequal, threaten to plunge all Europe into one of the most terrible and momentous wars of history? To answer this question it is necessary to take a brief glance at European history, and to consider the political and racial factors which have been instrumental in making that history. We propose in this article to describe briefly these factors under their national and geographical divisions.

### SERVIA.

The racial history of the Servians or Serbs in the Balkan Peninsula can be traced for fifteen hundred years. The Serbs are of Slavic stock, and are thus racially related to millions of the population of Russia. The Serbs or Servians and the Bulgarians each established great empires in the Balkan Peninsula in the Middle Ages. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the Ottomans or Turks, swarming towards Europe from western Asia, overwhelmed and conquered both the Serbs and the Bulgarians. The Turks even conquered Hungary and besieged Vienna. They were, however, finally repulsed from Vienna, and the aid which the Servians gave to the defense of Vienna—a defense which prevented the Ottomans from occupying and ravaging central Europe—was very great. "It was the Serb Bakich who saved Vienna," says a Hungarian historian.

It is one of the ironies of history that the people who played so great a part in saving the Austrian capital are now being threatened by the armies of that capital. For several centuries, during the occupation of the Balkan Peninsula by Turkey, Serbia was a Turkish province, but she never lost her racial consciousness and her national aspirations. In 1878 Serbia was declared independent of Turkey by the Treaty of Berlin. Since that time Turkey's power in the Balkan Peninsula has grown steadily less. A year ago Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria united in driving Turkey still farther out of the Balkan territory and into Constantinople. Unfortunately for the Balkan people, political ambition and national jealousies brought the Greeks, Servians, and the Bulgarians into conflict. Their successful partnership against the Turks was destroyed by quarrels and bickering. Instead of working together for a federation of the Balkan people, each nation strove for supremacy. The Greek, the Bulgarian, and the Servian each thought that he should be the head of a great Balkan empire, and they thus threw away the prize that was almost within their grasp.

Servia, whose northern boundary touches the southern boundary of the Austro-Hungarian Empire on the Danube, has long felt the encroaching pressure of Austria. In 1908 the Austrian Imperial Government annexed the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which provinces are largely Servian in population and sympathy. The Servians have long suspected, and events have justified that suspicion, that Austria desires to annex Servia itself.

\* Reprinted from *The Outlook* of August 8, 1914.

(Several of the articles in this brochure were written for numbers of *The Outlook* which were published during the early stages of the war, before important events which are now history had been more than prophesied. This does not, however, detract from the essential interest and value of the articles.—The Editor.)



On June 28 last the Austrian Crown Prince was assassinated in the capital of Bosnia. The assassin was a Servian. Austria asserts that the assassination was the result of an active conspiracy of Servians. She made demands upon the Servian Government, all of which were assented to by Servia with one exception. That exception was the refusal of Servia to permit Austro-Hungarian officials to sit upon boards of inquiry regarding acts of conspiracy by Servians against Austria. It seems to us clear that no government can preserve its self-respect or autonomy if it permits officers of a foreign government to sit in its own courts. Nevertheless, on receipt of Servia's note yielding to Austria on every point save this one, Austria promptly declared war.

The assassination of the Crown Prince is the occasion, but not the cause, of the war. The folly and wickedness of assassination as a method of establishing national liberty were never more vividly illustrated than in this case. However much Austria may have desired to invade Servia and thus to control the Balkan Peninsula, she never would have dared to do so in the face of Europe if it had not been for the very plausible opportunity given to her by the criminal murder of her Crown Prince.

#### AUSTRIA.

Austria has existed as a state for a thousand years. This state was originally formed in the region of the Danube during the conflicts between the Franks and the Slavs. The House of Hapsburg, to which the present Emperor, Francis Joseph I, belongs, has ruled Austria for six hundred years. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, which consists of a political union between the Kingdom of Hungary and Austria, was established in its present dual form in 1867; but Hungary has been under the control of the Hapsburgs for many centuries. The policy of the Empire is, however, dictated by Austrian statesmen and the Austrian ruling house, and the name Austria is commonly, as it is here, employed in an imperial sense.

Austria from earliest times has been the most reactionary Power in Europe, and is so to-day. "Hapsburg despotism and reaction" is a phrase used by no less an authority than Dr. Andrew D. White to characterize the policies and acts of Austria during the nineteenth century. Prince Metternich, the great Austrian Prime Minister of that century, was the Machiavelli of modern times. It was he who promulgated the policy which led to Austria's despotic and cruel domination of Italy, a despotism which was thrown off by Cavour, the great maker of modern Italy. Those who desire to understand the ethics and philosophy of the foreign policy of the Hapsburgs and the school of Metternich have only to read such books as the memoirs of Silvio Pellico, or the life of Cavour by William Roscoe Thayer, or the essay on Cavour in Dr. Andrew D. White's absorbing volume entitled "Seven Great Statesmen." Austria, under the influence of the Metternich school of diplomacy, has constantly exerted an obstructive force against political liberty and national freedom. The arrogance of Austria towards Italy and the European Powers at the Congress of Paris in 1856 has been immortalized by a witticism of Bismarck. Count von Buol was the Austrian representative at that Congress. His vanity, assertiveness, and despotism annoyed Bismarck beyond measure, who finally exclaimed: "Could I be for one hour as great as Count von Buol thinks he is all the time, my glory would be forever established before God and man."

Austria was expelled from Italy, although she still possesses important seaports on the Adriatic. Her desire for territory in the Balkan Peninsula is not only the result of political ambition, but springs from her conscious endeavor to reach the Mediterranean and to prevent Russia, her hereditary enemy on the north, from reaching it.

The Balkan States, of which perhaps Servia is the pivot, are in a direct line between Europe and the Orient. A great imperial power occupying the whole

Balkan Peninsula would be in a position of strategic control of, or at least of extraordinary influence over, the Suez Canal, the commerce of the Mediterranean, and a future all-railway route through Persia to India and to China. Salonika, on the Aegean Sea, now in Greek territory, is one of the finest harbors on the Mediterranean. A railway through Servia connects this splendid port with Austria and Germany.

A projected canal may in the early future unite the Danube and Salonika. If this project is ever carried out, commerce may come down the Danube and its tributary canals and rivers, even from central and western Germany, and reach the Mediterranean without passing the famous iron gates of the Danube or being subjected to the delays and dangers of the long passage through the Black Sea. Austria's manufacturing and commercial interests are growing. It is not perhaps surprising that her rulers should wish to control the territory of the Balkan Peninsula, in order to be masters of this route to the Mediterranean. She once tried to reach the Mediterranean through Italy and failed; she is now trying again (since Turkey has been forced to abdicate the Aegean seacoast) to reach it through Salonika.

#### RUSSIA.

Russia's motives in this threatened European conflict are partly racial, partly political, and partly commercial. As has already been pointed out, her population is largely Slavic and her racial sympathies are with the Slavic peoples of the Balkan States and of certain parts of Hungary. For years Russia has been trying to get a foothold on the Mediterranean. Russia's ships can now reach the Atlantic only through the ice-bound Baltic Sea or through the Dardanelles out of the Black Sea, and the latter passage is forbidden to her warships by international agreement.

In the middle of the last century Russia's advance to the Mediterranean was made by an attack upon Turkey. It was believed by the European Powers that she hoped to occupy Constantinople. Great Britain was terrified lest Russia should obtain possession of Constantinople, the Danubian provinces, and Balkan territory, thus establishing a position from which she might menace Great Britain's Indian and Oriental possessions and obstruct the English route to the East. This led to the great Crimean War, in which Great Britain, France, and Turkey, with the plucky assistance of the little Italian Kingdom of Sardinia, put an end to Russia's ambitions in that direction. Even if Russia no longer entertains the hope that she may at some time in the future grasp Constantinople, or obtain territory on the Mediterranean through the sympathetic assistance of the Slavic peoples of the Balkan Peninsula, she is unwilling that the Germanic people of Austria and the German Empire, who are in a sense her hereditary enemies, shall possess the dominion and power in the Near East which she coveted fifty years ago and failed to obtain. For this reason she is protesting against the invasion of Servia by Austrian troops, and if she decides to make her protest one of arms instead of diplomacy a general European war is almost inevitable.

#### GERMANY.

For Germany cannot permit Russia to attack Austria without flying to Austria's defense. In the first place, the German people are liberty-loving and have developed political freedom to a high state since the days of Bismarck. They look with distrust upon the despotic bureaucracy of Russia, and Russia with her enormous population and resources is always a possible enemy of Germany on the north. France threatens Germany on the south. On the west the commercial and political tension with England has almost reached the breaking point more than once during recent years. It is necessary, therefore, for Germany to preserve peace and even intimate friendship with Austria on

her eastern frontier. The Austrians are Germanic, and it may well be that German statesmen look forward to the time when German Austria will become an integral part of a greater German Empire. In such a case, if Austria controls the Balkan States, with a long seacoast on the Mediterranean, Germany will then have what she now lacks—namely, the great harbors and free sea way which will enable her to develop her maritime power. It is entirely probable that the German Emperor sincerely desires to preserve peace in Europe, but he will not sacrifice either the future safety or the future expansion of his Empire to Russia and France for the sake of peace.

#### ENGLAND.

England is the factor next in importance in this struggle of the European Powers to control the Balkan Peninsula as a strategic commercial and military point between the Orient and the Occident. She no longer fears either the intention or the capacity of Russia to take India away from her. She knows that Russia is too deeply engrossed in the development of eastern Siberia and Manchuria and in her rivalry with Japan to give any practical attention to India. But while England's fear of Russia has decreased, the commercial conflict between Great Britain and Germany has been steadily growing in intensity. In view of this struggle, can England with equanimity look upon an enlarged German Empire stretching from Holland on the west to the Ægean Sea on the southeast? Moreover, the English people are sincerely sympathetic with the democratic struggle of the Servians, Bulgarians, and Greeks. It was due very largely to the stand which Great Britain took under Lord Palmerston, prompted almost wholly by a genuine admiration for the Italian people in their struggle for freedom, that enabled Cavour to expel the Austrians from the Italian peninsula and to unify Italy. In a war between Germany and Austria on the one hand and Russia and Serbia on the other, it seems probable that England, as a choice of evils, would prefer Russian domination of the Balkan Peninsula to a Germanic domination of that territory.

#### FRANCE.

France has less at stake in the diplomatic contest over the Balkan Peninsula than any other of the national factors. She possesses an ample seacoast on both shores of the Mediterranean. Her Oriental possessions or colonies are not of sufficient importance to justify her in fighting against the partition or occupation of Balkan territory. But should diplomatic friction burst into the terrible flame of war, she has vital interests at stake. She still grieves deeply over her defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, and she passionately desires not only the reacquisition of Alsace-Lorraine, but the opportunity to measure her strength again with Germany. Moreover, she is an open ally of Russia, and there exists a triple understanding between Great Britain, Russia, and France, formed to oppose any possible aggression of the combination between Germany, Austria, and Italy, known as the Triple Alliance. The natural desire of France to unite with Russia in attacking Germany in case of a general war would be explicable, if not excusable.

#### ITALY.

It is true that Italy is a party to the political agreement between Germany, Austria, and herself, known as the Triple Alliance. It is hard to conceive, however, how the Italian people and Italian statesmen can possibly take any share with Austria in her attack upon the Servian people. Only fifty years have gone by—a short period in the history of a nation—since Austria did her best to thwart the unification of Italy, and Austrian statesmen and officials treated Italian patriots with a cruelty and mediæval barbarism unsurpassed in modern history. Moreover, in an alignment of European powers it is at least reason-