FRANCO-GERMAN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
1871-1939

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THESIS

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My purpose is to sketch briefly the diplomatic background of the existing relations between France and Germany from 1871 to 1939. I have told the story chronologically, because I believe that we must follow events as they unfold themselves if we are to understand why statesmen made their decisions. Where praise or blame seemed necessary, I have judged, not according to the standards of today, but by the standards which the statesmen themselves set; the reader must judge of the moral or practical worth of these standards.

Statesmen during this period were trying to solve a riddle: how can desirable changes in the international status quo be effected, and undesirable changes prevented without recourse of war? The attempts to solve this riddle have been made the central theme of the story and have dictated the distribution of emphasis.

I have attempted to mass all the important facts that I could find on Franco-German Diplomatic Relations from 1871 to 1939 without self-interests or prejudice to either of the two nations. My intentions were to seek a general knowledge of the drift of Franco-German Diplomatic affairs during this period of seventy years.
There were times when I felt it absolutely necessary to bring in the diplomatic affairs of England and other nations, but this was only when they affected either of the two countries, or both.

Very little has been said about the colonies or territories of the two nations, with the exception of Morocco which was very important in determining their relations from a viewpoint of diplomatic importance; the others seem insignificant.

Stress has been placed on the Triple Alliance, the Triple entente, the Dual Alliance, Morocco, Congress of Berlin, Fall of Bismarck, Rise of William II, The Commune and the Treaty of Berlin: all following the war in 1871; and reparations, the Saar, the Rhine, armament and disarmament: following the war in 1918.
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CHAPTER I

THE ERA OF BISMARCK

At the end of the Franco-Prussian war the French people were willing to submit to any terms. The French army had been severely beaten by that of Germany; therefore, Bismarck felt that now was the time to put France in her place and to see that she remained there. This was achieved by three methods; first, by taking the two industrial states, Alsace and Lorraine from France; second, by placing a huge indemnity of one billion dollars on her to be paid in three years; and third, by isolating France diplomatically. To do this he set about working for alliances with neighboring countries, the first attempt being with Russia and Austria as the League of the Three Emperors. This meeting was unsuccessful because after 1875 Russia, in sympathy with France, protested to Germany when she threatened the peace of Europe. Yet if France could have obtained fighting allies she might have gone to war in order to regain Alsace and Lorraine.

Bismarck played Russia and Austria against each other. He feared Russian influence in the Balkans as a tendency toward Slavic domination of Europe. Still he could not permit Austria to increase her power because this would tend to drive Russia further toward France. This is what happened at the Congress
of Berlin, Russia being greatly disappointed at the outcome.

One of the major internal difficulties of France was the political wrangling within the national assembly. A president resigned and a new one was chosen so often that hardly anything could be accomplished. In Germany, however, the circumstances were different. Bismarck remained in power from the end of the Franco-Prussian War until 1890 and was, therefore, able to cope with Germany's problems more successfully. However, Bismarck's ideas of alliances did not coincide with those of William I. It is here that he had his major difficulties.

A point of importance in Bismarck's diplomatic policy was brought out by the first uprising in Morocco. It is very clear that Bismarck's colonial policy was only to keep France occupied and thereby release the pressure on the question of Alsace and Lorraine. He proved several times that he was not interested in colonial expansion.

The terms laid down in the Treaty of Frankfort, though severe, were signed May 10, 1871. France was forced to cede to Germany Alsace and a large part of Lorraine, including the important fortress of Metz. She must pay an absolutely unprecedented war indemnity of five thousand million francs (a billion dollars) within three years. She was to support a German army of occupation, which should be gradually withdrawn as the installments of the indemnity were paid.¹ By defeating France

¹C. D. Hazen, Fifty Years of Europe, 1870-1919, p. 27.
and forcing upon her a humiliating peace in 1871, Germany attained her political unity and at once secured a position of unquestioned weight in the councils of the great powers. 2

France had to set about organizing a suitable form of government. A Republic was set up with Thiers as the president and it was very successful. "The republic is the government which divides us least," 3 for this reason the Republic was chosen and Thiers made its leader. His most important task was that of getting the Germans out of the country. Under his skillful leadership, the payment of the enormous indemnity was carried out. In September, 1873, the last installment was paid and the last German soldier went home. France realized the importance of the reconstruction of the army at all personal sacrifices. A law was passed in 1872 instituting compulsory military training. Five years of service in the active army were henceforth to be required in most cases.

On January 5, 1872, the newly appointed ambassador to Berlin, M. Elie de Contaut-Biron, said to Bismarck:

I am charged by M. Thiers expressly to declare the fixed intention of the government is to maintain peace and to discharge the terms of the treaty. As a member of the assembly, I can add that the entire assembly shares these views and that any warlike intention is far from their thoughts. 4

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2 Charles Seymour, The Diplomatic Background of the War, 1870-1914, p. 4.
Though the statement can hardly be true of individual members of the legislature, it was true of the official policy. Any other plan at this time would have been folly. Jules Grevy, then President of the Chamber of Deputies, said to an Alsatian who had chosen to return to France and had been elected to the Chamber:

I know you are for war. Well, I tell you, my friend who voted against the conclusion of peace, France must not think of war; she must accept a fait accompli; she must renounce Alsace. Do not believe the fools who tell you the opposite and who are the reason that our misfortunes have been aggravated by a hopeless struggle.  

While part of France was cherishing revenge, and the government and the people were putting their house in order, Bismarck was impressed by the sincerity and peaceful intentions of the President, Thiers, whom he had learned to respect during the negotiation of the treaty. As long as that moderating influence was present in France, the Chancellor believed Germany had nothing to fear. But Bismarck realized that in a short time France would again be a powerful nation, and he immediately started working to get some sort of assurance that Germany would be safe. In 1872 he was unsuccessful in organizing Germany, Austria, and Russia into the League of the Three Emperors. Relations between Germany and France became strained in 1875 when it appeared that war might again break out. Bismarck was also afraid that France and Russia were going to draw up an alliance against Germany.

\[5\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 11.}\]
In 1873 Thiers was ousted as head of the French Government. It was the year of the proclamation of the French Republic, and the Germans saw in this and in a vote passed by the French Legislative Chambers, which increased the army of France, the clearest indication that the conflicting parties in that country were coming to an understanding in preparation for a war of revenge. In answer, Bismarck let drop a disquieting phrase to the effect that he would not wait until France was ready for war and that he knew that she would be ready in two years. Doubtless he hoped to warn her that any resumption of an aggressive policy on her part would not be tolerated by Germany.

But it is believed by some historians that the German army party, led by Moltke, was more serious in its intentions and was determined to finish once and for all with France. They doubtless believed that an eventual war was a certainty and that in eighteen months France would be able to wage it on equal terms.

From the spring of 1873 to the summer of 1875 a series of crisis in both countries strained relations between the two. The German union, made safe from external aggression by Bismarck's consummate skill, seemed to Bismarck to be endangered from within. Loyal Catholics, eager for the restoration of temporal power and ready to accept the new doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope, had organized to bring pressure

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6 Seymour, op. cit., p. 23.
7 Gabriel Hanotaux, Contemporary France, II, p. 410.
8 Seymour, op. cit., p. 23.
upon the Chancellor to further their own interests. To Bismarck the political activity of the churchmen and their followers was equivalent to the formation of a state within a state. It was a question of unity within the empire. Consequently, he launched the Kulturkampf. The first of the Falk Laws was passed on May 9, 1873. The clergy refused to obey and the Pope declared the laws null and void.

It was in this month that the Party on the Right in France succeeded in overthrowing Thiers and elected MacMahon president. Church influences dominated the party in power. Bismarck suspected the ministry of holding Ultramontane views and though he assured Contaut-Biron that there was no occasion for a change in policy toward France, he demanded new letters of credit for the Ambassador. The situation was precisely the one that he feared, augmented moreover by the presence in Germany of a strong opposition controlled by the Church and feeling itself persecuted. The French gave open encouragement to their German brethren by speaking and writing in defense of the defiance of the laws of the empire. Bismarck became alarmed and angry. His policy at home was becoming increasingly difficult to enforce, and the country grew more and more troubled. Other governments had refused to intervene to stop the protests of their own bishops. Moreover, there was opposition in the Reichstag to his plan to reorganize the army. His demand that France silence the bishops, coincided
with his efforts to force the army bill through the Reichstag. Contaut-Biron wrote that the excitement over a war of revenge in Germany was aroused by the Chancellor in hope of obtaining an anti-Ulramontane election and the military law. Still he urged his government to quiet the press and the bishops and to talk less for awhile about increasing armaments.

So far as Bismarck's intentions went it is probable that he merely hoped to frighten France by his saber-rattling and that he found a "pledge of peace in not allowing France the certainty of not being attacked, no matter what she did." 

It seems plausible that Bismarck was planning a war in 1875. This contention is based on the grounds that Bismarck's Kulturkampf was failing at home; that his foreign policy was nowhere satisfactory; and that France had established a stable government and had found sympathy in Europe. The situation was so uncertain that the historian feels that Bismarck, obsessed as he was by fear of coalitions, would not have been Bismarck if he had not attempted to clear away the uncertainty by making a test of strength. For this the French military law gave the opportunity. The explanation seems rather easy. If Bismarck were in any degree conscious of the encouragement which Russia was giving France or of the impatience of the other powers, it seems incredible that a statesman of his genius would deliberately have invited humiliation. Moreover, such an explanation fails to take into account the influence

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9 Seymour, op. cit., p. 25.
of internal affairs on foreign policy. After all Bismarck was not the only adviser of the Emperor. Von Moltke had the final word on military affairs. Doubtless he hoped to warn her that any resumption of an aggressive policy on her part would not be tolerated by Germany.

But it is possible that the German army party, led by Moltke, were more serious in their intentions and were determined to finish once and for all with France. They doubtless believed that an eventual war was a certainty and that in eighteen months France would be able to wage it on nearly equal terms. According to some of the articles published at the time, Germany could not believe that Europe would be tranquil so long as a struggle were possible to survive and recommence the duel between Germany and France. Germany was troubled by the consciousness of having only half crushed her enemy and of being able to defend herself only by constant watchfulness.

Whether or not the German military party was really determined to crush France at this opportunity has never been definitely established. The French Foreign Minister telegraphed the fears of France to London and St. Petersburg, with the results that France was saved from the peril of a German attack, if peril there was, by the protests of England and especially of Russia. At St. Petersburg the Tsar assured the

\[10\textit{Ibid.}\]
French Ambassador that he would prevent any such attack as France feared on the part of Germany, and he immediately took steps to let the German government know his sentiments. Berlin at once became pacific, and the danger of war between France and Germany passed. But the crisis was of the utmost importance, since it proved definitely that the understanding built up between the three Emperors could not be utilized for the purpose of intimidating France.

Bismarck had been reduced to the necessity of declaring that he had never intended war, of assuring the Emperor William that the whole disturbance had been the fault of Moltke, and of dropping all references to a French reduction of armaments, or to a general reduction of which the French should form part.11

The great scare was over; and it remained for British and Russian statesmen to appropriate so much as possible of the credit for having brought about such a satisfactory result. According to Bismarck's own subsequent account, he had replied to Gortchakoff's, who was the Russian ambassador to Germany, eager officiousness by almost savage ridicule, while commenting on Queen Victoria's remonstrance with polite irony. There can accordingly be no doubt that he was conscious of having suffered a severe diplomatic defeat, which left him much annoyed with the conduct of the British Government and more bitterly contemptuous than ever towards Gortchakoff. As to the question of Bismarck's actual responsibility for the

crisis of 1875, it need only be implied that he sought to pick a quarrel with France. It would have been extraordinary had the general judgment to the contrary, in which so competent and so cool an observer as Lord Derby shared, been utterly at fault. Bismarck afterwards ventured to pretend that, by drawing attention to the desire for war which existed in some quarters in France he had done his best to preserve peace.

At the beginning of the following year, conditions in the Near East were giving rise to war talk. Discussion reverted to the increase in the French army. Thiers insisted to Hohenlohe, who was the German Ambassador to France, that he did not believe Germany wanted to make war on France. He did not see what they would gain. They had enough French territory, and to get more would cost too much. Hohenlohe then spoke of the desire of France to regain the lost provinces and Thiers demanded eagerly,

Where do you see a war party? There is no one here who wants war with Germany. The Marshall who now stands at the lead, though he does not belong there is not thinking of war; he thinks only of keeping his position. Gambetta is preparing to become president, and I have always been for peace.12

Then he added that France wanted a large army only to fill her place worthily in Europe and not to engage in a war of revenge.

The reserve with which the Foreign Secretary met these assurances of the leader of the Republican party is in marked

12 Mitchell, op. cit., p. 54.
contrast to the cordial attitude of the German government during the preceding year. The immediate cause of the closer relations was the Near Eastern question. Negotiations had been under way between Vienna and St. Petersburg which alarmed Bismarck. He saw the possibility that the two powers might unite and draw France into their entente. To permit the Tsar to extend his influence further into the Balkans was to increase the old German fear of Slavic domination of Europe. On the other hand, to permit Austria to increase her power there without compensatory measure for Russia would be to antagonize the Tsar and drive him toward France. In that case Germany would be menaced on both fronts. His solution to the problem was to join Austria and Russia in drawing up a note to the powers recommending definite reform to the Turkish government and to win France, England, and Italy to support this policy. Decazes, fearing that the Russian intrigues would involve Great Britain in a conflict which would precipitate a general war, was ready to work with the three powers for the preservation of peace. For that reason he served as intermediary between Austria and Russia on one hand and Great Britain on the other.

During all this period France stood consistently by the side of Germany, Russia, and Austria. Emperor William expressed his appreciation to Contaut-Biron. "We are well satisfied with all your government has done, with the support it has
given. England has tried to draw you to her side, but you have not separated from us."¹³ Nor did they separate during the feverish months that followed the Bulgarian atrocities. Having purchased the neutrality of Austria by the Reichstadt Agreement which promised her Bosnia in case his armies liberated Bulgaria, the Tsar notified Downing Street that Russia had no desire to take Constantinople, but that if the Powers did not force Turkey to execute reforms, he would act alone.

The war broke out between Russia and Turkey, and Count Biron was sent to Germany. In an interview with the emperor he declared that

France had no thought of aggression and its every interests lay in the conservation of peace. We are ready to make a public declaration in the form suitable to your Majesty. I believe if the two governments make a declaration of that kind one to the other, the effect would be excellent, would disperse all disquiet and reaffirm the general peace.¹⁴

Early in 1878, after defeating the Turks, the Russians advanced upon Constantinople, and the Sultan was obliged to conclude the humiliating Treaty of San Stefano. The Congress of Berlin was called to settle the Anglo-Austro-Russian problem. Because of German opinion Bismarck knew he must support Austria-Hungaria against Russia. Thus, when the Congress of Berlin opened under Bismarck's presidency, he had no real difficulty in making peace between the nations and satisfying

¹³Mitchell, op. cit., p. 55.
¹⁴Ibid., p. 58.
German pride. From France and Italy there was no reason to look for any but a pacific attitude; and Great Britain had settled her affairs before hand with the belligerent Powers. Not only was Russian Pan-Slavism disappointed by the result of the Congress, but Russian statesmen remained sore at the very limited success it had achieved. More especially was this the feeling of Gorchakov, who had insisted upon appearing as one of the Tsar's plenipotentiaries, although only as second to Schouvaloff, the real representative of Russian policy on this occasion.

France returned from the Congress of Berlin with her position greatly strengthened abroad. She had entered into closer relations with all the powers, and she had laid the basis for her future colonial expansion. The Congress of Berlin left France and Germany in better relations than at any time since the war of 1870-1871.15

In 1877 a new French ambassador to Germany was appointed, Comte Saint-Vallier. The general satisfaction over the new appointment was evident. During the months between his arrival and the calling of the Congress of Berlin, Count Saint-Vallier worked in close association with the Chancellor. He seems to have been consulted upon every phase of that project. The confidence which he inspired in the Emperor and in Bismarck lead to a partial reversal of a previous policy. France was occupied with preparations for a universal exposition of agricultural products, industry, and fine arts.

15R. W. Wiencofeld, Franco-German Relations, 1878-1885, p. 54.
to be held in Paris in May, 1878. Several years before Germany
had been invited by the President of the Republic to participate
in the exhibition. Bismarck had refused because he feared that
a German exhibit might lead to demonstrations which in violat-
ing French hospitality would affect German national honor and
destroy the good relations between the two governments. He
had instructed Prince Hohenlohe in declining the invitation
to deny the political motive and to emphasize the economic
fact that Germany had not received returns from the Vienna
and Philadelphia expositions commensurate with the money and
labor expended. The German newspapers had on the whole ex-
pressed themselves in favor of participation, especially
those of the south. In France there was considerable ill
feeling over the refusal. Now in March, 1878, Saint-Vallier
asked Germany to send some works of art to the exposition,
if she could do no more. This time both the Emperor and Bis-
marck approved. The Chancellor agreed with the French Ambas-
sador that German exhibits would have a good effect on the
public sentiment of both countries. Thus after about ten
years of strained relations between Germany and France, the
two governments had started cooperating and extending cour-
tesies to each other.

In 1879 the Republicans in France were able to gain a
majority in both houses of parliament and began a program of
reform. At first President MacMahon yielded, but when the
cabinet presented to him a decree relieving army corps commanders of their duties he refused to sign it. He then submitted his resignation to the national assembly. That body immediately chose a new executive, namely, Jules Grevy, the president of the Chamber of Deputies. President Grevy, desirous of making his foreign policy understood abroad, charged Waddington with the formation of a new ministry, and this act was received by the continental powers as an assurance that the president desired to keep France at peace. In order to emphasize his peaceful tendencies Grevy informed the senate and the chamber of deputies that "the government will continue to maintain and extend the good relations which exist between France and foreign powers, and to contribute in this manner to the establishment of general peace."¹⁶ That the relations between France and Germany were not at all affected by the change was evident. The next year there was a dispute between Greece and Turkey over boundaries. They tried to settle it among themselves but were unsuccessful, so a conference was called at Berlin to settle the question. France was anxious for the meeting to succeed and, accordingly, made known to Germany how important her future support would be. This was promised by Hohenlohe, who subsequently presided over the conference of ambassadors. This body met from June 16 to July 1, concluding its discussions by recommending

¹⁶Wienefeld, op. cit., p. 56.
a boundary closely following that of the Treaty of Berlin. The Porte was advised of this new demarcation in the collective vote of July 15, 1880, but due to the general indecision of the powers nothing was accomplished. The proceedings indicate that Germany gave full support to the proposals advocated by France, which was that the question be arbitrated but this was also unsuccessful. Finally a conference of ambassadors at Constantinople brought about a settlement, and on May 24, 1881, a convention was signed between Turkey and Greece whereby the latter gained nearly all of Thessaly, while the former retained Epirus with the exception of Arta.

Probably the most important result of the Congress of Berlin was the estrangement of Germany and Russia, for the latter considered that she had been deprived of the fruits of victory chiefly through German action.

Bismarck, long harrassed by the "nightmare of coalitions," regarded these Russian manœuvres with anxiety, and finally decided to seek an alliance with Austria. The alliance drawn up between Germany and Austria was purely defensive since they thought their sovereigns would accept such a treaty, and Francis Joseph gladly consented, but William II would not. Notwithstanding this the German Chancellor went to Vienna September 21 in order to renew his discussion with Andrassy, Prime Minister of Austria. The subsequent negotiations resulted in a defensive alliance directed against Russia.
Bismarck put forth every effort to persuade his master to accept the treaty but with ill-success. Not until the Chancellor threatened to resign did William accept the agreement.

The Austro-German alliance must be regarded as having been primarily with respect to Russia, for France received only secondary consideration. Before leaving for Vienna Bismarck ascertained from Hohenlohe the exact temper of France and how the journey to the Austrian capitol would be interpreted. The reply received was satisfactory, and then the Chancellor informed Paris that during his sojourn in Vienna he would assure the French ambassador of Germany's most sincerely peaceful feelings.

Despite these expressions of good-will the year 1880 witnessed frequent hostile manifestations between France and Germany. Early in the year a bill had been submitted to the German bundesrat whereby the army was to be augmented in view of the increase in population, and later Bismarck resorted to his favorite method of emphasizing the threatened dangers from Russia and France in order to secure the passage of the bill in the reichstag. The French press received the news of the army bill with reserve, but the unexpected summons of Hohenlohe to Berlin caused some concern in Paris. At first it was thought he was returning merely to attend the debates upon the military bill, but it was soon ascertained that the
Chancellor desired him to assume the position of secretary of state for foreign affairs. This recall intensified the feeling caused by the army bill, since the presence of the German ambassador in Paris was considered a guarantee of peace. Bismarck, on the other hand, affected to regard it as conclusive that good relations existed between France and Germany, otherwise, Hohenlohe would not have been recalled. 17 The latter gave similar assurance to Saint-Vallier and Freycinet, new French ambassador, promising to return to Paris in September.

Soon after the alarm of February and March the relations between the two countries became more cordial. Bismarck did nothing to aggravate the difference between France and Russia arising out of the Hartman affair, but endeavored to facilitate an understanding. 18 Events in Great Britain also caused a change in German policy, for the Chancellor drew nearer to Russia in order to prevent a British move in that direction.

Gortschakoff and Bismarck frankly discussed Russo-German

17 Ibid., p. 69.

18 Leo Hartman, a Russian Mihilist, was arrested in Paris upon the request of Russian authorities, since he was accused of being an instigator of the plot to assassinate the Tsar in Moscow December 1, 1879. The French Government was unconvinced of his identity and accordingly refused to extradite him. The Russian government became vexed and recalled Prince Orlov, the Russian ambassador to France; but Bismarck advised France not to withdraw her representative in St. Petersburg as a reply to Russia.
differences June 3, and affected a compromise reconciliation. At the same time the Chancellor assisted France with her north African enterprises in order to remove her thoughts from a war of revenge and to make her forget Alsace-Lorraine.

The policy of supporting France in Africa was well illustrated at the conference on Moroccan affairs which met in Madrid from May until July, 1880. The German government, having no interests in Morocco, informed Saint-Vallier that its delegate to the conference would be instructed to conform his conduct to that of his French colleague. Count Solms-Sonnenwalde, German ambassador in Madrid, was instructed that it was not necessary for Germany to place herself in the foreground, but "on account of general political reasons to go hand in hand with France who has justifiable interests to represent in Morocco by reason of her neighboring Algerian possessions." During the course of the conference the French government called upon Germany to give it further support, and this was accorded. The French President instructed Saint-Vallier July 2, to thank the German Chancellor for his support, and it was done without delay.

The friendly relations between France and Germany were suddenly disturbed by an incident that occurred at Cherbourg. President Grevy accompanied by Gambetta and many other dignitaries went to the city August 10, to bestow flags upon the

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19 Wienefeld, op. cit., p. 71.
navy and to review the fleet, and on the evening of the same day Gambetta delivered an address to a commercial group which resulted in exciting German opinion. The French statesman said in part:

For ten years not one word of rashness or temerity has escaped our lips. There are times in the history of people when right undergoes eclipses and it is then for nations to be masters of themselves. . . . They should wait in calmness with their hands and arms as free at home as abroad. Great reparation may issue from right. We or our children may hope for it, for the future is forbidden to none. . . . It is a necessity, when France has been seen to fall so low, to raise her up that she may resume her place in the world. If our hearts throb it is for this object and not in search of a sanguinary ideal; it is in order to retain intact what remains of France; it is that we may know whether there is in things here below an inevitable justice which will come at its due time.20

The German press seized upon this utterance as ample proof that France was patiently biding time and slowly maturing plans for revenge. The French minister of foreign affairs explained that France had emerged from the isolation to which events had condemned her, but that she would never undertake an adventurous foreign policy. Notwithstanding these peaceful assurances suspicion in Germany was not assuaged, in fact, it was made greater on account of the emperor’s address to his troops upon the anniversary of Sedan.

In 1883 both Bismarck and the military authorities continued to give their chief attention to Russia’s armaments.

20 Ibid., p. 72.
but it was against the revanche movement in France, in spite of Bismarck's earlier directions to neglect it, that they aroused public opinion. That the French chauvinist talked far more of German provocations and of Bismarck's aggressive purpose than of a French offensive did not make the professional zeal of General Thibaudin, France's energetic minister of war, less suspicious to German observers. The German press had not given heed to the "ceaseless war" waged by "the newspapers of all parties," but the conclusion was unescapable that the situation could not endure much longer without endangering peace. It is doubtless not a coincident that the "Kolnische Zeitung," a German newspaper, decided on the same day that France's fortification of her Eastern frontier betrayed an offensive rather than a defensive psychology, since the forts there could be used as the base for an attack. In view of France's greater military effectiveness, German opinion was more easily impressed by the danger of a French rather than of a Russian attack. In Paris, Ferry, then at the beginning of his long ministry, asserted that "optimism doesn't pay." As Bismarck doubtless intended, the "Nordeutsche's" article was generally interpreted in France to mean that her fear of an attack might become a reality. Thibaudin at once cancelled his plans for a test mobilization

21M. E. Carroll, Germany and the Great Powers, 1866-1914, p. 191.

22Ibid., p. 192.
on the Eastern frontier and the press, with one accord, protested that no one in France had advocated an aggressive war, but German observers remained skeptical.

Bismarck closed the incident promptly to avoid the danger of driving France into England's arms. In reply to the complaint of a leading Paris newspaper\textsuperscript{23} that Germany had been trying since 1877 to isolate France, the German press tactfully evading the point, explained that a sincere acceptance of the status quo would assure not only the best of relations but also complete freedom of action wherever France might wish to extend her influence. If Bismarck disliked a too intimate relationship between the two Western powers, the hint of a Franco-German rapprochement, remote as it then seemed, was a far greater danger to England for it might be the first step toward a hostile continental union.

The German government stood behind France again in 1884. Before the signing of the Treaty of Tien-Sin, Fekin had been seeking help from Germany, only to be told to come to terms with France. Bismarck had shown his solicitude for French interests.

To the French ambassador, the Chancellor remained as frank and friendly as before the trouble with China, in Tonkin, began. He said:

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Journal des Debats}, May 27, 1883.
I am not going to speak to you about China; I do not want to talk about it. People pretend that I am delighted that you are involved in troubles in the Far East. It is absurd. I do not want bullets to fly in China, because in flying they touch German interests. I desire very sincerely that you have the least possible difficulty with China and that you will derive some advantage. Be assured I will do nothing to add to your difficulties. As for mediation, of which the papers talk, you can neither demand it nor accept it; it would not be fitting. The Chinese have begged me many times to intervene, but I have always answered, that in spite of my desire to be agreeable to them, the preservation of good relations with France was more important to me in direct ratio of distances. I will not authorize our officers to enter the service of China during the duration of the conflict nor let the boats depart which would be contrary to our neutrality. 24

In Paris the feeling grew that the Chancellor was pushing Ferry into Tonkin in order to draw him closer to Germany and to better his own hegemony in Europe.

In 1881, there was arranged the League of the Three Emperors being, in fact, a renewal of the Dreikaiserbund of 1873. The terms of the League were contained in a Convention signed at Berlin on June 18, 1881, by Bismarck, Széchenyi, and Sabouloff.

The Austro-Germany Treaty of alliance was the pivot of Europe international relations from 1879 till the great war; the Treaty remained in force during this period. The Triple alliance was an expansion of it, but in no way superseded it. The Dual alliance of Austria and Germany, through concluded only for a term of five years, was in 1902 made practically perpetual, although notice of a desire for revision could be given by either party in any three-year period.

The treaty stated simply that "if one of the two Empires be attacked by Russia, the High Contracting Parties are bound to come to the assistance one of the other with the whole war strength of their Empires, and accordingly only to conclude peace together and upon mutual agreement."²⁵ Having consolidated their alliance between themselves and having made themselves secure with Russia, the Central Powers turned to see what could be done with Italy. The Italian Government was very sensitive about its position in the political equilibrium of the Mediterranean; and the extension of French power along the northern coast of Africa seemed to endanger this. For a time something in the nature of a crisis existed between Italy and France. It is unknown from whom came the suggestion that Italy should join herself to the Central Powers; the expediency of the alliance was obvious to all parties.²⁶ Bismarck would always welcome another alliance, which would make the French even more remote; Austria faced the possibility of some day fighting Russia, required some help in addition to Germany, for this State would be probably fully occupied in dealing with France; while Italy could never stand alone in a war, but must have allies.

A few months after the failure of the Suez Canal Conference in Paris, France and Germany concluded the treaty on West

²⁶Ibid., p. 241.
Africa which closed the work that Jules Ferry had begun; but even before that occurred, old suspicions and fears had reawakened. "Incidents" became frequent once more, and the two nations began to drift apart. The resumption of the continental policy was correlated with the maintenance of a great army as the outward and visible sign of power.

An article in the Temps, a French newspaper, was seized upon by the German press as an example of Chauvinistic agitation. It was a suggestion by the liberals to increase the cavalry on the eastern frontier. The Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, August 3, 1885, declared that such articles prove that all efforts to maintain cordial relations with France were unsuccessful and the German policy of reconciliation had not been reciprocated. The danger of attack was imminent.

We could not in spite of our wish help thinking that France only waits a favorable opportunity to attack us... No one having the welfare of Germany at heart can be free from care, in thinking that the day of revenge, awaited by France for fourteen years, offers to every party man the means of attracting the interests of his compatriots...

The reply of the French press may be summed up as follows:

Germany has responded visibly and frequently to the desire of France, but she does not wish to accept for love of peace all the insults and all the provocation with tranquillity... It is necessary for them to know that good accord can be safeguarded only if the two parties try equally to maintain peace. Germany has for a long time accepted calmly all the excess of susceptibility of France as natural and inevitable phenomena,

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27 Mitchell, op. cit., p. 201.  
like rain and wind. We hope indeed that the famous good French sense will end by understanding this. If one concludes that this kind of folly is incurable, Germany will certainly be in a position to take another attitude. 29

The Chancellor complained to the German Ambassador in Paris that years of friendly agreement had not changed the intention of all parties in France to use the first opportunity to break with Germany. 30

It was unfortunate for the relations of the two countries that Prince Hohenlohe was recalled from Paris. The Emperor regretted the necessity, but he felt that no one else was suitable for the position of governor of Alsace-Lorraine. For more than ten years Prince Hohenlohe had worked to destroy suspicion and to promote accord. He had learned to know and like the French and to interpret their view for his government with appreciation and understanding.

Meanwhile in Berlin the French ambassador was becoming discouraged. Like Prince Hohenlohe, he had tried faithfully for years to produce permanent improvement in the relations of the two countries. He believed in rapprochement with Germany. He had worked with the Chancellor and with Ferry for colonial expansion which would appease the injured pride of France, give her new outlets for her energies, and restore her to a position of influence in the family of nations. 31 All these efforts did not mean that he had forgotten Alsace-Lorraine or

30 G. M. Priest, Germany Since 1740, p. 145.
31 Mitchell, op. cit., p. 205.
that he had ceased to cherish the hope that sometime in the future justice would be done.

As Prince Bismarck and Prince Hohenlohe understood the susceptibilities of the French, so Baron de Cuncel, French ambassador to Germany, understood the apprehensions of the Germans. To persuade Germany of his government’s peaceful intentions in the presence of the warlike preparations of General Boulanger involved too many difficulties. Therefore, in July on 1886, giving ill health as his official reason, Baron de Cuncel asked to be recalled. In September he was replaced by M. Jules Herbette who came repeating the formula of Ferry that the two countries had more interests in common which should serve as a firm basis for a profitable agreement between them. Herbette immediately started work to establish an agreement between France and Germany with respect to the Franco-English interests in Egypt, but was unsuccessful. Bismarck’s official comment on the French proposal was that he could not endorse such a policy.

The reaction of the international conditions of France on external politics, the latter even more changeable than the English, and the fact that a German-French entente would obviously lack the trust necessary to a transient joint action must make us very wary of all attempts of France for a rapprochement. The latter will never be sincere with other powers. In view of the conduct of the War Minister,
Boulanger, a policy of delay should be difficult.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 210.}

The Wolff Convention, which was signed by Great Britain and Turkey fixing the time of withdrawal of British forces in Egypt at three years, was highly unsatisfactory to France and Russia. Again France turned to Germany for united action in refusing to adhere to the treaty, only to find the door finally and firmly closed to any suggestion of a common policy.

On June 3, 1887, M. Herbette called upon Bismarck to assure him of the peaceful intentions of the Rouvier Ministry, and to ask what stand Germany would take on the Austrian-Turkish agreement. The Foreign Minister said frankly that Germany did not want to make any difficulties for England in Egypt and would direct its policy accordingly. At this the Ambassador showed signs of displeasure. The French government, he said, had hoped to find Germany willing to meet them and to seek points of contact on which they could follow a common policy. Bismarck replied that Germany had long endeavored to work for points of contact with France in order to better Franco-German relations, but had earned neither thanks nor recognition from France. Since French public opinion was never so bitterly hostile as in the last twelve months, Germany feels that her efforts to promote friendly relations with France would be love's labor lost.
French historians are practically unanimous in the opinion that the motive of the Chancellor in his benevolent attitude toward their country was to draw her within the orbit of his policy and so complete his hegemony in Europe. Because they find nothing threatening in the conduct of the French government, they can see no reason for fear on the part of Germany, and they regard Bismarck's expressions of alarm as mere excuses to tighten his control over the affairs of the continent. No one can deny that the Chancellor loved power or that a statesman with his masterly skill would not play the game of diplomacy to win. The acquisition of Alsace and Lorraine had increased, not lessened the menace to the empire he had built. That menace would increase with the growing strength of mutilated France. He was convinced that some day France would strike to recover the lost province. Hoping that the thought of revenge would diminish in proportion to the increase of the influence of France with the cabinets of Europe, and to the exploitation of her territory overseas, Bismarck encouraged the French colonial enterprise and endorsed her views to accord German diplomatic victory. Later when German interests clashed with British intentions, he strengthened the good relation of France by urging joint action. Again his primary motive was to protect Germany.

French diplomats saw the futility of war for recovery of the provinces. In time they even gave up the idea of inducing
the Chancellor to give back the land for compensations, though they never gave up the hope that some day a stroke of diplomatic fortune would bring back the territories.

The Emperor William I died in his palace at Berlin on March 2, 1888. He was succeeded by Frederick III who died June 14, 1888, after serving only a few months. The importance of his short reign was the fact that he and the Empress Victoria were opposed to Bismarck. The conflict seemed helplessly unequal. Alone, Bismarck was a formidable enemy, but, on the issue of liberalism, he had the support of the powerful nationalist and Conservative groups. He could have desired no more favorable conditions for the contest.33

Frederick's death removed one threat of Bismarck control of Germany policy, but William II's accession raised another that was more serious. Friction had already begun between the Emperor and Chancellor. Intervals of satisfactory relations alternated with serious differences of opinion during the next two years.

The last two years of Bismarck's career were disturbed by no serious international crisis. His system of alliances discouraged Russia from pressing her claims in Bulgaria, and the collapse of the Boulangist agitation reduced the danger from France.

The differences of Bismarck and William II reached a climax in March, 1890, when Bismarck refused to sanction a

33Carroll, op. cit., p. 271.
cabinet order whereby the Chancellor would no longer be the intermediary between the emperor and the ministers of state. William II at once demanded Bismarck's resignation, and the Iron Chancellor retired to private life.\textsuperscript{34}

It was, therefore, apparent that Germany was unsuccessful in keeping France down. The French people were determined to regain power. Only two and one-half years of conservative living and saving were required to pay the indemnity. Compulsory military training was adopted to build a strong army that would protect France from Germany. It was through President Thiers that this success was accomplished, and the two countries brought closer together.

But by 1876 the two countries had drawn apart, and it seemed that war was inevitable. England and Russia protested against the actions of German government and that France was gaining the allies that were so important to her safety and her constant desire to regain the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine.

Russia was drawn closely to France by the Congress of Berlin because she felt she had been unjustly treated. This led to a defensive alliance between Germany and Austria in which Bismarck was successful with his alliances concerning Austria, but he was never able to bring in Russia. After realizing that this could not be done, he turned to Italy and

\textsuperscript{34} Priest, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 145.
was successful in combining Germany, Italy, and Austria in what was known as the Triple Alliance. This alliance was a major factor in preventing France from turning on Germany in the attempt to gain revenge.
CHAPTER II
FRANCO-GERMAN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
UNDER WILLIAM II

When William II came to power in 1890, he made clear his desire for peaceful relations between Germany and France. He felt that the two countries were ready for an alliance. France was busy trying to arrange a diplomatic understanding with Russia and was successful.

The aim of the French was to establish their footing with Russia, and, if possible, to detach Italy from Germany and Austria; the aim of the Germans was to keep Russia and France apart and to hold Italy to the Triple Alliance. But the French in obtaining Russia seemed to have let England drift toward the Central Powers. She remained there until Admiral Tirpitz started enlarging the German navy then England drifted away from the Triple Alliance towards the Dual Alliance.

Although French diplomats did everything in their power to prevent Germany from rebuilding her navy, very little attention was given to the army.

French diplomats realized the importance of an English understanding in Morocco and were willing to make any sacrifices to get England on her side. The German people had no
desire to go to war over Morocco as German interests there were purely economic. The Morocco dispute brought about a good chance for France to bring England and Russia together.

It seems clear at this time that King Edward was doing everything in his power to encircle Germany. He not only had strong agreement with Russia and France, but he also was striving, through the aid of Russia, to challenge Austrian and German interests in the Balkans.

Despite the differences between France and Germany, the diplomats of the two countries were still striving for peace. In 1911 a very satisfactory agreement was reached by the representatives of these two countries which shows that each country wanted to remain at peace.

The fall of Bismarck in 1890 was hailed with delight in France,¹ and friendlier relations between the two countries began when the French government accepted the invitation of William II to send a delegate to an international Conference on social reform in Germany. The veteran statesman and publicist, Jules Simon, who was chosen for the task, was captivated by the charm, the frankness and the energy of his host. The Kaiser expressed his ardent desire to enter into cordial relations with France, and when his visitor replied that the question could not be solved at present, he rejoined that it was never too soon to formulate a good idea.

¹C. P. Gooch, Franco-Diplomatic Relations 1871-1914, p. 32.
"Your army has made great progress and is ready," he added, "if it were engaged in single combat with the German army no one could forecast the result of the struggle. Therefore, I should regard as a madman or a criminal whoever stirred up the two peoples to make war."\(^2\)

In the early months of 1891 all the foundations of German policy seemed to be rocking. Germany was now thrown back on the Triple Alliance for her security, but of her two partners, Italy was always uncertain, and there were even doubts about Austria. France in the meantime was on the road to complete recovery. She had finished the equipment of her army with the Lebel rifle in the last months of 1890, and her munition factories were reported to be working overtime in the production of melanite shells. She now, as her statesman claimed, had a military establishment that would enable her to meet aggression from any quarter, and the appearance of her army at its manoeuvres in the autumn in 1890 had greatly impressed the experts of other countries.\(^3\)

All this made an uncomfortable impression in Berlin. France was evidently ripe for an alliance with somebody. Emperor and Chancellor decided that something should be done to appease the French, and word was sent to the newspapers to abate their customary hostilities.

\(^2\text{Tibi., p. 32.}\)

\(^3\text{J. A. Spender, Fifty Years of Europe, p. 130.}\)
A few months later President Carnot was invested with the highest Russian decoration and an invitation was issued for a French squadron to visit Cronstadt in the following summer. The German Emperor retorted with a speech at Potsdam in which he said with much vehemence, "Difficulty and serious times are before us; I rely on my army and expect the troops stationed on the frontier to keep a strong look-out." Everybody was now talking of war. The Russians and the French believed, or professed to believe, that the Kaiser was going to attack; the Kaiser believed, or professed to believe, that the French were on the war-path. Each in turn feared that when the moment came, its opponents would have manoeuvred the doubters and neutrals in such a way as to leave it isolated against a hostile combination.

On August 27, 1891, a diplomatic understanding was reached at Paris between France and Russia. Its purpose was announced to be the maintenance of peace and of the balance of power in Europe. A year later, August, 1892, a Russian-French "military convention" was signed. From one point of view, the Russian and French alliance seems incredible. Tsars are not expected to be friends with decidedly "red" republics. And it is indeed an anomaly that the French of the great revolution should seek an alliance with the most stubborn defender of the ancien régime.

\(^4\text{Ibid.}, p. 131.\)
The text of the German-Austrian alliance had become known and clearly showed to Russia uncertain value of Bismarck's friendship. Besides the Tsar needed money. The young Republic, whose citizens were a saving people with hoards of money to lend, needed a friend, any friend at any price.

There is much difference of opinion among the historians of our times as to the extent to which French policy has been influenced by the idea of revanche for the defeat of 1870. That the French profoundly mourned the loss of Alsace-Lorraine is beyond dispute.\(^5\)

This dual alliance was primarily significant because it indicated to all the world that the epoch of Bismarck was over. Something had happened in Europe without the consent of the Germans, something which Bismarck had taught them to believe was undesirable.

The French and Russian statesmen, although they refused to publish the text of these agreements, insisted that they were purely defensive; that their sole object was to safeguard the peace of Europe. But the Germans did not consider it simply defensive, it was so manifestly a blow at the prestige of the Deutschtum.\(^6\)

The diplomatic struggle went on feverishly for the next few months against this background of suspicion and anxiety.


The aim of the French was to establish their footing with Russia, and, if possible, to detach Italy from Germany and Austria; the aim of the Germans was to keep Russia and France apart and to hold Italy to the Triple Alliance, which was due to expire in May, 1892. With the help of England, Germany temporarily recovered her lost ground, and the renewal of the Triple Alliance a few months before that time (May 6, 1891) followed quickly on the failure of the French effort to detach Italy. This was a decisive blow to the French. Once more they saw themselves completely isolated; and with England in close touch with the Central Powers and pursuing a policy which checked French ambition and wounded French pride, it seemed hopeless to look for support in the German camp.\(^7\) The reader who knows the contents of the Franco-Russian Treaty might naturally suppose that its conclusion in January, 1894, was recognized by the other Governments as an event of the highest importance. The truth is, and it need constantly be borne in mind in any effort to understand the sequence of events in these years, the other governments were totally unaware of the contents of the Treaty.

More important still, the German Government now decided on another large increase and reorganization of their navy, and all through the autumn and winter of 1892-93 were engaged in breaking the resistance of the Reichstag to this project.

\(^7\)Spender, *op. cit.*, p. 134.
The recalcitrant Reichstag was dissolved, and the new one passed the Bill, but the agitation kept France in a ferment and caused special uneasiness to France and Russia, both of whom thought the measure to be aimed at themselves. This fear was not without reason, if we may judge from a communication made by the German Chancellor to a committee of the Reichstag:

Conditions in France, he pointed out, were drifting towards a dictatorship, and this would probably make for war. The Russian and German Governments were on good terms, but public opinion in the two countries was hostile. The Russian tradition demanded the advance to the Straits and Constantinople, even if the road were through Berlin. Under the circumstances the German Government felt obliged to preserve the position of Austria as a great Power.8

The French realized at this time that a choice had to be made without delay. As the French saw the situation, the agreement of August, 1891, if it stood by itself, placed them in a position of great danger. It exposed them to reprisals from Germany without any sure support from Russia. That no agreement was more than a flourish unless followed up by military convention paving the way to concerted action in face of attack, was, then, as later, the opinion of the French, who immediately after the return visit of the Russian fleet to Toulon in October, 1893, began to press for the conclusion of the Military Convention provisionally agreed upon by the French and Russian chiefs of Staff in the previous August.

8Ibid., p. 137.
The Tsar appears to have improved the occasion with a homily to the French Ambassador:

I often hear speak of revenge which exists in your country and which is said to be a menace, but I see no justification for this statement. You would not be France if you did not cherish the belief that the day would come when you might regain possession of your lost provinces; but between this very natural sentiment and the idea of a provocation to affect its realization, the idea of revanche, in a word, there is a great difference, and you have frequently proved, you have just shown again, that you desire above all and that you will know how to wait with dignity.  

Notes were exchanged between the two Governments at the end of December, 1894, and the ratifications were completed by January 4, 1895. The Convention in its final form ran thus:

1. If France is attacked by Germany or by Italy supported by Germany, Russia shall employ all her available forces to attack Germany.
   If Russia is attacked by Germany or by Austria supported by Germany, France shall employ all her available forces to combat Germany.

2. In case the forces of the Triple Alliance, or one of the Powers composing it, should mobilize, France and Russia, at the first news of the event and without the necessity of any previous concert, shall mobilize immediately and simultaneously all their forces and shall move them as close as possible to their frontiers.

3. The available forces to be employed against Germany shall be on the part of France, 1,300,000 men, on the part of Russia 800,000.
   These forces shall engage to the full with all speed, in order that Germany may have to fight at the same time on the East and on the West.  

The continental Powers had now chosen sides, but for them all there still remained a momentous question: what would

\footnote{L. H. Holt and A. W. Chilton, *The History of Europe 1862-1914*, p. 289.}

\footnote{G. P. Gooch, *Before the War* in *Studies in Diplomacy*, p. 75.}
Great Britain do? Germany was trying to get England into the Triple Alliance and France was trying to get England into the Dual Alliance. At the beginning she resisted all overtures for a definite alliance, but was willing to make short term agreements and decidedly inclined toward the German group. At the end she had definitely, in the eyes of Europe, though scarcely as yet in her own, taken her decision for France and Russia.

In 1895 Germany joined France and Russia in the intervention which deprived Japan of most of the fruits of her victory in her war with China, but whereas both France and Russia had taken ample compensation from China, Germany was waiting and had two years still to wait before she helped herself to her portion of Kiaochow. The British quarrel with the Boers in the Transvaal, which came to its climax in December, 1895, had consequence which extended far beyond South Africa, and from the beginning of 1895 onwards contributed to the tendencies which were driving the British and Germans apart.

While the Kaiser and the Chancellor were nursing their discomfort over the course of events in South Africa, Baron Holstein arrived at a conclusion. How would it be if after her Transvaal experience Germany were temporarily to go over to the France-Russian group and take with her Italy and Austria? Triple and Dual Alliances together could make
themselves extremely disagreeable to England. Then England would see that if she wished to keep her colonial possessions without having to fight for them, she would have to come back to the Triple alliance.

A conversation along the lines indicated took place in Berlin between the German Foreign Secretary, Marschall, and the French Ambassador, Herbette, with results that were extremely discouraging to the Germans. The French immediately seized upon the fact that Egypt was excluded from the proposed conversation. "I can't see," he said, "what use it would be to us to join you in checking England in matters in which your essential interests are at stake without being able to count on your support where our interests are more important than yours."[11]

Italian and Austria sympathies were with England. France and Russia looked on with frank pleasure. The project for a Continental union disappeared from sight. Salisbury's confidence that conflicting interests would prevent common action by the Continent was justified. By the middle of January, 1896, Germany stood humiliated and isolated.

The Germans were undaunted by their failure and proceeded apace with new and better laid plans. In 1897 Admiral Tirpitz was appointed head of the Imperial Navy and instructed to remedy its defects. This action was directed primarily against England.

To steer Germany through the troubled waters that lay ahead, the ambassador at Rome, Bulow, was brought back to Berlin and made Foreign Secretary in 1897. Bulow was incapable either of performing the difficult task entrusted to him or persuading the Kaiser to abandon his too ambitious program.\textsuperscript{12}

The year 1898 was full of trouble. All through the autumn and winter France and Britain seemed to be on the verge of war about the appearance of Marchand at Fashoda on the Upper Nile laying claim on behalf of France to territory which according to the British contention was indisputably part of the Sudan and, therefore, the property of Egypt. France had been warned off this ground by a previous British Government, and the Salisbury Cabinet stood firm for unconditional evacuation.\textsuperscript{13}

Meanwhile, Germany's policy caused resentment everywhere, especially in Russia.\textsuperscript{14} When Nicholas in August, 1898, hoping to avoid the sacrifices necessary if Russia were to keep pace with Germany's new artillery, astonished the world with his proposal of a conference for the limitation of armaments, German public opinion was not wholly displeased.

The Powers proceeded to blanket the Conference by excluding questions of political importance and left their

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., p. 75. \hfill \textsuperscript{12}Spender, op. cit., p. 171.
\textsuperscript{14}Carroll, op. cit., p. 434.
experts to work their will on the projects; for the non-augmentation of forces and military budgets for a term of years, for the prohibition of new weapons and explosives, and of aerial bombardments and submarines and rams.15 The Conference met at the Hague in May, 1899, and sat till the end of July. It was not altogether an innovation which the Germans thought dangerous, for it set up the first arbitral court on the understanding that recourse to it should be purely optional. The German Naval delegate seems to have been specially on guard against proposals which might take the steam out of the big-navy agitation in Germany.

The second Hague Conference was called for the summer of 1907. It convened to formulate an agreement about the rules and practices of naval warfare. But the Germans refused to attend the conference if naval reduction was to be discussed.16

The British were in despair. They realized that expenditures so large as to endanger their social reforms were inevitable if the Germans held the present pace. In August, 1907, King Edward visited Germany. He was accompanied by Hardinge, the British Undersecretary, who made a last effort to win over William II. The conversation became heated. The Kaiser accused the British Admirality of lying and Harding...
of ignorance. Hardinge persisted, "Arrangement ought to be found for diminishing the construction. You must stop or build slower." "Then we shall fight," retorted the Kaiser, "for it is a question of national honor and dignity."

Hardinge flushed and was silent. "You must always treat an Englishman thus," wrote William to Bulow.17

In March, 1908, the Kaiser wrote a private letter to Lord Tweedmouth, the British First Lord of the Admiralty, declaring it to be "absolutely nonsensical and untrue" that the German navy was meant as a challenge to British naval supremacy.18

At the end of May, 1908, the Kaiser made a blustering speech on the parade grounds at Dabelitz, denouncing the conspiracy to "encircle Germany and strike, as Bulow says, 'A warlike and threatening note.'"19

Another diplomatic step in the Transvaal question followed on March 2, 1900.20 By the Tsar's order Count Muraviev had a note presented to Berlin, proposing concerted mediation by Russia, France, and Germany. France and Germany were to unite in applying friendly pressure in London, and Russia was then to join them. Count Von Bulow replied that Germany must be careful to avoid any chance of entanglement with other Great Powers, especially other maritime Powers, so long as

17Ibid., p. 129.  
18Spender, op. cit., p. 274.  
19Ibid., p. 275.  
she was not sure of France's attitude. This security could only be afforded by a treaty in which the contracting Powers mutually guaranteed each other's European possessions for a long term of years. Thereupon Muraviev first tried a very poor subterfuge to the effect that negotiations preliminary to such a treaty would be long drawn out, and then on March 22, 1900, he caused his proposition to be withdrawn altogether.

At this time England again realized that she should be allied with someone. Chamberlin said that he preferred a rapprochement with Germany, and in his opinion a beginning could best be effected by a secret agreement concerning Morocco. If the German Government should refuse, England would be obliged to make a treaty with Russia. The reasons that had led Chamberlin to make his first offer to Germany in the year 1898 still existed in altered form in the year 1901.21 The antagonism towards France in Africa, it is true, had decreased after her withdrawal from Fashoda. On January 21, 1901, Bulow said:

We must take the greatest care neither to discourage the English nor to let ourselves be prematurely bound. We must not appear too eager. It would be a masterstroke if we could keep the English hope alive without being tied down ourselves. The threat of joining the Dual Alliance is only a bogey with which to intimidate us. The sacrifices England would have to make for an understanding with the Dual Alliance would be too great, and they would postpone for a short time England's struggle for her existence.22

21Ibid., p. 105.

22Holt and Chilton, op. cit., p. 310.
But no agreement could be reached with Germany because England wanted a separate treaty with Germany, and Germany wanted to bring in Austria and Italy. In 1902 England and Japan drew up a treaty and this seemed to distract the German diplomats. England had not as yet changed her relations to the two groups of Powers on the Continent, the Triple Alliance and the Dual Alliance. The Anglo-French differences had not yet been adjusted, and consequently, the renewal of the Triple Alliance could be consummated without direct opposition from England. But what had been changed in the last years, and changed to the detriment of the inner coherence of the Triple Alliance, was Italy's relation to France and also the benevolence that England had heretofore displayed towards Italy's union with the Central Bloc. About the same time that England, out of concern for her predominance in World Politics, came out of her isolation and secured Japan's support against Russia in Asia, the German Government had to deal with a crisis in the Triple Alliance under conditions that were far more unfavorable than those at the time of its twelve-year extension in May, 1891.

During his interview with Prinetti in Vienna on March 28, 1902, the Chancellor, Count Bulow, succeeded in obtaining a renewal of the Triple Alliance with no changes whatsoever. A few days after the signing of the renewal of the

23Hammann, op. cit, p. 127.
treaty, on June 23, 1902, Delcasse stated in the Chamber of Deputies: "Italy's policy is not aimed against France, either directly or indirectly, in consequence of her alliance. In no case and in no way can Italy become the tool or the accessory to an attack on our country." 24

French diplomacy appeared to be guided by the idea that Germany could misuse the Triple Alliance for an aggressive war; they thought it would be much easier for Italy to preserve her neutrality if it were stipulated that even a declaration of war by France was not necessarily to be regarded as positive proof that France was the aggressor.

The chasm that had appeared during the Boer War between England and Germany remained open in the years following and made it difficult for the two Governments to re-establish their old relations of mutual confidence. In February, 1903, Balfour exhorted all those who had any influence on public opinion to reflect how deeply accountable everyone would be who lent himself to the easy business of embittering the relations of the two peoples.

On April 8, 1904, agreements were signed in London by Lord Lansdown and M. Paul Combon, the French Ambassador, settling long-standing disputes regarding the Newfoundland fisheries, Siam, Senegambia, Madagascar, and the New Hebrides.

24C. J. Hale, Germany and the Diplomatic Revolution, p. 30.
but above all closing the question of Egypt, where France gave England an entirely free hand, while England in return undertook to efface herself in Morocco in the interests of France.

In the German Reichstag the Anglo-French Agreement was referred to by various members as early as April 12 and 14, 1904. The National Liberals deputy, Sattler, spoke of a rearrangement in European politics; the Socialists leader, Bebel, saw in the Agreement a measure of civilization in which seemed to indicate increasing isolation; the anti-Semitic member, Count Reventlow, a brother of the well-known author, deplored the humiliating fact that other Powers were securing for themselves greater influence in Morocco than was Germany. Faced with these objections and apprehensive, Count Bulow tried to make the best of a bad business. He insisted that Germany's interests in Morocco were purely economic, and that there was no reason to fear that any Power would disregard her. He scouted the idea of isolation in view of the fact that the German Empire had a definite alliance with two Great Powers while enjoying friendly relations with five others. The relations with France were calm and peaceful, and would remain so as far as it depended on Germany.

As a matter of fact, circumstances, the war in Eastern Asia and England's going over from the Triple Alliance to the
side of France, imposed an attitude of reserve upon Germany. Under official influence, public opinion in Germany was altogether in accord with the Chancellor's statements in the Reichstag that it would be sheer recklessness to plunge the country into war on account of Morocco. Germany's relations with the French republic were so little disturbed that as late as the end of April, 1904, serious-minded people were to be found in Paris and Berlin who believed that a meeting between the Kaiser and President Loubet in Italian waters was within the range of possibility.  

A Moroccan crisis broke out again in 1911. In March there was a revolt. The French press urged the necessity of occupying the capitol, Fez: the foreign residents of the city were in danger; they must be rescued; no one, not even a German could object to an effort to protect the interests of all civilized nations. The cabinet approved the expedition and troops started early in April and arrived at Fez on May 21. As soon as the Spanish heard of the expedition, they suspected a trick to deprive them of their share of Morocco. They lost no time in sending troops to suppress disorder.

Without diplomatic preparation, even spurning all offers to effect a quiet settlement, France had reopened the difficult Morocco question. From the first of April the German

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press began to dwell with increasing emphasis upon the actions of the French in Morocco, claiming that Morocco was about to be divided up and that Germany was in danger of being cheated out of her joint share. 26

When the German Government saw that France persisted in her expedition to Fez, it acted with characteristic determination and decision. At noon on July 1, 1911, the German ambassador presented to their respective powers the following note:

Some German firms established in the south of Morocco, notably at Agadir and in the vicinity, have been alarmed by a certain ferment which has showed itself among the local tribes, due it seems to the recent occurrence in other parts of the country. These firms have applied to the imperial government for protection for the lives of their employees and their property. At their request the imperial government has decided to send a warship to the port of Agadir, to lend help and assistance, in case of need, to its subjects and employees, as well as to protect the important German interests in the territory in question. As soon as the state of affairs in Morocco has resumed its former quiet aspect the ship charged with this protective mission will leave the port of Agadir. 27

The Moroccan issue had thus again become a sharply marked issue between the chief powers of the Triple Entente and the chief power of the Triple Alliance. For months it seemed as though the great general European war would break out. 28

So far as can be judged from the evidence available, Germany seems to have been willing from the outset of the

26 Holt and Chilton, op. cit., p. 463.
27 Ibid., p. 464.
28 Sontag, op. cit., p. 156.
actual negotiations, after the government had tested the spirit of France, to permit the establishment of a French protectorate in Morocco, but to have set herself to limit the boundaries of the French protectorate, to gain for Germany special economic privileges which would accomplish the Franco-German monopoly which Germany had hoped would result from the Berlin agreement in 1909, and to acquire from French territory compensation elsewhere in Africa in return for definitely acknowledging the French protectorate in Morocco. The French government, however, would not listen to a suggestion of the limitation of their protectorate, or to a suggestion of any special privileges which would put Germany in a more favorable economic position than other nations, by showing willingness from the beginning to entertain the idea of territorial compensation elsewhere.

The negotiations dragged on through the summer. Rumors of war and of great military preparation were rife. At one time in the middle of August France was aroused by a report that the German general staff was engaged in framing the details of a plan to land troops in Morocco; at another time it was said that the plan for Anglo-French military cooperation had been decided upon; it is certain that great quantities of coal were shipped across England for use of the navy, and it was reported that all ships were cleared for action; and the German government is known at one stage to
have given its preliminary notice to officers and men in the
reserves. In spite of the difference afforded by these
rumors and suspicions, the representatives of the two countries
managed to reach a peaceful agreement, which was incorporated
in two conventions, the Morocco Convention and the Congo Con-
vention, both signed November 4, 1911.

According to the Moroccan Convention Germany declared
that she had no interests in Morocco other than economic and
that she would not interfere with France in her conduct of
the necessary military, financial, or administrative reforms.

The Congo Convention provided for a rearrangement of
territory, whereby Germany gained in what was known as the
"Cameroons," a domain of over 100,000 square miles.

Even before the Moroccan negotiations had been carried
through to a successful conclusion, the attention of Europe
was drawn back to the Turkish problem, not again to be re-
leased until all the nations became imbroiled in the Great
War.

M. Delcasse, on October 8, 1904, published a statement
that an entente had been reached with Spain. The Spanish
treaty restated, a little more in detail, the arrangement
on which Britain had insisted. If the Germans knew of these
secret agreements for the partition of Morocco, at a time
when the three contracting parties were solemnly proclaiming
their desire to maintain the integrity of the Sultan's realm,
it certainly gave the Germans a legitimate reason for intervening.

The Germans, having decided on action, did not content themselves with a mere speech of defiance. Their newspapers, evidently acting on an official tip, summed up the situation in this fashion:

We are a peace loving people. We do not want to go to war with France. But this M. Delcassé has misled the French people into a policy which displeases us. It is their move. They can choose between our friendship or the friendship of M. Delcassé. If they do not act reasonably their blood will be upon their own head. 29

To make sure that the French understood how they felt about it, they carried the newspaper into the enemy's country. An ambiguous character, the Prince Haenkel Von Donnersmarck, had lived in Paris for many years. He held no official position but was supposed to be on a mission. Early in June he gave some characteristic quotation:

Is this policy (the entente) that of France, or must we consider it as being merely personal to M. Delcassé? We are not concerned with M. Delcassé's person; but this policy is a threat to Germany; and you may rest assured that we shall not wait for it to be realized.

In a war against Germany, you may possibly be victorious, since in her most tragic crisis France has always found extraordinary resources in herself; but, if you are vanquished, and my first hypothesis deprives my second of all offensive character, if you are vanquished as you probably will be, it is in Paris that the peace will be signed. . . .

Believe the word of a German, who has always had great sympathy for you. Give up this minister, whose only aspiration is to trouble the peace of Europe; and adopt with regard to Germany a loyal and open policy. 30

29 Bullard, op. cit., p. 83. 30 Ibid., p. 89.
It would have been hard to be more explicit. Germany was resolved on war or M. Delcasse's scalp.

In all events France decided not to fight. Her army was in a pitiful state. The Dreyfus affair had discredited the high command. Those in power were preoccupied with internal affairs, the great fight against clericalism. The various ministers of war had not dared to ask the Chamber for large military credits. The eastern fortification had been neglected. Munitions, equipment, everything was lacking, and as usual the Germans were ready.

On June 6, Delcasse's resignation was accepted. Nothing in modern history can be compared to this humiliation; one government forcing another under the threat of war to sacrifice a minister.

The Germans were not content with this reassertion of their prestige. The Kaiser gave Von Bulow the title of Prince as a reward for his successful tilt with Delcasse, but success tempted them to new proof of their power. They decided to give France a public reprimand. They demanded a European Conference to discuss the affairs of Morocco. There was nothing the French Colonial party wanted less. By ententes with Italy, England, and Spain, France had been able to arrange things quietly. The French made it clear that they would grant any reasonable demands which Germany would formulate in regard to Morocco in order to avoid a conference.
But concessions in Morocco were only part of what Germany wanted.

Germany had two important but indirect objects in insisting on this conference; the public humiliation of France, and if possible, testing the strength of the Entente Cordiale.

During the months which preceded the conference, French diplomacy was exceedingly and successfully busy in preparing their cases and in enlisting the sympathy of the other nations.

The first session of this conference met in February, 1906. Germany hoped to break the accord of France and England. In so far as the Germans insisted on the conference in order to test the strength and meaning of the Entente Cordiale, they secured the information they sought. This Anglo-French Agreement was more than a simple colonial deal, it was more than a compact one to the other, it also united them in European politics against Germany. Whether or not they were pledged to give each other military help was still unknown, but England was evidently prepared to live up literally and loyally to the phrase "diplomatic support."

The Conference of Algeciras, although everyone politely said that "no one was victor, or no one vanquished," was a real diplomatic defeat for Germany. France had not been condemned by Europe. The Entente was stronger than ever. And startling though it might appear, English and Russian diplomats had worked together in a European assembly.
A visit which King Edward paid to the Tsar at Reval in the following week added fuel to the flames, and during the next few weeks the Kaiser’s comments on dispatches from London rose to a high pitch of indignation and excitement. The Germans, as usual, professed to know all about it, and saw the foundations being laid for combined Russian and British action against Austrian and German interests in the Balkans, a further development of King Edward’s Encirclement policy. Substantially during these months it was M. Clemenceau’s view, he now being the Prime Minister, that England without an army, had no right to take the lead in any European policy which might end in war, and he looked with uneasiness, not to say alarm, at the resolute way in which a British Government was challenging Austria and Germany upon what was rapidly becoming for both of them a point of honor.31

This by-play within the groups becomes of increasing importance as we go forward. Europe was playing a dangerous game of the balance of power without any rules to govern the conduct of allies and friends let alone the conduct of the opposing groups. The most intimate contact between the members of each group, and the most careful measurement of the forces controlled by each were necessary, if the game was to be played with even relative safety, yet whenever the curtain is raised, friends and allies are seen acting

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31 George Lecomte, George Clemenceau, p. 91.
independently of each other while neither of the groups made any serious attempt to weigh the probable result if they came into collision with one another.

In the closing months of 1908, Bultow knew that the situation was very dangerous. In September, a brush between the German consul at Casablanca and the French police angered both countries. In October, the Bosnian crisis began. Before Bosnia was settled, the navy scare in England began again.32

Faced with the danger that Germany might be drawn into war with the Entente powers, Bultow abandoned the easy drift which had kept him in William's good graces for more than a decade. To hold France quiet during the Bosnian crisis, he made concessions in Morocco. The generosity of the proposal made the French suspect a trap; reiterated they accepted with alacrity. By the agreement signed in February, 1909, Germany recognized the political preponderance of France in Morocco. In return France promised Germany a share in Moroccan economic concessions. The French had secured a good bargain; if they had lived up to it, Morocco might never have been heard of again. William II gladly consented to the agreement; he had never cared about Morocco. He would have welcomed a truce with Russia also, but Isvolski would make no terms unless Germany abandoned Austria. If Germany would promise neutrality

32 Sontag, op. cit., p. 135.
in an Anglo-Russian war, Russia would promise neutrality in an Anglo-German war. Germany rejected this proposal without hesitation.

At this time Bulow expressed his ideas on the naval race, being in favor of slowing down the building, if an agreement could be reached with England. He was definitely opposed by Tirpitz and the Kaiser and resigned. He was succeeded by Bethmann-Hollweg, an old friend of William II. Bethmann did not possess Bulow's quick intelligence, and he was irresolute as well as slow-witted. His knowledge of foreign affairs was slight. He, like almost everyone in the Foreign Office, disliked Tirpitz's naval policy and lamented the admiral's influence on the Kaiser. Time after time William II accepted Tirpitz's views against the Chancellor's opposition. Yet Bethmann did not resign. He feared Tirpitz would be his successor.

By the autumn of 1910, both Russia and Germany were ready to resume conversations. It was agreed that both countries had a common interest in the maintenance of Turkey's integrity and of the status quo in the Balkans, although Sazonov acknowledged Russia's desire for the "freedom" of the Balkan people. Bethmann assured the Reichstag, December 10, 1910, that the Potsdam conversations had resulted in a definite agreement that neither power would enter a hostile combination against the other, but scarcely a week had elapsed before he instructed Fourtales to abandon the effort to secure a
written assurance. Not only had Germany failed to weaken the Anglo-Russian Entente and to secure a written agreement even upon specific questions, but the Potsdam visit, Bethmann's speech, and the publication by the *London Evening Times* of the alleged terms of a Russo-German agreement burdened her with the odium of another attack upon the Triple Alliance.

In the early months of 1912 the German Government proposed a new Army Bill which would result in an increase of the effectives by approximately 30,000 men. The Reichstag discussed the measure in April, and , promptly and loyally supporting the government in a measure said to be for necessary defense, passed the measure in May. This provided for the formation of two new army corps to protect the Franco-German frontier. It increased the total number in the German army in time of peace to approximately 655,000. The reorganization measures were hastened and on October 1, 1912, the two new corps were formally constituted.33

The activity of France's traditional enemy in the east, Germany, in threatening her in the Agadir crisis of 1911, and the German legislation of May, 1912, increasing the German standing army, combined to arouse Frenchmen to a high pitch of patriotic zeal. On March 4, 1913, the Superior Council of War issued a statement declaring that for the increase of the effective army it was necessary to exact three years of

33 Hale, *op. cit.*, p. 527.
service from all Frenchmen without exemption. March 6 the
Minister of War introduced a three-year-service bill in the
Chamber of Deputies. March 7 the Municipal Council of Paris
recorded its approval of the measure and May 9 the Army
Committee of the Chamber of Deputies accepted it.\textsuperscript{34}

The German Government was, of course, fully cognizant
of the danger of the ill-feeling engendered between the German
and the French in one direction and the Germans and the
Russians in another.

That Germany's own security required Austria's survival
as a great power nevertheless remained the most important
assumption of German foreign policy.

In October, 1913, Berchtold assured his colleagues that
German's independance had no "services or permanent signific-
ances." In fact, William was eager for measures against the
Serbs.

I will go along, he said, the other powers are not
ready; they will not act. You will be in Belgrade in
forty-eight hours. There are limits to my desire for
peace. I have read a great deal about war and I know
what it means, but a day finally comes when a great
power can no longer remain indifferent but must take
up the sword.\textsuperscript{35}

Of German dissatisfaction and restlessness in the spring
of 1914, there can be no question. Her desire for more and
better colonies was unappeased. With France and Russia arm-
ing to the teeth, with the balance of power in the Balkans
favorable to the Triple Entente, with Austria's future as a

\textsuperscript{34}Sontag, op. cit., p. 187. \textsuperscript{35}Carroll, op. cit., p. 740.
great power uncertain, and with England and Russia negotiating for a naval agreement, Germany's influence and prestige, if not her security, were endangered.

On July 22, Germany assured Austria that she could proceed with the defense of her legitimate interests, in Serbia, in full confidence of Germany's support.

On July 31, the German Chancellor dispatched the following telegram to the German ambassador at St. Petersburg:

In spite of negotiations still pending and although we have up to this hour made no preparations for mobilization, Russia has mobilized her entire army and navy, hence also against us. On account of these Russian measures, we have been forced, for the safety of the country, to proclaim the threatening state of war, which does not yet imply mobilization. Mobilization however, is bound to follow if Russia does not stop every measure of war against us and against Austria-Hungary within twelve hours, and notifies us definitely to that effect. Please to communicate this at once to M. Sazonoff and wire hour of communication.36

This message was delivered to M. Sazonoff, the Russian foreign minister, at midnight on July 31. At the same time the German Chancellor telegraphed to France asking the French government to state "whether it intends to remain neutral in a Russo-German war. Reply must be made in eighteen hours. Wire at once hour of inquiry. Utmost speed necessary."

At 12:52 p. m., the next day, August 1, 1914, Von Bethmann-Hollweg, not having had an answer to his ultimatum of the night before, dispatched the following telegram to

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36 Holt and Chilton, op. cit., p. 559.
the German ambassador at St. Petersburg:

In case the Russian Government gives no satisfactory answer to our demand, Your Excellency will please transmit at five o'clock this afternoon the following statement:

His Majesty, the Emperor, my august sovereign, in the name of the Empire, takes up the defiance and considers himself in a state of war against Russia.

I urgently ask you to wire the hour, according to Russian time, of arrival of these instructions, and of their carry out.

Finally ask for your passports and hand over the protection of German interest to the American embassy. 37

On the same day the German ambassador in Paris telegraphed von Bethmann-Hollweg:

Upon my repeated definite inquiry whether France would remain neutral in the event of a Russo-German war, the Prime Minister declared that France would do that which her interests dictated. 38

At 7:10 p.m., August 1, the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg, in accordance with his instructions, presented the German declaration of war against Russia. Two days later, August 3, 1914, the German ambassador to France alleged several acts of French hostility on German soil, demanded his passports, and stated that: "The German Empire considers itself in a state of war against France in consequence of the act of this latter Power." 39

Whether or not William II was sincere in his belief that Germany and France could be drawn together, he was unsuccessful. The French people disliked the Germans; they had not

forgotten the war and they were still watching for a chance to regain Alsace and Lorraine. The French were successful with an alliance with Russia and later on helped persuade Italy to withdraw from the Triple Alliance.

England at first favored Germany over France because of the Fashoda incident and also because Russia was lining up with France. The turn of the tide came when Germany started building a large navy. Of course, this arose as an obstacle between the two nations and England drifted towards France and Russia.

The Boer War was another thing that kept Germany and England apart as far as an alliance was concerned. The mutual confidence of the two nations was never re-established.

England was drawn closer to France by an agreement on long standing disputes. France gave England an entirely free hand in Egypt, Siam, Senegambia, Madagascar, and the Newfoundland fisheries, while England in return undertook to efface herself in Morocco in the interests of France. Very significant, however, was the fact that for the first time English and Russian diplomats worked together in a European assembly. So France had accomplished another of her desires, the desire to bring Russia and England closer together.

In 1911 the trouble of Morocco again faced the diplomats of the two countries. A very peaceful agreement was the outcome of this affair. France was given the protectorate of
Morocco and Germany the "Cameroons" in South Africa.

From this time on, however, the two countries were preparing for war. One would increase its army and so would the other.

When Austria and Servia started fighting Russia came to the aid of Servia. When Germany saw that France was going to support Russia she declared war.
CHAPTER III
AFTER VERSAILLES

At the end of the World War the French were determined to avenge the suffering they had gone through after the Franco-Prussian war. From an economic standpoint France wanted the western industrial centers of Germany and also a huge indemnity; these, of course, were to keep Germany weak. There is a conflicting interest in the desires of England and France, however; England had carried on a great deal of commerce with Germany before the war so economic chaos in Germany was detrimental to England.

The defeat of the French by the Germans in 1871 was decisive. But in 1918 Germany was defeated by six great powers and a score of lesser ones. The interest of each of these powers had to be taken into consideration. After 1918 France was certain that Germany could, if allowed to recover her strength, defeat France in war; it was France who needed allies for protection and also to insure that Germany remain weak. France believed that Germany could be kept in her place by the huge reparations payments. In short the Germans were feared by the French; they still had not forgotten the Franco-Prussian War, and they knew just
how powerful Germany could be so they depended on the Treaty of Versailles.

The Reich had declined to admit that Germany had lost the war. This group plotted for revenge, bitterly opposing any policy of conciliation and cherishing the belief that Germany would be able to overturn the peace settlement if she could only form some important alliances.

Still further security was desired by France and so Germany was brought into the League of Nations. France felt that the other members would be a protection in case Germany tried to make any advances.

Less than two decades ago, the expression "German Revolution" would have seemed a contradiction of terms. The Imperial Government of His Majesty, Kaiser William the Second, appeared too solidly entrenched, the German people too docile and too well disciplined, ever to make revolution a possibility. But the impossible happened in 1918.

The Socialist Democratic Party was responsible for this revolution. Discontent was rife, not only with the conduct of the war but also with the government of the country; and there was a growing demand for the establishment of popular government and for franchise reform.

As a last forlorn hope, on October 4, 1918, the Kaiser appointed as Chancellor the liberal Prince Max of Baden, who formed a government in which the Socialists were
represented for the first time in German history. It marked Germany's departure from the absolutist regime; but it came too late. Military defeat and the armistice immediately followed by a complete revulsion of feeling against the military leaders, the responsible politicians and the institutions of the state. On all sides arose demands that the Kaiser abdicate; revolution had become practically a historical necessity.

In the South, Bavaria was the first German State to proclaim itself a Republic. On November 9, Kurt Eisner, a scholarly Jew, was chosen president.

The Kaiser still remained on his throne. On November 7, the Chancellor received an ultimatum from the Socialist leader, Scheidemann, to the effect that unless the Kaiser had abdicated and the Crown Prince renounced his claim to the throne by noon on November 9, the Socialists would resign from the Government. No answer came; the Socialists resigned and threatened to call a general strike if the abdication was not announced on the next morning, November 9.

The next morning the Chancellor announced that a telegram had just been received informing him of the Kaiser's abdication. He then resigned the Chancellorship to Ebert who at once proclaimed a "People's Government." The armistice agreement was signed by the new government two days later, November 11.

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1A. C. Grzesinski, Inside Germany, p. 45.
2Ibid., p. 50.
The French attitude on disarmament foreshadowed Clemenceau's security demands. The results of the peace conference were that the Rhineland remained German; the Saar was placed under the League, with the probability that it would later revert to Germany. France got the Saar coalfields. French security was protected, at least for a time, by the disarmament of Germany, by the demilitarization of the left bank and part of the right bank of the Rhine and by temporary allied occupation of the Rhineland.³

In 1871, Continental hegemony passed from France to Germany; by the Treaty of Versailles, France regained Continental hegemony.

The defeat of the French by the Germans in 1871 was decisive. But in 1918 Germany was defeated by six great powers and a score of lesser ones. It is easily understood that the task of French diplomacy was far more difficult than that which Bismarck had faced. After 1918 it was certain that if Germany was allowed to recover her strength, she could defeat France in war; France, not Germany, now needed allies. Germany must be weak, and France must have allies; these have been the guiding principles of French diplomacy since 1918. But a grave mistake was made. France believed that Germany could be kept in her place because of

³C. J. H. Hayes, A Brief History of the Great War, p. 368.
the reparations payments. The amount was to be placed so high that the German Government would be strained in making the payments and therefore, because of financial conditions, would be unable to rebuild the powerful system she had before the war.

Clemenceau thought he had achieved the necessary security by the Treaty of Versailles. The German army and navy were permanently reduced to insignificant proportions; the Rhineland was permanently demilitarized, allied troops were to garrison the Rhineland for fifteen years—for longer, if Germany had not fulfilled the conditions of peace. Germany was economically weakened by the loss of industrial resources and last, the most important factor all, by the reparations burden that she must pay.

The French felt that Germany would be too weak to attack if these provisions were enforced. Clemenceau also counted on the continued existence of the alliance for aid in keeping Germany from regaining hegemony of the continent.

After bitter discussion the German Reichstag ratified the treaty and it became the law of Europe on January 1, 1920. It was not a treaty of negotiation, or a product of mutual consent. It was a treaty imposed by allied might upon a defeated and humiliated power. Parts of the treaty did attempt to put into force the principles of Wilson, as in

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the case of Alsace-Lorraine and Poland, and the plebiscites in certain disputed territories. But in other cases Wilsonian principles were applied only in part or when they worked to allied advantages.⁶

The terms of the peace treaty were also that Germany pay $1,500,000,000 a year to France until 1922 at which time an international conference was to be held and the discussion was to be made as to the total amount of reparations and the plan to be used in making the payments. At this time it was decided that Germany could not pay this large amount in gold because all the gold in Germany was necessary as a support of German currency. It was then decided that Germany pay in goods or in services and this is the plan that was first accepted by both Germany and France.

By this plan, however, German trade would again be built up,⁷ as it was in South America before the war, and allied countries would be flooded with German products and when reparations were completed Germany would have a better trade built up than any country in the world, so the scheme was finally abandoned and the "wild dreams"⁸ of 1918 given up. England was the first to see the dangers of this plan and due to her trade and commerce she immediately started working against it and so even if the plan could have been perfected it is unlikely that it would have been adopted due to England's

⁶Ibid., p. 30.
⁷C. P. Higby, History of Modern Europe, p. 418.
⁸Ibid., p. 419.
attitude. She was looking out for England alone, a fact, which is very noticeable in diplomatic relations of Europe after the World War.

By 1921 Britain found she could not prosper economically while a large part of Europe, especially Germany, was in economic chaos. The British urged, therefore, that reparations payments be suspended until Germany's economic survival was assured.⁹

In viewing reparations the Germans saw only the uncontestable fact that the allies were demanding more than Germany could pay. The German government was in an awkward predicament. The only way to convince the allies that the reparations claims of the treaty were economically unworkable was by a sincere effort to pay.¹⁰ The French government was in an equally difficult position. The French people saw only the fact that the Germans were not paying to the limit of their capacity. From this fact French nationalists concluded that the real purpose of Germany was to repudiate reparations. If the Germans were successful, two results would follow. One part of the Treaty of Versailles would be broken; the Germans would then proceed to attack other parts.¹¹ If the Germans won on reparations, they would next concentrate on arms, then

⁹F. L. Berns, Europe Since 1914, p. 256.
¹⁰P. W. Slosson, Europe Since 1870, p. 618.
¹¹Ibid., p. 620.
on the occupation of the Rhineland, and then probably on the territorial settlement.

The treaty of Versailles stipulated that the total reparations must be fixed by May, 1922, and that prior to that date the allies would consider any offer Germany might make. A settlement proposed by Germany would obviously have a stronger guarantee of payments than one imposed on Germany. At a meeting of the Allied Reparations Commission the total liability was set at 56 billion dollars.\textsuperscript{12} There was little possibility that such an amount could be paid by Germany.

To meet this payment Germany issued paper money, inflation had begun because there was no gold by which this money could be backed. The German mark dropped to half value in less than a month. Germany was slowly going bankrupt. Lloyd George realized this and succeeded in January, 1922, in bringing together at Garmes an international conference. Now everyone agreed that the only course for reparations was to keep Germany from again becoming the strongest nation in Europe. So Lloyd George made the proposition that if France would do away with the reparations, Britain would be willing to make an alliance with her to assure protection from Germany. France refused the offer saying she would protect herself and force the Germans to obey the treaty. So again England took the side of Germany against France and all because of self interest.

\textsuperscript{12}Buell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 79.
In December, 1922, the French delegate to Germany succeeded in getting the Reparation Commission to declare Germany in default. In January, 1923, French and Belgian troops occupied the Ruhr, Germany's most valuable industrial area. French suspicion of Germany's good faith increased with each delay in payments and reached a climax when Germany requested a total suspension of all payments until her budget could be balanced and her credit restored. There was very good ground for this demand, since inflation had driven the mark down to a small fraction of its face value. The English protested vigorously to the occupation of the Ruhr. Not since the two countries first joined hands in the Entente Cordiale of 1904 had France and England stood so sharply opposed to each other as during the time of the Ruhr occupation. By 1923 most British commentators on international affairs denounced the French policy as harsh and oppressive.

In defense of France, Poincaré said that the occupation would continue until reparations were paid, and apparently he meant the whole reparation bill. All reparations payments were stopped, however. All German officials and industrial workers in the Ruhr area ceased work. The value of the German mark kept slipping and by September, 1923, the German Government was bankrupt. The mark was worthless.

German government bonds had not been sold after the war because they might at anytime become worthless. The

duty of the reparations commission was to adopt some plan that would revive faith in Germany, of the German government. The commission, headed by General Dawes, one of America's representatives, lost no time. A new German currency called the Rentenmark was created. To revive the German people's faith in the currency, Germany was to receive an international loan of $200,000,000\textsuperscript{15} with which to back the currency and make it stable. This plan went into effect on October 31, 1924. The Dawes Plan, as it was called throughout Europe was hailed as a second armistice which would facilitate the making of a lasting peace.

The Dawes Plan took reparations out of international politics for a few years and by helping to restore confidence allowed Europe to enjoy four years of economic prosperity. But the questions of reparations were not solved, as men insisted on thinking. Locarno and the entrance of Germany into the League of Nations were followed by four years of comparative tranquillity which permitted the evacuation of the Rhineland. The French thought Locarno meant German acceptance of the Treaty of Versailles; Germans thought Locarno would be followed by revisions of the Treaty of Versailles. Both the French and the Germans were mistaken.\textsuperscript{16}

For the first few years the Dawes plan placed the burden of reparation primarily upon German railways and upon

\footnotetext{\textsuperscript{15}}{Buell, op. cit., p. 31.}

\footnotetext{\textsuperscript{16}}{Helen Hill, The Spirit of Modern France, p. 24.}
German industry rather than upon the German budget.\textsuperscript{17} The German people regained faith in their government and industry began to recover. By 1927 unemployment was greatly reduced and the number of bankruptcies had been decreased very much in Germany.

The first three payments of reparations, under the Dawes Plan, from 1924 to 1927 were met in full by the German government.

In September, 1923, plans were made for a new experts committee.\textsuperscript{18} There were to be two representatives from each of six nations: Germany, France, England, Japan, Italy, and Belgium, and two from the United States. They met at Paris February 18, 1929. Here are the terms of the plan that was accepted. In the Young plan\textsuperscript{19} the amount to be paid by Germany was fixed and was to be met by 59 annual payments. The first full annual payment was fixed at $407,000,000 but gradually the amounts were to be increased to a maximum of $578,500,000 in 1965-66. The average of the payments for the first 37 years was to be $488,000,000. After the first 37 years the payments declined considerably and the average for the last twenty-two years was slightly more than $357,000,000, it was to end in 1983 and the total sum by that time would be $9,000,000,000.\textsuperscript{20} This plan seemed favorable because the allies would still be making Germany pay reparations, which

\textsuperscript{17}Buell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 90. \textsuperscript{18}Benns, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 274.
\textsuperscript{19}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 277. \textsuperscript{20}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 290.
was to last 57 more years and the Germans were still more pleased because the total amount to be paid had been decreased.

In 1931 Chancellor Heinrich Bruning of Germany made it clear that Germany would not be able to continue the Young Plan payments. Meanwhile Great Britain had found it necessary once more to go off the gold standard and even France had begun to feel the adverse effects of prolonged and widespread depression. Another reparations conference was, therefore, called for June, 1932, at Lausanne. This, it was hoped, would reach a lasting settlement of the measures necessary to solve the other economic and financial difficulties which it felt were responsible for and might prolong the existing world crisis. Germany sought to secure the complete cancellation of all reparations payments. France, on the other hand, desired to have the Young Plan continued but with the payments reduced. In the end an agreement was reached. The Young Plan was done away with. It was replaced by an obligation upon Germany to pay into a general fund for European reconstruction the sum of $750,000,000. It was decided that whatever discussion may ensue the reparations clauses of the Versailles Treaty have been virtually revised out of existence.

No sooner had the treaty been ratified than some of the terms, so dear to the French heart, fell to the ground. In

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21 Sontag, op. cit., p. 392.
22 Schuman, op. cit., p. 54.
1920 and 1921 Belgium and England waived their rights under the treaty to confiscate German private property in the event of Germany's failure to live up to her obligations. The object of this waiver was to restore the confidence necessary to also modify or at least postpone the literal enforcement of the disarmament provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. In 1920 a communist revolt occurred in the neutralized territory along the Rhine-- territory which German troops could not legally enter. In order to put down the revolt the German Government requested permission to move troops into the area, a request which the British favored but which the French opposed. Without waiting authorization, the Germans marched 20,000 men into the area and overcame the revolutionists. This action angered the French who claimed that the Germans had violated the Treaty of Versailles. Declaring that the Germans must be punished, the French marched troops across the Rhine and occupied the German towns of Frank-on-Main and Darmstadt in April, 1920. At the protest of the British and when the neutral zone had been evacuated by the Germans, the French withdrew in May. The French were alarmed however. If one violation of the treaty could be justified, another and still others could be condoned, until the treaty became nothing but a dead letter.

By 1923 the League of Nations Committee which was studying the disarmaments problem had become lost in a bog of
technicalities, and it was alarmed by the swiftly vanishing prestige of the League. The disarmament commission laid aside its technical studies and turned to the problem of security. In 1923 the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance was submitted to the powers. The treaty met with widespread criticism, especially in the British Empire. In 1924 an effort was made to meet these criticisms in a revised version, the Geneva Protocol.\textsuperscript{23} Although it was unsuccessful, it paved the road to Locarno.\textsuperscript{24}

The next move came from Germany.\textsuperscript{2} The Reich had declined to admit that Germany had lost the war. This group plotted for revenge, bitterly opposing any policy of conciliation and cherishing the belief that Germany would be able to overturn the peace settlement if she could only form some important alliances. The second group was frank to admit that Germany had made mistakes in the past. But it blamed the system of Government not the German people. It admitted that Germany had lost the war and must pay the penalty, but believed that without the aid and cooperation of the Allies there was no hope for the future. This group urged the policy of Western Orientation, a policy of conciliation with all states. And this was the policy which finally prevailed.\textsuperscript{25}

The embodiment of this policy of conciliation was Herr Streseemann who had been Foreign Minister since August, 1923. A methodical, clear-sighted man, he worked steadily for the

\textsuperscript{23}Sontag, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 368.

\textsuperscript{24}Buell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 104.

\textsuperscript{25}Ibid., p. 104.
rapprochement of Germany and France. He believed that once the fear of a new German attack had been removed, the Allies' view would change and the peace settlement could be revised.

Perhaps conscious-stricken at its shabby rejection of the Geneva Protocol, England promptly expressed sympathy with the German idea. France was quick to recognize that the German proposal involved a recognition that the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France was final and irrevocable. The French industrialists, then entering into cartel agreements with the German industrialists, likewise favored entering into an agreement. But the French also realized that Germany had offered to make no promise in regard to the frontier with Poland, which was the outstanding issue in the negotiations that now followed. At first the German Government made the security pact contingent upon the reopening of the question of Germany's sole responsibility for the war, and the evacuation of Allied troops from the Cologne zone of the occupied area.26

Under the Treaty of Versailles, the Cologne zone of the occupied area was to be evacuated in January, 1925, if Germany had fulfilled all her obligations under the treaty to that date. France sighted some minor infraction of the disarmament clauses for refusing consent to evacuation. The fall of the mark also caused a decline in the French franc due to the fact that reparations were no longer being paid.

The treaty of Versailles not only deprived the German people of any power of self-defense, but it exposed them to military invasion if and when they failed to fulfill its requirements.

Germany hoped to subordinate the license which the French government claimed and possessed to invade Germany; to the authority of an international court which would protect the German people from being exposed to all the dangers of war without being allowed to enjoy any of its possible advantages. All that Germany asked for was a guarantee of the security of Germany by France and underwritten by Great Britain.

M. Briand's reply offered no encouragement to this attempt of Germany to build a new legal foundation for national security. He took his stand on the Treaty of Versailles as the only possible basis of European peace, and he knew that Germany felt she had been mistreated by the treaty. 27

Here is a quotation from the editorial of the "New Republic,"

The French reply to the German overture has in our opinion done nothing to improve the prospects of the restoration of Europe to law, order, and peace. So long as the authority of the Treaty of Versailles remains unimpaired, as France demands and Great Britain agrees, Europe will continue to drift helplessly towards another calamitous convulsion. 28

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28 The *New Republic*, July 1, 1925, p. 133.
While the French financial power was ebbing, French military power was also taxed to its utmost. All available troops were sent to put down revolts in Syria, Morocco, and Tunis. French military experts realized that in the future similar conditions might give Germany a chance to invade France so they immediately started working on a plan of getting Germany into the League of Nations, in which case France would be protected by other members of the League. This was successfully carried out.

In October, 1925, Briand, Stresemann, and Chamberlain drew up the Locarno Treaty, made up of several different pacts each dealing with specific questions or problems in Europe.

In the Rhineland Pact, Great Britain and Italy joined in guaranteeing the Franco-Belgium-German frontier. It is to be noticed that this guarantee gives the same security to Germany as it does to France and Belgium.

On September 3, 1926, after six months of quarreling the League of Nations unanimously voted for Germany's admission to League membership. That same year French troops were removed from the Saar and the Cologne zone. Of 4000 troops which had been stationed here since the war, 300 were to remain to keep order. The remaining 3200 were to return to French territory and if the need became great enough, they were to be recalled. The Übelnitz zone was to be evacuated
in 1930 and the Kehl zone by 1935, but by June, 1930, all allied troops had been evacuated from the Rhineland.

On internal questions, the Germans were hopelessly at odds; on questions of foreign affairs they were becoming increasingly united. This confused situation gave Hitler his chance. He fascinated all classes by promising to rid Germany of the incubus of the Treaty of Versailles. Practically, Hitler said Germany had not really been defeated. Germany had been betrayed by the corrupt Republican politicians. The Republican government gone, Germany could repudiate the treaty. Germany was stronger than France. "France," he declared, "must free herself from the delusion that we are a second-rate power and must learn to treat us as cultured people. We are not Carthage, nor is France Rome, and it should also be recalled that Rome subdued Carthage single-handed."^29

The election of 1930 made apparent what the world had refused to see: Germany, made desperate by years of suffering and thwarted hope, was losing faith in democracy and moderation. Both the Communists and the National Socialists made heavy inroads on the Socialists and the moderate bourgeois parties.^30

The steadily rising tide of nationalism in Germany and Hitler's wild language aroused misgivings among those who had invested money in Germany. A large proportion of these loans

^29Sontag, op. cit., p. 390.  
^30Benns, op. cit., p. 433.
were short term, that is, the investor could demand payment on a few weeks' notice. Uneasy, more and more foreign investors demanded repayment. International finance took fright and tried to withdraw almost overnight the sums which had been showered on Germany in the years preceding. France held back, and insisted that the unconditional payments under the Young plan be protected. The French demands were accepted, but only after a delay which allowed the panicky withdrawals to have effect. By the time the terms were adopted, German economic life was paralyzed.

Alone among the great powers, France emerged apparently unscathed, and with relentless precision France proceeded with the task of reducing the rebellious Germans and Austrians to complete submission. France won, but at heavy cost, not only to the rest of the world but also to herself. France had vindicated her rights to payments under the Young Plan, but only by helping to plunge the world so deep in economic ruin that there seemed little hope that Germany would ever be able to resume payments. France had shown her power to coerce Germany, but open coercion not merely alienated world opinion from France, it also goaded the Germans to desperation and made the triumph of the German nationalists certain.

By the close of 1932, therefore, France, Great Britain, the Powers of the Little Entente, and Poland constituted one group of states, with Russia inclined to lean in their
direction; while Italy, Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria constituted a rival combination. This could easily be seen and was realized throughout the world. Mussolini, feeling that something could be done to relieve the tension, asked that a meeting be held at Geneva to see if some kind of agreement could be made between the two factions. On July 15, 1932, the Four-Power Pact was signed by ambassadors from Great Britain, Germany, France, and himself representing Italy. This was a non-aggression pact and was based on the idea that one of these nations taking aggression against these or any other countries must discuss their actions with representatives of the other three.

The French made a grave mistake in putting too much faith in the Treaty of Versailles, which was gradually being abandoned. For this the English were partly to blame. For economic reasons and partly through sympathy the Germans were allowed to slip away from the Treaty of Versailles.

The French also adopted the League of Nations as protection against Germany, but this was unsuccessful because the League was not as strong as it was meant to be and also Germany withdrew a few years after entering.

The Dawes plan took reparations out of international politics a few years, but trouble soon began to rise. Three years later the Young Plan was adopted, but it eventually

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31 Current History, April, 1932, XXXVI, p. 573.
failed. At Lausanne in 1932 reparations payments were done away with completely. Another important part of the Treaty of Versailles had been revised out of existence.

So by 1932 the countries of Europe were again taking sides. Italy, Germany, Austria, and Bulgaria against France, Great Britain, the Powers of the Little Entente, and Poland.

France, despite her effort, had permitted Germany to start on her road to recovery.
CHAPTER IV
GERMANY UNDER HITLER

When Hitler came into power Germany was in a terrible state financially. He wanted to improve the economic conditions, rebuild the German army and navy, do away with the Treaty of Versailles, and he wanted Germany to become the strongest and most powerful nation in Europe.

Of course, Hitler started rearming immediately, and France followed, her motive being that she must remain stronger than Germany. Germany's rearmament and its avowed objective made clear her purpose to the rest of the world.

The French army was purely a defensive one while Germany's plan was to build an offensive army. France was preparing to protect herself, but Germany was planning on regaining the territory that she had lost at the end of the World War.

Early in 1933 Hindenburg appointed Adolph Hitler Chancellor. Hitler's policy can be placed under three heads: (1) The regeneration of the German race consciousness with all that is implied in "Germany's place in the sun," (2) Military equality with France, (3) Revision of the unjust treaties.\(^1\)

If these objectives could not be accomplished by peaceful means, he was prepared to resort to others.

\(^1\)Walter Durante, Europe War or Peace, p. 9.
The Nazis were brought to power on a wave of nationalist sentiment and profound economic distress. They boasted of their ability to deal with the situation, which they traced primarily not to the economic disorders of the world as a whole, but rather to the hardships inflicted on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles. They demanded first of all the right for Germany to rearm. German leaders declared: . . . Rearmament is desired not only for its own sake, but also as a symbol of restored German nationhood, and a throwing off once and for all of the enforced repentence exacted from Germany in the Versailles Treaty.²

The Nazis had comparatively little difficulty in captivating the German mind by playing upon the psychology of the German people and by knowing their autocratic tendencies built upon the "iron and blood" theory of Bismarck, as well as their love for uniformity, precision, and pride of leadership.

Heinrich Heine once wrote:

The Germans are more revengeful than the Romance peoples; this is because they are idealists, even in hatred. We Germans hate long and hate deeply, to our last breath. . . .³

On October 14, 1933, Germany startled the world by withdrawing from the League of Nations and announced that she was going to rearm. France seeing the danger hastened to strengthen her alliances with Great Britain, Italy, and Russia.

³Monroe Smith, Out of Their Own Mouths, p. 114.
This was the start of the armament race. Germany did all she could to become as well prepared as France, and France in turn did everything possible to remain stronger than Germany.

In the opinion of the leaders of the Reich the highly armed states had not, and were not willing, to reduce their armaments, to an appreciable extent. "She for her part believes she has a contractual right to demand such a reduction." In two years of disarmament negotiations in the League of Nations, she felt that she did her best to do justice to quite a number of wishes expressed by the other powers.\(^4\)

Germany's rearmament and its avowed purpose, the revision of the Treaty of Versailles, dwarf in importance all contemporary European policies, and Germany completely understood that treaty revisions could not and would not be obtained by peaceful means. Hitler and his associates have made their purposes all too clear; at the present time, it was true, they were loud and eager to affirm that Germany wanted peace. In fact, all that it demanded, at the present time, was military equality with France. Meanwhile, the Reichwehr had been increased in numbers; men and women alike were being drilled from the ages of ten to fifty. It is no wonder France was alarmed or that Britain believed Hitler had replaced William's slogan of "our future is on the sea" by "our future is in the air." The facts of the case speak

\(^4\)Benns, *op. cit.*, p. 449.
more strongly than words.\footnote{Lord Riddle and others, The Treaty of Versailles and After, p. 58.}

One fault found with the Treaty at this time was that after the disarmament provisions had been completely carried out, what could be done in the case of German defiance and the threat to rearm only fifteen years after the Treaty of Versailles had been signed?\footnote{New York Times, March 16, 1935.}

France, naturally fearing German vengeance, had kept a strong army in preparation all through the period of fifteen years. On March 6, 1935, military conscription service was extended to two years,\footnote{Buell, The Dangerous Year, p. 8.} and diplomacy drew a cordon around disarmed Germany consisting, besides herself, of Belgium on the west, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Russia on the south-east and east, and Great Britain on the west. Hitler then threw in his bombshell of notice of rearmament, announced his return to the policy of conscription and declared his intention to build an army of fifty-three divisions of 600,000 men; six times the Versailles Treaty allotment. He thus defied the outside world, and Germany gained new confidence. By its own will it had achieved a position of equality in Europe denied it by the Allies.\footnote{On March 16 the German press screamed, "End of Versailles. Germany is free again."}
disarmament obligations as a justification for the Reich's reintroduction of conscription. He emphasized France's action on the day before in extending the period of conscription service to two years. The material ban was also scrapped in defiance of military clauses in the Versailles Treaty. "The new German army will be equipped in accordance with the latest developments of military science." The conscription law was not called a "document of peace, but a document of determination." About this time Hitler made a speech to the people; the most significant sentences from his appeal to his people on German rearmament were:

The German people had the right to expect the redemption by the other side of the (disarmament) obligation undertaken. The increase of armament on the part of a whole group of states became evident. In the midst of these highly armed, warlike states, Germany was, military speaking, in a vacuum. Germany was ready to accept this plan (the MacDonald peace proposal). The other states declined to accept it. Even after leaving Geneva, Germany still was ready to make practical proposals. The German government must note that for months the rest of the world had been rearming continuously and increasingly. The German government desires to command international respect as co-guarantor of general peace. The German government does not intend in rearming to create an instrument for warlike attack, but exclusively for defense and thereby for the maintenance of peace.

The significance of the decision thus taken was explained to the German nation and the world in this manifest

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issued by the German Government. It was in vain that the other European Powers protested, and that the League of Nations adopted a resolution stating that Germany had violated her obligations toward the community of nations. The German Government, in its turn, protested against this resolution of the League which it regarded as a further discrimination between Germany and other countries, and it denied to the members of the League the right to sit in judgment upon Germany.\footnote{Cesare Santoro, \textit{Hitler Germany}, p. 70.}

It was known that Germany had been making military plans secretly for some time before her public announcement. Her air forces were estimated to be 40,000. This was not a violation of the Treaty, because no limit had been placed on commercial aviation, and pilots could easily learn to fly military planes.

The choice of defense warfare was one of the causes of the military collapse of France. It was at the same time one of the causes of the political collapse. All the people in France, who since 1936 have more or less openly worked toward abolishing democracy at home and concluding an alliance with the European dictatorships, gave full support to the military theory of the defense that served their purpose as well. The struggle which these people waged against the alliance with Russia was attributable in no slight measure to the fact that the Russian General Staff had severely criticized French
military policy because of its purely defensive perspective, declaring that alliance with France had practical value only if the French army like the Russian were transformed into an instrument for taking the offensive.\textsuperscript{12}

Germany in the meantime was building a very broad and very systematic network of highways over the empire in order to get ammunition and provisions to her armies in case of war. Highways are much more difficult to destroy than railroads, and more efficient. Germany's ability to hold up so long during the world war was largely due to the fact that she occupied a central position and could work inside lines, being able to send troops from one front to another in comparatively short time. Today life in Germany is regimented along military lines, so that it is scarcely too much to assert that the nation is in a continuous state of mobilization.\textsuperscript{13}

After sending troops into the Rhine and in order to prevent any misinterpretations of its intentions and of the purely defensive nature of the measures taken by it; in order, further, to confirm again its immutable aspiration towards a real pacification of Europe; the German Government declared itself prepared to submit to proposals destined to insure lasting peace in Europe. Hitler had broken the second strongest fetter imposed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles and

\textsuperscript{12}Heinz Pol, \textit{Suicide of a Democracy}, p. 138.

\textsuperscript{13}Headline Books, No. 15, p. 47.
presented the world with a new surprise. Unfortunately his suggestions have hitherto failed to elicit any response in other countries. On the contrary, however, to her attitude in 1935 Italy only took part in the initial stages of the new campaign.

Germany has always been a leader in military weapons and methods. Stalemated on land, checked on the sea, she turned to a third dimension and forged the most terrible weapon the world has ever faced. The actual facts of the German aerial triumph could by the end of 1938 be presented quite accurately as follows.

In 1937 the German air force was already considered the best in the world, with a personnel of 45,000 men and between 6,000 and 8,000 planes, with her factories turning out 400 new ones each month.14

At the time of the Czechoslovakian crisis of 1938, Hitler had 12,000 military planes, today (March, 1939) his fleet is between 16,000 and 18,000 planes. Of these 60 per cent are fighting planes; forty per cent are for observation, transport, communication and training.15

At this time Germany had been said to be military from the cradle to the grave. German boys and girls entered the Hitler youth movement at the age of ten. They learned to hike and swim. They learned that Hitler saved Germany, and

14 Santoro, op. cit., p. 74.
15 Reader's Digest, March, 1939, p. 6.
to love their Fatherland above everything.

Just as the children were trained for the army, so also the rest of German life was directed towards the goal of building up the Reich's military strength. Hitler promised that he would make Germany a great military power again and he has. The military clauses in the Versailles Treaty have been torn to shreds. In 1939 the German army and air force were the most powerful weapons of destruction ever forged by human hands.

It is in some cases difficult to get accurate information about the present German army. Germany guards her military secrets zealously. But we have some reliable estimates of the strength of Germany's forces in terms of money, men, and weapons. Experts say that she was spending the staggering sum of four billion dollars a year to make herself a nation in arms. The same experts tell us that Germany's military strength was as follows: men in active service, 300,000; first line reserves, 500,000 to 600,000; semi-military trained men in the ranks of the Elite Guard and Storm troopers, 900,000; old fighters of the World War, about 4,000,000; total number of men with some military training over 6,000,000.

The Hitler administration soon began developing the German military establishment at great speed. During 1933-34, despite a world wide drop in trade of approximately 20%
the Reich showed an increase of several hundred per cent in the import of iron, scrap, nickel, copper, and molybdenum to supply the new demand for war materials. Germany's rearmament and its avowed objective made clear her purpose to the rest of the world.\(^{16}\)

In January, 1935, the Saar was peacefully returned to Germany after a plebiscite held under the auspices of an international police force and an electoral commission appointed by the League of Nations.\(^ {17}\)

In June, 1935, Germany and Britain suddenly announced the conclusion of an agreement recognizing Germany's right to maintain a navy thirty-five per cent of that of the British Empire and three times as strong as that allowed the Reich under the Versailles Treaty. The British justified this agreement on pragmatic grounds. Hitler had repeatedly offered to limit his army and air force at concrete figures, but his offers had not been accepted because of the French thesis of security and France's unwillingness to sign any kind of arms accord with Germany. Britain thought that by this agreement she could prevent another Anglo-German naval rivalry. The agreement definitely prevented such a race by fixing the German fleet at a size smaller than that of either France or England.\(^ {18}\) Hitler made it known to all the world that he was going to build U-Boats, one of the most dreaded ships

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\(^{16}\)Durante, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

\(^{17}\)Duell, The Dangerous Year, p. 8.

\(^{18}\)Ibid., p. 26.
Germany possessed during the World War. But it was not the building of U-Boats that aroused the French; it was the fact that Germany was rebuilding her navy.

Germany's navy was supposed to be limited by a treaty signed with Great Britain in 1925, to thirty-five per cent of the tonnage of the British navy. The German fleet is not strong enough to challenge Britain's supremacy on the sea or to break a blockade of the north German seaports, although with a parity in submarines Germany would probably be able to harass British shipping as she did during the world war. Most experts agree that the primary function of the German navy is to control the Baltic in the event of war with the Soviet Union.19 Hitler suggested a "peace belt" any depth on both sides of the Rhine which would not be fortified. France sneered and continued construction of her famous Maginot Line.20

On March 13, 1936, at noon German troops numbering 25,000 marched into the demilitarized zone and on to the Rhine through Frankfort, Dusseldorf, Essen, Mainz, Frier, Sarrbrouchen, and Cologne.21 In France regiment after regiment piled into eastbound trains. Fifty thousand soldiers rushed to their posts, half above and half below the ground, from Belgium to Switzerland at Metz, Nancy, Verdun, Belfort,

19Headline Books, No. 18, p. 45.
20Current History, February, 1937, p. 54.
21News-Week, March 14, 1936, p. 7.
and Strasbourg. The stage was set for war to begin where it had left off November 11, 1918.

One year after the announcement of remilitarization, the German effective available for immediate action on the day of war were summarized as follows:

Land army of from 630,000 to 650,000 men; air force of from 80,000 to 100,000; a "replacement" army, under eight weeks training, about 50,000; the labor service army of between 200,000 and 250,000 in which the class next up for military duty serves six months; from 30,000 to 35,000 men in the navy. A total of over 1,000,000 men in conscript formations. 22

Also Germany was building a supposedly impregnable defense facing France and Belgium. Little information was obtainable about German fortification. In Germany the Nazi government, faced with the desire for an unprecedented expansion of armaments, has had the virtual control of all private manufacturing. Although private factories have been continued and expanded, Krupp and other great armamakers in Germany are now as closely regulated as if the country were at war, and their profits are limited. 23

Relations were somewhat strained between the two nations but on December 6, 1938, the Franco-German Pact was signed by Georges Bonnet of France and Joachin Von Ribbentrop of Germany. It was a vaguely worded three-article declaration in which the two countries (1) pledged "Pacific and good-neighborly relations"; (2) recognized the frontier of their two countries

22 Nation, September 5, 1939, p. 268.
23 Ibid., p. 269.
as it was, at the present time established; (3) promised to consult together in case of international tension. The new pact was widely accepted as meaning: (1) that Germany in black and white renounced all claims to Alsace-Lorraine (which Hitler had verbally already done); (2) that France agreed not to interfere with Germany's political, and economic drive in the Balkans.

Many points of possible Franco-German friction were left hanging. Nothing was said about German claims to French colonies, protectorates, or mandated territory.\textsuperscript{24}

The realistic French public was skeptical about the new pact's length of service, and well they might be. Hitler had not hesitated to break any of his agreements and in their minds would not hesitate to break another.

In September, 1938, the fate of Czechoslovakia hardly seemed worth bothering about, although France had pledged her support. Air Marshall, Herman Wilhelm Goring, says, "the armament fever has gripped most countries of the world. Thus, further expansion of the German air forces is necessary; the German Air Force is the terror of our opponents and it will remain so."\textsuperscript{25} At Munich, Germany, a last minute hitch occurred when Hitler increased his demands. The German army was ready to march. Another European war seemed imminent on September 30, 1938, when Chamberlin of Britain, Daladier of

\textsuperscript{24} \textit{News-Week}, December 19, 1938.

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Time}, March 13, 1939, p. 22.
France, and Mussolini of Italy met with Hitler at Hitler's request and gave Germany what she wanted in the way of territory from Czechoslovakia.

On March 1, 1939, the Field Marshall declared his determination to "maintain Germany's leading position among the world's military and aviation forces." He also declared that a "fully developed defense zone" thirty-seven miles deep had been created behind the Reich's western fortifications during the September, 1938, Czechoslovakia crisis.26

A United Press correspondent of the Berlin staff declared on January 24, 1939, on the sixth anniversary of Nazi Germany, "the Reich leaders claim they could send a fleet of more than forty submarines into the North Sea, cloud Europe's skies with 10,000 warplanes, and put 2,000,000 trained soldiers into the trenches."27 The estimated standing army on that date was 1,000,000 men.

Armaments, like the rise of dictators, are a reflection of bad economic and political conditions. Because the League of Nations failed to provide means of solving economic problems or revising unjust treaties, nations have more and more lost faith in peace machinery. A nation which is unable or unwilling to look to arbitration for a remedy of its problems of raw materials and markets builds up an army in order to

26Spenton Record-Chronicle, March 9, 1939.  
27The Fort Worth Press, January 24, 1939.
secure what it needs by force. Germany feels that all arbitration has been at her expense over a period of fifteen years because of her weakness.\textsuperscript{28}

In his world speech on February 1, 1939, Adolph Hitler declared that "the wealth of the world must be divided by equity or by force."

Hitler was successful in rebuilding his army, navy, and air force. He was striving to become one of the major powers of Europe, and he had achieved his objective. France on the other hand was unsuccessful with her rearming mainly because of her political instability. Labor and management did not work together and strikes were always interfering with her progress.

The French fortifications were depended on as being competent of holding off an invading army but the machine that the Germans had built was not to be held off by simple defensive fortifications.

A lack of unity was another of the reasons why France was unsuccessful in keeping the Germans down. Germany was unified under Hitler to such an extent that he could achieve almost anything with other nations.

His method of dealing with other nations was simple. He tried to accomplish his ideals by peaceful means and if he could not get what he wished he resorted to other methods.

\textsuperscript{28}Headline Books, No. 6, p. 31.
CONCLUSION

The general curve of friendly relations is not difficult to trace. Naturally, it is not visible for nearly five years after the treaty of Frankfort. From 1870 to 1875 the cry for revenge was sounding in France, and from Germany came the threat of preventive war. Europe was momentarily expecting the outbreak of hostilities; the two countries were discussing the question of a common policy. From 1876-1880 there was a distinct détente in their relations. It was a period of close association from 1881 to approximately 1886 when the Foreign Offices were openly following the same policies and seriously discussing an entente on specific and definite problems. France needed the support of Germany for her colonial adventures, and Germany was glad to divert French attention from the Rhine to seek French aid when conflict with England threatened. These five years of active cooperation were followed by five years of mutual distrust and recrimination. The responsibility for the strained relations rests largely with the Nationalists of France. The old hostility gradually disappeared and by 1895, public opinion was ready for new cooperation with Germany. There followed five years when the two governments were in almost as close association as they had been between 1881 and 1886.
Between 1900 and 1905 the relations of the two countries became strained by diplomatic agreements with other countries and it appeared that war might break out at anytime over the question of Morocco. For the next five years the two governments were on fairly good terms considering what they had gone through in the past five years. But the two countries started drifting apart and the gap was widened from 1910 until the war broke out.

From 1913 to 1925 relations were rather friendly because there was really no other alternative for the Germans. They were placing their hope in the belief that is some way the Treaty of Versailles may be revised, and Germany realized that at this time no other method was practical. For the five years that followed few changes can be seen. Germany was striving to make friends and to get into the League of Nations. She was working to reduce reparations through peaceful means.

France was still master of the situation until 1932 when Hitler started working for control of the German Government and even after he came into power relations between Germany and France were rather favorable until about 1935. After 1935, however, Hitler's military strength was so improved that he felt he no longer had to resort to peaceful means to realize his aims. From this time on relations between Germany
and France became more and more strained until late in 1939 they were broken off completely.

So it seems that the success of the German nation may be somewhat attributed to the diplomatic actions of its leaders. Bismarck was one of the most successful diplomats in Europe. He held France just where he wanted her until William II came into power. William II was not quite as successful as Bismarck, but as far as France was concerned he was equal to the task. After the World War France was the dominating nation, and Germany was forced to accept the ideas of France, but when Hitler came into power Germany again took the lead through Hitler's skill.
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