

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE CONFERENCE OF AMBASSADORS IN LONDON, 1912-13, AND THE  
CREATION OF ALBANIAN STATE: A DIPLOMATIC STUDY

A DISSERTATION

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The Conference of Ambassadors in London, 1912-13, and the  
Creation of Albanian State: A diplomatic study.

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The Conference of Ambassadors in London, 1912-13, and the  
Creation of Albanian State: A Diplomatic Study.

Introduction

The Balkan Question, the "laboratory of history", for the last fifty years, has been the malignant boil on Europe's back. The Albanian Problem was simply the most signal inflammation of that dreadful carbuncle; the Balkan League its suppuration; and the Balkan War of 1912 its perforation. Europe had a quack-doctor, the Conference of Ambassadors in London, who with all his plaster and iodine tincture, did not cure the sore entirely; only accelerated the fatal process of putrefaction. From the historical point of view, the World War of 1914-1918 had its indirect origin in the vicissitudes of that Albanian inflammation.

A quack is a quack, and quack-doctors in diplomacy have their common traits. The Ambassadorial Conference in London was not excelled later by the Council of Four at Paris in 1919, both in the secretiveness with which compromises were being effected and in the expediency to make peace quite against the principles of justice and freedom. To the history student at least, it ought to be clear that in no case can mere plaster and iodine stop the inflammation. You can not stop it unless you kill all its germs. Diplomacy may appear only as egotistic intrigues; but they always have their roots, they represent broad eternal elements in humanity. If political

disputes are ever to be settled rightly, their causes, circumstances and consequences should be studied carefully. Only the quack-doctor allows himself to be deceived by form and phenomenon.

### Causes

Even at present (1921) the Albanian Problem is far from being settled; now smoldering, now bursting into flames, but no sooner is one aspect of the problem disposed of than a new factor springs up and produces a more perplexing situation. The complexity of the problem has been caused by numerous composite forces. Indeed, the cause and conduct of the London Ambassadorial Conference, 1912-1913, had many different aspects, both national and international, both apparent and hidden.

Of course, when we know that Albania was a part of European Turkey, and that Turkey was the weak and favorable spot of political disease that upset the diplomatic equilibrium of Europe, we should easily fathom the depth of the problem. The creation of the Albanian state by the Ambassadorial Conference was not a mere incident in history, not to say an accident. In the very beginning of the twentieth century, a letter plainly addressed "Albania" was once returned from Albany, N.Y., with the painstaking inscription, "Try Europe".<sup>1</sup> But in 1912 the Albanian inflammation began

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<sup>1</sup> Peacock, Albania, p.5.

to appear on the surface; and the contemporary opinion was rife that "to settle the Albanian question satisfactorily will be to settle the future of European Turkey; but any projected settlement of Turkish territory which leaves out the Albanians is doomed to failure."<sup>2</sup> Albania suddenly became very popular because of its international relations, and the international relations here were significant because of Albania's geographical situation. Being only thirty-nine miles from Italy and holding the strategic position on the Adriatic, this became the contested barter for the Serbs, the Greeks, the Austrians and the Italians. The fine ports of Valona, Durezzo, and San Giovanni di Medua are a sharp contrast with the sandy slow-slopping marshy shores on the Italian side. Valona is the Gibraltar of the Adriatic, and with a strong navy it can control all the countries bordering the sea. This was why the Austrians did not want to see the Serbs control Albania; and that Greece was never tolerated by Italy to get north of Corfu. This was why the Russians were backing Serbia's wishes in Albania and France those of Greece.<sup>3</sup>

If we should study the Treaty of San Stefano, the program of Bulgarian aggrandisement could be easily seen. It would have given important Albanian cities like Struga, Okhrida, Koritsa, and Dibra to Bulgar control; and it would have been very possible for Bulgaria to work her way towards

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<sup>2</sup> Liv.Age, V.275, p.810.

<sup>3</sup> Lichnowsky, p.6.

the Adriatic. The Serbian propaganda in Albania was not unlike that in Macedonia. Through the religious centers like Ipek and Dyakova the Serbian priests directed a regular systematic campaign to Serbanize the Albanians. Serbian scholars did not hesitate to support some sort of intellectual propaganda, far more subtle than were emotional appeals. The historic domain of Sandjak of Novi-Bazar and Old Serbia proper were strongly Albanian in 1912, yet Messrs. Belits, Kantchev, and Cvijic insisted upon the Serbian possession of them.<sup>4</sup>

Just as the Serbians in the north, the Greeks penetrated into the south. With the double blade of religion and commerce the Greek sword thrust not only into Epirus but also north of Corfu.<sup>5</sup> Panhellenism was the bitter rivalry of Pan-Germanism or Pan-Slavism. But it had too much self-conceit; it quite ignored the self-determination of the Albanian race. The Hellenists deceived themselves that the vulgar Greek speaking people of Epirus were Greeks, whereas they are still Vlachs and Albanians in overwhelming majority.<sup>6</sup>

If Greece is interested in Albania at least from the standpoint of Ionian commerce, Italy has intimate commercial relation with Albania across the Adriatic. According to Mr. P. Ronzy in the Paris Temps,<sup>7</sup> Albania under

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4 Report of Int. Com., p.158.

5 Ibid., p.38, map.

6 Hogarth, Journal, V.41, p.330, Apr.1913.

7 Quoted in Lit. Dig., V.47, p.5-18, 1913.

the Ottoman rule imported \$6,000,000, most of them were grain, wines, spices, dried fruit, and printed fabrics from the boot kingdom. Every year there were \$400,000 furs, \$ 500,000 olive oil, and \$500,000 wool exported largely to Italy. By no means behind Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece, Italy too was hungering for a bite out of the poor Albanians. For her trade and her merchants, she was bound to take a keen interest in Albanian affairs.

But international competition and complication were not confined to Albania's immediate and surrounding neighbours. Every Great Power had more or less economic or strategic interest in the Balkan Peninsula, the route to the Near and Far East. Austria-Hungary was not contented with a few second-class ports at the head of the Adriatic. She wished for, and wished fervently, no less a city than Salonika on the blue Aegean. In her reaching, Sanjak and Old Serbia, regions of Albanian inhabitants, must be her stepping stones. For many years the Austrian consuls had been regularly established in the principal centers of Northern Albania with a view to install and maintain a regular propaganda in behalf of the Dual Monarchy.<sup>8</sup> Austro-Hungarian statesmen were particularly indignant with the Pan-Slavic or Pan-Serbian movement. To their best judgment Serbia should never be allowed to occupy the Albanian coast.

Germany, who arrived late to the scramble of colonial possessions, had to find a new route to the East by

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<sup>8</sup> Liv.Age, V.275,p.809,1912. Seton-Watson,p.21 ff.

consolidating the Middle Europe, the Balkan and the territory of Anatolia. While she was making friends at Bucharest and Constantinople, she had gone into a life and soul alliance with the Dual Monarchy for a Pan-Germanic movement, and, what was more, for a peaceful "penetration" of Turkey. Had there been no Franco-Russian alliance or the Triple Entente, Germany would have built the Bagdad Railway; German students and scientists would have followed its course and opened up the vast resources of Asia Minor and Mesopotamia. German political influence in Constantinople would in the main have excluded English and French financiers from the large profits to be derived from concessions of various sort; but we must remember that German financiers had been excluded in the other parts of the globe. Had the Anglo-Russian jealousies continued, Russia's Constantino-policy would have been checked as it had always been; the predatory appetites of the Romanovs might have assumed a new form; and Russia might have developed a genuine constitutionism, which can unite the Ukrainians, the Esthonians, the Lithuanians, the Finns and the Poles more effectively than the Cossacks and the barracks. The most probable consequence of all, however, would have been a better economic adjustment and the removal of political distress. Had the Entente not been formed, the Alliance would have been disappearing; and in 1912 there would have been no danger of a general European War at all.

Sir Gilbert Murray<sup>9</sup> seems to think that it only takes one party to make war while two parties are necessary for peace. But in any case the war of Europe would have been impossible, certainly improbable, had there been German Draug nach Osten without the Russian Pan-Slavism. As it came out in 1914, the general European war, to a large measure, had been fomented by the fatal conflict between the political aspirations of the Slavs and the economic ambitions of the Germans.<sup>10</sup> Russia did not realize her Constantinopolitan policy even with the Crimean War and the San Stefano Treaty. But since the creation of the Bulgarian exarchy, 1870, Russia could no longer use "The Orthodox Faith" as her mask; since the time of Prince Gortchakof, Pan-Slavism was adopted as the program of Russian conquests. In 1912, the issue of Serbian outlet on the Adriatic was favored by Russia, who tried to back up Serbia in the name of Pan-Slavism. It was, however, an admixture of racial, political and geographical arguments.

Perhaps with the same intensity and conviction as of the Russian support for the Serbian aspiration, the French sentiment for the Greeks was unreasonably strong. "France has always felt that she owed an intellectual debt to Greece that could never be adequately repaid. It is far more from tenderness for Greece to grant to Greece, mother of art and literature, every one of her requests; that France was antagonistic to a strong Albania than for any other cause. All

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<sup>9</sup> Foreign policy of Sir E. Grey

<sup>10</sup> Brailsford, p.7.

the other reasons - the fear of Austrian preponderance in the Near East, the wish to act in accordance with Russian aims - have been only secondary with France."<sup>11</sup> A more historical reason for the French attitude, however, could be studied in connection with her Mediterranean influence and naval power. Her adversary on the Sea was Italy. To fight against Italy indirectly, was the French statecraft. And since the Congress of Berlin, 1878, France has become the champion of the Greek claims on Southern Albania.<sup>12</sup>

From the international situation of that time, Albania could have been partitioned between the Greeks and the Serbs, under the influence of the French and the Russian; or it could have been divided up by Italy and Austro-Hungary with the assistance of Germany. Why was it then, that the Ambassadors at London, able as they were in combining and compromising, did not ignore the creation of the Albanian State? There must be the Albanian nationalism. Without nationalism, Albanian autonomy would have not, under the circumstances, received support, nor could it have been a practicable solution. Unlike Macedonia, the territory of Albania was more than a geographic expression.<sup>13</sup>

The Ambassadorial Conference had to acknowledge the Albanian nationality, the claims of which have ever been indisputable. They were questioned only by the parties selfishly interested in her dismemberment.<sup>14</sup> Those who fail

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<sup>11</sup> Aubry, p.247, v.6, Asiatic Rev.

<sup>12</sup> Dako, p.153.

<sup>13</sup> Grey, Commons, p.1404, v.55.

<sup>14</sup> Woods, Cradle of War, p.154 ff.

to distinguish between what is meant by self-determination and the question of a people's ability to govern themselves here and now, might be skeptical about Albania as an independent nation. But whatever the ability may be it can hardly affect her indefeasible right to national unity and to separate national organization. As a matter of history, the Shkipetars, as the Albanians are fond of calling themselves, are descendants of the original inhabitants of Balkania. For it was not until 550 A.D. that the Serbs crossed the Danube; nor did the Bulgars come to the Peninsula till one hundred twenty-nine years later. The Albanians had already possessed the land for about ten centuries.<sup>15</sup>

Here is a nationality preserved pure and undefiled. The population, through the centuries, in spite of their migrations to Greece, Macedonia, and Italy and Serbia; in spite of so many successive conquests by Romans, Byzantines, Normans, Bulgarians, Serbs, Italians and Turks, the population in Albania, unlike in Macedonia, is homogeneous on the whole, and certainly compact. The long-necked and narrow-faced Ghegs live north of the Skumbi River, on which Elbasan is situated. They speak a different dialect from the Tosks, who stay in the south. In general the Tosks are Christian Orthodox and the Ghegs Roman Catholics; hence in writing the Ghegs often use the Latin and the Tosks the Greek.

But since the Congress of Monastir of 1908, the Albanian orthography is well settled. According to Holger

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<sup>15</sup> Peacock, Albania, p.178-79.

Pedersen, the difference between the two dialects is much smaller than the dialectal differences found within most other languages.<sup>16</sup> Most of the Epirians and the people of Lower Albania, even south of Viose River, traded in Greek; prayed in Greek; read their rare books in Greek. But in Albanian they loved and quarrelled and sang; in Albanian they courted their wives, taught their children, and took counsel with their elders. Under the crushing weight of Turkish intolerance the poor but noble Shkipetars managed successfully to keep their national physiognomy and their racial consciousness intact. An Albanian is always an Albanian. No matter whether he is orthodox or Moslem, or remained to be Catholic, he is always regarded as an Albanian by his kindred. Nowhere in the peninsula has nationality been so deep-rooted as among the Albanians;<sup>17</sup> and if they are in many ways not civilized, it is because they have suffered the double disadvantage of forming part of the corrupt and stagnant Ottoman Empire; and of having lived in a constant state of instability and insecurity on the remote corner of that Empire, which never was strong enough to subdue them.

It is not beyond expectation that, when the time arrives, the race which gave birth to Pyrrhus and Alexander, to Skanderbeg and Lek Ducaghin; which in modern history has endowed Turkey and even Greece and Italy with eminent statesmen, sailors, and soldiers; and which has justly earned

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<sup>16</sup> Dako, p.230.

<sup>17</sup> I.K.Bey, in Quart.Rev., V.228, p.147.

fame for courage, integrity and industry, would not have tolerated the provisions of San Stefano treaty. That treaty registered the highest pitch of intensity of the Russian sympathy for the Slavonic kindred. But it deprived half of the Albanian territory and gave it to the other Balkan States. Albanian patriotism, on the other hand, was unresistably aroused. Three hundred delegates were summoned from all over the country at Prizren; and under the leadership of Wass Pasha and Prenk Bib Doda, Hodo Bey and Abdul Bey Frasheri, the Albanian National League was founded on June 17, 1878. E.F.Knight, who was visiting the country at that time writing of the movement of the Albanian League says, "The League has waxed too strong for the government who could not crush it now were it desirous of doing so. The Leaguesmen, feeling their strength, have extended their program. Defense of their native land against foreign invasion is now not their only cry, but autonomy and the shaking off of the Turkish yoke are boldly discussed in the Bazars of the garrisoned towns. To resist the advances of Austria on the North and Greece on the South are the two avowed objects of the League."<sup>18</sup>

The League's program, written by Waso Pasha, declared that no portion of Albanian territory should be annexed to any other nation; and that the vilayets of Scutari, Kossovo, Janina and Monastir should be formed into a single autonomous province. Knowing the justice of these claims, Britain supported the issue in the Congress of Berlin. Had

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<sup>18</sup> Quoted by Dako, p.57 (note).

Lord Goschen and Lord E. Fitzmaurice's idea triumphed, many later complications and much bloodshed and misery would have been prevented; the Balkan carbuncle would have been nipped at the proper stage of development. But the crime was that the Great Powers could not come to an agreement; so they contented themselves merely with a recommendation for certain administrative reforms for the Turkish provinces, which were never put into execution. The Congress of Berlin created a principality for the Bulgarians, delivered Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria, endowed Serbia and Montenegro with enlarged territory and increased independence, and gave Roumania autonomy; but Albania received nothing.

Must the Albanians create a new state for themselves! And this they now determined to do. The Anglo-Russian scheme, known as the "Reval programme" of 1908, aimed at an effective European supervision in Turkey and thus scared the Young Turks Party more than ever before. On good promises the Turkish revolutionists invited the Albanians to overthrow the Sultan Hamid. The revolt started in Albania, and when the Albanians, one hundred thousand of them<sup>19</sup> demanded a Constitution, the Sultan had to yield. The Young Turks did nothing to help the Albanians; they were assisted by them. The Albanians by themselves held four national congresses; founded sixty-six national clubs, thirty-four day schools and twenty-four night schools; formed fifteen literary societies and three musical clubs; established four

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<sup>19</sup> Dako, p.76.

printing presses and issued eleven newspapers. "After five centuries of struggle, the people began to breathe free and to endow themselves with the blessings of education."<sup>20</sup>

Unfortunately, the Young Turks betrayed the Albanians and consequently deceived themselves. The merciless but forceful Ottomanization of the "Committee of Union and Progress", endeavored nothing but to subdue the Albanian nationalism. A revolt inevitably came; and it was under the patriotic leadership of Issa Boletini, whom no foreign money could corrupt and whom foreign guns could never scare. In the spring of 1911 the Young Turks had to compromise; but when they evaded the issue, the Albanian revolt broke out again in the next year, the eventful year of the Balkan peoples. That was indeed the fateful year in the peninsula; before it ended, Turkey was driven east of the Midia-Enos line, and Macedonia and Albania were on the verge of anarchy. The success of the Albanian revolution and the downfall of the Young Turks, must have indirectly encouraged the First Balkan War. On the other hand, it was that First Balkan war that gave international complications to the Albanian question; and it was the war, which set Europe in alarm, that directly gave birth to the Ambassadorial Conference.

The formation of the Balkan League should explain conclusively the origin and the possibility of the war. It ought to give a background also of the potentiality of Albanian complications and the conflicting ambitions of the

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<sup>20</sup> Dako, p.78.

Balkan States in Albania. The early futile attempts of a League showed how little the Great Powers could help, unless at the same time the Balkan peoples could help themselves. For a time, after 1901, Austria-Hungary almost made the proposed League a very remote deed. To countervail "San Stefano" she had already in 1881 and 1889 concluded secret treaties with Serbia to secure for herself the Adriatic coast; and to drive Serbia into conflict with Bulgaria in the plain of the Vardar and the Western Macedonia.<sup>21</sup> She held a convention with Roumania, and then brought about the Graeco-Roumanian rapprochement which finally threatened the Bulgarian position in Macedonia. But, fortunately for the future of the Balkan League, in 1903 the conflict of Roumanian and Greek propaganda in Macedonia brought about a diplomatic rupture to end that rapprochement. In the same year King Alexander Obrenovits of Serbia was murdered. With the return of the Karageorgenits dynasty, Austrian influence in Serbia began to wane. While Austria boldly annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, she irritated Russia. The attempt that Russia made to bring Serbia and Bulgaria into an alliance convinced the Balkans that she was then in favor of a league facing towards the Danube rather than the Bosphorus. But in spite of Russian assistance, the Serbo-Bulgarian conferences at St. Petersburg, 1910, did not arrive at any result.<sup>22</sup>

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21 Report, p. 39.

22 Report, p. 42.

Sentiments alone could not have accomplished the League; a firm necessity had to come from circumstances. Only the cruel "Ottomanizing" of Christians in Albania and Macedonia, and the chance of taking advantage of Turkey's military weakness, because of the Albanian revolts, - had the adequate force to transform a Balkan League from its ideal to its real, from a noble faith to a promising sight. At the end of September, 1911, Gueshoff, the prime minister of Bulgaria was with King Ferdinand at vacation in Vichy. On the way returning to Sophia, Gueshoff was met at the Belgrade Station by Milovanovits, the prime minister of Serbia. In the course of two hours' conversation the bases of an alliance were laid down; and after a long negotiation through the winter, the treaty was concluded between Feb. 29 and March 13, 1912.<sup>23</sup> There was no reason why Bulgaria should conclude an Alliance with Serbia and not with Greece. Greece had long before Serbia suggested the proposition, and the Graeco-Bulgarian Alliance was concluded on May 16-29, 1912.<sup>24</sup> Montenegro had signed an agreement with Bulgaria in April and later with Greece. But it was only through an intermediary, Bulgaria, that the Serbo-Montenegro alliance was concluded in September, 1912. For some years previous to this, Montenegro and Serbia had been suspicious of each other because of their aspiration to the role of "Piemont", because of dynastic intrigues and because of the reactionary regime of King Nicholas.<sup>25</sup>

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23 Report, p.43.

24 Report, p.46.

25 Report, p.47.

Now the Balkan League was completed and was to sound the death knell of Turkey's rule in Europe, but it also endangered the existence of Albanian nationalism. For the secret treaty between Serbia and Bulgaria was to partition the spoils of the war; and even the contested regions referred to Russian arbitration, included the Albanian cities of Dibra and Struga.<sup>26</sup> Later, when the "Committee of Union and Progress", as we know, had granted the Albanians their autonomy covering four vilayets of Macedonia and Old Serbia, the Serbians got alarmed and proposed to divide European Turkey among the Balkan States into four spheres of influence.<sup>27</sup> Supplementary to the alliances, a series of military conventions prepared with utmost secrecy was concluded among the Balkan Allies.

Europe was not aware of this pus, the pus produced by the Balkan suppuration; Europe was not intelligent about the Albanian inflammation; Europe was too ignorant to help and hasten the formation of autonomous provinces on the basis of ethnological and ethnographical principles. Had a little bit of surgery been applied to the sore spot "right away", there would have been ample chance to cure the inflammation. Had the Ambassadorial Conference of London been held in 1912, in May, when Turkey granted an Albanian autonomy, the problem of delimitation of boundaries might have been easier to handle; certainly the two Balkan wars should have been prevented. But Europe was then asleep, Europe did not "find

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<sup>26</sup> Report, map on p.45.

<sup>27</sup> Report, p.47. Chekragi, p.68-69.

itself." Austria-Hungary did not take things seriously. Russia even tried to detach Bulgaria from Serbia and Serbia from Bulgaria. Russia was the big Slav brother; he advised as always, the allies to abstain from aggressive action of any kind.<sup>28</sup>

But suddenly the Balkan allies, Russia's young brothers included, declared war upon the Sultan. Within a month, much to the astonishment of every onlooker, the allied armies had overrun the Turkish territory, defeated their forces, captured Uskub and Salonika, seized many Aegean islands, held Adrianople in close investment, and were only stopped by the Tchataldja lines from occupying Constantinople. The perforation was rapid. Albania could never hope to resist the passion of conquests of her otherwise peaceful neighbours. When armistice was signed, on December 2, 1912, Serbia had occupied Sanjak, Old Serbia, Kuprulu, Perlepe, Monastis, Elbassan, Durazzo and San Juan de Medua.<sup>29</sup> With Montenegrin troops the Serbians were attacking Scutari. During the armistice Greek gunboats did not stop bombarding an unfortified quarter of Valona.<sup>30</sup> Of all Albanian territory, in fact Valona and Berat and the vicinity of these two cities were the only places where Greek or Serbian or Montenegrin soldiers did not occupy at the end of April of 1913 - when the Conference at London already had been in session for four months.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Report, p.47.

<sup>29</sup> G.Young, p.229.

<sup>30</sup> Times, Dec.13, 1912, p.987.

<sup>31</sup> Report, map, p.55.

The Albanians knew that Serbia was opposing a "Greater Albania"<sup>32</sup> and was fighting her way to the Adriatic coast and fighting for a territory contiguous to Greece. On the other hand, they could not tolerate the Ottoman victory, which only could mean "farewell" to an autonomy. They were between the "devil and the deep sea". At the very beginning of the war, they made necessary preparations for a formal and solemn proclamation of independence and neutrality. The details of all this have been well described by the national hero Ismail Kemal Bey Vlora himself.<sup>33</sup> It is sufficient to say that on November 28, 1912, a provisional government was set up at Valona. Ismail Kemal Bey, a Mohammedan Albanian and former deputy for the province in the Ottoman Parliament, was elected its President and Minister for Foreign Affairs. A Senate, then of eighteen members, was presided over by Zeynel Bey of Ipek.<sup>34</sup> Isa Boletintz, an Albanian leader in the revolts against Turkey, was made the head of a national militia. The Malissori tribe, the Catholic Albanians, who fought against the Turks with the Montenegrines, now joined the Mohammedan Albanians in the movement for national independence.<sup>35</sup> It was a movement in which Lord Byron and Garibaldi would have wished to stand by the side of the Albanians.

In the Congress of Berlin 1878, Bismarck told the Albanian delegates that "There is no Albanian Nationality".

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<sup>32</sup> Report, p. 47.

<sup>33</sup> Quarterly Rev., p. 140 ff., V. 228, 1917.

<sup>34</sup> Times, Dec. 13, 1912, p. 987.

<sup>35</sup> Annual Register, for 1912, p. 356.

The question in 1912 was whether Albania should have, like the Serbian liberation, created a state without the Great Powers; whether she would have the fortune, like that of Greece, to secure the lavish help of them; and whether, like the process of Roumanian unification, this new nationality was to be achieved in their despite. The fact was, that now the oldest of all Balkan nationalities had definitely made a declaration of independence and that thereby the dreams of Montenegro, Serbia and Greece for a partition movement were shattered. Russia and France, supporters respectively of Serbia and Greece in their claims of Albanian territories, were also taken by surprise. Austria-Hungary was anxious that Serbia should not attack Albania and thereupon should seize the Adriatic coasts. Mr. H.W. Steed was then serving as Times correspondent in Vienna. He was told by a high Austria officer, who paid him a visit from Baron Conrad von Hoetzendorff, Chief of the General Staff, that "the surest means of settling the thorny Southern Slav question " was to have a joint attack upon Serbia and Russia. When the Englishman pointed out the doubtful attitude of Pan-Slavists in Austria-Hungary, and the great hazard involved in such a policy, the Austrian noble simply remarked that such risks were at their worst leading to "perish gloriously" (glorreich gütgehen).<sup>36</sup> The antagonism between Austria-Hungary and Russia was immediately sharpened. Both countries went to mobilization.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Seton-Watson, p.24-25.

<sup>37</sup> Times, Nov.29, 1912, p.941.

Once Russia got into the war, she could have easily defeated Austria-Hungary with the help of the victorious Slav states in the Balkans. But since Germany would never have tolerated the open attack upon her ally, Russia would have to fight the Central Powers. German militaristic superiority was feared in general; and England and France, for their own purpose, should not have suffered the disturbance of "The Balance of Power". Instead of 1914, the great European conflagration could have by chance come in the winter two years earlier. The fact that it did not come in 1912 obliges the historian to account for the possibility of that peculiar diplomatic instrument that prevented the European war. It seemed that the war was avoided by the creation of the Albanian state; for she cannot hurt anybody, and by the mere fact of existing she can stand between those who might be tempted to do one another harm. But the causes of the Great Powers going to the Ambassadorial Conference were far more subtle and hidden than most of us would imagine. Of course, the "International Socialists" were not for war, at least not that time. The Times correspondent wrote from Berlin that M. Jaures and Mr. MacDonald, together with an Austrian representative, would have given demonstration on Nov. 16th, 1912, against the peace-menacing proceedings of the European governments, and against all selfish attempts at interference in Balkan affairs.<sup>38</sup> Their influence was not such as to have been able to change the governmental policy anyway. The real

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<sup>38</sup> Times, Nov. 15, 1912, p. 906.

reason for the London Ambassadorial Conference was from the general and common desire of the Great Powers to localize the war and to postpone the solution of the Adriatic question. To do quack-doctoring for the Albanian inflammation was agreeable to all of them, as indeed quack-diplomacy is the fashion still at present.

The motives with which the Great Powers went to join the Conference have often been misunderstood, and still more often vaguely stated and misleading on the whole. Even an Albanian patriot asserted without qualification and reservation, that "England's motives in supporting the claims of Albania were sincere. Italy's selfish: Austria's and Germany's criminal."<sup>39</sup> Studying history objectively, one shall see that when the London Ambassadorial Conference began, all the Great Powers had arrived at a genuine desire for temporary peace. They were all more or less sincere in that desire, and nothing was criminal about it. Only different Powers arrived at that policy of temporary conciliation by delicate and divergent ways and arguments. To study the development and change of the policies of the Powers, is to explain the remote but real issues that have made the Conference possible.

First, we shall take up Austria-Hungary. As any other monarchy, this Dual Monarchy had its foreign policy controlled by purely dynastic interests and ambitions. There was a horrible conglomeration of races. The mountain-girt

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<sup>39</sup> Dako, p.120 (note)

monarchy was a seething reservoir of all European nationalities. Germans occupied the West. Czechs and Slovaks pressed in from the northwest, Poles and Ruthenians from the north and northeast. Roumanians occupied the southeastern border. Croats, Serbians and Slovenes were steadily pushing northward. Italians were advancing from the southwest. Against these races a central mass of Hungarians strove to expand. If the existing Dual system, the then dynastic influence, was to be preserved for its own sake, the efficient policy of this would demand the predominance of Germans ~~and~~ over Slavs in Austria, and of Magyars over Slavs and other non-Magyars in Hungary. A foreign policy worked out on this basis was bound to be anti-Slav and anti-Russian in the Balkans if not in Europe. It was obvious to the Austro-Hungarian statesmen, however, that in order to dominate over the majority of Slav subjects within the empire, it was necessary to put the Empire under the care of Germany. When the greater part of the Balkans became independent one after another, the situation turned out to be worse for the Hapsburg Dynasty. Should the foreign policy and home politics be brought into closer harmony with the numerical balance of power among the subjects? Or should they still follow the traditional course of pursuing an anti-Slav project?

Anything traditional always appeals to a dynastic mind. The Hapsburg mind had rarely shown itself elastic. Precedent suggested that the dynasty would cling to tradition. Both Bismarck and Cavour knew the Hapsburg folly of trying to dominate Italy and Germany while her subjects at home were under

the thumb of Absolutism and on the verge of financial bankruptcy. Had Francis Joseph become wiser from the Franco-Piedmontese Alliance of 1859 and the consequent loss of Lombardy to the Hapsburg, he might have purchased an alliance with Italy by the timely cession of Venetia. Without the Italian help Austria was not able to resist the Russian dominance in Germany. The Hapsburgs had been aggressive in foreign affairs but they never thought of setting their own house in order first. Their internal problems, on the contrary, had been treated from time to time as the interests of dynastic foreign policy might have seemed to require.

Even after the rude lesson of 1859, the Emperor did not put the monarchy on an internal basis of federalized unity, to strengthen the national development by destroying the unstable equilibrium caused by the system of Dual Domination. To have such a new internal reform in constitution and to put the Empire on a better and more independent basis of diplomacy, was beyond the conservative mind of the old Emperor. After the loss of Venetia he became more timid in war. When the Balkan Slavs secured victories over the Turks in 1912, he must have entertained much fear of the ascendancy of his own Slav subjects. Threatened by an unsecured internal situation, the natural inclination for him was to avoid a foreign conflict as far as possible. This was why George Young seemed to think of Emperor Francis Joseph as pacificist in tendency.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, unlike the situation in 1908, when  
40 G. Young, p. 227.

the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina took place with a German ultimatum to St. Petersburg, the radical Realpolitik was no longer in power in 1912.

The Austrian Clerico-Military party, combined with that of the Jewish-Liberal press and of plutocratic interests no longer controlled the government; nor were they able to succeed in war agitation. The war intrigues had their blow when General Baron Conrad von Hotzendorf, the chief of General Staff, resigned under the pressure of Aehrenthal and his followers. Just as Aehrenthal was anxious for an Italian friendship in 1911, his successor Count Berchtold, who came into office in Feb., 1912, was eager in cultivating a Russian friendship while still upholding the Triple Alliance.<sup>41</sup> The autographic letter of Emperor Francis Joseph addressed to the Tsar, reflected the friendly sentiments between the two courts, and was taken by prince Gottfried von Hoehelohe Schillingsfurst to the Russian capital.<sup>42</sup> It seemed that every possible attempt was then being made to make the big Slav brother forget the grievances aroused in the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Perhaps the fear of a Russian menace was inevitably intensified by the apparent danger of Southern-Slavs within the monarch's own border. In view of the victories of Serbia in 1912, and the narrow attitudes of the Austrian statesmen in those preceding years, it was almost too late for the monarchy to solve the Southern Slav problem in its own favor. At the

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<sup>41</sup> Times, Jan. 3, 1913, p. 22.

<sup>42</sup> Times, Feb. 7, 1913, p. 111.

end of that year, the impression was widespread in many parts of Austria and in some parts of Hungary that the blind Hapsburg policy had reached the brink of its destruction. It was perfectly clear that if the existence of the Monarchy was threatened the menace should have come from within more than from without. The Germans of Austria and the Magyars of Hungary had to sink their differences in order to save the Dual System to perpetuate their hegemony. Hungary urgently wished for the control of Croatia-Slavonia, her only route to the Adriatic, and of Fiume, her only port. By all means Hungary tried to prevent the Southern Slav race from obstructing her sea communication. Instead of uniting them and dominating over the Germans in the Empire, she ill treated Croatia-Slavonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Dalmatia.

Now, the Emperor seemed to have no project particularly to meet the danger of such a particularism and sectionalism identical with racial jealousy. His attitude was negative, he wished to save the dynasty by avoiding war. But not so was Archduke Francis Ferdinand. The Archduke was more an individual personality than the representative of the Hapsburg family. His view was positive, new, and even radical compared with that of the Emperor. He was suspected as pro-Slav in sentiment; his wife, the Countess Chotek, was not a German. It was said that he was not favored by the Hungarian government because he had been connected with the policy known as "Trialism".<sup>43</sup> The Trialists proposed to conquer the tremendous Serbophil

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43 Laffan, p.169.

outbursts in Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Croatia, by creating a third and Yugoslav State in the Hapsburg Empire. Naturally, such a third state if it had been formed, would have shut Hungary off from the Adriatic.

Archduke Ferdinand was most popular in the army. He was known to be in favour of suppressing Serbia for it might have grown too big to be included in the Hapsburg Empire. He was rightly regarded by the Serbians as their first enemy. Probably the war agitations in the Dual Monarchy was, more than any other person, due to the Archduke. The Austro-Hungarian minister, on November 12, made diplomatic representations to King Nicholas and declared that San Giovanni di Medua and Alessio were reserved for an autonomous Albania. To this the King of Montenegro gave a decisive negative reply. Four days later the Montenegrins took San Giovanni Medua; still two days later, with some Serbian troops, they captured Alessio.<sup>44</sup> About that time, the Austro-Hungarian minister at Belgrade visited Budapest, and upon his return requested an interview with the Serbian premier. In Vienna a Crown Council was held presided over by the Archduke. Later Ferdinand went to Berlin, evidently to consult the German Kaiser.<sup>45</sup> It was strangely reported that Mr. Prochaska, the Austro-Hungarian consul at Prizren, had been grossly insulted by the Serbs on their occupation of the town. It was later confessed by Mr. Prochaska himself to be a pure forgery under official instruction.<sup>46</sup> But the legend excited public opinion and a mobilization was rumored of seven army corps.<sup>47</sup> Rumors were

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44 Times, Nov. 15, 1912, p. 907; 923  
46 Seton-Watson, p. 25

45 Times, Nov. 15, p. 906.  
47 Dako, p. 107.

afloat that "the Austrian partisans of a forward policy are receiving encouragement from Berlin."<sup>48</sup>

If a general European conflict was to be prevented this time, the Great Powers had to exercise their perspicacity and prudence. And above all, the issue was no doubt under German influence. Whether Germany was to support the Austro-Hungarian aggression or not, can easily be noted from the German-Austro-Hungarian relation in general and from the relation between Kaiser and the Archduke in particular. Once we understand why Germany did not then support the Dual Monarchy vigorously as she later did in 1914, we should see why also, that Consul Prochaska of Prizren was found safe in the end of November 1912; and why Austria-Hungary and Germany no longer insisted upon the settlement of Austro-Serbian differences before the settlement of the other Balkan issues arising out of the war.<sup>49</sup>

The Earl of Selborne, who had been up to 1904 the First Lord of the British Admiralty, said that Austria-Hungary was emerging into a really important naval Power.<sup>50</sup> Yet the Dual Monarchy had failed to act independently in her foreign policy. Indeed Aehrenthal tried hard at this. During several phases of the Morocco crisis, 1911, he frankly detached himself from the German standpoint, for, as it was believed, he was hoping to gain a free access to the French money market. The French government, however, did not sanction the Austro-Hungarian loans on the Paris market. It was known that upon

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<sup>48</sup> Times, Nov. 29, 1912, p. 942.

<sup>49</sup> Times, Nov. 29, 1912, p. 943.

<sup>50</sup> Lords, v. 12, p. 303.

Germany the Dual Monarchy was politically dependent.<sup>51</sup> Although by the terms of Dual Alliance Germany was not to aid Austria-Hungary in openly attacking a third party, the Dual Alliance furnished the political basis of a Middle Europe scheme, an economic Drang nach Osten, and a very sentimental Pan-Germanism. Furthermore, the Dual Monarchy was dependent upon Germany insofar as the diplomatic world believed so. The international relation is often what we choose to believe.

Austro-Hungarian foreign policy, especially towards the Balkans, had long been subservient to that of Germany. In 1914, "a mere hint from Berlin would have decided Count Berchtold to content himself with a diplomatic success, and to accept the Serbian reply. This hint was not given; on the contrary they (militarists in Berlin) urged in the direction of war,"<sup>52</sup> and the war did come. In 1912, at Konopischt, the Archduke Ferdinand had a conference with William II; no plan of an active policy against Serbia was laid down, and there was no actual war against Serbia.<sup>53</sup> Why there was such a change of policy instantly after the death of the archduke it is hard to say unless it was that the archduke was not only hated by Hungary but also dreaded by Germany. He was a pro-Slav in sentiment, and perhaps in policy. Little as the Slavs loved the Germans, just as little did they wish to return into a German empire even with a Hapsburg-Lorraine emperor at its head. The Southern-Slavs were striving for a federation in Austria-Hungary on national lines. Evidently an aggressive but Slavophil Francis Ferdinand

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<sup>51</sup> Steed, p. 266.

<sup>52</sup> Lichnowsky, p. 35..

<sup>53</sup> Jagow, p. 139.

did not meet the pleasure of Germany. Lichnowsky said that he had learned of his death on board the Meteor, and remarked, "His Majesty (William II) regretted that his efforts to win him over to his way of thinking had thus been rendered<sup>54</sup> vain."

At the eleventh hour Austria-Hungary had to abandon its designs of aggression. The obvious perils of such a course without the aid of Germany, the enthusiasm against Hungary aroused in the Southern-Slavs by the Balkan victories, and the scandals which coincided with Auffmanberg's departure from the Ministry of War, all acted to deter an open conflict with Serbia and Montenegro. But war or no war, the one aim was to check the expansion of Serbia. A Serbian access to the Adriatic was viewed as of extreme danger to Austria-Hungary. Now Bosnia and Dalmatia, the long line of coast inhabited by the Slavs, were already in the hands of Austria-Hungary. The only outlet to the Adriatic left for Serbia was through northern Albania. This accounts for the insidious policy for an autonomous Albania. Before the battle of Kumanovo, Oct. 24, 1912, Serbia might have been thought insignificant. Since then Turkey in Macedonia was put an end to. The Adriatic Problem had to be solved either for or against Serbia. Austria-Hungary might be aware of the principle of Albanian nationality. But her insistence on an autonomous Albania was strongly inspired by her "diplomatic" jealousy of Italy and Russia.<sup>55</sup> Austria-Hungary's Albanian policy was indeed very

<sup>54</sup> Lichnowsky, p. 31.

<sup>55</sup> Young, p. 228.

successful from her standpoint. Ten days before he came back to preside over the national assembly at Valona, Ismail Kemal Bey had his interview with Count Berchtold at Budapest, and his return to Albania was through Trieste.<sup>56</sup>

When Austria-Hungary made Albania a buffer-state, she had satisfied the policy of Italy for the moment. She had yet to answer the Russian Tsar politely. Just the day before Albania's declaration of independence and neutrality, the Tsar gave a whole hour audience to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Tsarske Selo. It was reported that the interview pleased both parties.<sup>57</sup> Later, in February of the next year, Prince Hohenlohe's mission made an excellent impression at St. Petersburg; and that partly explains the demobilization on the Galician frontier and in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the recalling of Austro-Hungarian fleet from the Pola in March.<sup>58</sup>

Neither Serbia herself could be ignored by the Dual Monarchy in her Albanian negotiations. In the middle of November, 1912, the Austro-Hungarian ministers already held conferences respectively at Rieka with King Nicholas and at Belgrade with the prime minister Nicholas Pashitch. On November 12, 1912, the Austrian minister suggested that "Serbia should grant a preference to Austro-Hungarian goods and industries, waive her claim to an Adriatic port, and acknowledge the independence of Albania. In return Austria-Hungary will willingly recognize Serbia's right to territorial expansion and

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<sup>56</sup> Times, Nov. 22, 1912, p. 923.

<sup>57</sup> Times, Nov. 29, 1912, p. 943.

<sup>58</sup> Times, Mar. 7; ~~1913~~ pp. 21, 1913, p. 192; 230.

use her influence to secure for Serbia a port on the Aegean."<sup>59</sup> But in making joint war upon the Ottomans, Serbia had only two aims: the liberation of her Slav brothers in "Old Serbia" and the acquisition of an outlet to the Adriatic. It seemed that an Adriatic port was Serbia's minimum requisite to her national development and economic independence. The Austro-Hungarian suggestion was too hard on Serbia. Ten days later, the prime minister Pashitch declared that "It is essential that Serbia should possess about fifty kilometers from Alessio to Durazzo. This coastline would be joined to what was formerly Old Serbia approximately by the territory between a line from Durazzo to Ochrida Lake in the South, and one from Alessio to Djakova in the North. ... Indeed, Albania belonged to Serbia formerly until conquered by the Turks."<sup>60</sup>

This uncompromising, positive attitude of Serbia created a difficult situation for Austria-Hungary, who wished to subdue the haughty Serbians and yet was deterred by many factors equally formidable. Austria-Hungary was on the tiger's back. She was saved in time by the London Ambassadorial Conference not only from a war with Serbia, but also from a diplomatic defeat in regard to the Albanian autonomy. The German foreign policy of that time was certainly wiser than that of Austria-Hungary. While the Dual Monarchy favored militaristic conquest, the policy of Germany was for economic aggression. War if must be, but first of all the German people were aiming at economic expansion. As peace was necessary for economic prosperity, <sup>war</sup> /was only a secondary consideration, perhaps the last

<sup>59</sup> Times, Nov. 15, 1912, p. 901; 906.

<sup>60</sup> Times, Nov. 29, 1912, p. 943.

resort. This general character of German foreign policy since 1898, was well brought out by the German Emperor's own words. In regarding the Kiao-Chao treaty of March 6, 1898, he said that Germany was endeavoring "to develop economic relations with China, which, year by year, will become more important, and to secure to German subjects their full share in the activities directed towards opening the Far East to Europe, from the economic point of view."<sup>61</sup> What was said about the Far East was more true for the German policy in the Near East and Middle East. The constant and consistent aim of German foreign policy in the Twentieth Century was the economic domination in the Ottoman Empire and in the lands that lie between it and the frontier of Austria-Hungary.

The Drang nach Osten is the master-key to the understanding of German foreign policy. It was the great aim to which all other aims were more or less subsidiary. It should explain much that would otherwise be difficult to penetrate, more especially the intense interest which Germany took in the maintenance of the Dual Monarchy. Upon the romanticist William, the East had exercised a great and growing attraction. Enthusiasts like Friedrich Naumann pointed to the Near East as the goal of German hopes, the most promising object of German efforts. Naturally, with the superiority of German imagination, a partition of the Hapsburg and Ottoman Empires was not tolerable. They must be brought in their entirety within German sphere of influence. The oceanic colonization was no longer to be had,

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<sup>61</sup> Adam, p.191.

at least without fighting first. Here was the wonderful opportunity for land colonization. The land under the nominal sway of the decadent Ottoman rule was thinly settled. Here the superfluous German population might have come; here German capital might have been profitably employed in railways and irrigation works, in mining and agriculture. The cotton, the cattle, the mineral products could have made splendid supply to home manufacture; and the increasing prosperity of Mesopotamia would have provided growing markets for German industry.

Indeed the possibilities in the Turkish Empire under German enterprise were practically unlimited. But in order to reach over this wonderland of economic development, it was indispensable that the Dual Monarchy should not only be maintained but should dominate the Balkan Peninsula - the stepping stone to the Near East. The close Alliance with such a Dual Monarchy, whose political position was so precarious because of the cantankerously diversified races, was very unfavorable to Germany. Some publicists thought with Lichnowsky that the policy of peaceful expansion should have been carried out with good understanding with Britain and France; and that it was abhorrent to maintain the "Triple Alliance policy" of espousing whatever quarrels Austria-Hungary might have engaged in.<sup>62</sup> But the majority of German writers seemed to regard the Alliance with Austria-Hungary as essential. They viewed Vienna as the necessary station for the German Bagdad Railway.

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<sup>62</sup> Lichnowsky, p.xii; p.6.

In Lichnowsky's opinion, since Turkey in Europe could no longer be saved after the successful operation of the Balkan League, Germany should have ceased to identify her foreign policy with Ottoman entanglement. He favored the idea that Germany ought to have declared her complete disinterestedness with regard to the frontier delimitations, thus leaving the Balkan Allies to settle themselves.<sup>63</sup> But the German Foreign Office did not seem to agree upon this. Jagow explained with logical and psychological truth the necessity of Germany's role as a mediator for Austria-Hungary. "I would like to remark," said Jagow, "that such far-reaching disinterestedness in Balkan questions as Prince Lichnowsky advocates does not seem possible to me. It would have contradicted the essential character of the Alliance if we had completely ignored really vital interests of our ally ... It further appeared impossible to me not to pursue a 'Triple Alliance' in matters where the interests of the allied powers touched each other. Had no such policy been pursued, Italy would have been driven, entirely into line with the Entente in Oriental questions, Austria would have been handed over to the mercy of Russia, and the Triple Alliance would thus have really gone to pieces. And we, too, would have been unable, in the absence of any support, to safeguard our interests in the Orient. Even Prince Lichnowsky does not deny that we had there great economic interests to represent. But today economic interests are no longer to be separated from political interests."<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Lichnowsky, p.5.

<sup>64</sup> Jagow, p.131.

It was precisely this attitude of Jagow that made the influential Herr von Holstein pleading before the Chancellor von Bulow, not to have Austria-Hungary in the lurch in the annexation movement of 1908.<sup>65</sup> It was again in accordance with this same attitude that Bethmann-Hollweg's speech was made in the Reichstag, December 2, 1912.<sup>66</sup> Three points were brought out in that speech: (1) Germany was not directly affected by events in the Balkans, and in many points her interests was far less than that of other Powers; (2) but if one of her allies were attacked, Germany would be bound by treaty obligations to support her; (3) Furthermore, Germany was justified to participate in the rearrangement for peace for the security of Turkish debt.

Far more than any other single phenomenon, it was the German suspicion of the Triple Entente that helped to cement the friendship between Germany and the Dual Monarchy. After the South African War, Britain had abandoned Lord Salisbury's policy of "splendid isolation". The Anglo-French Agreement of April 8, 1904, concerning Egypt and Morocco, was a surprise to Germany. The Anglo-Russian relations after the Russo-Japanese War were much improved; and the publication of the Anglo-Russian convention of August 31, 1907, justified the German suspicion that Britain in reaching good understanding with her continental rivals, was soon to make Germany encircled and isolated. The Triple Entente strengthened rather than weakened the Triple Alliance. As a rule, Alliances are held together more securely by the forces which press against them,

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<sup>65</sup> Steed, p. 261.

<sup>66</sup> Times, Dec. 6, 1912, p. 962.

than by any internal cohesion. This force of suspicion was very far-reaching. It certainly prejudiced a genuine Anglo-German understanding. This feeling of suspicion of the Entente contributed to the formation of Reventlow's attitude: that Germany ought to regard the British friendship as a trap; disarmament and arbitration treaty were bubbles; and Germany therefore should have both navy and army.<sup>67</sup>

Unfortunately, Count Reventlow's idea gradually gained force in Germany. Under the pressure of heated sentiment created by the Morocco crisis of 1911, the new army and navy bills were passed, in May of the next year. To answer the French Three Years' Service, Germany added for herself two new corps and 29,000 more peace strength. In the navy a Third Squadron was created; ships, cruisers, and many submarines were constructed.<sup>68</sup> So long as Germany saw no confidence in Britain, so long Germany deemed it necessary to cultivate the friendship with Italy and Austria-Hungary. "A loosening and dissolving of old alliances that no longer answer all conditions is only in order when new constellations are attainable.... So long as this policy (that of a rapprochement with Britain) did not offer reliable guarantees, we could not sacrifice the old guarantees - even with their obligations."<sup>69</sup>

Germany, however, was still in the hope of arriving at a good understanding with Britain. For aside from the question of armament, which Germany preferred not to discuss, a British

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67 Reventlow, p.78; 219; 280-5; 296.

68 Times, Jan.3, 1913, p.22.

69 Jagow, p.144.

friendship, even with lip service, would not have in any way hurt Germany and her allies. Even from the very beginning of the German empire, the British friendship was sought after. Bismarck several times, notably in 1878 and in 1887, made direct overtures to England for an alliance. Had either one of the proposals been accepted, it might have changed the fate of Europe and of the world. Efforts continued in the Twentieth Century to bring the two countries to a better understanding, at least to remove some slight misunderstandings. In 1906 and 1908 King Edward and Lord Hardinge visited the Kaiser. As a result of the special mission of Lord Haldane to Berlin, and of the organized visits between municipal bodies, societies of working-men and the like, the relations between the two countries steadily improved during 1912. Even Jagow, the German Secretary of State, as he later confessed himself, also had pursued a policy which aimed at an understanding with England. He was shrewd enough to see that the Balkan victory and the consequent Turkish defeat had created an unequal balance between the Entente and the Alliance. He held that an understanding with Britain was the only way for Germany to escape from the unfavorable position created by the First Balkan War.<sup>70</sup> It is no wonder then, when the Ambassadorial Conference was taking place in London Foreign Office, the royal feast should have been held in Berlin Palace. In May, 1913, Princess Victoria Louise was married to Prince Ernest Augustus of Cumberland. The Prussian royal wedding was joyfully attended by King George and Queen Mary.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Jagow, p.143.

<sup>71</sup> Times, May 23, 1913, p.409.

It was true that ever since Algeciras Conference and the French loan to Russia both in 1906, Germany became more than before suspicious of the activities of the Entente. Up to that time no larger foreign loan was contracted in history. More than anything else, that loan saved Russia from her ill fortune during the period of Revolution and post-war administration.<sup>72</sup> The military and financial interests of France in Russia might have been the justification for Jagow's statement "Russia and France pressed towards war."<sup>73</sup> In spite of the situation, William II was still the champion of peace against the war-like tendencies of certain parties in Germany. At least we know, from M. Jules Cambon's letter to his government that the Kaiser ceased to be the friend of peace in November, 1913.<sup>74</sup> A year earlier, however, we have reason to think him as in favor of peace and consequently still friendly to Russia. The events of 1912 seemed to prove this. The ultimatum sent to St. Petersburg in 1908 was not here repeated. In the spring of the next year, Willy wrote and praised Nicky's government for its excellent foreign policy of a conciliatory and friendly spirit as shown in the London Conference of Ambassadors.<sup>75</sup> In the morning of May 22, 1913, the Tsar arrived in Berlin for the royal wedding, and the Willy-Nicky meeting was reported as exceptionally cheerful and cordial.<sup>76</sup>

In 1912, Germany did not wish to go to war with Russia. In spite of her suspicion of the Entente, she was seeking an understanding with Britain in order to secure her economic concession in the Ottoman Empire. Her relation was awkward with

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<sup>72</sup> Witte, p.304-05; 307-08.      <sup>73</sup> Jagow, p.143.  
<sup>74</sup> French Yellow book, No.6.      <sup>75</sup> Letters, p.255.  
<sup>76</sup> Times, May 23, 1913, p.413.

Austria-Hungary, which empire was on the verge of sectional or racial civil war. Three days before the Albanian declaration of Independence and neutrality, therefore, Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter's communique declared very sharply that the Powers were agreed not to commit themselves, in advance, upon any one of the Balkan questions; and stated that the Albanian and Adriatic questions were to be discussed and settled only in conjunction with the other questions.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, an Albanian autonomy was most preferred by Germany to an Albanian partition between Greece and Serbia or between Italy and Austria-Hungary. Albanian autonomy could mean only the German diplomatic victory for the Turks in the eyes of Ottoman statesmen. Furthermore, even man like Jagow possessed faith in Sir Edward Grey, the initiator of the ambassadorial conference. "I believe", said Jagow, "in Sir Edward Grey's love of peace and in his earnest wish to arrive at an understanding with us."<sup>78</sup> "Just as little as Sir Edward Grey did we wish war to come over Albania. Therefore, in spite of our unhappy experiences at Algeciras, we agreed to a conference."<sup>79</sup>

Sir Edward Grey's desire for peace was indeed earnest; but earnest only for Britain's sake, though it might be argued by British imperialists that the British peace is the world peace. Perhaps it is nothing but very natural that the psychology of a winner should be different from that of a loser. In any contest the winner ever fears himself losing out, and the loser is ever envious and struggling to gain. Britain was the winner in 1912 and Germany the loser in the game of colonial expansion and naval defense.

<sup>77</sup> Times, Feb. 7, 1913, p.111.

<sup>79</sup> Jagow, p.133.

<sup>78</sup> Jagow, p.144.

If Germany should have desired peace, all the more did Britain. But under the veil of friendship, Britain must secure the German reduction of armament. For it was not the British naval supremacy but the German naval supremacy that was dangerous to the world peace. The German naval bill was introduced after the Morocco crisis and the installation of Three Years' Service in France. Almost immediately the marquis of Crewe recommended Lord Haldane to visit Germany and "to dissipate any national misunderstanding which might exist."<sup>80</sup>

In accordance with this suggestion, Lord Haldane was sent to Berlin early in 1912, to see if the German plan of establishing a third squadron could not be modified. When this failed him, he proposed a "naval vacation". Germany then replied with a counter-request of a formal treaty for British absolute neutrality in case of war. Of course, absolute neutrality could have made the British navy somewhat a luxury. Britain has never ceased to insist upon her supremacy of the sea. In July of that same year, Sir Edward Grey himself said that without a navy Britain could not have made her position in the Mediterranean secure even with skilful diplomacy or foreign policy.<sup>81</sup> Gilbert Murray argued that the British navy could not be a danger because of the lack of a large army.<sup>82</sup> But just before an Anglo-German Conference of eminent personages met in London to promote improved relations between the two countries, Earl Roberts' speech for compulsory service system before the meeting of the National League aroused much of the German suspicion.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Lords, v. 11, p. 39.

<sup>82</sup> Murray, p. 109;

<sup>81</sup> Commons, v. 40, p. 1993.

<sup>83</sup> Annual Register, for 1912, p. 225

Very fortunate to the Anglo-German relations of this period, the German ambassador in London was an Anglophil diplomat. He believed, as very few did, that in spite of the naval question, "the most delicate of all questions" it would have been possible to arrive at a friendly rapprochement. The word "fleet" was never passed between Sir Edward Grey and Lichnowsky.<sup>84</sup> Four months before the Ambassadcrial Conference, Mr. Asquith was sure that the Anglo-German relations of amity and good will were likely to remain.<sup>85</sup> But, of course, the German people had not yet forgotten the seizure of "Bundesrath" by the British navy during the South African War. The Reichstag from thence on became ever ready to vote for large naval programs, and to increase them periodically.<sup>86</sup>

England was not only anxious about the ascendancy of the German navy, as she had reason to be, but she was more apprehending a German-Russian alliance. It was perfectly plain to the world that with such an alliance firmly established, Britain, in spite of her naval supremacy, could hardly defeat the German project of the Drang nach Osten. Britain proclaimed that "the balance of power" - that insidious British diplomatic slogan - was essential to the world-peace; and the world-peace for Britain was nothing more than the maintenance of British supremacy and British commercial prosperity. At first, Britain's fear was in Russian expansion; hence the proposal of some sort of alliance with Germany in 1895, 1898,

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84 Lichnowsky, p.21.

85 Commons, V.41, p.1393.

86 Brailsford, p.256.

1899, and repeatedly in 1901. As late as the fall of 1901 Britain was eager to check the designs of France on Morocco. In the opinion of German statesmen, notably Holstein, the British wanted Germany to pull their chestnuts out of the fire for them. And that was more than a mere suspicion, for the British could hardly defeat France in Africa and Russia in Asia at the same time. Failing to secure German help, all the more Britain became anxious to check the Central Powers. She then proceeded to enter into a naval agreement with France; so as to have a united front against the German force. Utilizing the opportunity of the Russian defeat in Asia in 1905, Britain courteously approached the Russian friendship. In the beginning of 1912, Lord Weardale visited St. Petersburg and Moscow. Few months later, M. Sagonoff visited London and held prolonged conferences with Sir Edward Grey - just before the outbreak of the Balkan War. The difficulties over Persia and the general Near East was then removed. On his returning to Russia, Sagonoff held conferences with Poincare, then Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Paris-London-St. Petersburg Conferences in 1912 no doubt greatly strengthened the Triple Entente.<sup>87</sup>

As Earl of Ronaldshay and Sir Edward Grey declared, the Triple Entente was then the keystone of the British foreign policy.<sup>88</sup> It is to the credit of the British Secretary of Foreign Affairs that he regarded the Entente as only the starting point of his foreign policy. His was to maintain world peace, as

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<sup>87</sup> Times, Jan. 3, 1913, p. 22.

<sup>88</sup> Commons, v. 40, p. 1934; 1994; 1995.

peace was most desirable for Britain, by having the best possible relations with other Powers not in the Entente. So he said, "I have always felt that though there may be separate groups they need not necessarily be in opposing diplomatic camps." The "balance of power" was certainly one of the chief motives for Britain's calling the Ambassadorial conference. Aside from the question of Albanian autonomy, there was to be solved the problem of Aegean islands. When the Conference was nearly at its end, Sir Edward Grey told this to the House of Commons: "Owing to our position in the Mediterranean and to naval considerations, we have a particular interest, and it is this: that no one of these (Aegean) islands should be claimed or retained by one of the Great Powers. If one of these islands passes into the permanent possession of a Great Power it must raise questions of great importance and great difficulty."<sup>89</sup>

In his "Lebenserinnerungen und Politische Denkwürdigkeiten", Eckardstein told the <sup>7</sup> amazing story of the proposal of Lord Salisbury in 1895 that the Ottoman Empire should be divided among England, Germany and Austria-Hungary. Had this been carried out, there might have been no such an Ambassadorial Conference in London seventeen years later. Since the days of Gladstone, the British policy in the Near East had gradually substituted "The Balkans for the Balkan people", for "Turkey for the Turks". It began long before 1912 to abandon the idea registered in the Congress of Berlin thirty-four years before. In Asquith's words, "Things can never be again as they were before,

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<sup>89</sup> Commons, V.56, p.285-86.

and it is the business of statesmen everywhere to recognize and to accept the accomplished fact. ... Even the campaign of Austerlitz did not produce changes so sudden, and so startlingly and overwhelmingly complete, as those which during the last month (Oct. 1912) have been wrought by the Balkan Confederacy."<sup>90</sup>

In view of the results of the First Balkan War, no one was then disposed to dispute the right of the Balkan States to formulate when they saw fit the terms to conclude this war. The Great Powers were not slower to adjust their own views to the march of events. Fully aware of the potential conflict between the Entente and the Alliance, Sir Edward Grey was not prepared to adopt the view of the First Lord of the Admiralty. He declared that the British policy was "to promote the happiness of all the populations concerned or interested."<sup>91</sup> Nearly a month before the Conference he urged the House of Commons not to declare a separate policy for Britain on the Balkan questions, but that it was a primary object to keep in touch with other powers so as to promote agreement between all.<sup>92</sup>

Besides the Aegean question, the Conference had to deal with the problem of autonomy. But even an Albanian Independence could have not hurt in the least Britain's policy in the Near East. It could only mean a useful check against the Slavic or the Teutonic domination on the Adriatic. Both Austria-Hungary and Italy by 1912 became strong Mediterranean naval powers. If it was the interest of Great Britain not to have any of the Aegean islands fall into permanent possession of either

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of them, certainly it would have been intolerable to see the

<sup>90</sup> Times, Nov. 15, 1912, p. 903.

<sup>91</sup> Commons, V. 45, p. 449.

<sup>92</sup> Commons, V. 43, p. 528-29.

Albanian coast divided between the members of the Triple Alliance.

Italy also fully realized the value of the Albanian ports and coast. As Count TITTONI saw it, the possession of them, for either Italy or Austria-Hungary, would mean the incontestable supremacy over the Adriatic sea. "This is what Italy would never allow Austria to obtain, nor Austria Italy; in the event that either one of these states should seek to appropriate for itself that region, the other ought to oppose it by all available means."<sup>93</sup> As early as 1897, the NOLI ME TANGERE treaty was concluded between GOLUCHOWSKI and VISCONTI VENOSTA; both governments decided to bind themselves by a self-denying ordinance to hold aloof from Albania, to favor the status quo so long as the Ottoman Empire retained its sway there. Both in 1900 and in 1905 the two Powers further guaranteed the autonomy of Albania upon the Turkish dismemberment in Europe. Whether ISMAIL KEMAL BEY had any knowledge of this agreement, it is not known. But the suspicion that existed between the two members of the Triple Alliance on the question of Albanian ports, was clear to the world. Aehrenthal in 1911 showed his extremely friendly attitude towards Italy's Tripolitan policy. But in the fall, when Italy began a naval demonstration near the Albanian coast, Austria-Hungary did not hesitate to issue a protest.<sup>94</sup>

During the next year, the speech delivered in the Italian Chamber by the ex-Premier, Baron SIDNEY SONINO, and the despatches of the well-informed Deputy, Prof. Torre, revealed the potential antagonism between Austro-Hungarian and Italian

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<sup>93</sup> Chekrezhi, p.81-82.

<sup>94</sup> Steed, p.277.

views upon the problem of a Serbian port on the Adriatic.<sup>95</sup> The peace maker between these two Great Powers was not the London Conference primarily, but the renewal of the Triple Alliance on December 7, 1912. By the provision of 1902, the allies had the right to denounce the Alliance after the lapse of five years; the renewal of 1912 was to reassure those members of the Alliance, and to recall to a sense of their obligations. The renewal had been preceded by the visits of Count Berchtold to Italy, of the Marquis di San Giuliano to Berlin; and the bestowal of the Grand Cross of St. Stephen and the Order of the Black Eagle upon the Italian Foreign Minister. It undoubtedly contributed much towards the removal of harsh feelings between the two Powers; hence the support of both to the London Conference.

The Kingdom of Italy and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy were indeed jointly interested in the Southern Slav question. Aside from the naval aspect of the Albanian coast, the Italian view on the Adriatic question was largely influenced by the sympathy with the estimable Italians of Dalmatia and Isteria. From the standpoint of their own struggle against the overwhelming numerical strength of the Southern Slavs in those places, the Italians judged the whole problem. Furthermore, the Italian policy in Albania seemed to be one of economic penetration. The Treaty of Lausanne had just been concluded and Italy in no way desired an open conflict with a Great Power. Italian diplomacy since Cavour has always been cautious and cunning, quite in contrast with the more foolishly chivalrous France, Russia, and Austria-Hungary. For the moment Italy only asked for a

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<sup>95</sup> Times, Dec. 13, 1912, p. 982.

buffer-state between herself and the Dual Monarchy. It was an autonomous Albania that would have tolerated the Italian expansion; and it was by the autonomy that Austria-Hungary, not only Serbia and Greece, could have been checked from menacing the Adriatic. This was why that the day after the London Conference opened, the Italian Foreign Minister made a speech that lauded the Triple Alliance as a guarantee for the European peace and for the security of the three Allied States. "Italy and Austria were agreed that the Albanian problem could be solved by observing the principle of nationality, neutralizing the country under the guarantee of the Great Powers."<sup>96</sup>

In explaining the conciliatory attitude of France and Russia, Mr. Dako, the president and representative of the Albanian National Party, said that it was because of the fact that they had no legal right to claim the support of England unconditionally.<sup>97</sup> Indeed, just as the Triple Alliance was originally a matter of German interest the Triple Entente was always subservient to the British aim. Before Pitt revived the doctrine of the Balance of Power, Mirabeau and the whole generation of Revolutionists had dreamed of a moral union of the French, British and German peoples for the sake of European and world peace. Even as late as 1914 when Anatole France and Jean Jaures were visiting London, they both earnestly appealed to England to act as the mediator and common friend between the two continental countries.<sup>98</sup> Now, when Britain desired

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<sup>96</sup> Times, Dec. 20, 1912, p. 1001.

<sup>97</sup> Dako, p. 130.

<sup>98</sup> Brailsford, p. 295.

peace in 1912 and 1913, the more reasonable it would have been for her allies to prevent war..

Another more definite reason for the French and Russian anxiety for peace was the fact of their unpreparedness. In 1910 when the most writers in France were indifferent, no man saw the weakness, and its impending danger, of the French army as penetratingly clear and painfully alarming as did the Socialist leader Jaures.<sup>99</sup> Just as the day before the opening of the London Ambassadorial Conference, a general strike of twenty-four hours was attempted in France to protest against a European war.<sup>100</sup> On May 5, 1913, when the first number of L'Homme Libre came out, M. Clemenceau urged in his leading article to make necessary preparations for maintaining the "armed peace".<sup>101</sup> France knew herself that she was by no means ready to meet a German attack. She had been hoping to check Germany by the Russian army; hence her good friendship with the Czar. After the danger of Algecirras Conference, France went wholeheartedly into the Russian Loan of 1906. That tremendous finance of 2,250,000,000 francs, however, was not yielding ultimate result as yet in 1912. The benefit was lessened by the ignorant bureaucracy, who were not enlightened and generous enough honestly to adhere to the principles of the October Manifesto of 1905.<sup>102</sup>

In 1906, Count Witte told the Czar that in case of a general European war, Britain was not able to help France on land; and that Russia was not in a position to render any considerable military assistance to France.<sup>103</sup> After the fall of Scutari into King Nicholas' army, one of the Russian military

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<sup>99</sup> Jaures, p.136. <sup>100</sup> Annual Register, 1912, p.41. <sup>101</sup> Times, May 9, 1913, p.372. <sup>102</sup> Witte, p.310. <sup>103</sup> Witte, p.298.

attaches said to Miss M. E. Durham, the famous English writer on Albania, "We (the Russians) shall be quite ready for our Balkan War in 1914; now it is impossible."<sup>104</sup>

Russia's unpreparedness, ought to explain conclusively her relations with France, Austria-Hungary, Serbia and Germany. Her conciliatory attitude made her welcome the Ambassadorial Conference. Not long after President Poincare's inauguration, the highest Russian order the Order of St. Andrew, had its insignia presented to the French chief by the Czar. Even with this close friendship of France, Russia had to warn Serbia not to get into trouble. M. Sazonoff, early in November of 1912, informed the Serbian minister in Belgrade that Russia would not go to war for the sake of a Serbian port on the Adriatic. And when the German ambassador in St. Petersburg, Count Pourtales, inquired of M. Sazonoff on the Russian support to Serbia, the idea was reasserted. The conversation in substance was again communicated to the Serbian government through her minister in the Russian capital.<sup>105</sup> The day after the opening of the Conference in London, the Russian premier Kokovtsoff, gave a warmly received speech in the Duma, paying a tribute to Sir Edward Grey's initiative in proposing the consultation of ambassadors. "Russia", said he, "with the support of her allies and friends, would do her best to make it a success."<sup>106</sup>

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104 Liv. Age, V.302, p.386.

105 Times, Nov.15, 1912, p.901; 906.

106 Times, Dec.20, 1912, p.1001.

The Course of the Conference

Although every one of the Great Powers in Europe, as we have seen, desired peace all from more or less selfish motives, there had to be some one with enough constructive statesmanship to initiate a method to bring about some satisfactory solution at least to avoid the danger of war. When the Balkan War broke out, when Germany was not sure of the defeat of Turkey and Austria-Hungary was skeptical about Serbia's fortune, it was not the opportune time for any joint action of the Entente and the Alliance. The French proposal of establishing a joint declaration of disinterestedness was naturally refused.<sup>107</sup> But within a month, when the Montenegrins captured Berane Ipek, the Greeks occupied Preveza; and the Serbians won Novi Bazar, Koumanovo, Uskub and Isthtib, Prizren, and Monastir, the Central Powers were angry and alarmed. The official statistics show that the withdrawals from German savings banks as a result of the war panic in November were even larger than those which occurred during the Morocco crisis a year ago.<sup>108</sup> The proposal of a conference of the Great Powers in early December, was therefore seasonable. It is said that Paris was originally proposed as the place of meeting, but Austria-Hungary, for some unknown personal reasons, preferred London.<sup>109</sup>

Sir Edward Grey's idea was to have the Ambassadors in London discuss questions with each other round a table; so that the Powers would be in closer touch, and there could be

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<sup>107</sup> Lichnowsky, p.10.

<sup>108</sup> Times, Feb.7, 1913, p.112.

<sup>109</sup> Times, Dec.6, 1912, p.962. Commons, V.45, p.451.

less danger of any of them drifting apart from the others when unexpected difficulties came about. Without any doubt, the first and foremost aim of the ambassadorial conference was to localize the Balkan War. To prevent the war from spreading, any disagreement between the Great Powers must be removed that might lead to a breach of the peace between themselves. Of course, the degree of interest taken by the Powers varied with their traditional policies and their geographic and economic relations. There was hardly much unanimity among the Powers together. But if Constantinople and Asiatic Turkey were not to be brought within the area of the war, and if these questions were not<sup>to</sup>/be raised in the course of the war, then the Great Powers might find themselves in agreement provided they came to an understanding with each other about the Aegean islands and the Albanian question. The aim of the Conference was just this. It did not try to discuss the status of Cyprus as Mr. Mark Sykes had apprehended.<sup>110</sup> It was to find a temporary solution for the status of Aegean islands and for lessening the hideous aspects of the Albanian inflammation. No doubt, the Conference also aimed at helping the conclusion of Peace Treaty that was being negotiated in the London Conference of the Balkan Allies with Turkey. As early as Dec. 9, 1912, the St. Petersburg correspondent of the London Times reported that "Bulgaria expected to deal directly with the interested governments; points of difficulty or difference in the peace negotiations will be submitted as they arise to the Ambassadors."<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup>. Commons, V.44, p.2455.

<sup>111</sup> Times, Dec.13, 1912, p.987. Commons, V.46, p.2265.

The Ambassadors in London, who constituted the Conference held in the British Foreign Office and presided by the British Secretary of State Sir Edward Grey, were Count Benckendorff from Russia, M. Paul Cambon from France, Prince Lichnowsky from Germany, Marquis Imperiali di Francavilla from Italy, and Count A. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein from Austria-Hungary. Cambon and Francavilla were never known to be anti-British, while Mensdorff, Benckendorff and Lichnowsky were noted for the help in settling the affairs to bring the Conference to a success as Sir Edward Grey wanted. The Russian press attacked Count Benckendorff because of his German descent and Roman Catholicism, his relation both to Count Mensdorff and to Lichnowsky, and his general reputation as a friend of Germany. But a brusque attitude Benckendorff never showed and he always had the sympathy and support of England and France.<sup>112</sup>

Mensdorff was certainly a peace-loving Catholic, never had the intention to be the author of any arms dispatch. On Nov. 27, 1912, the Vienna correspondent of the Times wrote: "I understand that the improvement in the situation and the slackening of the pace of military precautions are attributable principally to advice given by the German Emperor during his meeting with Archduke Francis Ferdinand at Springe, but partly also to a report received from the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in London."<sup>113</sup> Though Lichnowsky resented the Mensdorff leadership for the Triple Alliance in the Conference, he had been always known as an Anglophil. When the Allies' conference broke

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<sup>112</sup> Lichnowsky, p.11

<sup>113</sup> Times, Nov. 29, 1912, p. 942.

up on Jan. 26, 1913, the Conference of the Ambassadors still continued its meetings. Lichnowsky won the sympathy of the English; and the alarm engendered by the failure of the Allies negotiations was largely quieted by the obvious improvement in the relations of Great Britain and the German Empire.<sup>114</sup>

The consultations of the Ambassadors were informal and noncommittal. This was surely an indication that the Powers were not yet sure that a solution of all difficulties was in sight. On the other hand, the fact that the Powers had been able to agree to come to closer quarters in discussion might be taken as evidence that none of them believed that such solution was impossible. Instead of the ordinary method of diplomatic communication among the six Powers composed of six Foreign Ministers and thirty Ambassadors - a cumbrous and slow-moving personnel of thirty-six in all - we now had a London Conference of Ambassadors. London was the clearing house for the opinions and discussions of the Great Powers and of the Balkan Allies on the European crisis. The meetings were not really of the Plenipotentiaries. Sir Edward Grey acted as the British Plenipotentiary when required; but the suggestions and recommendations in the Conference had always been referred to the respective governments of the other Powers for settlement.<sup>115</sup> The proceedings of the Conference were therefore not embodied in any formal document; the resolutions of the Ambassadors were simply the records of the points

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<sup>114</sup> Annual Register, 1913, p.40.

<sup>115</sup> Commons, V.56, p.2284.

upon which their governments were in agreement. The agreement for an autonomous Albania was not signed but that of boundary delimitations was a written document.<sup>116</sup>

According to Mr. Chekrezi, and with some good reason of conjecture, "the deliberations of the Conference had the appearance of a continuous wrangle, which was occasionally ended by a compromise or a bargain. The Ambassadors would sit for hours and days to resolve upon commonplace matters; the Russian or French envoy would bitterly oppose the cession of an inch of territory to Albania, although he knew that it belonged to her. On many occasions systematic obstruction of the deliberations was resorted to."<sup>117</sup> The secret nature of the Ambassadorial Conference also made itself somewhat the prototype of the Peace Conference in Paris, 1919. Sir Edward Grey could not make public statements as to the views and decisions of the ambassadors except when such could have been made by common consent.<sup>118</sup>

By November 21, 1912, the question of whether a conference should or should not be held, had not been definitely considered by the Powers.<sup>119</sup> On December 10th, Sir Edward Grey told the House of Commons that all the Great Powers had cordially approved the suggestion that the Ambassadors in one of the capitals of Europe should engage in informal and noncommittal consultations to facilitate exchange of views between the Powers.<sup>120</sup> But the next day he reported that London was definitely to be the place of Ambassadorial

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116 Commons, V. 65, p. 6.

117 Chekrezi, p. 88.

118 Commons, V. 46, p. 976.

119 Commons, V. 44, p. 452.

120 Commons, V. 45, p. 224.

consultations.

The Conference of Ambassadors in London was formally opened on December 17, 1912; and Sir Edward Grey, who had been elected the day before as honorary president of the Peace Conference, at St. James' Palace, presided at the meetings of the Ambassadors in the British Foreign Office. At the beginning of the Conference, the Great Powers passed a self-denying ordinance that to preserve union among them, none of them would take advantage of the Balkan War to claim territory annexation for itself.<sup>121</sup> December 20th was the last of the meetings before they were adjourned for the Christmas holidays. But by that time the Serbians had evacuated Durazzo and the Albanian autonomy was accepted in principle by all the Great Powers.

When the Conference began again the next year, 1913, the equally important question of the disposal of the Aegean islands was discussed on January the third. Sir Edward Grey always paid attention to the transactions in the other Peace Conference, that of the Turks and the Balkans. In the afternoon, just before the meeting of the ambassadors on Jan. 6th began, both Tewfik Pasha and M. Daneff had called at the Foreign office. The latest views of the belligerents were thus learned directly, and the next day, when the ambassadors came together again, the possibility of bringing pressure on the belligerents to secure peace, formed the chief part of the discussion.<sup>122</sup> On Jan. 15, two days before the Powers sent their collective

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<sup>121</sup> Commons, V. 56, p. 2286.

<sup>122</sup> Times, Jan. 10, 1913, p. 30.

note to Turkey, the Ambassadors began their discussions on the delimitation of the boundaries of an autonomous Albania under European guarantee.<sup>123</sup>

The March meetings of the Ambassadors almost exclusively devoted themselves to the settlement of boundary questions. Shortly after the fall of Yanina into Greek hands, the Albanian delegates in London presented a communication to the Conference of the Ambassadors, complaining the distress of the Albanians under the pressure of Turkish soldiers, the plunder of the Serbian army and the Greek blockade of the coast.<sup>124</sup> By March 10th the question was settled in regard to the Adriatic littoral. The Serbian economic access to it was made easy by an international railway.<sup>125</sup> Sixteen days later, the very day when the Serbians and Bulgarians captured Adrianople, the northern and northeastern boundaries for Albania were settled and formally accepted by Austria-Hungarian government. Scutari was recognized as indisputably Albanian; the Serbian access to the sea was reassured; Ipek, Djakova, Prizren, and Dibra ceded to Serbia. With this boundary agreement came the withdrawal of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian troops from the Galician frontier.

In April, the Balkan war continued with ferocity till the 16th, when hostilities stopped at Chatalja. On the 22nd, Scutari was surrendered to the Montengrins; and the next day, in the Ambassadorial meeting, a demand of evacuation was decided to be sent to Cattigne. The allies' reply to the Powers'

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<sup>123</sup> Times, Jan. 24, p. 69.

<sup>124</sup> Times, Mar. 14, 1913, p. 213.

<sup>125</sup> Commons, V. 50, p. 33.

proposals for peace was then discussed; at this meeting Lord Morley, Sir Arthur Nicolson and Asquith were also present.<sup>126</sup>

Scutari was a test of strength for the Ambassadorial Conference. For outside the Conference, Pan-Slavic agitations in Russia and military preparations in Austria-Hungary created a crisis in European diplomacy. In the meeting of May 1st, Thursday, Italy supported Austria-Hungary for an immediate joint action by Powers to compel King Nicholas to evacuate Scutari. Britain, France and Russia believed that King Nicholas could be brought to obey the will of Europe with time and patience but without resort to physical coercion. No definite result came out of that meeting.<sup>127</sup> Europe had the fortune to see King Nicholas surrendering Scutari at the eleventh hour. He replied the demand of the Powers through Count de Salis, the British Minister at Cettigne. Sir Edward Grey read the telegram in the Ambassadorial meeting of May 5th. It was then recommended that an international contingent from the warships blocking the Montenegrin ports should take over the town and maintain order pending the creation of an Albanian administration. The ambassadors also discussed the prospects of peace between Turkey and the Balkan Allies; Sir Edward Grey even read in the meeting the draft preliminary treaty. The Constitution for Albania was discussed in the meeting of May 8th. Italy and Austria-Hungary favored a principality under a European prince, which should be given complete independence when the guardianship of Europe was no longer needed. Russia was more for an autonomy

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<sup>126</sup> Times, Ap. 25, 1913, p. 329.

<sup>127</sup> Times, May 2, 1913, p. 349; 350.

under the Turkish suzerainty, which should be governed by a Vali to be appointed by the Powers for a fixed term of years.<sup>128</sup> There were continuous meetings from July 28th to August 1st, during that period the Ambassadors agreed upon the nomination in six months of a prince of Albania; and upon sending a commission of control to organize the administration. A gendarmerie was also to be created under Swedish command.<sup>129</sup>

The preliminary treaty to end the Balkan war, had been evidently passed by the ambassadors when it was read on May 5th. Because of the delay on the allies part to conclude it the Powers had to adopt some measure of persuasion. In the meeting of Ambassadors on May 27th, therefore, it was definitely decided to hasten the signature of London Treaty, which was signed three days later under the advice of Sir Edward Grey.<sup>130</sup> The Conference of Ambassadors, having been considered by all the Powers as successful, held its last meeting on August 11th at which the delimitation of Southern Albanian boundaries in general was agreed upon. Two days after the Conference, Paul Cambon and Lichnowsky took a vacation outside of London. Marquis Francavilla and Sir Edward Grey left on the next morning.<sup>131</sup>

The question of Albanian autonomy had been anticipated one month before the Conference, even before the Declaration of Independence and neutrality in Albania on November 28, 1912. The London Times reported on Nov. 15 that

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<sup>128</sup> Times, May 9, 1913, p. 369.

<sup>129</sup> Times, Aug. 1, 1913, p. 610.

<sup>130</sup> Times, May 30, 1913, p. 429.

<sup>131</sup> Times, Aug. 15, 1913, p. 649.

among the Great Powers there had been a general agreement that there must be an autonomous Albania, including, at any rate, the bulk of the country inhabited exclusively by Albanians. As we know the formal recognition of the Albanian autonomy came only after the last meeting of the Ambassadors in 1912. On December 20, that meeting was held for two hours. The question of Serbian access to the sea was decided. "The port opened to Serbia on Albanian territory shall be free and neutral, and that it shall be served by an international railway under the same European supervision, with freedom of transit for all merchandise, including munitions of war. Serbia will besides have the benefit of freedom from customs duties."<sup>132</sup> Through the recommendation of the ambassadors, the Powers also accepted the principle of Albanian autonomy. It was to be under the suzerainty of Sultan, but also under the supervision of the Great Powers. The idea of making Albania independent of Turkey did not develop itself in the conference until after the fall of Scutari in the end of April of the next year.

During the negotiations of the Peace Conference between Turkey and the Allies, therefore, the Balkan States declared that Albania was to be ceded by Turkey, but that its future would be decided in accordance with the wishes of the Powers.<sup>133</sup> Turkey's counter proposal on December 28, 1912, was that Albania should be an autonomous province with General Assembly, but that the administration should be under an Ottoman prince appointed as governor for a term of five or more years.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Times, Dec. 27, 1912, p. 1021.    <sup>133</sup> Times, Dec. 27, 1912, p. 1021.

<sup>134</sup> Times, Jan. 3, 1913, p. 1.

This was not recognized by the Treaty of London signed on May 30, 1913. And the decision made in the Ambassadorial Conference was not even known at the time to the Albanian provisional government. Ismail Kemal Bey said "The Greek fleet having cut the cable which was the only channel of communication with the outer world, we were completely isolated and deprived of all knowledge of what was taking place beyond our borders."<sup>135</sup>

Outside of Albania, however, press comments in Europe were rife, some of them were certainly not representative of their governmental policy. The St. Petersburg paper, "Novoye Vremya", intended to have Albania divided among the allies who were friendly to Russia. It exaggerated the hostile elements in Albania; so as to make autonomy more impracticable than it was. The English "Saturday Review", which regarded autonomy as insane, commented: "The Albanians may be noble savages, but savages they are to all intents and purposes, and they practically enjoyed autonomy under Abdul Hamid, with the result that the country remains what a savage country may be expected to be. A native ruler would never be accepted by all the tribes; the only existing organization is a family and tribal one, not national or anything approaching it, though there may be a vague common feeling against the outsider."<sup>136</sup> This English paper wished to have Austria-Hungary rule Albania, and this was supposed to be the most satisfactory and final settlement. On the contrary, the "Italia Moderna" a paper in Rome, thought

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<sup>135</sup> Quart.Rev., V.228, p.158.

<sup>136</sup> Liv.Age, V.275, p.810.

that there was a great deal of united national feeling in Albania, and that it was quite capable of being formed into a compact and powerful state. "Italy certainly has a great interest in the creation of good,, safe, and practical communications between the Adriatic, Serbia, and Macedonia. Its interest is undoubtedly not less than that which Serbia has in such communications....Public opinion in Italy would condemn any foreign annexation of Albania and thus supports our government in its efforts to obviate any such contingency. For an autonomous Albania would prove a living guard for the Strait of Otranto and a reliable sentinel over the traffic, which, for the common good of Italy and the Balkan States, would restore to the Adriatic most of the commerce between the East and West."<sup>137</sup>

The inland frontiers of Albania was a matter of great importance, because if Albania were to be too small it could not have a separate existence in future. On the other hand, if it was were so large as to encroach unfairly on the legitimate aspirations and aims of Montenegro, Serbia or Greece, the Great Powers which were supporting any of these countries could not tolerate it. The Ambassadors in London were absolutely sure of this; hence they unanimously agreed that the delimitation of Albania was a task which the Great Powers alone were qualified to tackle. But after all, it was a conference of temporary compromise and not of mutual adjustment. It was a conference of Ambassadors of the Great Powers which, says the Annual Register, "was charged with the duty of reconciling the settlement with their demands."<sup>138</sup> It was the work primarily of a quack-doctor  
<sup>137</sup> Lit. Dig., V. 46, p. 124.  
<sup>138</sup> Annual Register, Dec., 1912, p. 274.

who covers the inflammatory skin without attempting to cure it radically. The purpose of plastering is often to cover the ugly spot and to deceive the patient himself. The purpose of the Albanian delimitation was none other. It was to sacrifice real mutual adjustment, real human justice, for the sake of delaying a general European War. "I am quite aware", said Sir Edward Greay, "that when the whole comes to be stated it will be open on many points to a great deal of criticism from any one with local knowledge who looks it purely on the merits of the locality itself. It is to be borne in mind that in making that agreement the primary essential was to preserve agreement between the Great Powers themselves, and if the agreement about Albania has secured that it has done the work which is most essential in the interests of the peace of Europe."<sup>139</sup>

Right or wrong, even a mere agreement was not easy among all the Great Powers. Austria-Hungary was determined to rescue Scutari for the new Albania, because it was the Catholic metropolis and the seat of missionary schools which had done a work as beneficial for native development as it was serviceable to Austro-Hungarian aims. On this point it took over two months to secure the Russian agreement finally. But Russia by no means acted for the sake of Albania; she insisted that sufficient concessions had to be given to the two Serb States, Serbia and Montenegro. Moreover she desired to include in the concessions Ipek, Prizren, Dibra and Djakova.<sup>140</sup> On the other hand, Austria-Hungary did not propose to compensate the Serbs by the Dalmatian

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<sup>139</sup> Commons, V. 56, p. 2285.

<sup>140</sup> Times, Mar. 28, 1913, p. 250.

coast, neither did Italy by giving up some of the Aegean islands. Austria-Hungary readily agreed about Ipek and Prizren; after some delay agreed also on Dibra.

Djakova was the last point to settle for the north and northeastern boundary line. It was the most unjust act of compromise without the consideration of anything like self-determination Serbia claimed the place to have been Serbian from the 14th to the close of the 17th century. But the fact was that by 1912, the overwhelming majority of living population was Albanian, though in the city there was still an Orthodox church. As late as 1915, the Djakova population was over 97% Albanian.<sup>141</sup> The geographical argument ought to have defeated the Serbo-Russian claim. But Austria-Hungary, having won the important diplomatic victory of an Albanian autonomy, might have thought that, after all, the political reconstruction of the Balkans was to represent only a transitional state. She might have considered, as very likely she did, that war was not preferred at that time, and that the interests of the future in this case were not so pressing to herself. Vienna was then influenced by the moderate attitude of German foreign policy.<sup>142</sup> At any rate, with the far-reaching concession of this Albanian City, settled the only outstanding question in the long negotiations over the northern boundaries.

Ipek, Prizren, Dibra, and Djakova, - all were predominantly Albanian towns; and all of them were now assigned to the Serbians, who naturally did not possess much tolerance and  
<sup>141</sup> Skendo, p.9.  
<sup>142</sup> Jagow, p.133-34.

sympathy towards the Albanian natives. The tribes of Hoti and Grouda and the five Malissori tribes, who had revolted against Turkey the year before, were now included in the Montenegrin boundary, a very unnatural one. The new Albanian boundary was made to cling to the edge of the mountains. Albania acquired rocks and gorges, and mountain torrents. In the summer the upland might still serve good pasture lands; but in the winter when the ground was covered by snow, the sheep must starve, however hardy they could be. The fertile plains surrounding the market towns of Prizren, Dibra, Ipek and Djakova, where rocks had been hewn into houses and cities, where gorges had been widened out into valleys, and the valleys become productive fields, and where the mountain torrents had been changed into rivers, - these were lost to Albania. "A situation has been created", says Mr. Woods, "in which it is practically impossible for the Albanians in the hills to exist. Men and women formerly accustomed to pass freely from their mountain homes to sell or buy in the neighboring markets are now compelled to perform journeys which often take four or five days in summer and which are impossible in winter, in order to visit markets which are still in Albania, or to risk massacre or insult in towns which are now Serbian or Montenegrin."<sup>143</sup> Besides the commercial and economical importance, the cities were the principal civilizing agencies in the country. And their deprivation to Albania was the more unjust when they by natural and ethnological rights belonged to her.

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<sup>143</sup> Woods, Fort Rev., V.101, p.462.

After the agreement on the northern boundary in the Ambassadorial Conference, the Albanian provisional government was no longer isolated from the world. Three or four days later, on April 1, 1913, Ismail Kemal Bey left Albania on the yacht of the Duc de Montpensier, for the purpose of conferring with the Powers. From Brindisi he went successively to Rome, Vienna, Paris, and London. He did not return to Valona till June.<sup>144</sup> During his absence from Albania, the greatest crisis of the Conference and of Europe of that year, came over the issue of Scutari.

Scutari, the capital of the old Illyrian kings in the tenth century B.C., came under the direct rule of Constantinople only after the Crimean War; the mountaneous regions nearby have always been more or less independent.<sup>145</sup> The fertile plain near the Lake of Skutari is the natural and real frontier of Albanian territory. Annan Bryce suggested that Montenegro should give up Scutari and receive compensation somewhere else, while another Parliament member, David Mason, proposed that Montenegro might follow Austria-Hungary's example with regard to Bosnia-Herzegovina; and that Montenegro should purchase Scutari from Albania.<sup>146</sup> The fate of Scutari, however, was part of the balanced settlement and balanced agreement among the Great Powers. And when the principle of nationality happened to serve the purpose of balance of power, the Great Powers all declared Scutari to be a wholly Albanian town.

The Armistice of December 4, 1912, was ignored by mutual agreement between the combatants; hence fighting continued at Scutari even in the beginning of February, 1913.

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<sup>144</sup> Quart. Rev., V. 228, p. 159-61.

<sup>145</sup> Peacock, p. 35.

<sup>146</sup> Commons, V. 52, p. 2310; 2316; 2326.

While the negotiations on the Albanian boundary went on in the Congress, the Turkish commander at Scutari, Hussein Riza, of partly Albanian origin, intended to declare the town Albanian. The plan was thwarted by Essad Pasha Toptain; and Essad plotted the assassination of Hussein Riza.<sup>147</sup> After the northern boundaries of Albania were agreed upon, the task before the Great Powers was to deliver Scutari from the hands of the Serbians and the Montenegrins. An official telegram from Cettigne expressed the Montenegrin attitude towards the Powers: "In justice to Montenegro it should be known that the Montenegrin commander has on three separate occasions given the foreigners opportunity to leave Skutari; but that they preferred to remain, as the Austro-Hungarian consul decided to stay at his post. Although Montenegro has now carried out the wishes of Austria-Hungary in regard to the departure of non-combatants, she has declared to the Powers that she can not but regard the Austro-Hungarian demand as a breach of neutrality. Montenegro wishes Europe to bear in mind that she is still at war with Turkey, and it is not clear to her how any decision of the Powers regarding the boundaries of Albania will alter this material fact."<sup>148</sup> In the beginning of April, when Serbia recalled her troops from before Scutari, at the request of the Powers, Montenegro continued to siege alone.

Russia also warned King Nicholas of the grave responsibility he would assume if Montenegro continued the resistance of the Scutari settlement. The Montenegrin reply

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147 Liv. Age, V. 302, p. 386.

148 Times, Mar. 28, 1913, p. 250.

ascribed certain passages to "total ignorance on the part of the Russian Foreign Office."<sup>149</sup> Montenegro was a haughty child of Balkan hyper-nationalism; it was going to take an objective lesson from the mighty Powers. It must be made to obey them; and the measure taken to enforce the territorial decision and to bring Montenegro to obedience, was an international naval expedition. On April 2, 1913, Acland announced in the Commons that British ships (battleship "King Edward VII" and cruiser "Dartmouth") were ready to join the naval demonstration when other Powers also got ready.<sup>150</sup> Finally, the program was decided upon. Even Russia, who was a great Slav and Orthodox Power, and who had no war ships in the Mediterranean, explained her policy in the communique to London: "In view of the fact that the Conference of Ambassadors in London has pronounced a naval demonstration in Montenegrin waters indispensable, Russia, although not herself taking part in the ... demonstration, has expressed the opinion that the demonstration ought to have an international character, and that French and British ships ought to take part in it."<sup>151</sup> The ships of five Powers began the blockade of the Montenegrin coast at eight o'clock, April 10th, morning. Two hours later, nine warships proceeded south towards Dulcigno, leaving at Antivari two more warships, the "Dartmouth" and the "Franz Ferdinand."<sup>152</sup>

Sir Edward Grey announced as the purpose of this blockade, to uphold an autonomous Albania; to stop the Montenegrin war of conquest; and to deliver the oppressed

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149 Times, April 18, 1913, p.309.

150 Commons, V.51, p.365.

151 Commons, V.51, p.817.

152 Times, Apr. 11, 1913, p.293.

Catholics and Moslem of Scutari.<sup>153</sup> But the fall of that Albanian city into the hands of Montenegro, half a month later, constituted a mockery of the entire conference and a snub to all the powers taking part in it. The city was surrendered to the Montenegrins at midnight. The news reached Cettigne at about 2 A.M. through a telegram sent by the Crown Prince to the King. It was immediately published, and was greeted by salvos of artillery and the ringing of the church bells. But the anxiety of the Great Powers was heightened. The prospect of European complications, after receding into the background, was now again brought to the front. Among the currents of opinion, some thought the situation became worse than ever; for the Montenegrins could now be expelled only by force, and if Austria-Hungary were to do it alone, the European peace could hardly be expected. Another group thought that with the victory the Montenegrins could now easily come to compromise without humiliation; and thus the situation was improved. The most common view, however, was that this dramatic act did not change the real status, at least the Great Powers still adhered to the idea that Scutari should not be outside of the autonomous Albania. The Great Powers were expected to use enough pressure to make their will prevail without any need for recourse to violent or precipitate action.<sup>154</sup>

The cause of the surrender of Scutari was not exactly known. The London Times reported of the shortage of foodstuffs, especially flour. The Ottoman ammunition had been

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153 Commons, V.51, p.817.

154 Times, Apr.25, 1913, p.329.

nearly all spent when the town was taken.<sup>155</sup> It was ascertained later that Essad Pasha had surrendered the city as a bargain with King Nicholas. By some sort of agreement Montenegro was to have the whole of Albania north of the river Drin, and in return Essad was to be recognized by King Nicholas as the chief of Albania.<sup>156</sup> Five days later, Essad actually proclaimed himself king of the Albanians at Alessio. The next morning Ismail Kemal Bey left Paris for London, "in order to urge his views upon the ambassadors."<sup>157</sup> The Great Powers must have been embarrassed now by the presence both of the Valona and the Alessio factions, and were compelled to set up an organization for the new state.

Meanwhile, the more urgent proposition was to drive away the Montenegrins from Scutari. For if the city was to be delivered from their hands by war, it must have been of a European war either with the Powers together or against each other. Of course, the best possible way out was to have no war when Montenegro yielded to the joint demand of the Great Powers. To accomplish this best adjustment, not only sufficient pressure must have been brought upon the "Father-in-law" of Europe, but delicate diplomacy must have been employed on Austria-Hungaria. Immediately after the fall of Scutari, all the Vienna newspapers expressed the idea that the government should at once take energetic steps against King Nicholas, either with or without the help of other Powers.<sup>158</sup> The last three days of April saw that "the flood of telegrams from Vienna (to Berlin) about the imminence of military operations has been excessive."<sup>159</sup> Germany urged Vienna not to intervene unless jointly with Italy.

The Russian Ambassador to Austria-Hungary "begged" the Dual

155 Times, Ap. 25, 1913, p. 231.

156 Dako, p. 98.

157 Times, May 2, 1913, p. 350.

158 Times, Ap. 25, 1913, p. 333

159 Times, May 2, 1913, p. 350.

Monarchy to refrain from war, and pledged at the same time that Russia would work for the evacuation of the Montenegrins.<sup>160</sup>

It was said also that the Italian government did its best to persuade its ally to adopt a policy of patience. But should there be war at all, Austria-Hungary was not to be allowed to act alone. Italy considered her interests just as vital as those of the Hapsburg Dynasty. Italian public opinion turned rapidly against Montenegro. Essad was figured as a "traitor and common malefactor". While Austria-Hungary concentrated her troops on the Bosnian border, Italy sent an entire army corps to Brindisi, the Italian port nearest Albania, together with four cruisers and enough other ships to transport troops. If the Hapsburg troops were to attack Scutari by way of Herzegovina, Italy must have hers crossing the strait and occupying the famous Valona.<sup>161</sup> This parallel if not joint action in Albania seemed to have received the tacit consent of both countries. The most militant Austria-Hungarian politicians, even they were prepared to sanction the establishment of Italy in a position from which it had always been the object of the Hapsburg strategists to exclude her. Had the partition of Albania been carried out at this moment, Italy-Austro-Hungary boundary in the Balkans would have been the river Shkumbi.

In the opinion of Lichnowsky, this crisis would have already led to a world-war.<sup>162</sup> But fortunately for Montenegro and for the international peace of that year, King Nicholas finally yielded. Like the sudden change of weather that has midsummer and midwinter in a week, the state of public feeling

<sup>160</sup> Dako, p.100.

<sup>161</sup> Times, May 2, 1913, p.350; Outlook, V.104, p.132.

<sup>162</sup> Lichnowsky, p.10-11.

in the Hapsburg Empire passed from a feverishly warlike to an extremely peaceful temperature. The martial law in Bosnia and Herzegovina was soon rescinded. "The idea of an expedition to Albania is treated as ancient history."<sup>163</sup>

Before May the Ambassadors had sent a joint communique to Cettigne demanding Montenegrin evacuation from Scutari. On May 1st the reply was unfavorable. While M. Popovitch, the Montenegrin Plenipotentiary at London, was making a formal protest, the Russian minister at Cettigne again urged the evacuation from Scutari immediately. Russia advised that should Austria-Hungary have intervened, the small mountain country could have expected its own ruin.<sup>164</sup> Furthermore, Montenegro was in dire need of a foreign loan. Disobedience to European Powers meant lack of financial assistance.<sup>165</sup> In defiance of his cabinet and the aspirations of his people, King Nicholas decided to yield. The Montenegrins had all to thank God that Scutari was in their hands even for such a very short time. The prestige of their country and the honor of their arms were exalted even by this "irreparable national loss". On the morning of May fifth the decision of King Nicholas was announced by Asquith in the House of Commons and by Lord Morley in the House of Lords. In the afternoon, nine days later, Scutari was put under the authority of Vice-Admiral Burney; hence the end of blockade of the Montenegrin coast.<sup>166</sup>

The issue of Scutari was the most critical of Europe in 1913, and therefore representing the climax and the

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<sup>163</sup> Times, May 9, 1913, p. 372; May 16, p. 393.

<sup>164</sup> Dako, p. 101.

<sup>165</sup> Times, Jan. 2, 1914, p. 19.

<sup>166</sup> Times, May 16, 1913, p. 389.

supreme effort of the Conference of Ambassadors. "The only expression of feeling", said Mr. Acland, "I can give upon the matter of Scutari is a sigh of relief. Last Sunday (May 4th) was not a pleasant day even for one so indirectly concerned as an Under-Secretary, and we at present only feel with regard to Scutari, as I say, enormous relief that the question of the town is no longer threatening division between the Great Powers of Europe. . . . The Montenegrin authority are very much to be congratulated in their own interests no less than that of Europe. If I may say so, they have climbed down the tree before the tree was blown up by an explosion which might have set all Europe on fire as well as being very uncomfortable for themselves."<sup>167</sup>

After the evacuation of Scutari, the Conference considered the northern Albanian boundary as completely settled. On the day when the Conference ended the decision was arrived at the settlement for the south and southeastern boundaries. The line to be drawn by an international commission was from a point south of Cape Stylos to the Lake of Ochrida, leaving the district of Koritza to Albania. It was no more than a compromise between the frontier claimed by Greece and that advocated by Italy and Austria-Hungary. The district of Chameria was ceded to Greece for the sake of maintaining Valona out of Greek hands, Austria-Hungary, while pressed hard on the Scutari issue, did not make an equally energetic effort to secure for Albania a generous frontier in the south, for the excellent reason that the southern Christians were Orthodox, and the dominant foreign

influence Italian. Every gain to Albanian territory in the south would be, in some sense, a counterpoise of a too-exclusive Austrian influence. At any rate, the Greek attention was most of the time absorbed towards Salonica; and the Turkish resistance in Epirus, particularly at Yanina, was prolonged. All these went to explain why the Greco Italian conflict in Albania was not apparently so acute as that of Austria-Hungary and Montenegro.

Though the important towns of Kortcha, Leskovick, Agyrocastron, and Delvino and the famous port of Santi Quaranta were given to Albania, the fertile Chameria was lost. The settlement of the south and southeastern boundary was no more just or unjust than that of the north and northeastern. Among the British Parliamentary members, Aubrey Herbert and Walter Guinness, protested against the unjust settlement. The latter said, "in reality the population of Greek nationality is far outnumbered by the Albanians. The whole Albanian race only numbers 2,250,000, enough to form a strong and compact state, owing to their undying feeling of nationality; but if the Greek proposals are carried out, of these 2,250,000 only 500,000 will be found within the boundaries of the new State."<sup>168</sup> The debates of some of those Parliamentary members should remind one of the speeches of Senators Johnson, Lodge and Knox on the so-called SShantung question in 1919. Lord Lamington said, "It is much better to have even a weak Albania than no Albania at all."<sup>169</sup> Woodrow Wilson seemed to have that same idea in regard to the "League of Nations".

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168 Commons, V.52, p.2304.

169 Lords, V.14, p.365.

The thousands of telegrams of pleading and protest that were received in the Paris Conference of 1919 seemed to have their pattern from those sent by the Albanians to the Ambassadorial Conference six years before. Thirty thousand Albanians from all over the United States of America protested against the unjust decision of the Conference regarding the north and northeast boundaries of Albania. They refuted the "shameful Greek proposal for fixing the southern boundaries by plebiscite, for such a vote will not express the voluntary will of the Albanians but the Greek will, enforced upon the Albanians by the bayonet."<sup>170</sup> They begged the Ambassadors to reconsider the whole Albanian question seriously and give it a just solution. Their idea was definitely expressed, "that there will be no peace in the Balkans should we be deprived of the land belonging to us for over five thousand years." The telegrams addressed to Sir Edward Grey from the Albanians of Lonsdale, R.I., Gary, Ind., Lewiston, Maine, Worcester and Lynn, Mass., and Buffalo and Syracuse, N.Y., had anticipated those addressed to Woodrow Wilson in 1918-19 from almost every part of the earth to influence the execution of his own "Fourteen Points". Perhaps Sir Edward Grey could not have been behind Woodrow Wilson in matters of expediency without justice. In spite of the protests from the Albanians in Bukarest, Valona, Sophia, and numerous places in the United States of America,<sup>171</sup> Yanina was given to Greece by "the right of conquest."

The ambassadors in 1913 certainly had much difficulty with the diplomatic Greeks. After conquest the Greek military

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<sup>170</sup> Skendo, 1'Epire, p.53.  
<sup>171</sup> Skendo, 1'Epire, Appendice.

officers used coercion and compulsion in Albania to force the native inhabitants to sign false declarations. The correspondents of foreign newspapers were always invited to the well managed mass-meetings. The resolutions of these meetings, previously prepared by Greek officials, were read to the audience, who did not understand Greek very well. The unsophisticated foreign correspondents approved the resolutions, which were then sent to London as true sentiment among the native Albanians.<sup>172</sup>

It is not a wonder then that the simple-minded German ambassador should have been deceived by the crafty Greeks. In his opinion, "the greater part of Albania is Hellenic. The towns in the south are entirely so; and during the Conference of Ambassadors delegations from Principal towns arrived in London to obtain annexation to Greece."<sup>173</sup>

However, the results of the Conference were unjust, it must be said that Sir Edward Grey had his personal success in the Conference. In this his friendship with the Ambassadors and his skill in smoothing over difficulties, all should count. As peace was then the supreme demand of and for Britain, as Britain did not care to go to war over the Albanian issue, Sir Edward Grey applied his entire mind on the conference affairs. He was so busily occupied with the Ambassadors that many a time he failed to answer questions in person before the Parliament.<sup>174</sup> He was clever enough to take up a very neutral position as chairman of the conference. Since his declaration as an "honest broker" aroused no suspicion from the other Great Powers, they

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172 Chekregi, p.95-96.

173 Lichnowsky, p.6.

174 Commons, V.52, p.2324.

allowed him to keep the peace as long as it suited them. Moreover, Sir Edward Grey had the sympathy and support of the whole nation. He could as a plenipotentiary speak in the Conference with the authority of a united people. The world knew that he spoke not for a party of the nation; thus power had added emphasis to everything he tried to do. Mr. Bonar Law said: "There has never been a Foreign Secretary who was less hampered in a critical time by what happened at home .... On the whole, I think the support which he has received from his country has been almost greater than has ever fallen to any Foreign Secretary in the past."<sup>175</sup>

#### The Aftermath

The meetings of ambassadors were indeed of great use at moments of urgent crisis in the relations between the Great Powers. But for the facilities which were provided by these meetings, some of the agreements which were reached on controversial points might not have been reached at all, or might not have been reached in time. The ambassadors certainly did hasten the signature of the Peace Treaty of London to conclude the First Balkan War. They settled the Albanian question only temporarily, and they did not help to preserve the Balkan Federation. Not only that the Second Balkan War immediately followed, but only one year later the inevitable European War broke out largely because of the maladjustment between Serbia and the Hapsburg Monarchy. The arrangements made by the Conference

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175 Commons, V. 56, p. 2298.

in regard to Albania bore the mark of the selfish interests of the Powers that were mainly interested in the Adriatic problem. Only within a very short time, the test of actual application revealed the artificial and superficial nature of these arrangements. The London Conference was simply a quack-doctor; and instead of curing the Albanian carbuncle radically, the ambassadors and Sir Edward Grey created an acute case of blood contamination which was the fate of Europe in 1914.

What the quack-doctor offered to Albania was the more than useless plaster in the peculiar form of international commissions. In September, 1913, they numbered four altogether. Two boundary commissions were respectively for the north and the south. The naval commission, under the presidency of Vice-Admiral Sir Cecil Burney, administered Skutari and its vicinity. At the end of September, when Greece and Serbia were carrying on a propagandist agitation in the frontier districts and the Serbians were shooting down Albanians who came to exchange their goods in their old markets, the International Commission of Control for All Albania met for the first time at Valona.<sup>176</sup> It was really nothing more than a commission of consuls. M. Krajewski of France was former consul at Scutari; Mr. Harry H. Lamb former British vice-consul at the same place and later consul-general at Salonica; Commodore A. Leoni of Italy former Consul-general at Bastia; Dr. J. Winckle of Germany former consul-general at Trieste; and M. Petraieff of Russia was adviser to Russian Embassy at London but also former consul at Monaster. Austria-Hungary  
176 Annual Register, 1913, p.356.

delayed in appointing her representative, Herr Aristoteles Petrovitch, former consul at Valona and Yanina and consul-general at Alexandria.<sup>177</sup>

Great Britain proposed in December a compromise line; and on the basis of that, with the approval of other Powers, the boundary commissions completed their works. The Albania thus fixed was only one hundred eighty miles from north to south, and eighty-five miles from west to east, making a sum of about 11,000 square miles with about 800,000 population.<sup>178</sup> Half a year ago, just after Montenegrin surrender of Scutari, Acland had declared in the Parliament, that Albania was to live "with all the other Powers quite independent and as independently as the other Powers live and capable of enjoying a future development and future growth in civilization in exactly the same way as we hope will be the case with the other Balkan States."<sup>179</sup> Now a considerable part of Albanian territory and a large section of her population were severed from the trunk so to speak, and grafted on Montenegro, Greece and Serbia. This was the European handiwork, impelled by motives alien to the welfare of the new state. This was nothing but a repetition of the sinister course taken by the Great Powers at the Congress of Berlin. Of course, the like mischievous consequences should soon appear.

Very much like the Congress of Berlin, the Ambassadorial Conference in London adopted the art of quackery. It tried to have a mere momentary peace; it did not try to radically cure the sore spot. As Sir Edward Grey said, "The

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177 Times, Oct. 3, 1913, p. 793.

178 Woods, Cradle, p. 156.

179 Commons, V. 52, p. 2325.

concert of Europe set itself to one object, and that was to localize the war, and on the whole, I think, the concert of Europe has been wise in settling itself that object and not going beyond that object." His reason for quackery, as he advanced, was that "to attempt more might have been to endanger the whole concert."<sup>180</sup> There was a written agreement as to the new Albanian boundaries; but even Britain did not admit any responsibility for the maintenance of law and order in Albania.<sup>181</sup> The Great Powers did not make any attempt to study the interests of the population, but sought a ruler for the new state whose selection should provoke the minimum of objection from any among themselves. Finally they agreed to accept a prince of irreproachable reputation and sprung from a very old family, but utterly devoid of brains. The selection of Prince William of Wied as the ruler of Albania was officially notified to the Provisional Government at Valona, on Nov. 23, 1913.<sup>182</sup> This handsome, tall, and dignified Prince, did not worry a bit about his future administration. He appeared to think that he would know something about the Albanians by instinct when once he had assumed the crown. On March 7, 1914, he slipped into his new kingdom almost unannounced. He sneaked into the country like a political refugee who wishes to avoid the notice of the police. After the Serbo-Austro-Hungarian War was declared, and as the result of another Albanian insurrection, he was driven out from Durazzo, having been a nominal head of that country not more than half a year.

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<sup>180</sup> Commons, V. 56, p. 2294.

<sup>181</sup> Commons, V. 63, p. 1963; V. 65, p. 6.

<sup>182</sup> Times, Jan. 2, 1914, p. 19.

Indeed, from the end of the Ambassadorial Conference in August, 1913, at the outbreak of the European War the very next year, the one sad chapter in Albanian history was the crime of international intrigues in that precarious political state. In replying to the Albanian declaration of independence and neutrality in November, 1912, the Turkish Grand Vizier had warned that "if Albania were to rely on Austria or on Italy, let her not forget ... the example of the Crimea, whose independence was the prelude to complete Russian subjection."<sup>183</sup> The pitiful small state was on one hand threatened by a Greaco-Serbian partition, and on the other hand menaced by an Italian-Austro-Hungarian dismemberment. The Conference of the Ambassadors did not help her to gain a strong, firm standing for her nationality. The alternative that Albania was given was the alternative of the Lamb who has to choose whether she shall go to the wool merchant or straight to the wolf! From the beginning, Italy's policy appeared to be one of double sword, to split Serbia and Montenegro and to thwart Austria-Hungary. Somehow she preferred Scutari to be Montenegrin to its falling into the hands either of Austrian or Serbian. It was very probably true that Italy had been head engineer in the surrender of that Albanian city. The negotiation between Essad Pasha and King Nicholas was through the Italian consulate. A few months later, when Essad was arrested by the Dutch gendarmes he was released by the demand of Italy. At Rome he was decorated. He was the

tool of Italian intrigues.<sup>184</sup>

<sup>183</sup> Quart. Rev. V. 228, p. 157.

<sup>184</sup> Liv. Age, V. 302, p. 386.

Essad was also an instrument for Serbian intrigues. Through him the Serbians promised the refugees from Dibra that, as a reward for evicting Prince William of Wied, Dibra should have been restored to them. Italy and Serbia initiated the insurrection against Wied, while the Greeks, supported by France, were attacking Koritza. The poor Albanians were dazed with the falsity of the Powers and confused by Counter-decrees. The innocent Albanians were ignorant of the intention of the Great Powers represented on the International Commission of control. Krajewsky immediately after the fall of Scutari, told Miss M.E. Durham that France would not allow Albania to exist.<sup>185</sup> An Italian colonel took part in the so-called Durazzo revolution. And when Essad entered that city, having come directly from Serbia, he was publicly embraced by the Italian representative, Commendatore A. Leoni.

The Conference of Ambassadors in London did not possess the far sight to help preserving the Balkan League. By reducing, by curtailing, and by mutilating Albania, they made that one thing that everybody most desires- that is, equilibrium and stability in the Balkans - very much harder to obtain. Without economic liberty and freedom Albania after the Conference was still the football of Europe, still a hotbed of international intrigues. Neither did the Conference arrange for the affairs at Salonica, the contest over its possession actually broke the Balkan League and ushered in the fratricidal Second Balkan War. The European diplomacy in regard to the Balkans was anything but effective and strong. The Berlin Congress in 1878 and the London Conference in 1912-13, both were simply

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<sup>185</sup> Liv. Age. V. 302, p. 387-88.

instruments detrimental to the hope of a Balkan Federation. The European Powers were never moderate in their own interests; and with a few exceptions, they never yet have failed to conclude or help a one-sided peace which will arouse everlasting hatred among nations.

The Albanian Question was not settled rightly and therefore in reality not settled at all. After the surrender of Scutari by the Montenegrin King on May 5, 1913, the tension in the Ambassadorial Conference was immediately relieved. But in Herr von Jagow's prophetic opinion, the crisis with which Europe had been threatened was only temporarily over. He told M. Jules Cambon, then the French ambassador at Berlin, that the Great Powers were travelling in a mountainous district; and that they had just reached a difficult pass and they yet saw other heights rising in front of them.<sup>186</sup> After the Second Balkan War, the Balkan League, the only power which could secure Balkan independence against Austria-Hungary on the one side and Turkey on the other, was hopelessly shattered. The seeds of deadly animosity and a craving for revenge were sown in the Balkans; thus giving further chances for European intrigues and intervention. Moreover, Serbia now had received an enormous accession of power; and the Yougo-Slav nationalism became more threatening to the very existence of the Dual Monarchy. Salonica, long the aim of Austro-Hungarian statesmen, was now in the possession of the Greeks. If the results of the Balkan Wars could not be undone, all dreams of a Berlin-Byzantium-Bagdad highway for Pan-Germanism faded into thin air. The reversal of these conditions, from that moment on, must have been the chief object of Austro-German policy.

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<sup>186</sup> French Yellow Book, No. 3.

A war between Serbia and Austria-Hungary was attempted more than once in 1913.<sup>187</sup> Only three days after the Treaty of Bucharest, the Hapsburg Monarchy sounded Italy as to a war with Serbia. The proposal was declined, on the ground that the Triple Alliance did not contemplate such an act of aggression.<sup>188</sup> If Italy had joined the Hapsburg to keep the Serbians out of her Adriatic share, naturally M. Giolitti could not tolerate, and with even stronger apprehension, the substitution of Austrian for Serbian influence in Albania. Shortly, however, in the end of November, came the conversion of the German Emperor for War and the triumph of the military party at Berlin.<sup>189</sup> William II had always kept the German powder dry, but now he speeded up the preparations for war with the characteristic German traits of secrecy, discipline and of persistence. Germany already looked for a good opportunity, a satisfactory pretext for war; and when that did come in the next June, when Archduke Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated at Serajevo, Germany did not hesitate to support the Dual Monarchy for the sole sake of the Drang nach Osten. When this dreadful news reached Albania, Durazzo was about to be captured by the insurgents while the Greeks were flooding south Albania, burning and massacring as they went. The struggle in Albania was not Albanian at all. It was only a part of the great fight among the Great Powers for the possession of the Near East and the route to the Far East.

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188 Serbian Blue Book, No. 2.

189 French Yellow Book, No. 6.

187 Times, Oct. 24, 1913, p. 851.

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