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THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE
FOREIGN OFFICE
1900-1907

THE BACKGROUND TO THE END OF ISOLATION

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P R E F A C E

The Foreign Office underwent an important transformation at the beginning of the twentieth century. This development coincided with the new course of British foreign policy which has been called "the end of isolation."

One reason for this transformation was the rapid promotion of new men with new ideas to fill the senior posts both in the Foreign Office and the Diplomatic Service. Two men in particular, Sir Francis Bertie and Sir Charles Hardinge, benefited from Royal influence to become, respectively, Ambassador at Paris and Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office. These two men, and a number of their contemporaries, began to wield more influence than their predecessors, and attempted with some success to bring about the promotion of men of whom they approved in preference to those of whom they did not approve. Their activities introduced a new body of men at the top of the Foreign Office, and brought about an atmosphere of intrigue and rivalry which had not previously been present.

Another reason for this transformation was the reform and consequent reorganisation of the Foreign Office. This development brought about a devolution of responsibility, and encouraged the permanent officials to begin to put forward their own views and to influence the execution of British foreign policy. The men who were being promoted to the important senior posts were, therefore, provided with an administrative machinery which facilitated their desire for a more active role in the formulation of policy.

The other reason for the transformation was the rise of "anti-German" feeling in the Foreign Office, which came to a head at exactly the same time. Towards the close of the nineteenth century the important members of the Office began first to criticise the methods of German diplomacy, and then to see the aims of German foreign policy as inimical to British interests. This mounting criticism was dramatically affected by the collapse of Russia and the aggressive policy pursued by Germany shortly after. Some of the more influential members of the Foreign Office began to suspect that Germany was attempting to impose a hegemony over Europe. They were divided about the importance which they felt should be attached to the potential threat from Russia, but so long as that Power remained weak they began to regard Anglo-German relations as the most important factor to be taken into account when considering British foreign policy. The men at the forefront of this opinion were by and large the same men who were able to take advantage of the new organisation of the Foreign Office to exploit their new positions to the full. When a general consensus was finally reached that Germany was moving towards a bid for hegemony the transformation of the Foreign Office was complete. The Foreign Secretary was surrounded by a body of forceful senior officials, who took advantage of the new and efficient organisation to advance the same overall policy.

The Foreign Secretary did not always follow the advice that he was given, but after this time that advice was something which he had to take into consideration. The transformation

of the Foreign Office was the watershed between the nineteenth century office and the twentieth century bureaucracy.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The years 1900 to 1907 have justly been described, in relation to British foreign policy, as "the end of isolation." These years witnessed the signature by successive British governments of three important international agreements: the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902; the Anglo-French Convention of 1904; and the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. It is no exaggeration to say that British foreign policy underwent a complete transformation during these years, that this short period constituted a watershed between the late Victorian period and what we may with hindsight refer to as the pre-war period. The Foreign Secretary for most of this time, in fact from the autumn of 1900 to the end of 1905, was the fifth Marquess of Lansdowne; the signature of the Russian agreement a year and a half later was no more than the culmination of a policy that Lansdowne himself had initiated. It is this transformation that helps make the few decades before the First World War such a fascinating and rewarding field of study for diplomatic historians. It is true that there was a general continuity of British Imperial and strategic interests. It is true also that many of the problems facing the Foreign Office in the years immediately preceding the outbreak of war in 1914 had also been present in the 1890s. Yet anyone who studies British foreign relations in the two or three decades before the First World War cannot fail to notice the wide gap which separates the Foreign Secretaryship of Sir Edward Grey from those of Lord Salisbury.

This transformation cannot be explained solely by reference to "the end of isolation," nor can it be regarded as the result of the overwhelming Liberal victory in the General Election of 1906. There were in fact a number of deeper and more fundamental interrelated causes, and it is the purpose of the present thesis to shed light on these. The thesis will therefore serve two purposes. First it will provide a background against which the change in British foreign policy can be more fully understood. Second it will seek to provide a satisfactory explanation and description of the transformation of the Foreign Office from 1900 to 1907.

There were three important developments which were in part the cause, and in part the result, of "the end of isolation." The first of these was personal; a number of forceful men suddenly, and very rapidly, obtained promotion and acquired some of the most influential diplomatic appointments. The second development was administrative; the Foreign Office underwent a series of reforms and then a complete reorganisation. The third development was political; a succession of factors combined to influence and change the attitudes of the politicians and officials who were closely connected with the management of foreign affairs. These three developments coincided exactly with the Japanese, French and Russian agreements, and were interdependent with them. Yet they were in their origins entirely separate matters and can, when unravelled, be studied separately. Each one has been given a chapter of its own in the present thesis.

These personal, administrative and political developments

have hitherto received little more than passing attention from diplomatic historians, and it is hoped that the present thesis will therefore go some way towards bridging an important gap. There has however been some pioneer work undertaken by two other historians, and it will be useful to refer to the extent of their work at this stage.

The first book to appear which set out to study the transformation of the Foreign Office was Dr Zara Steiner's "The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898-1914," published in 1969. This book refers briefly to the intrigues and promotions of Bertie and Hardinge; yet the account given can only be regarded as very incomplete, while no attempt is made to describe the personal changes as a whole. This book also contains a short description of the reorganisation of the Foreign Office; yet it is based almost entirely on the limited information to be found in the Bertie Papers and the Hardinge Papers, and on the inaccurate information to be found in a number of volumes of memoirs. Finally this book seeks to assess the influence of some of the important officials of the time; yet it does so without in any way examining the general shift in the political opinions held in the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service. Dr Steiner's book has the merit of being the first published work in its field, and must be given the credit for having provoked further research. Unfortunately it cannot be regarded as any more than a brief introduction to a subject requiring more extensive and more considered coverage.

The second of the two books which have set out to study the transformation of the Foreign Office was Dr Ray Jones's administrative history of "The Nineteenth-Century Foreign Office," which was published in 1971. This excellent book is concerned with neither the personal nor the political changes in the Foreign Office, but it does contain a very helpful chapter on the reorganisation of the Office. It is therefore necessary to explain why this subject has required further examination in the present thesis.

It was Dr Jones who first discovered the basic documentary evidence for the reorganisation in the Foreign Office Library, and among the Treasury archives in the Public Record Office. It is these papers which must be the basis of any examination of the process of administrative change, and it is precisely these papers which Dr Steiner did not discover. Yet the account that Dr Jones has given is based almost entirely on these two sources, supplemented by a few papers from the Foreign Office archives in the Public Record Office, and by the information that Dr Steiner gleaned from the Bertie Papers and the Hardinge Papers. In Chapter Two of the present thesis I have started from the same point as Dr Jones, but have substantially extended the detailed treatment of the subject, thereby considerably altering the overall picture. This has been done in part by making cross-references to the personal changes which influenced the reorganisation, but more particularly by making use of a considerable amount of important additional information. In particular I have introduced new evidence from the Foreign

All these sources, together with the many published books which I have actually referred to in the text, will be found listed at the end of the Appendices.

C H A P T E R O N E

PERSONAL CHANGE: THE PROMOTION OF NEW MEN WITH NEW IDEAS, 1900-1906

"The question of appointments may have an important bearing on political questions."

Eyre Crowe in 1908.

(The senior officials in the Foreign Office in 1900 - the method of promotion in the Diplomatic Service - Bertie's personality - his discontent with his post in the Foreign Office - Mr and Mrs Charles Hardinge - Bertie determines to use Royal influence to improve his position - appointment of Martin Gosselin as Minister at Lisbon and Mungo Herbert as Ambassador at Washington - Bertie tries to have Hardinge transferred to the Foreign Office - the imminent retirement of Lord Currie from the Rome Embassy - appointment of Bertie as Ambassador at Rome - Sir Frank Lascelles becomes indispensable at Berlin and Sir Arthur Nicolson remains on at Tangier - appointment of Hardinge as Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office - Hardinge accompanies King Edward on his foreign tour - appointment of Sir Mortimer Durand as Ambassador at Washington and Sir Edwin Egerton as Ambassador at Madrid - criticism of Sir Charles Scott as Ambassador at St Petersburg - Rennell Rodd and Cecil Spring Rice - the plan to give the Embassies at St Petersburg and Paris to Hardinge and Bertie - appointment of Hardinge as Ambassador at St Petersburg - appointment of Eldon Gorst as Assistant Under-Secretary, and transfer of Harry Farnall to Cairo - Goschen's resentment and Nicolson's patience - Bertie hopes to obtain the Paris Embassy - appointment of Bertie as Ambassador at Paris, Egerton as Ambassador at Rome, Nicolson as Ambassador at Madrid and Rodd as Minister at Stockholm - Bertie takes over the Foreign Office during Sanderson's illness - Hardinge successfully handles the Dogger Bank Incident and becomes a candidate for Sanderson's succession - death of Gosselin, and appointment of Goschen as Ambassador at Vienna and de Bunsen as Minister at Lisbon - Hardinge becomes Sanderson's most likely successor - he raises financial difficulties - appointment of Hardinge as Permanent Under-Secretary - appointment of Nicolson as Ambassador at St Petersburg, de Bunsen as Ambassador at Madrid and Villiers as Minister at Lisbon - Sir Edward Grey becomes Foreign Secretary - Louis Mallet is marked out for Hardinge's succession - conclusion: the effect of the new appointments on Eyre Crowe)

(1)

When Lord Lansdowne became Foreign Secretary in 1900 he was directly helped and supported by a handful of senior officials. These were the Permanent Under-Secretary, the Assistant Under-Secretaries and his own Private Secretary. Beneath these were the Senior Clerks, the Assistant Clerks and the Junior Clerks.

The Permanent Under-Secretary had been the most powerful and influential official in the Foreign Office since the middle of the nineteenth century. The post had been held by Edmund Hammond from 1854 to 1873, and then by Lord Tenterden until 1882. Lord Granville, when appointing Lord Tenterden's successor, had had a choice between four men: Sir Julian Pauncefote, an Assistant Under-Secretary; Villiers Lister, the other Assistant Under-Secretary; Philip Currie, who had been Lord Salisbury's Private Secretary; and Thomas Sanderson, who was Granville's own Private Secretary. Granville had wanted to promote Sanderson, but the latter was only an Assistant Clerk, and he had been afraid of "the disruption it would cause in passing Sanderson over the heads of so many of his senior colleagues."¹ Philip Currie's chief interests lay outside the

1. R. Jones: "The Nineteenth Century Foreign Office." p.76. See also p.79.

Office, and Granville had, therefore, given the promotion to Pauncefote,¹ Currie was promoted Assistant Under-Secretary in place of Pauncefote, and Sanderson remained Private Secretary.

This combination of senior officials remained roughly the same for the next few years. It was, however, customary for the Foreign Secretary in those days to choose as his Private Secretary someone of the same political persuasion as himself. Thus when Lord Salisbury returned to the Foreign Office in 1885 Currie took over from Sanderson, and when the Conservatives returned to power in 1886 the Private Secretaryship was given to Eric Barrington, who had replaced Currie as the Conservative nomination.

In 1889 Sir Julian Pauncefote was sent as Minister to Washington, and his place taken by Sir Philip Currie. The vacant Assistant Under-Secretaryship was given to Sanderson. This combination remained in command of the Foreign Office until

1. PRO 30/29/195. Granville to Currie, October 5, 1882:
"After careful consideration of all the circumstances I have offered the permanent Under Secretaryship to Pauncefote. His qualifications and those of some other men in the office, make it quite unnecessary for me to go outside the office... Our old friendship does not diminish my sense of your fitness to fill the post. But it enables me to tell you frankly what is my doubt... The permanent headships of such an office as ours ought to be held by those who will make the work their real object. I know your powers of work, but you are rich, you are appreciated in society, you have hunters, and there is not the same factitious excitement as makes political men stick for a time to severe drudgery... I ought to add, although it is not likely that I shall have to name a permanent Under Secretary for a third time, I should not consider the appointment of an Assistant Under Secretary as prejudicing... another such an appointment."

1894, when Villiers Lister's retirement¹ made way for the promotion of Sir Percy Anderson. When Currie was at the same time appointed Ambassador at Constantinople the way was made clear for the promotion of Sanderson to be Permanent Under-Secretary, and Francis Bertie to be Assistant Under-Secretary. Lord Rosebery had meanwhile succeeded Lord Salisbury as Foreign Secretary, and had taken Francis Villiers, a son of the great Lord Clarendon, as his Private Secretary.² When Lord Salisbury again returned to the Foreign Office in 1895 Eric Barrington took over from Villiers, and the latter resumed work in one of the Departments of the Office.

In 1896 Sir Percy Anderson, who is remembered for his role in England's imperial expansion in Africa,³ died and thus left a vacant Assistant Under-Secretaryship to be filled. "The post was ... offered in the first place to Eric Barrington, but he refused it mainly on private grounds."⁴ The post was then

1. Salisbury Papers E/Villiers Lister/19. Villiers Lister to Salisbury, November 13, 1893.
2. Villiers had actually succeeded Sanderson as the "Liberal" Private Secretary in 1886. See Rosebery Papers Box 63. Granville to Rosebery, February 4, 1886: "Sanderson would evidently prefer remaining at the Head of his Dept. and thinks he might be more useful to his chief there. His recommendation is Frank Villiers, and Spring Rice as precis writer - (both Liberals). His praise of the first is very great - both as to ability and knowledge of the work of the office - and keeping his chief up to the mark... The alternative which smiled to him most, was Eric Barrington, now Private Secretary to Salisbury - and therefore acquainted with all the ins and outs of the work. But he believes Villiers to be the stronger man."
3. See W.R. Louis: "Sir Percy Anderson's Grand African Strategy, 1883-1896." ("The English Historical Review," 1966. p.292-314).
4. Rosebery Papers Box 73. Villiers to Rosebery, July 25, 1896.

offered to Villiers, who accepted,¹ Two years later a third Assistant Under-Secretaryship was created, and it was given to a diplomatist named Martin Gosselin, who was a personal friend of Sanderson. It was this combination of Sanderson (Permanent Under-Secretary), Bertie, Villiers and Gosselin (Assistant Under-Secretaries), and Barrington (Private Secretary), that Lord Lansdowne inherited from Lord Salisbury in 1900.²

(2)

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century promotion in the Diplomatic Service was very largely determined by seniority. There were obvious disadvantages in such a system as it hindered the promotion of outstanding talent. Nevertheless it was a tradition that it was not easy to ignore, as Lord Salisbury explained to Queen Victoria in 1886:

"If the practice is departed from (as it legally can be), the outcry is so violent as to make the service very discontented, and even to invite the interference of Parliament. In 1878, Lord Salisbury appointed a Secretary of Embassy from the lower ranks of the service. A motion of censure in the House of Commons was the result, and though it was not carried, it effectually prevented Lord Salisbury from trying the experiment again. In the same way, it is almost impossible to remove a man who is unsatisfactory, unless he has done something which can be

1. Salisbury Papers E/Villiers/1. Villiers to Salisbury, July 24, 1896.
2. When Lord Curzon was appointed Viceroy of India in 1898, he wrote to his successor as Parliamentary Under-Secretary: "When you first go to F.O. go and see yourself in their rooms: Sanderson, Bertie, Villiers, Eric Barrington, Gosselin. Then send for and see in your room the head of each of the other departments." British Museum Add. MS 50073, p.209. Curzon to Brodrick, October 4, 1898.

publicly proved against him, or unless he can be sent to some better post; or unless the close of his official term is at hand."¹

Another tradition that had grown up in the Diplomatic Service was that diplomatic posts should be the exclusive preserve of professional diplomatists, and that they should never be given to politicians or other outsiders. Lord Salisbury ignored this rule on a small number of occasions, and always provoked intense resentment in the Diplomatic Service as a result. For example, he wrote to the Queen in 1888:

"It is impossible to keep a service in any heart unless men are promoted when their turn comes, or at least have a fair general chance of being so. When a vacancy occurs, the service expect there shall be a general move upwards. They are not always gratified. Lord Salisbury has been guilty in their views, on three occasions, of deferring this general advance, by introducing men of distinction at the top; Lord Lytton to Paris, Lord Dufferin to Rome, and Sir H. Wolff to Teheran. This has had the effect of preventing this general move up for which the service looks. But this 'move up' necessarily involves a change of post. When other vacancies came, Lord Salisbury felt bound to recommend that promotions should take place; otherwise the service would have been disheartened."²

The year 1888, when Lord Salisbury wrote this letter, was a particularly bad one from the point of view of the Diplomatic Service. For example, Rennell Rodd, a junior diplomatist, wrote to a friend on February 13, 1888:

"As to the move it may be a good bit postponed, as Lord Salisbury is giving away all the diplomatic posts to his friends and supporters. We read now that Lord Dufferin

1. Lady G. Cecil: "The Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury." Vol. 4, p.2-3. Salisbury to Queen Victoria, August 29, 1886.
2. Ibid. Vol. 4, p.107-108. Salisbury to Queen Victoria, September 19, 1888.

is to have diplomatic employment and that will be the third post in half a year taken away from the Service. It is very hard on men who have worked hard and well and expatriated themselves for 30 years and more to have all the plums of their Service given away to just the men who have had the big plums already. The only one I much complain of is Drummond Wolff. He had been amply paid for unsuccessful services and it was quite unnecessary. People speak of regret of the good times of Lord Granville who had the interests of the Service at heart. Of course it does not affect juniors like myself except in delaying promotion, but it is very disheartening to men who are waiting in hopes of a legation."¹

Shortly afterwards the Berne Legation fell vacant, and Charles Scott, one of the candidates, wrote that "I feel pleased at the prospect of another vacant Mission which I do hope will not be again filled up out of the regular line."² It caused considerable resentment in the Diplomatic Service when it was rumoured that the post might be given to Sir Joseph Crowe, who was only a Commercial Attaché, and Rodd wrote to another junior on March 1, 1888:

"My dear Cartwright,

"..We are all rather annoyed with Ld. S. for foisting so many already-liberally-rewarded outsiders into the best berths in the service. Sir H. DW, Lord Lytton and Ld Dufferin have all had lots of plums... The last rumour is that old Crowe is to succeed Adams at Berne and that Austen Lee who has gone with Ld Lytton to Paris is to succeed Crowe. This if true will be the last straw to our struggling Secretaries of Embassy, and the only hope for us is that they may all resign in disgust."³

The discontent caused by the appointment of these three outsiders, and by the rumoured appointment of a fourth outsider,

1. Sir G. Leveson Gower: "Years of Endeavour, 1886-1907." Rodd to Leveson Gower, February 13, 1888.
2. British Museum Add. MS 52306, p.170. Scott to Mrs Scott, February 26, 1888.
3. Cartwright Papers. Rodd to Cartwright, March 1, 1888.

made Lord Salisbury most reluctant to ignore the wishes of the Service again. When Lord Rosebery succeeded Salisbury in 1892 he deliberately tried to improve the morale of the Service; first by reserving diplomatic posts for members of the Diplomatic Service, and second by giving more rapid promotion to promising juniors. Many years later Lord Fitzmaurice discussed the doctrine of "always making ... (diplomatic) appointments from within the circle of the Diplomatic Service:"

"The doctrine above referred to (he wrote) I have always understood was an invention of Rosebery in 1892-5; who said that you could not expect the Diplomats to be efficient, if they constantly saw the big prizes of the profession go to outsiders; a plausible doctrine: and one it is needless to say very popular with the Diplomatic Service itself."¹

1. British Museum Add. MS 46389, p.186. Fitzmaurice to Spender, January 6, 1918. Fitzmaurice, who wrote the official biography of Lord Granville, continued his letter: "The answer to it is that the Diplomats will work better, if they know that they have not got a monopoly. In Lord Granville's later and Lord Salisbury's earlier period the practice was quite different. Goschen and Dufferin were made Ambassadors without ever having been in the Dip: Service. To them may be added Layard, as the nominal post of 3rd Sec. at Constantinople was only given him to provide him with protection against outrages during his excavations at Nineveh. His career was political - in the H. of Commons. - Drummond Wolff early in life was in the Foreign Office, which he left for reasons of his own; then after a considerable interval he entered the H. of Commons, and afterwards became a Diplomatist, and an Ambassador. - He never had been in the Diplomatic Service. Evelyn Baring had never been a diplomatist, when he was made Consul-General in Egypt; and Sir William White belonged to the Consular Service; as did W.G. Palgrave, both of whom Lord Salisbury brought into the Diplomatic Service, to the rage and fury of the latter... If you will look at the names about whom Lord Granville and Mr Gladstone corresponded, when three great Embassies were vacant in 1884, you will see that, amongst others, the following names were considered; none of whom had been in the Diplomatic Service - Ld. Ripon, Ld. Carlisle, my own (see Granville II. 365 and 450-452). I happen to know that the name also of the Duke of Bedford (Hastings Russell) was considered at that time

At the time Rosebery himself wrote that "in my short experience I have always been anxious to give the younger men a chance of distinguishing themselves, so that they might not feel themselves chained to a dull hopeless tramway of promotion by mere seniority."¹

(3)

In 1900 the senior Assistant Under-Secretary was Francis Bertie, who had been born in 1844, the second son of the sixth Earl of Abingdon. He had been educated at Eton, and had then spent some time at University in Germany, before joining the Foreign Office in 1863. He had served as Private Secretary to the Conservative Parliamentary Under-Secretary, R. Bourke, from 1874 to 1880, and had accompanied Beaconsfield and Salisbury to Berlin in 1878. Most of his years as a Junior and an Assistant Clerk had been spent in the Eastern Department, and from 1882 he had been that Department's acting Senior Clerk. He had continued in that capacity until August 1885, earning high praise from Lord Salisbury and the Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir Julian Pauncefote.² He had been promoted Senior Clerk in 1889, and Assistant Under-Secretary in 1894.

1. A. Ramm: "Sir Robert Morier," p.306. Foreign Office Circular by Rosebery, August 1892.
2. FO 366/724/p.119. Minutes by Pauncefote and Salisbury, August 15, 1885.

for the appointment at Berlin." See also Appendix I for a further letter on the subject of outsiders. When the Diplomatic Regulations were revised in January 1903 it was specifically stated in Clause 14 that the higher posts could be given to outsiders. See FO 371/168/37683.

When Bruce Lockhart joined the Foreign Office shortly before the First World War he "learnt the historical gossip of the office - wondrous tales of the practical jokes of Lord Bertie and of other stalwarts of bygone days."¹ The fact was that Bertie became a legendary figure in the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service even before his career was over. One man who knew him has recorded the following "wondrous tale:"

"Bertie was a man of strong views, strong prejudices, and strong language. There were many legends of his earlier days... He used, for instance, to express his dissatisfaction with an uncleaned window by writing unprintable remarks in the grime, with the result, I was told, that the charwomen blushed and made haste to erase them by cleaning the glass."²

Another contemporary remembered that "Frank Bertie ... was a jolly, bluff, hunting man; rather good-looking, very kind-hearted, supposed to use 'frightful' language when annoyed; but in reality he was very seldom really upset and his oaths and adjectives were only employed for effect and very pleasantly interjected."³ Tilley's recollection was somewhat different, as he actually had to work under him:

"He was a man of picturesque appearance, fine grey hair and a ruddy face, much given to the most Rabelaisian types of conversation, very kind by nature but apt to explode with anger now and then. 'The Bull' was the excellent nickname with which he was baptized ..., and he was pleased with it himself."⁴

Tilley also remembered that "if a paper was missing Bertie was apt to come into the 'third room' with a smart pair of gloves

1. R.H. Bruce Lockhart: "Memoirs of a British Agent." p.48.
2. G.P. Antrobus: "King's Messenger, 1918-1940." p.91.
3. Sir H.H. Johnston: "The Story of My Life." p.121.
4. Sir J. Tilley: "London to Tokyo," p.21.

on and hurl all the papers out of a cupboard into the middle of the room, 'just to learn us to keep them properly;' the gloves because he thought the papers might be dusty."¹ He was "a very strict taskmaster, according to his lights, insisting on clarity and accuracy," and he never "actually helped us to make up bags or do copies." "Bertie did, however, in slack hours, contribute to our enjoyment by showing us how high he could kick, and how to cut candles in two with a sword; although he had by ... (the 1890s) abandoned, and even come to discourage, stump cricket."² Esmé Howard remembered one occasion in particular when Bertie contributed to the enjoyment of the Foreign Office:

"He was a man of ability and rapid judgment, but strong likes and dislikes, and woe to those of his staff whom he disliked. His dislikes, however, were not by any means confined to his staff. I remember well one afternoon in the private Secretary's room in the Foreign Office (in 1894-95) when a lady of his acquaintance, of whom he strongly disapproved because she was a bore, was boring Armine Woodhouse (the son of Lord Kimberley, the Foreign Secretary) over some fancied indignity received while travelling abroad. Bertie opened the door, and hearing her voice, tip-toed up behind her, executed in complete silence an Indian war dance, waved an imaginary tomahawk over her head, and, having successfully scalped her, pranced triumphantly out of the room. Armine and I had naturally the greatest of difficulty in preserving a sympathetic expression over the lady's tale of woe while she went droning on without ever discovering the pantomime acted by Bertie behind her back."³

Corbett, who also worked under Bertie, wrote:

"He had not, perhaps, many friends in the Foreign Office, where his mordant tongue and caustic jests made him something of a terror. When I first joined and he was Head of my Department, I confess that he inspired me with feelings the reverse of love."⁴

1. Sir J. Tilley: op. cit., p.22.
2. Sir J. Tilley and S. Gaselee: "The Foreign Office." p.130.
3. Sir E. Howard: "Theatre of Life." Vol. 1, p.325-326.
4. Sir V. Corbett: "Reminiscences: Autobiographical and Diplomatic." p.48-49.

Nevertheless Lord Newton recalled that although "Bertie had a reputation for being a strict martinet, ... I got on very well with him, probably because he realised that I was interested in the work."¹

Bertie was a regular letter-writer, and although he could and often did send long letters he preferred to make them short and sharp. The following one sent to the Ambassador at Berlin in 1899 may serve as an example here:

"My dear Lascelles,

"If you desire to be ignorant as to Rhodes and the German Emperor don't open the inclosed. In the contrary event read, mark and learn."²

We may conclude with Bertie's Rabelaisian language. Rennell Rodd described him as a "first class fighting man,"³ who "tempered his impeccable official precision and extremely able superintendence of public affairs with a crudity and licence of expression in personal relations which lifted the hair off the newly joined."⁴ Cecil Spring Rice once hastily concluded a letter to Lord Rosebery with the simple remark: "Bertie is swearing."⁵ Finally Tilley has recorded that when electric light first came to the Foreign Office it was irregular in its habits: "When all the lights went out simultaneously, the staff with one accord rushed to Bertie's door to hear what language he might use."⁶

1. Lord Newton: "Retrospection." p.10.
2. FO 800/9/p.222. Bertie to Lascelles, March 1, 1899.
3. Sir R. Rodd: "Social and Diplomatic Memories." Vol. 3, p.24.
4. Ibid. Vol. 1, p.40.
5. Rosebery Papers, Box 63. Spring Rice to Rosebery, August 23, 1886.
6. Sir J. Tilley and S. Gaselee: op. cit., p.144.

These testimonies form a striking and almost unanimous view of Bertie, and it is important to be aware of his personality when examining the personal aspect of the transformation of the Foreign Office under Lord Lansdowne.

(4)

By the end of the 1890s Francis Bertie had become frustrated and discontented with his position as Assistant Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office. He was second-in-command of the Office, and he had acquired an influence over foreign policy.¹ Nevertheless "he hated Sanderson"² and disliked Villiers, and felt hindered from showing his real ability by what he considered to be the red tape of the old Foreign Office.³ In 1897, when all three Assistant Under-Secretaries in the Colonial Office retired at the same time, the question had arisen of transferring him there, but he had rejected the offer and had remained in the

1. See, e.g., "The Diary of Lord Bertie of Thame, 1914-1918." Vol. 1, p.vii-viii. Foreword by Grey, 1924: "My first acquaintance with him was from 1892 to 1895 when I was Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office and he was one of the most important officials there. The impression he made then was that of a man of quick mind, and crisp, clear opinions. There are some men who write long and informing minutes that provide useful material to enable their Chiefs to form decisions but which leave the reader in doubt whether the writer of the minute had a very clear opinion of his own. Bertie was not of that type. He left no doubt as to what was his opinion on a given matter. It was not his habit to support it by a long argument, but he left no doubt that it was based on sound sense and grasp of some point of substance. Whether or not his opinion was to be accepted as final or exhaustive, one always felt that it was something that must be taken into consideration and not lightly put aside."
2. PRO 30/33/17/5/p.19. Diary entry by Satow, September 30, 1919.
3. See, e.g., Sir J. Tilley: op. cit., p.21 & 23.

Foreign Office.¹ His relations with Sanderson had meanwhile begun to deteriorate,² and by 1900 there was little love lost between the two men.³ Bertie began to refer to Sanderson as "Bossy,"⁴ instead of his usual nickname, "Lamps."

1. Rosebery Papers Box 77, p.160. Bertie to Rosebery, January 13, 1903; J. Chamberlain Papers 11/30/69. Salisbury to J. Chamberlain, January 10, 1897. Salisbury informed Chamberlain that "there is not much original power" in Bertie. Villiers was also offered a transfer to the Colonial Office, but he refused. See Salisbury Papers A/95/15. Villiers to Salisbury, February 8, 1897. The Legal Adviser, Davidson, was also considered for a transfer, but nothing came of the suggestion. See Salisbury Papers E/Sanderson. Sanderson to Salisbury, January 1, 1897: "I was asked today confidentially my opinion whether Davidson would be a good choice as an Assistant Under Secretary at the Colonial Office... I said I thought Davidson a good legal adviser, sound and painstaking, but that for administrative business he has some serious defects. He has no experience of it, is slow, lengthy, inclined to small criticisms on attendance. He would be a very bad choice for an Ass.t Under Secretaryship here but at the C.O. possibly some of these failings might be less inconvenient." See also on Davidson: British Museum Add. MS 50075, p.56. Curzon to Brodrick, December 1, 1903.
2. See, e.g., Salisbury Papers A/95/19. Barrington to Salisbury, August 10, 1897.
3. See, e.g., FO 800/160/p.81. Bertie to Sanderson, March 1, 1900; British Museum Add. MS 52298, p.241. Sanderson to Scott, December 19, 1900; PRO 30/33/7/1/p.58. Sanderson to Satow, March 1, 1901.
4. FO 800/6/p.441. Bertie to Lascelles, March 20, 1901.

During these years Bertie became increasingly outspoken on political matters, particularly regarding Anglo-German relations.¹ In April 1901 he was "unwell with a gouty prolonged cold and suffering from want of a holiday," so he went to Italy for a month.² Sanderson confided to Lascelles that "I am glad for I was really afraid of his falling ill, and to tell the honest truth he has not made himself too agreeable to his colleagues lately - though we pay no attention."³ At the end of July 1901 it was reported that Bertie "curses in his wrath:" "Bertie as is his fashion, d--ns everything and everybody by turns."⁴

By the spring of 1902 the Anglo-Japanese Alliance that Bertie wanted had been concluded, and the Anglo-German alliance

1. It was also at this time that Bertie had his interview with Dr Stuebel of the German Colonial Office. (Stuebel had been Director of the Colonial Division of the German Foreign Office since 1900. See J.G. Williamson: "Karl Helfferich." p.60). See FO 800/10/p.86. Sanderson to Lascelles, April 10, 1901: "Stuebel certainly got very little change out of us. I think Bertie's memoranda of his conversations with him very clever, but ... I am rather afraid he may have been somewhat snubby in manner." It did appear at first that Dr Stuebel had been snubbed by Bertie, but a private letter, dated April 11, 1901, was received at the Foreign Office describing Stuebel as violently Anglophobe and pro-Boer. Lansdowne minuted: "This accounts for his somewhat distorted account of the manner in which he was rec.d." FO 800/128/p.114. Minute by Lansdowne on Gosling to Foley, 11/4/01. See also FO 800/10/p.96. Lansdowne to Lascelles, April 13, 1901: "Dr Stuebel was certainly not snubbed. I saw him twice, once for nearly an hour and was most civil to him. I don't know whether Frank Bertie's logic was too unsparing for the Doctor's taste."
2. PRO 30/33/7/1/p.68. Sanderson to Satow, April 12, 1901.
3. FO 800/10/p.86. Sanderson to Lascelles, April 10, 1901.
4. PRO 30/33/10/4. Chirol to Satow, July 31, 1901.

that he did not want had been completely dropped. He then concentrated his attention towards strengthening his position in the Foreign Office, where he felt inhibited by Sanderson and Villiers. With this end in view he used his influence at Court to advocate the promotion of his friend Charles Hardinge.

(5)

Charles Hardinge was the second son of the second Viscount Hardinge, and had been educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge. He had originally been intended for the Navy, but he had failed the necessary medical examination and joined the Diplomatic Service instead.¹ After preliminary training in the Foreign Office, he had been sent to Constantinople in 1881, and had accompanied Lord Dufferin to Cairo in 1882-83.² From Constantinople he had been sent to Berlin, Washington, Sofia and Bucharest, before being appointed Head of Chancery at Paris in 1893. By that time he had married Winifred Sturt.

Charles Hardinge's wife was a daughter of Lord Alington, a personal friend of the Prince and Princess of Wales. She had known the Prince and Princess from childhood, and became a Lady-in-Waiting to the latter in 1893. The Hardinges and the Alingtons were cousins, and Charles Hardinge wrote to Mrs Charles Scott on August 15, 1889:

1. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.5; Kent County Archives U927/Vp 1/1/16. Dickson to Hardinge, June 11, 1910.
2. Crewe Papers C/20. Hardinge to Crewe, November 13, 1912; Hardinge Papers Vol. 93, p.70, no.67. Hardinge to Parker, August 18, 1913.

"My dear Mrs Scott,

"... You little knew your prophetic powers when you wrote that I had had lots of time to fall in love with one of my five charming cousins since I last wrote and that numbers would then no longer be a safeguard, and that you were perfectly right as you may have heard that I am engaged to my cousin Winifred Sturt who is number 2 of the five that I mentioned. I am very happy indeed about it, and as I will not bore you by singing her praises I will merely confine myself to expressing the hope that it may not be long before I shall have the pleasure of introducing her to you. I have unfortunately to return to my post in a fortnight's time so the marriage cannot well take place before the spring when I shall return home to pull off the event."¹

When Hardinge had returned to his post his future bride wrote to him:

"Last night I was made to sit next to the Prince at dinner, and I think I managed the talking pretty well considering that I was awfully frightened. I told him that he was most unkind about you and me, and he laughed a great deal and said that he did not know you and he would not say if he approved of our engagement or not until he knew you - to which I answered that that was all right, as he could not help liking you. I expect he will be very cross this morning as he held the bank at Baccarat last night, and I hear it broke three times."²

1. British Museum Add. MS 52307, p.189. Hardinge to Mrs Scott, August 15 1889.
2. Lady Hardinge of Penshurst: "Loyal to Three Kings." p.18. Miss Sturt to Hardinge, undated. "She was her father's favourite child and was at the time of this visit fighting a battle in her family over her very unpopular engagement to my father-in-law. Gerard Alington's first comment on being confronted with the possibility is said to have been, 'What, Charlie Hardinge marry my little Bena? Never!' He did not know the forces he was up against. There were genuine grounds for objections, as they were first cousins and then it was not at all a worldly match. By this time the Dorset squires had become very much more grand. They were rich, they were hospitable, they had a considerable amount of influence and patronage, and they had Royal friends. My mother-in-law's nickname in the family was Bena, one that had emerged from nursery days. Her sweetness and devotion to her father and the kind offices of many friends made him relent. Of these many friends, one of the most effective in promoting the marriage was Queen Alexandra, at that time Princess of Wales."

Through his wife, then, Hardinge had come to know personally both the Prince and Princess of Wales.

While Hardinge was at Paris he became one of Lord Rosebery's "protégés,"¹ and in 1895 was distinguished by being given the C.B.. He wrote later to his former patron that "it is difficult, I think, for a Secretary of State to realise how great an encouragement it is to a young Secretary to receive such a mark of appreciation."² In 1896 he was sent to Tehran as Secretary of Legation.³ He recalled later that "Tehran was ... a delightful post, in spite of its isolation from the civilised world, with a perfect climate, interesting work, and never ending amusement over the childishness and cheerful character of the Persians, both high and low."⁴

During these years in Tehran Mrs Hardinge was described as "a vision of English Beauty,"⁵ "full of the freshness of youth."⁶ Hardinge himself was described as "handsome with dark eyes, dark hair, and a serene forehead, quiet and reserved without being stiff... Of great nobility of character and breadth of view."⁷ But the impression created by Hardinge and his wife during their return to London in 1898 was much more important. Mrs Hardinge

1. Rosebery Papers Box 79, p.77. Spring Rice to Rosebery, August 31, 1904.
2. Rosebery Papers Box 79, p.18. Hardinge to Rosebery, March 7, 1904.
3. See India Office Library MS Eur. D/727/6. Durand to Hardinge, October 12, 1896.
4. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "On Hill and Plain." p.101=102.
5. A.D. Kalmykow: "Memoirs of a Russian Diplomat." p.87.
6. Ibid. p.74.
7. Ibid, p.77.

had by then become a great favourite with the Prince and Princess of Wales, and Lord Salisbury had acquired a very high opinion of the abilities of Hardinge himself. The Prime Minister therefore decided to risk the displeasure of Parliament and the Diplomatic Service once again, as Hardinge himself recalled:

"Barely two months after my return to England I was, to my great surprise, offered promotion by Lord Salisbury to the post of Secretary of Embassy, or Councillor, in the Embassy at St Petersburg, thus passing over the heads of seventeen of my seniors in the Service. There never was anything more unexpected by me, but I was overjoyed at getting promotion and accepted the offer with enthusiasm. It created considerable stir and questions were asked in Parliament as to why I had passed over the heads of so many senior diplomatists, but Lord Salisbury was always quite firm in his statement that I was, in his opinion, the best suited to succeed Mr Goschen, who had been appointed Minister in Belgrade from St Petersburg."¹

Hardinge was a friend of Bertie, who was also a cousin of Bena Hardinge,² and Bertie began to develop the idea during 1901 and 1902 of pushing for his friend's transfer to the Foreign Office, whenever Gosselin should vacate his Assistant Under-Secretaryship and return to the Diplomatic Service. This way he felt that he would obtain support in his uneven struggle against Sanderson and Villiers.

(6)

Bertie, like Hardinge, was a friend of the Prince of Wales, in his case through the Prince's Private Secretary, Sir Francis Knollys. While the old Queen was alive and Lord Salisbury was

1. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.68. See also Salisbury Papers A/88/22. Salisbury to Queen Victoria, July 9, 1898. Also India Office Library MS Eur. D/727/6. Durand to Hardinge, July 29, 1898.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.449. Bertie to Hardinge, July 5, 1905.

still Foreign Secretary there was nothing that Bertie could do, but between 1900 and 1902 the political horizon gradually brightened. In the autumn of 1900 Lord Salisbury handed the Foreign Office over to Lord Lansdowne; in January 1901 the Prince of Wales ascended the Throne as King Edward VII. The relations between the new King and the old Prime Minister were not easy and it was clear that Lord Salisbury would soon retire altogether.¹

During 1901 Bertie set to work to improve Hardinge's position with the King and Lord Lansdowne. In November he informed his friend that "your letters ... have been seen by Lord Lansdowne," and that "I have also had them shown to the King as it will be to your advantage."² Hardinge replied that "it was very kind of you getting my letters shown to the King. He told my wife that he had been very much interested by one of my letters and I have thought how nice it was of you to have done me a good turn by sending it on."³ At the beginning of 1902 Hardinge returned to England on leave, and had talks with Lansdowne and Sanderson. The latter wrote to the Ambassador at St Petersburg that "you will find him very well posted up with

1. A.L. Kennedy: "Salisbury, 1830-1903." p.342-343: "The King wished to bestow peerages on several of his personal friends; and some of them seemed to Lord Salisbury to be unsuited for the honour." He retired on July 11, 1902, and died on August 22, 1903.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.205. Bertie to Hardinge, November 6, 1901.
3. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.211. Hardinge to Bertie, November 14, 1901.

our views."¹ It was probably during this visit that Bertie discussed his plans with Hardinge.

In March 1902 Lansdowne decided to appoint Sir Martin Gosselin to be Minister at Lisbon.² This meant that there would be an Assistant Under-Secretaryship at the Foreign Office to be filled, and Bertie determined to put forward Hardinge's name for the post. Then, in May 1902, Pauncefote, who had by then been given a Peerage and promoted Ambassador at Washington, died. The question arose as to who should be sent to succeed Pauncefote.

The American President, Theodore Roosevelt, and Cabot Lodge were intimate friends of two British diplomatists, Michael Herbert and Cecil Spring Rice. "These four were inseparable all through Harrison's Administration" (1889-1893), and it had been reported that "there is nothing right that R. will not do for Herbert."³ Spring Rice was too junior to be considered, but Michael Herbert, generally known as Mungo Herbert, was just eligible. At first Lansdowne was reluctant to appoint Herbert because he had an American wife,⁴ writing to Joseph Chamberlain on March 8, 1902:

1. British Museum Add. MS 52299, p.73. Sanderson to Scott, February 6, 1902.
2. Salisbury Papers E/Lansdowne. Lansdowne to Salisbury, March 25, 1902.
3. British Museum Add. MS 49727, p.155. Frewen to Lansdowne, September 16, 1901. See also Lee Papers, Roosevelt Box. Roosevelt to Lee, February 12, 1907: "Mungo Herbert, one of the best fellows and most thoro (sic) gentlemen that ever lived.
4. British Museum Add. MS 48679, p.106. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, June 13, 1902.

"As to Washington: I would not allow the consideration of 'order in the hierarchy' to weigh one ounce; and I would take a junior or even an outsider without any scruples.

"Sanderson wouldn't do. I have never heard him proposed. I doubt whether either Howard or Herbert would do. There are several other men who are worth thinking about but I will talk to you about this next time we meet. There is no immediate hurry."¹

There was, however, pressure in favour of Herbert's appointment,² and on May 30, 1902, Lansdowne informed the Prime Minister that "the King entirely approves of M. Herbert's selection for Washington."³ Herbert was informed of his appointment by Lord Salisbury on June 3,⁴ and the appointment was announced on June 5. Sir Edward Hamilton noted in his diary:

"Mungo Herbert's appointment, which I was told of privately last night, is announced this morning. I am more glad than

1. J. Chamberlain Papers 11/21/18. Lansdowne to J. Chamberlain, March 8, 1902.
2. See, e.g., British Museum Add. MS 48679, p.91. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, May 24, 1902: "Ld. Pauncefote, who has been ill for some time, is dead. He has filled the post of Ambassador at Washington quite admirably and will be a great diplomatic loss. Mungo Herbert has been often talked of for the place; and I hope he will get it. I believe he is probably the best man. He has few competitors in the Diplomatic Service; the only two above him who seem at all fitted for the appointment being H. Howard and E. Goschen. But they do not know America or the American questions like Mungo H. does, and they have not the American friends he has. An American wife may perhaps stand rather in his way; but a greater risk is the appointment of some titled outsider. This would be a rather dangerous experiment, for the post is now a most difficult and important one, and it would be very easy for anybody who has no diplomatic training or experience, and who does not understand the Americans, to get into trouble. - I believe Mungo H. is the best man to send; and seniority ought to count for nothing when the place to be filled is really important.
3. Salisbury Papers E/Lansdowne. Lansdowne to Salisbury, May 30, 1902.
4. Salisbury Papers E/Herbert/3. Herbert to Salisbury, June 4, 1902. Salisbury Papers E/Herbert/4. Herbert to McDonnell, June 4, 1902.

I can say. It is great luck for him (I don't know when we have had an Ambassador at 45 only); but I believe he will justify the appointment if he has the health. The announcement is being very well received in the United States. I dined at Lansdowne House tonight and he seemed very pleased and satisfied with the appointment."¹

Herbert had been Secretary of Embassy at Paris. This meant that two posts were now vacant: an Assistant Under-Secretaryship at the Foreign Office; and the Secretaryship of Embassy at Paris.

On June 4, 1902, the day before Herbert's appointment was announced publicly, Bertie wrote to his friend Hardinge to give him the news, and explain the situation:

"My dear Charlie,

"... You will see by the telegraph Sections if you did not hear before that Gosselin goes to Lisbon as Minister and Mungo Herbert becomes Ambassador at Washington. Consequently there is an Assistant Under Secretaryship vacant here and the Secretaryship of Embassy at Paris has to be filled up.

"You know what my ideas are as regards your coming here as an Under Secretary and I hope that if Lord Lansdowne offers the place here to you or give(s) you the choice between Paris and London you will opt for the latter. I think that it would be a better preparation for your future than Paris. I do not at all know what Lord L. intends. I have done my best before Pauncefote's death to advocate your appointment to the vacancy here which was an arranged affair before Easter but I did not elicit any decided view from Ld. L. and you know the red tape of Sanderson, Villiers and Co. Whatever solution may be arrived at keep to yourself and yourself only what I tell you... You could as Odo Russell and Gosselin did reserve the privilege to return to the Service abroad later on."²

Hardinge replied on June 9:

1. British Museum Add. MS 48679, p.99. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, June 5, 1902.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.250. Bertie to Hardinge, June 4, 1902.

"My dear Frank,

"Very many thanks for your letter which I received by bag yesterday.

"I hasten to tell you that I agree with every word that you have written and you may rest quite assured that if I am given the choice between Paris and the F.O. I will certainly opt for the F.O.

"Although I know that you have pushed my candidature for the post of Under Sec.y on the grounds of the efficiency of the F.O., still I wish to tell you, whatever the result may be, how grateful I am to you for having advocated my appointment. I still hope I shall get it in spite of all red tape opposition.

"Mungo Herbert's and Gosselin's appointments seem to me first rate."¹

It soon became clear however that Bertie's plans were unlikely to succeed. Sanderson and Villiers put forward Francis Campbell, a Senior Clerk in the Foreign Office, for the Assistant Under-Secretaryship, and Bertie wrote to Hardinge on July 3:

"My dear Charlie,

"... I trust that you have some good ground for being still full of hope. I do not feel happy about your chance. The Boss would like to appoint Campbell I think and the King cannot well intervene in what is really only a Departmental matter. The Goose remains until July 31. The Bun appears to be favourite for the St Honoré Stakes."²

Six days before Gosselin's departure from the Foreign Office

Bertie wrote to Hardinge again to tell him the outcome:

"My dear Charlie,

"Alas! I have failed. Red Tape has carried the day. Campbell has accepted the appointment after some hesitation on account of health, pay insufficient, leave etc. He is

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.254. Hardinge to Bertie, June 9, 1902.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.265. Bertie to Hardinge, July 3, 1902. The "Goose" was Martin Gosselin; the "Bun" was Maurice de Bunsen.

a very good fellow and will make a bon collègue but I think that a Diplomat ought to have been appointed and that one you.

"Lord L. is bound by the red tape ... of this office."¹

Hardinge replied on July 30:

"My dear Frank,

"Many thanks for your note.

"I am of course very sorry that I am not to be your colleague as I know that I should have liked my work and, although it may sound conceited, I believe I could have done it well. However it is not to be, and as I gather that in all probability Bunsen will get Paris, I suppose I must resign myself to going on indefinitely here, tired as I am of the place and its abominable climate. You know how really grateful I am to you for all your active support in this matter so I will not repeat my thanks, and although I have not won the stakes I am glad to have been in the running for them."²

Meanwhile, as Hardinge surmised, Maurice de Bunsen was appointed Secretary of Embassy at Paris.

(7)

It was now clear that there would not be a vacant Assistant Under-Secretaryship for several years. However, rather than remain in the Foreign Office with Sanderson and Villiers, Bertie decided to try to obtain a transfer into the Diplomatic Service. If he could not have Hardinge as his ally in the Foreign Office Bertie wanted to leave it himself. In so doing he would also create another opportunity for Hardinge to become an Assistant Under-Secretary. There were only seven European Embassies,

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.276. Bertie to Hardinge, July 25, 1902.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.278. Hardinge to Bertie, July 30, 1902.

(at Paris, St Petersburg, Berlin, Vienna, Rome, Madrid and Constantinople), and Bertie began to wait for one of them to be vacated.

It soon became clear that the Rome Embassy was the most likely to come his way. Philip Currie had, as we have seen, been sent as Ambassador at Constantinople, but "his experiences abroad had disappointed him. At Constantinople he did not receive the support from home which he had anticipated,"¹ and his hopes for a transfer to Paris were dashed in 1896.² He had been sent instead to Rome but, despite elevation to the Peerage, he had been far from successful. Rennell Rodd, who worked under him at Rome, looking back to the year 1902, recalled that,

"The Ambassador, Lord Currie, had aged considerably during the last two years. He had lost all his old vitality. There was none of that confident assurance which had been characteristic in him as an Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office... when transferred to Rome he seemed out of his proper element. It was no doubt difficult for him, after thirty or forty years of official life in London, to receive with patience himself the instructions which he had so long been accustomed to dictate. With all the courtesies of a great gentleman, he was too unplastic and essentially British to appear sympathetic to the Italians, who did not appreciate his official manner, and were at one moment anxious to bring about his recall."¹

1. Sir R. Rodd: *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, p.2. See also *Ibid.* Vol. 2, p.61: "It was from the school of Lyons and Malet that some of the ablest diplomatists among my contemporaries issued. I am not sure that the same close association exists to-day. Even in my own time it was tending to disappear when former permanent under-secretaries from the Foreign Office, who had no foreign experience, were sent abroad as ambassadors and displayed rather the attitude of the schoolmaster than that of the head of the family towards the juniors."
2. British Museum Add. MS 51255. A. Paget to Paget, July 3, 1896.

Since the summer of 1901 Currie's "health had been giving some cause for anxiety,"¹ and Lansdowne had written the following short note on December 18, 1901:

"Dear Lord Salisbury,

"Please read Barrington's memo of the 14th as to Ld Currie's position at Rome.

"The King spoke to me on the subject not long ago, and the Times had a vicious dig at him yesterday.

"Will you speak to me about this? Currie has three years more to serve and I am told says in effect 'here I be and here I bide.'"²

Currie was remembered at this time as "a tall, dignified old gentleman with a white imperial, and gentle, rather vague blue eyes."³ In the spring of 1902 his health had deteriorated still more, "when a disquieting weakness of the heart manifested itself," and he had "left Italy at the end of April."⁴ When his leave expired he was granted a further period of sick leave,⁵ and he wrote to his old Chief from Cromer in Norfolk on August 6:

"Dear Lord Salisbury,

"... I had an attack of influenza last spring which left me with hardly any power in my legs and a dilated heart. Since then I have been going through various cures and have been promised a perfect recovery by many doctors.

1. M. Buchanan: "Ambassador's Daughter." p.35.
2. Salisbury Papers E/Lansdowne. Lansdowne to Salisbury, December 18, 1901.
3. M. Buchanan: "Diplomacy and Foreign Courts." p.39.
4. See India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/224/p.8. Rodd to Curzon, April 11, 1902: "My Ambassador is going to Homburg shortly and will be away a very long time - his heart has been affected and I even wonder if he will ever come back. The place does not suit him."
5. Sir R. Rodd: op. cit., Vol. 3, p.4.

But alas up to the present the results have been small. My last effort was a visit to Cromer where, owing to a little over exertion, my heart got worse and the local doctor insisted on my going through a complete rest cure... I am now better... My own plans cannot be settled until I know with more certainty what turn my health is likely to take."¹

It was clear that Bertie would soon have an opportunity to make a bid for the succession to the Rome Embassy.

There had been a series of second-rate British Ambassadors at Rome before Currie, and in July 1902 the Italian Foreign Minister approached Rennell Rodd and put in a mild protest at the continuing state of affairs. The latter reported to the Foreign Office on July 29:

"My dear Barrington,

"In the course of a long conversation which I had the day before yesterday with the Minister for F.A. he said something which I feel I ought to report...

"... Prinetti said - You have had a long series of Ambassadors here who have been charming men, but they have generally been out of health, *or for some reason or other* little able to come forward. - He then enumerated Sir John Lumley, Lord Vivian and Sir Clare Ford as instances. - He left out Lord Dufferin. And so perhaps we had lost touch."²

In August 1902 Lord Lansdowne decided to transfer Sir Charles Scott from St Petersburg to Rome, and Sir Mortimer Durand from

1. Salisbury Papers E/Currie/202. Currie to Salisbury, August 6, 1902.
2. FO 800/132/p.112. Rodd to Barrington, July 29, 1902. Cf: Rosebery Papers Box 77, p.145. Spring Rice to Rosebery, January 8, 1903: "At Rome (where Barrère's personal influence brought about the Franco-Italian entente) we had two Ambassadors in succession, who were sent there because they failed at Constantinople: one of whom was constantly drunk and the other constantly absent and for years an invalid. And no people are so susceptible to personal influences as the Italians: and no people in such a good position to use such influences as the English." The two Ambassadors referred to were, respectively, Ford and Currie.

Madrid to St Petersburg. These moves would have left the Madrid Embassy vacant, but Bertie preferred to obtain the Rome Embassy for himself. He also had a low opinion of both Scott and Durand. He therefore determined to use Royal influence to prevent these appointments from being made, and wrote to Knollys, the King's Private Secretary, to warn him. The latter replied on August 20:

"My dear Frank,

"I have submitted your letter to the King, who thanks you for letting him know what Lansdowne has probably in contemplation in regard to changes.

"It is doubtful however whether Durand would do well at St. Petersburg as he understands he is a mauvais coucheur.

"He has long thought that Scott ought to be pensioned and the Italians will certainly not care about having a second failure, as I suppose Currie was not considered a success at Constantinople, sent to them."¹

Bertie's letter succeeded in its direct object of sabotaging Lansdowne's plans, but the succession to the Rome Embassy remained an open question. It was during this year that Bertie received his Knighthood. A colleague remembered:

"Frank Bertie was a great character. He professed to hate decorations and would not take a C.B.: but in 1902 he accepted a K.C.B. Tyrrell pinned upon his door, 'Sir Francis Bertie will be in from 2-4 to receive congratulations.' There was a constant stream of callers. Bertie was furious when he discovered."²

In August 1902 Charles Hardinge returned from St Petersburg to attend the new King's Coronation,³ and the two men were able to discuss their plans again.

1. FO 800/163/p.110. Knollys to Bertie, August 20, 1902.
2. Lord Onslow: "History of the Onslow Family." Vol. 7, p.1721.
3. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.80.

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When nothing had been done by October Bertie decided to approach Knollys again to procure Royal backing for his own candidature. Knollys wrote to him on October 14:

"My dear Frank,

"... I told H.M. the purport of what you said to me about the Embassy at Rome in connection with yourself, and repeated, what I had once before with your permission stated to him: that if supposing you were at Rome, Sanderson left the F.O. by chance, you would be ready to take his place, were it so wished.

"I showed him your short memo. about the embassies at St. Petersburg and Rome...

"I think you can rely on the King's support of your claim to go to Rome, and he says that Currie ought to leave at once...

"... I might speak to Sanderson with whom I am on confidential terms about you and Rome."¹

Knollys followed this with another letter to Bertie on November 5:

"My dear Frank,

"The King spoke to me about Currie and Rome today, and when Lansdowne comes to Sandringham he intends to talk the matter over with him and to press you for the Embassy upon him.

"I told him that if you did not get Rome, I thought you would leave the service as soon as you were entitled to a Pension, which would be in about two years time."²

At this point Lansdowne tried to put Bertie off by offering him the Legation at Stockholm. "Lansdowne aurait voulu le garder au Foreign Office, et, quand Bertie a demandé à aller abroad, on lui a proposé Stockholm, sachant bien qu'il

1. FO 800/163/p.111. Knollys to Bertie, October 14, 1902.
2. FO 800/163/p.112. Knollys to Bertie, November 5, 1902.

n'accepterait pas."¹ Meanwhile both the King and Knollys put pressure on the reluctant Lansdowne to appoint Bertie to Rome. The issue was still undecided when Knollys again wrote to Bertie on November 19:

"My dear Frank,

"... The King spoke twice to Lord Lansdowne at Sandringham about you in connection with the Embassy at Rome, and I also talked to him on the subject. He expressed himself in very high terms of the great value of your services at the F.O. (making however no reference to his offer to you of Stockholm!) and I think he was a little startled when the King told him he thought that if the circumstances remained as they are now, that you would probably apply for your Pension as soon as you were entitled to it, and he said he would enquire when that would be. The long and the short of the matter is that he knows what are the King's wishes and knows also that when the Embassy in question becomes vacant that H.M. will press him to nominate you to it. That Lansdowne does not say he will not recommend you for it, but neither does he say he will. His mind I think works slowly, he is ultra cautious and he is undecided in character, besides being a long time in making up his mind. Hence his disinclination or disability to speak more positively than he has done on this question.

"I asked him how Currie was, and said the King thought it would be a great disadvantage to have an Ambassador at Rome who was an invalid when matters of much importance might at any moment arise connected with Morocco and Tripoli. He avoided alluding directly to this latter part of my observation, but replied that he expressly told Currie in his letter (Sir E. Barrington's) that if he returned to Rome, he must be really well enough to perform the duties of an Ambassador properly. I answered that his wife would in all probability manage to 'cork him up' for the time so that he might go back, but to this Lansdowne made no remark."²

The question of the succession to the Rome Embassy came to a head during December 1902. Although Lansdowne did not want

1. G. Louis: "Les Carnets de Georges Louis." p.135. Note by Louis, August 25, 1910.
2. FO 800/163/p.113. Knollys to Bertie, November 19, 1902. Lady Currie wrote books and poetry under her maiden name, Violet Fane. See M. Buchanan: "Ambassador's Daughter." p.33.

to give the appointment to Bertie, his position was constitutionally weak. Bertie himself informed the French diplomatist, Georges Louis, some years later that,

"Les ambassadeurs, en Angleterre, sont proposé au choix du Roi non par le ministre des Affaires étrangères, mais par le président du Conseil. Le ministre des Affaires étrangères est consulté, mais c'est le président du Conseil qui soumet le nom au Roi, et le Roi ne peut forcer son choix."¹

The man with whom the appointment lay was therefore the new Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour, rather than Lansdowne.

King Edward VII, who "was a well-meaning but inconsistent dabbler in foreign affairs,"² "was deeply interested in questions of appointments and liked to have a finger in them."³ On December 14, 1902, he sent Balfour "a list I made ... as to possible Diplomatic changes which would I think ... be for the good of the public service." He also sent Lansdowne a similar list.⁴ It is not clear exactly what recommendations the list contained, but it is certain that the King was pressing for Bertie's appointment as Ambassador at Rome. Lansdowne meanwhile tried in a conversation with Charlotte Knollys to spread the rumour that Bertie did not really want to go abroad. Knollys wrote to Bertie on Friday December 19:

"My dear Frank,

"... Of course it was absurd saying what the latter (Lansdowne) did to Charlotte about your reluctance to go

1. G. Louis: op. cit., p.134-135. Note by Louis, August 25, 1910.
2. I. Nish: "The Anglo-Japanese Alliance." p.368. See also British Museum Add. MS 56087. Sanderson to Lee, December 18, 1911.
3. Lord Onslow: "History of the Onslow Family." Vol. 8, p.2076.
4. British Museum Add. MS 49683, p.115. King Edward VII to Balfour, December 14, 1902.

abroad, and I don't quite understand it, as Lansdowne is, I have always thought, a very 'straight' man.

"The King on reading your letter, said 'I hope he' (that is you) 'knows I am doing everything I can for him' (which I assured him you did) 'and I am in hopes he will go to Rome after all.'"¹

On the same day that Knollys wrote this letter assuring Bertie of the King's support, Currie finally handed in his resignation to Lord Lansdowne.² Bertie immediately seized his opportunity, and on the same day sent the following letter to Lansdowne:

"My dear Chief,

"Currie tells me that on his doctor's advice he has made up his mind not to return to Rome.

"You have always been so kind to me personally that I hope you won't mind my writing to you to say how grateful I should be if you could see your way to sending me to Rome in Currie's place.

"I am no longer young and I see no prospect of obtaining advancement in the Foreign Office before I become entitled to my pension."³

The question remained undecided over the weekend of December 20-21, and Eric Barrington, who was Lansdowne's Private Secretary, decided to play a last card to prevent Bertie's appointment. He wrote to Knollys hinting that Bertie should succeed Sir Francis Plunkett at the more prestigious Vienna Embassy. Knollys then wrote the following letter to Bertie on Sunday December 21:

"My dear Frank,

"Lansdowne wrote to the King to announce Currie's retirement, and H.M. replied that he hoped you would be his successor...

1. FO 800/163/p.115. Knollys to Bertie, December 19, 1902.
2. FO 45/856. Currie to Lansdowne, December 19, 1902.
3. FO 800/163/p.116. Bertie to Lansdowne, December 19, 1902.

"Quite of course between ourselves, I have just heard from E. Barrington, who writes in the most kind and friendly way about you, and 'wonders' whether you will succeed Currie, though he thinks Vienna would suit you best.

"He adds that he has no idea what L. will do. When will Plunkett's time be up?"¹

Bertie replied on the following day, Monday December 22, and explained Barrington's motives. He also explained that his two main rivals were both Ministers in the Diplomatic Service; Egerton, who was at Athens, and Nicolson, who was at Tangier:

"My dear Francis,

"Many thanks for your letter of yesterday. I am most grateful for what the King has done and you are doing.

"I know from Currie that Barrington's candidate is Egerton on the grounds of his being the senior Minister ... Egerton mentally is not what he was and he has been passed over for the post of Ambassador by Lascelles, O'Connor and Herbert.

"As to Barrington's suggestion that Vienna would suit me best that is merely a desire to postpone the question as regards myself for Plunkett's five year term does not expire till Sept. 1905.

"Pansa was here yesterday on a fishing expedition but he caught nothing. He hopes I should go to Rome to which the answer naturally was that there was nothing I should like better. He said that Nicolson seemed to be the F.O. candidate which I suppose means Sanderson and Villiers for he has not had any conversation with Lord Lansdowne on the subject. Nicolson began in the F.O. in 1870, and is therefore junior to many others."²

Knollys replied on the same day, and explained that he had spoken to Sandars, who was Balfour's Private Secretary:

"My dear Frank,

"I did not know that Plunkett's term does not expire until 1905. I thought his time was up much sooner.

1. FO 800/163/p.117. Knollys to Bertie, December 21, 1902.
2. FO 800/163/p.118. Bertie to Knollys, December 22, 1902.

"I saw Sandars this morning and told him that the king wished you to go to Rome, and he promised to write to Balfour on the subject today.

"He knew that Ambassadors were appointed by the Prime Minister. I explained to him your reasons for wishing to go to Rome. He quite entered into them, and said that Balfour had a high opinion of you. I think he will do what he can in the matter, but one never knows what Lansdowne may not have 'up his sleeve.'"¹

Lord Lansdowne actually came to the decision to propose to Balfour that Bertie be appointed Ambassador at Rome on the same day that Bertie and Knollys wrote the above letters, on Monday 22 December. On that day he sent the following letter to Balfour:

"My dear Arthur,

"Currie has wisely sent in his resignation.

"I think Bertie will be the best man to succeed him. There are no very strong claimants in the Service: moreover other vacancies are within sight.

"Bertie is as well known to you as to me, and I need not enlarge on his merits or on his defects. He is shrewd enough to keep his temper in control when he is transacting international affairs. The foreigners here all like him and Pansa gave me to understand that in his opinion it would be a good appointment.

"The King is greatly in favour of it.

"To my mind the most serious objection to it is that it will weaken the F.O. considerably, and personally I shall be very sorry to lose F.B. with whom I like working and who has been very useful to me.

"With the British Colony at Rome I should think that his selection will not be popular.

"If on the whole you approve will you make the submission to the King?

"And please let me know as soon as you can in order that I may tell F.B."²

1. FO 800/163/p.119. Knollys to Bertie, December 22, 1902.
2. British Museum Add. MS 49727, p.261. Lansdowne to Balfour, December 22, 1902.

When Balfour received Lansdowne's letter he sent a submission to the King, dated Tuesday December 23. "The submission, however, did not reach London until the 25th (Christmas Day). It was forwarded by Mr Balfour in an envelope - an official one - and was addressed to a Private Secretary who, as it happened, had been attacked with illness out of London, was in the doctor's hands, unable to do any business, and without any box in which to transmit the submission to the King."¹ The Private Secretary was unable to leave his sick bed and go to London until January 3, 1903,¹ with the result that Bertie's appointment was unaccountably delayed. In the interval the latter again wrote to Knollys, and received the following reply, dated Friday December 26:

"My dear Frank,

"I have submitted your letter and enclosure to the King, and he is very glad to hear that you think Lansdowne is likely to give way and to recommend you for Rome. I am sure I hope he will, and the sooner the matter is settled the better. The King has heard nothing since he spoke to L. on the subject two or three days before the former left London. I will let you know as soon as I am able to give you any information."²

On the same day Lansdowne decided to see Bertie and inform him of his appointment, since Balfour's submission to the King had obviously gone astray. Bertie reported to his friend, Knollys on Saturday December 27:

"My dear Francis,

"I have received your letter of yesterday. There has been a mislaying or miscarriage of a communication from Balfour.

1. British Museum Add. MS 49683, p.122. Sandars to Knollys, January 4, 1903.
2. FO 800/163/p.120. Knollys to Bertie, December 26, 1902.

"Lansdowne sent for me yesterday and said 'I think that we can gratify your wishes. I wrote to Arthur Balfour with whom the recommendation of Amb.s rests and as I had no answer I telegraphed to him and have received a telegram from Miss Balfour to say that her brother is ill, and that he wrote to the King on Tuesday submitting your appointment for approval: it now depends on H.M. whose approval I feel I may say I have no doubt whatever will be given, but until such approval is received you must not say anything about it.'

"It is evident that Balfour has mislaid the recommendation or it has miscarried, but of course Lansdowne thinks the matter is delayed. Don't you think you might write to Eric Barrington to ask what he has done about Rome as the King has had nothing since Currie's resignation and the matter ought to be settled.

"I do not know how I can sufficiently express my gratitude but will you please submit my humble duty and most grateful thanks to the King for the very great kindness that H.M. has shown to me. I will do all I can to do credit to his selection."¹

Bertie summed up his feelings later the same day in another letter to Knollys:

"My dear Francis,

"If it had not been for you I do not think that I should have got Rome.

"I am grateful beyond measure for your exertions: you are a real good friend.

"It is very funny what Lansdowne said about the K's approval."²

As we have seen, it was not until January 3, 1903, that the Private Secretary in question "got leave" from his doctor "to come up to London ... - earlier perhaps than was prudent - ... in order to get the box dispatched." The King instantly gave his approval of the appointment but sent a minute complaining of the delay. Sandars wrote to explain on January 4:

1. FO 800/163/p.121. Bertie to Knollys, December 27, 1902.
2. FO 800/163/p.122. Bertie to Knollys, December 27, 1902.

"My dear Knollys,

"The King's approval of F. Bertie's appointment to Rome has just been received and will be dealt with by the Foreign Office as soon as possible. I have seen them about it today. But His Majesty has written a minute accompanying the approval asking to be furnished with the reason for the delay which has occurred, and, if I may say so, I think he has every right to make such an enquiry.

"... the reasons contributing to the delay were (1) the Post at Christmas time, (2) the accident of the Private Secretary being at the moment away from London, (3) the illness of this Private Secretary which prevented him bringing the submission back to the office earlier for transmission to the King in a box.

"I am extremely sorry that this series of untoward events should have led to the King's displeasure."¹

Shortly afterwards Bertie wrote:

"My dear Rosebery,

"I have to thank you not only for your welcome congratulations but also in part for Rome: for acting on your advice, given to me when we were at Charlie Carrington's at Abergeldie, I again rejected overtures which were made to me to go to the Colonial Office. If I had accepted I should have been shelved. As you have guessed I am tired of the F.O. I should never have got anything more there. I think that I shall like Rome very much."²

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Four other men had wanted the Rome Embassy: two Ambassadors and two Ministers. The two former were Sir Charles Scott, the Ambassador at St Petersburg, and Sir Frank Lascelles, the

1. British Museum Add. MS 49683, p.122. Sandars to Knollys, January 4, 1903. See also G. Louis: op. cit., p. 135: "Lansdowne était ministre quand Bertie a été nommé à Rome... C'est le Roi qui a suggéré sa nomination à Rome, et c'est Balfour qui l'a proposée."
2. Rosebery Papers Box 77, p.160. Bertie to Rosebery, January 13, 1903.

Ambassador at Berlin. The two latter were Sir Edwin Egerton, the Minister at Athens, and Sir Arthur Nicolson, the Minister at Tangier.

We shall refer to Scott a little later. Lascelles had been Minister at Bucharest and Tehran, and Ambassador at St Petersburg, before having become Ambassador at Berlin at the end of 1895. He was a very likeable man, "with his keen but gentle blue eyes, his white beard and dignified bearing,"¹ but he had been at Berlin for a long time and wanted a change. Unfortunately for him he had become 'persona gratissima' with the German Emperor, and as Anglo-German relations began to deteriorate Lansdowne and Sanderson became more than ever determined to keep him in his present position. The following story, dating from March 1900, is typical of Lascelles's skill in handling the impetuous monarch:

"It may amuse you to read the following dialogue which took place at luncheon.

"H.M. What did you think of the ceremony in the Weisser Saal the day before yesterday.

"I. Simply splendid, Sir.

"H.M. Yes. I wanted to do all the honour I could to the Academy and therefore gave the utmost pomp to the ceremony, and my Generals are well drilled,

"I. They certainly are Sir, but now I am going to be impertinent.

"H.M. You always are. What is it?

1. M. Buchanan; "Ambassador's Daughter." p.49.

"I. There were four cushions carried before Your Majesty on which lay the Crown, the Sceptre, the Orb, and another object which I could not make out.

"H.M. Oh that was the seal.

"I. It looked like a magnified snuff box.

"H.M. Yes you are right. I always call it 'Pandora's Box.'

"I. Now I am going to be even more impertinent and say that what excited my greatest admiration was the central figure in the ceremony.

"H.M. Ha. I was expecting that. I thought you would say that.

"I. In that case Sir, I am very glad that I thought of it."¹

Lascelles was soon considered irreplaceable,² or at least so long as Lansdowne and Sanderson were at the Foreign Office, and the story of the Emperor's arrival in the Ambassador's bedroom while Lascelles was still in bed has passed into diplomatic legend.

On December 31, 1902, Bertie, who had just been appointed Ambassador at Rome, sent the following letter:

"My dear Lascelles,

"I am going to succeed Philip Currie at Rome and the only drawback is the feeling that you had a desire to be transferred to Rome. However when you told me last spring that such would be your wish I felt that the Government and King would not feel able to spare you from Berlin, and I learnt later that I was right.

"You have to pay the penalty of having made yourself indispensable and though it must be satisfactory to you to feel that your services at Berlin are so highly appreciated it is annoying not to get what one likes at the moment that one wants it. Perhaps you will do better by waiting...

1. FO 800/17/p.228. Lascelles to Sanderson, March 23, 1900. For a similar story see Princess Marie Louise: "My Memories of Six Reigns." p.72-73.
2. FO 800/163/p.134. Hardinge to Bertie, December 24, 1903. FO 800/183/p.141. Hardinge to Bertie, January 2, 1904.

"The appointment will be announced as soon as the agrément of the Italian Government is received which may be tomorrow or (the) next day till then it is a secret de polichinelle."¹

Sanderson, however, was less happy. He wrote on the same day:

"My dear Lascelles,

"... Bertie is to be the new Ambassador at Rome. Between ourselves it is not to my mind an ideal selection, but we must hope that in the Italian climate and with much less work some of the asperities from which we have suffered will disappear. I fancy the King pressed it a good deal."²

Knollys wrote to Lascelles on January 6, 1903: "I hope you think Frank Bertie's appointment is a good one."³ Lascelles's magnanimous reply was dated January 9:

"My dear Knollys,

"... I think Frank Bertie will make an excellent Ambassador, and I am glad so good a man has been chosen. The post ought not to be a difficult one, but after the experience of the two last Ambassadors, both in failing health when they were appointed, it became very important to send the best man that could be found."⁴

Egerton had wanted the Rome Embassy because he was the senior Minister, and had already been passed over on a number of occasions. Nicolson, however, had equally pressing reasons for

1. FO 800/11/p.88. Bertie to Lascelles, December 31, 1902. See PRO 30/33/11/18. Satow to Reay, May 8, 1918: "Before the war the procedure used to be this. The Foreign Secretary no doubt consulted the Prime Minister about the Embassies and the more important Legations. Then he offered the place to the selected candidate, and on his acceptance, laid his name before the Sovereign. On his approval being given, the foreign government was sounded, either through the man on the spot or through the Representative in London, and on its agreement being given, the new appointment was announced in the press."
2. FO 800/11/p.92. Sanderson to Lascelles, December 31, 1902.
3. FO 800/15/p.449. Knollys to Lascelles, January 6, 1903.
4. FO 800/18/p.93. Lascelles to Knollys, January 9, 1903.

wishing to leave Tangier. After joining the Foreign Office in 1870 he had served in Berlin, Peking and Constantinople, and had accompanied Lord Dufferin to Cairo in 1882-1883. He had then been posted at Athens and Tehran,¹ before being appointed Consul-General at Budapest in 1888. Budapest was the only post he had disliked, writing in July 1889 that "this place is too idle, and I hate the climate."² In 1893, however, he had been appointed Secretary of Embassy at Constantinople. A junior colleague noted shortly after his arrival that "Nicolson is a godsend to us and is gradually leading us back to the traditions of the Dufferin age from which we have strayed alas! too far."³ In the summer of 1893 Nicolson laid the foundations for his future reputation when he acted as Chargé d'Affaires. The same junior colleague wrote to the Private Secretary at the Foreign Office:

"My dear Villiers,

"... Coming back here is like coming to a new world - I hardly recognize my Constantinople of last spring. Nicolson has worked miracles in his six weeks of office. The Porte now treats us with a respect to which we have long been strangers, and actually answers our letters in a serious spirit.

1. Nicolson acted as Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran before the arrival of the outsider Drummond Wolff in 1888. See above, p.14-18. Also British Museum Add. MS 52301, p.3. Cartwright to Scott, June 20, 1888: "Drummond Wolff has arrived here and I cannot say that I very much appreciate him as a chief or that I stand amazed at the immensity of his intelligence... Everyone here regrets that the Nicolsons are gone; he worked very hard here and did very well and richly deserved the K.C.I.E. which he got. He was on very good terms with the Shah who does not hide that he would much rather have had Nicolson as Minister than Drummond Wolff."
2. FO 800/6/p.87. Nicolson to Lascelles, July 11, 1889.
3. PRO 30/26/124/p.61. Corbett to A. Hardinge, February 1, 1893.

"The Triple Alliance colleagues, who were very distant with the Ambassador, have expanded into confidence and speak of Nicolson with enthusiasm.

"In spite of an undisguised firmness of attitude, he is popular, it seems, even with the Turks, who like a man they can respect - In a word if the times of Lord Stratford have gone for ever, I think we may claim to have revived those of Lord Dufferin."¹

Unfortunately for Nicolson he was not very ambitious. He admitted later that "I myself passed some of my happiest days at Constantinople;"² at the time he was in no hurry to leave, and he wrote to Villiers on July 17, 1893:

"My dear Francis,

"... your letter rather alarmed me. I am in good relations with the Turks... What a change from Pest? But this is my favourite post so unless you wish to be visited by my unforgiving vengeance don't please change me. I don't want promotion at all and am very happy here."³

In fact Nicolson was transferred to Sofia in 1894, and thence to Tangier in 1895. He was still at Tangier in 1902.

It was, as I have said, unfortunate for Nicolson that he was not ambitious. It was true that he had married a sister of Lady Dufferin, but his wife was unorthodox and unworldly. It did not take long, therefore, before his obvious lack of ambition caused him to be left on the shelf at Tangier. For example he wrote to Villiers on June 22, 1896:

"My dear Francis,

"... I am curious to know who they are going to send to Paris. The Dufferins apparently have no idea. I suppose the Ambassador will be an 'outsider' as beyond Currie there

1. PRO 30/26/124/p.86. Corbett to Villiers, July 31, 1893. See also PRO 30/26/124/p.87. Corbett to Rosebery, August 14, 1893.
2. FO 800/355/p.172. Nicolson to Lowther, April 15, 1912.
3. FO 800/22/p.63. Nicolson to Villiers, July 17, 1893.

there seems to be no one in the service quite fitted for the post. However now I take but an academical interest in these combinations being very happy here, and having got all the promotion I care for."¹

To Nicolson's regret these remarks were taken seriously.

In 1900 Nicolson was still able to write to Villiers, thanking him "for the news of impending moves:" "I am patient, and not ambitious, and wait my turn."² During 1901, however, he began to become increasingly discontented with his lot. "But to an elderly man getting on in his fifties, with growing financial Xps at an inadequately paid second class mission," he wrote in October of that year, "I confess the thought of being kept long here is not very exhilarating... I think after a time one's influence wanes here, and new blood is desirable."³ The new King had a high opinion of Nicolson, remarking to Paul Cambon in October 1901 that "il est tout petit mais il est très capable;"⁴ but nevertheless he remained on at Tangier. In February 1902, when the Lisbon and Washington posts were being discussed, Nicolson wrote again that "I hear many dipl. moves

1. FO 800/22/p.151. Nicolson to Villiers, June 22, 1896. Earlier that year another outsider had been appointed Minister at Peking. See FO 800/6/p.38. Drummond to Lascelles, January 14, 1896: "Sir C. Macdonald goes to China - twist of the nose ... to the service - funny times." See also Appendix I. See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/3/p.2. Rodd to Curzon, January 17, 1896: "It is rather a doleful prospect, when one sees the upper places blocked by men who wont go and cant be promoted and one is like (sic) to remain a bald and podgy second secretary indefinitely." When Salisbury had considered this appointment he had written: "I have looked in vain down the Foreign Office List... The only adequate men I know are one of the two Hardinges - or Claude Macdonald." See India Office Library MS Eur, F/112/1/p.33. Salisbury to Curzon, September 30, 1895.
2. FO 800/22/p.190. Nicolson to Villiers, April 20, 1900.
3. FO 800/22/p.248. Nicolson to Villiers, October 27, 1901.
4. P. Cambon: "Correspondance, 1870-1924." Vol. 2, p.61.
P. Cambon to H. Cambon, October 31, 1901.

are pending. I do hope one will come my way."¹ But again he was passed over, and he then began to set his sights on the Rome Embassy. Although he had the support of Sanderson and Villiers there was nothing they could do to prevent Bertie's appointment, and anyway Nicolson felt that Lascelles had prior claims. He wrote to Villiers on November 30, 1902:

"My dear Francis,

"... I had heard that Lascelles was wishing for Rome, and if this be so, nil are my chances, and rightly so, but I trust that if there is to be a shuffle of cards I shall not have to say 'no trumps.' For financial and other reasons I am very anxious not to have to enter on a ninth year of residence here, which would be the case after next summer."²

It was only natural that he should have written in January 1903, when he received the news of Bertie's appointment following so soon on the promotion of Herbert to Washington: "I feel snubbed - as a Minister - 2 Embassies vacant and one going to a Sec. of Embassy and another to an Under Sec.y." Nevertheless he added characteristically: "However one must be patient."³

It will be as well to be aware of this background when examining later appointments.

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No sooner had Bertie obtained for himself the Embassy at Rome than he began to press for the appointment of Charles Hardinge as his successor at the Foreign Office. On December 30,

1. FO 800/22/p.252. Nicolson to Villiers, February 11, 1902.
2. FO 800/22/p.276. Nicolson to Villiers, November 30, 1902.
3. FO 800/22/p.284. Nicolson to Villiers, January 12, 1903.

1902, even before Balfour's submission had reached the King, he wrote to his friend who had sensibly chosen this time to come home on leave:¹

"My dear Charlie,

"I am very glad indeed that you wish me to have Rome. I have got it but the agrément of the Italian Government has yet to come and meanwhile though the appointment is rather a Secret de polichinelle it is not be announced. It is curious that on the very date of Balfour's recommendation of me to the King Scott wrote a letter to Sanderson the P.S. of which was 'I see that Currie has resigned. Has anything been decided as to his successor?'

"Now I have talked enough about myself and let us turn to your affairs. Nothing has been decided as to my successor, but I hope that it will be you and I do not advise your arranging for an apartment at Petersburg. I will do whatever I can to show the advantage in every way of appointing you to the vacant Assistant Under Secretaryship."²

Sanderson and Villiers were in favour of the promotion of Harry Farnall, a Senior Clerk, but within two weeks Bertie had had Hardinge appointed to the Foreign Office post. He wrote triumphantly to his friend on January 14:

"My dear Charlie,

"I am quite delighted that you have got the appointment. You ought to have had it when Gosselin left the F.O. I am glad that I could do something to obtain recognition of merit and ability. The rest depends upon yourself. You must be prepared to meet with obstruction from guts of red tape and elastic bands. I think that you will get Persia and Central Asia including Thibet; but as to whether you will have China, Japan, Siam and Corea or Africa West, South and East I don't know. Farnall is prepared to sulk. He desires that for which he is not fit and won't take that for which he is most suited. He says that he would not take the Commercial Department even if he got £1200 a year with

1. FO 65/1643. Hardinge to Lansdowne, No. 361, November 27, 1902; FO 65/1639. Lansdowne to Hardinge, No. 295, December 2, 1902.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.320. Bertie to Hardinge, December 30, 1902.

it. He regards it as a despised position and refuses to see that the position depends upon the tenant. He would not take my advice when Bergne retired viz to accept willingly the Commercial Department. If he had he would have become Superintendent of that Dept combined with the Consular Service. The next thing to do is to get rid of Hopwood or Cockerell, move Law into one of the places so vacated and to force Farnall into the Commercial Dept."¹

Hardinge wrote later that "during those five years" at St Petersburg from 1898 to the end of 1902 "I constantly met King Edward, as Prince of Wales and King."² It was in fact the King who had pressed for Hardinge's appointment, just as he had for Bertie's. Knollys, who was the most important figure in the co-ordination of these intrigues, wrote on January 15:

"My dear Hardinge,

"I am desired by the King to thank you for your letter, and to say that it has given him much pleasure to hear you have been appointed Under Secretary at the F.O.

"I may mention that H.M. pressed you very strongly upon Lord Lansdowne for the Post in question.

"Many thanks for having written to me to announce your appointment. I am delighted at it on every account, one of my reasons being that I think you are the fittest person for it...

"I ought to add, what however you probably know, that F. Bertie has been a very good friend to you."³

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.322. Bertie to Hardinge, January 14, 1903.
2. British Museum Add. MS 56087. Hardinge to Lee, November 14, 1920.
3. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.324. Knollys to Hardinge, January 15, 1903. In his memoirs Hardinge's incomplete account of the episode was as follows: "After the return of the Ambassador in December 1902 I went home on leave and learnt of the appointment of Sir F. Bertie, (an) Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, as Ambassador at Rome. This created a vacancy amongst the four Under-Secretaries which was offered to me in the following January and was gladly accepted. Lord Knollys wrote to me that the King had pressed my candidature for the post very strongly upon Lord Lansdowne." Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.84.

Sir Frank Lascelles sent his congratulations on January 16:

"My dear Hardinge,

"I congratulate you sincerely on your appointment, which I feel sure you will fill well. I think you were quite right to take it although the work will probably be harder and perhaps less interesting than what you have lately been accustomed to. I think also that it is important that the Diplomatic Service should be represented in the F.O. and so well represented as it will be by you. Lady Scott who passed through some days ago told me that both she and her husband hoped to get Rome, and were disappointed at F. Bertie's appointment."¹

It was inevitable that the promotion of the King's favourites should have caused disappointment and resentment among the diplomatists. Nicolson, for example, wrote to Sanderson on January 22, 1903, that "I am now in my eighth year of residence here, and if I am to be kept on, I should be grateful if the status of the post could be raised and placed on the level of most Legations. i.e. a First Class Mission."² Spring Rice wrote to Villiers on February 8, and remarked cautiously in the postscript:

"Observe my extreme reserve and delicacy about the F.O. appointments. I shall hear later what you think. I should think from what I remember of Ch. Hardinge that if you are to have a diplomatist you couldn't have a more efficient one."³

This was in fact the general opinion within the Foreign Office,⁴ though Hardinge's popularity was mingled with a certain relief at the departure of Bertie. Tyrrell wrote to Lascelles on

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.326. Lascelles to Hardinge, January 16, 1903.
2. FO 371/292/39454. Nicolson to Sanderson, January 22, 1903.
3. FO 800/23/p.226. Spring Rice to Villiers, February 8, 1903.
4. But see India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/179/235. Chisolm to Curzon, June 7, 1903: "I need not say that ... Charlie Hardinge's appointment ... has created ... jealousy among the permanent establishment."

March 18 that "we have an A one man in C. Hardinge who is winning golden opinions all round. Since Bertie's departure we are also turning into peace at any price men!"¹ Davidson wrote towards the end of the year, on November 5:

"My dear Satow,

"... We jog along here somehow. The diplomatic service has provided us with a capital Assistant Under Secretary in Charles Hardinge, who is far the most capable of anyone recently appointed (not that this is saying much!). He is courageous, quick, easy to deal with, endowed with excellent common sense, and a thorough knowledge of the world of mankind, and has a strong will of his own."²

Nevertheless the young Horace Rumbold remarked that "diplomacy is devilish slow work unless one collar a wife like Mrs Hardinge."³

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In February 1903 Bertie went to Rome "to present his letters and inspect the Embassy, after which he returned to England for a few weeks."⁴ Knollys remarked on February 25 that "F. Bertie has returned to London to pack up. He appears to be very much

1. FO 800/8/p.365. Tyrrell to Lascelles, March 18, 1903.
2. PRO 30/33/7/2. Davidson to Satow, November 5, 1903.
3. M. Gilbert: "Sir Horace Rumbold." p.47. Rumbold to his father, January 17, 1903. See also Ibid. p.47. Rumbold to his father, February 1, 1903: "As regards any influence one may secure through one's wife, I believe that under the present regime marriage with a Jew's daughter - with a dash of foreign blood in her - would be the thing to do, unless one secured a phoenix like Mrs Hardinge."
4. Sir R. Rodd: op. cit., Vol. 3, p.26. Currie meanwhile became a cripple in London. Wilfred Blunt, who took "a walk ... in the Park" at the end of July 1903, noted that "we found Philip Currie there in a bath chair, unable to use his legs, and so being wheeled about." See W.S. Blunt: "My Diaries." Vol. 2, p.66. Diary entry for July 30, 1903.

pleased with his new appointment and goes back to Rome in another week or ten days."¹ It had been decided that the new King should visit Rome in April 1903, and when at length Bertie "took up his work in March, there was not too much time to prepare his house for the visit of King Edward, which was to take place on the 27th of April."² Meanwhile the King decided that he would like Hardinge to accompany him on his trip.

Hardinge arrived in London from St Petersburg on February 5, 1903, "and joined the F.O. the same day." He reported to his former chief in St Petersburg that "I like the work and am very happy."³ A little later he wrote to Sir Frank Lascelles:

"My dear Sir Frank,

"I have been in harness for nearly a fortnight now and am really very happy in my new post.

"According to the new scheme for the distribution of work I have the superintendence of Persia, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Thibet, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland and the Consular and Treaty Departments. Everybody here warned me that I should be overwhelmed by the work, and seemed to be under the impression that a diplomatist could not work, but so far I have found no difficulty at all in coping with the work that falls to my share, even though Persia and Thibet have been monopolising an undue proportion of my time. At the same time I like my work and am very pleased at these Asiatic countries being entrusted to my care as I am thus able to utilise the experience which I gained in Tehran and St Petersburg."⁴

1. FO 800/11/p.104. Knollys to Lascelles, February 25, 1903.
2. Sir R. Rodd: op. cit., Vol. 3, p.26.
3. British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.92. Hardinge to Scott, February 11, 1903.
4. FO 800/15/p.328. Hardinge to Lascelles, February 18, 1903. The India Office were also very pleased that Hardinge was dealing with these countries. See India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/162/p.40/No.11. Godley to Curzon, February 20, 1903 (Godley also regretted Bertie's departure); and India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/162/p.57/No.15. G. Hamilton to Curzon, March 13, 1903.

However it was not long before friction arose between Hardinge and his new colleagues, Sanderson, Villiers and Barrington. It was clear that they would do all they could to prevent Hardinge's accompanying the King to Rome.

At the beginning of March 1903 Ronald Graham, who had worked with Hardinge at St Petersburg under Sir Charles Scott, but who was now in the Foreign Office, wrote to his old chief:

"My dear Sir Charles,

"... Hardinge seems very pleased with his post and his work... - it has been amusing to see some of his little struggles with Sir Thomas, who has had to give up Persia to him and cannot bear it, and is perpetually trying to encroach... However Hardinge is quite equal to holding his own and seems to be getting on capitally."¹

Hardinge himself wrote to Lascelles on March 18,

"My dear Sir Frank,

"... It is hard work endeavouring to infuse a little energy into this office about Persia. Nobody seems to dare to come to any decision and everybody waits to see which way the cat is going to jump. Sanderson has tried to shove his oar into my provinces but I have resisted and spoke to him very clearly on the subject which I hope will be sufficient for some time to come."²

Shortly afterwards the question of the Royal tour came to a head.

Hardinge recalled later that "the visits to be paid by the King after the accession to the Throne came up for discussion at

1. British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.216. Graham to Scott, March 6, 1903. But see India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/179/218. Sanderson to Curzon, March 6, 1903: "Charles Hardinge has come here as Ass. Under Secretary on Bertie's appointment to Rome and is taking Persian, Afghan and Central Asian questions. It is a great comfort to have some one who knows the ropes thoroughly and is so sensible and hardworking."
2. FO 800/14/p.290. Hardinge to Lascelles, March 18, 1903.

the Foreign Office as His Majesty had decided to go abroad at the end of March:"

"To my surprise (he added) I heard that the question had been raised by the King of my accompanying His Majesty instead of a Cabinet Minister as is usual on such journeys, but that Lord Lansdowne opposed the idea. On the other hand, I heard that the King insisted and refused to yield. Things drifted till within a week of the date of the King's proposed departure, and as the subject had become one of general knowledge and discussion I called on Lady Lansdowne, whom I knew well, and told her that although I realized of course that I was entirely under Lord Lansdowne's orders, still if there was any likelihood of my having to accompany the King it would only be fair to tell me at once as naturally I would have to make certain preparations for such a journey. She entirely agreed, with the result that she spoke to Lord Lansdowne, who told me very unwillingly that I was to accompany the King and that I was to receive the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary in the Diplomatic Service. I need hardly say that I was greatly pleased and astonished at my exceptional good fortune and was entirely at a loss to understand why I had been selected in this unusual and unexpected manner."¹

On March 25 Hardinge explained the new situation to Lascelles:

"My dear Sir Frank,

"... You may be interested to hear that I am to accompany the King officially on his impending cruise. The King on his own initiative asked that I should accompany him, but Lord L. backed by other high officials at the F.O. objected and twice asked the King to select somebody else but the King insisted. Finally the Constitutional question was raised, but this was negatived by Mr Balfour as 'rot' and the King got his way much to my joy as I look forward to the trip with the greatest pleasure. An amusing incident connected with this struggle is that when finally settled I asked that I should have the rank of Minister which I was told verbally when my present post was offered to me went with it, but upon which point some doubt had since been cast. As the King expressed a wish that I should have this rank it had to be done, but contrary to my wishes and request the F.O. (i.e. Sanderson and Villiers) sent a minute to the King by which I was only to have the rank 'while in attendance upon the King.' The King spotted this much to these people's surprise and insisted on my promotion being made

1. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.85.

general and you should have seen the commotion yesterday in the F.O. when this announcement was made. I chuckled, quietly and a new minute has now been sent to the King."¹

On the same day he told Scott that "we are to have a most interesting cruise as we are to pay official visits to Lisbon, Gibraltar, Malta, Rome and Paris."² It was understandably rumoured "that Hardinge had been selected because he had married one of Queen Alexandra's Ladies-in-Waiting."³

The King's tour was a very great success. After leaving Bertie in Rome,⁴ the King and Hardinge returned by train to Paris where King Edward, reading a speech prepared for him in the train by Hardinge, laid the foundations for the Entente Cordiale. The success of the trip considerably enhanced the King's influence, as well as Hardinge's importance and prestige. The latter published a book later that year describing the notable

1. FO 800/14/p.294. Hardinge to Lascelles, March 25, 1903. See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/162/p.70/No.17. G. Hamilton to Curzon, March 27, 1903: "The King has insisted upon taking Charles Hardinge with him in (sic) his yachting tour. It is tiresome as, in the absence of Charles Hardinge, there is no one at the Foreign Office who knows either the mind of the St. Petersburg authorities, or the nature of the difficulties which have to be overcome in Tehran."
2. British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.94. Hardinge to Scott, March 25, 1903. See also British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.209. Graham to Scott, March 25, 1903: "C. Hardinge has told you, I fancy, of his going with the King on his yachting tour - very pleasant for him and interesting - though the other U.S.S. do not seem enthusiastic on the subject, which is only natural."
3. Sir F. Ponsonby: "Recollections of Three Reigns." p.154.
4. The German Emperor also visited Rome at around the same time. See British Museum Add. MS 48680, p.132. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, May 16, 1903: "I heard from F. Bertie today. He says the German Emperor made a great display at Rome, and laid himself out to be pleasant, but the ostentation attending his visit was rather resented."

events that had taken place during the tour.¹ On May 20 he wrote:

"My dear Scott,

"I have been so busy since my return that I have not had time to write to you before...

"My trip with the King has done me a lot of good and I am now fit for any amount of work for a long time to come. You have no idea what an immense amount of work I had to do with the King. I really have never been so hardworked but it was very interesting and most instructive. I hope you approved of the King's speeches, as I was the author of them all and he never changed a single word, but of course this is not generally known. It was a very great responsibility for me as I had to make all the arrangements and practically to carry on the King's work with the whole of the Cabinet, but everything went off without a single hitch of any kind and the King was so appreciative of my work that I was amply repaid for all the trouble which I had."²

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The next important post to become vacant was the Washington Embassy. Herbert, who had been appointed Ambassador in 1902 at the early age of 45, became seriously ill during the following year and died in the early autumn of 1903.³ Hardinge wrote to Lascelles on October 7:

1. C. Hardinge: "A Short Record of the King's Journey, 1903." See British Museum Add. MS 56087. Ponsonby to Lee, November 16, 1920: "As solid information it is excellent but anything more dreary I have rarely read. It is a sort of edition de luxe of the Court Circular."
2. British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.109. Hardinge to Scott, May 20, 1903.
3. See, e.g., British Museum Add. MS 48681, p.57. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, September 26, 1903: "I am afraid the latest accounts of Mungo Herbert are very disquieting." See also Sir C. Spring Rice: "Letters and Friendships." Vol. 1, p.367.

"My dear Sir Frank,

"... I went to poor Mungo's funeral yesterday and it was a very sad assembly. He has for a long time been very bad and I think that the work of the Embassy at Washington simply killed him... I have no idea as to who will be his successor. I have heard that Durand wants the post very much, and he has a supporter in Ld. Lansdowne... The Appointment would hardly be ideal but it is almost impossible to find in the service a really good man for Washington."¹

Sir Mortimer Durand was the Ambassador at Madrid. He had originally been a member of the Indian Civil Service, and had been Foreign Secretary of the Government of India before becoming Minister at Tehran.² Hardinge, who served under him in Persia, wrote in 1897 that "Durand is an interesting study, as he is such an able and interesting man, but awfully prejudiced and with all the vindictiveness of an Oriental."³ A foreign colleague noted of those days that Durand "was the ponderous type of successful colonial official," while Hardinge "was a different man and struck a different note."⁴ Lord Salisbury had had a low opinion of Durand,⁵ but Curzon, then Viceroy of India, felt that "Ld. S. is I think unfair upon Durand."⁶ However even a supporter of Durand like Curzon qualified his defence by admitting

1. FO 800/12/p.332. Hardinge to Lascelles, October 7, 1903.
2. This transfer had been largely due to the influence of Lord Dufferin, who had been responsible for Durand's appointment as Foreign Secretary of the Government of India. Dufferin also recommended Durand as a successor to Lord Cromer at Cairo. See Salisbury Papers E/Dufferin/50. Dufferin to Salisbury, September 3, 1895.
3. Salisbury Papers A/127/10. Hardinge to Foley, January 21, 1897.
4. A.D. Kalmykow: op. cit., p.77.
5. British Museum Add. MS 49691, p.33. Salisbury to Balfour, August 31, 1898.
6. British Museum Add. MS 50073, p.245. Curzon to Brodrick, June 7, 1899.

that he "is cold in manner and a little uncompromising. He is lacking in dexterity and suppleness."¹ These defects were not a serious disadvantage to Durand when he was transferred to Madrid, but they were hardly likely to recommend him to President Roosevelt, and to American Society generally.

Sandars put forward the idea that Lord Cranborne, or the 4th Marquess of Salisbury as he had recently become, should be offered the post. Sir Edward Hamilton noted however:

"J. Sandars' suggestion for the Embassy at Washington was Cranborne. The Americans would almost certainly have jumped at the idea of having Lord and Lady Salisbury; but he has presumably little or none (sic) diplomatic qualifications; and he will probably be safer as Lord Privy Seal here than as our Representative at Washington."²

There was also talk of offering the post to Lord Jersey, but Lansdowne went ahead and offered the Embassy to Durand. His idea was that Durand would go to Washington, and that Egerton should take his place at Madrid. Hardinge wrote to Lascelles again on October 21:

"My dear Sir Frank,

"... I suppose you know that Washington has been offered to Durand and Egerton has been talked of for Madrid.

1. British Museum Add. MS 50073, p.261. Curzon to Brodrick, August 24, 1899.
2. British Museum Add. MS 48681, p.74. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, October 26, 1903. Lord Cranborne had been appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs when his father had relinquished the Foreign Office in 1900. Shortly after Bertie's transfer to Rome, Cranborne wrote to him: "As for the F.O., I have succeeded to the post of blister-in-ordinary to the Permanent Under Secretary vice Sir Francis Bertie promoted. I preferred however that you should have that responsible but rather harrassing function." (FO 800/181/p.109. Cranborne to Bertie, April 12, 1903.) He became Lord Privy Seal in October 1903.

Durand's acceptance seems however to hang fire as he is coming over to talk about it. If he refuses, I really do not know who could go."¹

Two days later Lansdowne wrote to Balfour:

"My dear Arthur,

"... After our conversation at Whittingehame I told the King that you had no objection to Durand for Washington and H.M. begged that I would at once offer the Embassy.² He has accepted, so it is too late to think of Jersey."²

Durand's appointment to Washington actually turned out to be a very bad mistake and had to be prematurely terminated. At the time it was not without its critics. For example Lord Curzon wrote to his friend Brodrick:

"My dear St. John,

"... I was amazed at Durand being sent to Washington. In Mungo Herbert you had the finished cosmopolitan. You have now taken a typical and peculiarly taciturn John Bull."³

Martin Gosselin commented from Lisbon that "I was somewhat surprised at Durand's transfer," but agreed that "Egerton deserves a move after his many years at Athens."⁴

Durand's transfer and Egerton's promotion meant that Sir Arthur Nicolson had yet again been passed over at Tangier.

1. FO 800/12/p.347. Hardinge to Lascelles, October 21, 1903.
2. British Museum Add. MS 49728, p.80. Lansdowne to Balfour, October 23, 1903.
3. British Museum Add. MS 50074, p.210. Curzon to Brodrick, October 28, 1903. See also PRO 30/33/7/2. Davidson to Satow, November 5, 1903: "I wonder what you think about the new Ambassador at Washington? He will at any rate be as good as his predecessor - the paean of praise which ascended at whose death really disgusted me, for he was nothing more than an amiable gentleman of good family who in consequence of his being privileged to call the President (of the) USA by his Xtian name was jobbed over the heads of a number of better men into a position enormously above his merits or capacities."
4. Cartwright Papers. Gosselin to Cartwright, November 11, 1903.

In April 1903 he had written to Villiers:

"My dear Francis,

"... By the bye I hear an idea is afloat in the F.O. that if I am moved ever I do not want a cold climate. I am not particular, and in fact would prefer a little snow and ice not having seen any for 8 years, so pray dissipate the idea if it does exist."¹

When he heard about the latest moves he complained to Villiers, on November 1:

"My dear Francis,

"... Durand's appt is, I should think, a good one. I suppose Egerton will get Madrid... I must tuck myself up again in my rather worn out blanket, and wait till I am put on another shelf. I find the present one narrow and unsupportable."²

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By the end of 1903 Sir Charles Scott was coming to the end of his appointment at St Petersburg, and it became clear that this would be the next important post to become vacant.

Scott had had a long career in the Diplomatic Service. He had been appointed Chargé d'Affaires at Coburg in 1879, and had served at Berlin as Secretary of Embassy during the 1880s. In 1888 he had been appointed Minister at Berne, and had then been transferred to Copenhagen. In that post he had made important Russian connections, first with the Russian Imperial Family, who frequently visited their Danish relatives, and second with Count Benckendorff, who had since become Russian

1. FO 800/22/p.298. Nicolson to Villiers, April 19, 1903. See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/179/305. Chirol to Curzon, March 26, 1904.
2. FO 800/22/p.323. Nicolson to Villiers, November 1, 1903.

Ambassador in London.¹ On the strength of these connections Lord Salisbury had offered Scott the St Petersburg Embassy in a letter dated May 28, 1898.²

Looking back over his career from retirement, in the summer of 1907, Scott recalled his appointment:

"Ld. Salisbury's offer of the post of St Petersburg was made to me in a private letter which reached me one bright Summer morning in June 1898 at ... (a) country place nr. Copenhagen I had again taken for my family's summer residence.

"The offer was entirely unexpected by me. I had already entered on the 40th year of my service and celebrated my 60th birthday, and tho' I had at no time chucked the ambition of an Embassy as the crowning stage of my career, the appointment of several juniors to this rank, and the nomination of one of them to the only Embassy (Berlin) for which my past services and long residence at German Courts seemed to have qualified me, had for some time past reconciled me to the renunciation of hopes of further promotion, and to the thought of early retirement on the pension assigned to my present post at Copenhagen.

"My feelings on receipt of Ld S's letter which was couched in very kind terms, and referred to my past services at Berlin, and to the ... fact that my appt would be very pleasing to the Russian Court, were of a mixed character.

"I was naturally gratified by the offer of the highest rank in the Dip.c Service to which a higher rate of pension was attached, but thoroughly sensible at the same time of the difficulties of the post, of which I had had some experience in a subordinate capacity twenty years previously, and also of the financial worries which so expensive a residence would necessarily entail on an Ambassador like myself with no private fortune and with a large family to provide for."³

Despite these hesitations Scott had accepted the post. Shortly afterwards Charles Hardinge had arrived as Secretary of Embassy.

1. See British Museum Add. MS 52301, p.71. Scott to O'Conor, April 28, 1898; and British Museum Add. MS 52303, p.47. Scott to Salisbury, December 14, 1899, for Benckendorff's desire for an Anglo-Russian agreement.
2. British Museum Add. MS 52297, p.69. Salisbury to Scott, May 28, 1898.
3. British Museum Add. MS 52305, p.14. Memorandum by Scott, June 1907.

Sir Charles and Lady Scott seem to have been universally popular, but not very highly regarded politically. George Buchanan, who had worked under Scott at Berne, had found him a "very delightful Chief."¹ Hardinge himself wrote:

"He had a charming and pretty wife and five daughters. He was always very kind, and though popular in Russian Society was not a political success. He had spent most of his career in small German Courts, and in Denmark as Minister, and was inexperienced in dealing with the larger political questions of Europe. Consequently he found himself out of his depth in St. Petersburg and his views carried no weight at the Foreign Office."²

One reason why Scott's views carried no weight at the Foreign Office was because Hardinge and Bertie deliberately sabotaged his position.

Hardinge himself later admitted that while he was Secretary of Embassy under Scott in St Petersburg he "constantly met King Edward, as Prince of Wales and King, and ... informed him of the indignities our diplomacy suffered at the hands of the Russian Government."³ This, of course, was thinly veiled criticism of Scott's handling of affairs. A contemporary who joined the St Petersburg Embassy just before Scott's retirement noted:

"I just knew my new Chief, Sir Charles Scott, but Lady Scott I had never met. They were charming people and very kind. Lady Scott had been a very beautiful woman and was still singularly handsome. Scott was there on the point of retiring (not of his own free will) and it was his last few months in the Service so they were very much depressed. It was the fashion to abuse Scott and to run him down. Hardinge had done so persistently whilst he was Secretary of Embassy - but although Scott may not have been a great statesman or diplomatist he was a very good Ambassador."⁴

1. M. Buchanan: "Diplomacy and Foreign Courts." p.14.
2. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.69.
3. British Museum Add. MS 56087. Hardinge to Lee, November 14, 1920.
4. Lord Onslow: "History of the Onslow Family." Vol. 7, p.1797.

In March 1901 Sanderson wrote to Scott that "I am afraid that it is one of the miserable conditions of a complicated negotiation that there should be periods when our Representative is inclined to d--n the F.O. in heaps from the Secretary of State down to the junior Clerks."¹ In fact it was the Foreign Office which was inclined to abuse Scott. Bertie in particular spear-headed this movement, writing sarcastically to Lascelles in September 1900 that "I hope you have been edified by the telegraphic and despatch productions of your colleague Scott."²

The post of British Ambassador at St Petersburg was far from being an easy one at this time, and Scott himself admitted in January 1901 that "I am beginning to find that my work here is rather hopeless and hateful."³ Nevertheless Bertie remarked soon after that "poor Scott swallows everything that Lamsdorff tells him and deprecates distrust of his assurances!"⁴ Lansdowne, however, sent Scott a letter of encouragement which "relieved and encouraged" him.⁵

In November 1901, when Bertie and Hardinge first began to lay their plans for the future, Bertie wrote:

"My dear Charlie,

"... When there was a question of 'approaching,' as it is called, Russia I said that Scott must have nothing to do with it or it would be sure to fail in his management: not that the negotiations Persian Loan and Manchuria

1. British Museum Add, MS 52299, p.17. Sanderson to Scott, March 27, 1901.
2. FO 800/6/p.361. Bertie to Lascelles, September 12, 1900.
3. FO 800/6/p.421. Scott to Lascelles, January 10, 1901.
4. FO 800/10/p.41. Bertie to Lascelles, February 27, 1901. See also FO 800/6/p.427. Bertie to Lascelles, January 15, 1901.
5. FO 800/6/p.463. Scott to Lascelles, April 4, 1901.

Agreement would have much chance of success in anyone's hands, but least of all in those of Sir Venturesome Scott. How pleased he would be to know the opinion held of him not only by my humble self but by everyone -- bar Lamps -- who knows him."¹

Hardinge replied on November 14:

"My dear Frank,

"... How you made me laugh about Scott! I believe that you are right and that Lamps believes as much in Scott as Scott does in Lamsdorff. I only hope that other people are not so easily taken in. I should like to know whether Lamsdorff sung Scott's praises to the King when he saw him at Copenhagen. I expect so as I know they look upon him here as quite their creature, and last spring when they thought Scott's position was a bit shaken owing to attacks on him in the Times in connection with the abortive Manchurian Convention, Lamsdorff and all the Court people went out of their way to tell Abercorn and his special mission that there had never been such an English Ambassador as Scott, which I should think was true in one sense, but not in the right one...

"I shall hope to see you shortly as I hear that my old man returns on the 1st and I shall fly directly he comes."²

The following week, on November 20, William Tyrrell, then a Junior Clerk, wrote to Hardinge that "I was glad to see you had bearded old Witte in his den. Your visit helped to show up both L(amsdorff) and W(itte) as liars - much to the distress of Scott."³ At the beginning of 1903 Cecil Spring Rice commented that "at St. Petersburg we have an old Gentleman who was appointed there because Muravief had known him to be 'parfaitement imbécile'

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.205. Bertie to Hardinge, November 6, 1901.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.211. Hardinge to Bertie, November 14, 1901.
3. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.219. Tyrrell to Hardinge, November 20, 1901. See also FO 65/1623. Minute by King Edward VII on Scott No. 344, 11/12/01: "Sir C. Scott is easily satisfied!"

at Copenhagen."¹ In February 1903, when Hardinge left St Petersburg to take up his new post at the Foreign Office, poor Scott wrote to Sanderson that "I shall miss Hardinge, who has been of the greatest assistance to me, very much indeed."²

Scott's failure to secure the Rome Embassy in December 1902 made it certain that St Petersburg would be his last post. Hardinge, who continued to criticise him in London, wrote to Bertie on May 25, 1903:

"My dear Frank,

"... I see no chance of Scott being moved. Our Chief can remove people like Gosling but he is frightened of an Ambassador. You are such alarmingly great people!"³

In the following month the "Times" launched an attack on Scott,⁴ who wrote to Lansdowne on June 11:

"My dear Lord Lansdowne,

"I think I have every reason to resent the wanton attack made on me by the Potentate of Printing House Square, and I am grateful for the opportunity you so promptly gave me of supplying you with facts to defend me in case questions are put in the House..."

1. Rosebery Papers Box 77, p.145. Spring Rice to Rosebery, January 8, 1903. See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/162/p.57/No.15. G. Hamilton to Curzon, March 13, 1903: "Scott is miserably weak."
2. British Museum Add. MS 52304, p.51. Scott to Sanderson, February 5, 1903.
3. FO 800/163/p.123. Hardinge to Bertie, May 25, 1903.
4. See British Museum Add. MS 52299, p.133. Sanderson to Scott, June 2, 1903: "The Times is to us a constant and fertile source of aggravation. It is always attacking some foreign Power or lecturing it on the iniquity and perversity of its ways, and generally at the same time condemning the Foreign Secretary and his unfortunate Department for ineptitude and weakness. But I have never thought it worth while to quarrel with it, and my Chiefs have always taken the same view."

"... I really cannot see how even such illustrious predecessors as Lord Dufferin and Sir Robert Morier could, have done more than I did under the given circumstances."¹

It is possible that Hardinge had a hand in inspiring this attack, but if this is so his plan was a failure. Sanderson wrote to Lascelles on June 17 that "I forgot to tell you that I spoke somewhat roundly to Chirol² the day before yesterday about the attack made by the Times on Scott, which is really quite unjustifiable."³ Nevertheless Sanderson sent the following warning on the same day:

"My dear Scott,

"I do not think the attack on you in the Times has done any harm, the only effect that I have been able to notice, being that you have been very abominably treated. Chirol called here yesterday and I told him my opinion somewhat roundly as the Elizabethans used to say...

"I told Chirol also that in my opinion the language of the Times articles was on occasions quite unnecessarily offensive...

"If I might venture to make a suggestion, I think it would be better if you avoided in your Despatches such strong expressions of confidence in Lamsdorff's straightforwardness. It drives the King wild. It may be true that L. means well by us but he certainly does not stick at an occasional fib. In the Russian loan business he played us rather a dirty trick. In the Chinese question he avowedly invented a statement that we had proposed that

1. FO 800/140/p.174. Scott to Lansdowne, June 11, 1903.
2. Valentine Chirol was the Foreign Editor of the "Times." He had worked in the Foreign Office as a young man, and had been the "Times" correspondent in Berlin during the 1890s. He was a close friend of many diplomatists, particularly of Hardinge and Spring Rice. The latter wrote in 1904 of Chirol that "he is as intimate in the Foreign Office as anyone can be, and absolutely trusted." See Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit, Vol. 1, p.436. Spring Rice to Roosevelt, November 1904.
3. FO 800/15/p.338. Sanderson to Lascelles, June 17, 1903.

the Japanese should have a mandate in order to explain to the Emperor why he had opposed our unobjectionable proposal. The Russians do not see any harm in these deviations from the brutal facts. I daresay he is quite sincere in wishing to pursue a friendly policy and keep on good terms. That he or at all events Russian diplomacy will not take every advantage they can within those limits is, I fear, not to be expected - and a certain amount of deception is part of their ordinary stock in trade."¹

Scott replied on June 25:

"My dear Sanderson,

"... I agree with you that the attack on me in the Times has not done me much harm, and I am glad to know that you think it treated me very abominably.

"The subject is one which may be wisely dropped, as its temporary sensation has fizzled out, as my friends in England seem to think, with no other result than exposing the Times to ridicule.

"At the same time I notice that the public and Parliament were left quite in the dark as to the view which the F.O. took of my action and of the value of the censure passed on me...

"I see that the answer not orally given to the only question put in the House of Commons expressed no opinion one way or the other on the censure passed on me, but stated that I had been called on to furnish explanations of the charges brought against me.

"The latter part of your letter in which you give me a friendly hint of the great irritation caused by some of the expressions in my despatches felt in the highest quarter, concerns me more.

"I am much distressed to learn this. I should have thought that the King would have reposed sufficient confidence in his Ambassador to feel assured that whatever convictions I expressed were conscientiously and honestly formed after availing myself of opportunities which give a clearer insight into the situation and tendencies directing the action of the Central Govt in foreign questions and the character of the principal actors here, than could well be possessed in London even with the assistance of sidelights from Berlin and Peking.

1. British Museum Add. MS 52299, p.137. Sanderson to Scott, June 17, 1903.

"I should, I conceive, be glaringly neglectful of my duty if I failed to report them as frankly and as fully as I have endeavoured to do in my official reports, in order that the Foreign Secretary and Cabinet who have to decide the foreign policy of this country, may have everything that can be said on both sides of a question before them, before they take a decision...

"Excuse this scrawl, written for your private information in reply to a very friendly and useful hint."¹

Sanderson concluded this correspondence with the following letter, dated July 1:

"My dear Scott,

"Thanks for your letter. As regards what you say of the absence of any public expression of approval, or official statement in reply to the Times attack upon you, I do not think anything of that kind is called for, or would be judicious unless the attack were in some way taken up in Parliament. No one has thought of doing so, and there are obvious objections to volunteering a defence when no attack has been made. A controversy with a newspaper is never a dignified proceeding, and is as a rule to be avoided because the newspaper can always have the last word."²

In the summer of 1903 one of the Diplomatic Regulations which had fallen into disuse was revived by Lord Lansdowne. This regulation was used as an excuse for bringing to an end Scott's appointment at St Petersburg. Barrington wrote to explain on July 15:

"My dear Scott,

"You are of course aware of the terms of the Diplomatic Regulations under which (clause 17) the position of an

1. British Museum Add. MS 52304, p.62. Scott to Sanderson, June 25, 1903.
2. British Museum Add. MS 52299, p.141. Sanderson to Scott, July 1, 1903. See also PRO 30/33/9/15. Townley to Satow, January 13, 1904: "Scott would have left last summer only that it was considered better not to remove him then as it would have looked as if it were done at the instigation of the 'Times.'"

Ambassador is to be reconsidered when he has served for five years at his post. This rule has of late years fallen somewhat into desuetude, but Lord Lansdowne considers it desirable that it sh.d be more frequently enforced. He proposes to remind those Heads of Missions whose appointments have come to an end under the above clause that they must not count upon a renewal for a similar period, although it may be convenient that they should retain their appointments for a time. As regards your own position Lord Lansdowne wishes me to let you know that he does not contemplate asking you to remain at St Petersburg after next winter. If therefore there is no other Embassy to which he can appoint you before the spring, he will propose to recommend you for your pension, a course which he believes may not be altogether unwelcome to you. He thinks that it is due to you that you should have fair warning of this, in order that you may have plenty of time for making your arrangements."¹

Sanderson wrote on September 4:

"My dear Scott,

"... I cannot think that the post you hold is likely to be other than a difficult and invidious one - entailing constant struggle and little satisfactory result. - I do not know therefore that there is occasion for condolence at your retirement from it though it is always rather a wrench to give up interesting work and I shall personally regret a change."²

Despite Sanderson's unfavourable description of the post, Knollys, Bertie and Hardinge began to press soon afterwards for the latter's promotion and transfer from the Foreign Office to St Petersburg as Ambassador.

1. British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.118. Barrington to Scott, July 15, 1903. See also British Museum Add. MS 49729, p.166. Lansdowne to Balfour, September 28, 1905: "We have lately introduced a new rule under which every Chef de Mission automatically vacates his post after a five years' tenure, unless his term is extended for special reasons." The relevant clause of the Diplomatic Regulations was actually No. 15. See FO 371/168/37683.
2. British Museum Add MS. 52299, p.148. Sanderson to Scott, September 4, 1903.

(14)

The Court faction of Knollys, Bertie and Hardinge were not just determined to obtain Hardinge's promotion to the St Petersburg Embassy: they wanted also to ensure that Hardinge's successor as Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office should be a man acceptable to themselves. The two men initially considered for this post were Rennell Rodd and Cecil Spring Rice. It will be as well to introduce both men before proceeding to the details of the new intrigue.

Rennell Rodd and Cecil Spring Rice had been contemporaries at Balliol in the early 1880s along with Arthur Hardinge, Louis Mallet, Edward Grey and George Curzon.¹ They had joined the Foreign Office at around the same time, and had been promoted at roughly the same pace. More recently, however, Rennell Rodd had pulled ahead. After serving at Berlin, Athens, Rome and Paris, he had been posted for many years first in East Africa and then in Cairo. "While at Rome" for a holiday in 1901, however, he "learned that Lord Currie had asked for my appointment to the secretaryship of Embassy there, which was about to fall vacant." He "was hierarchically still rather junior for such a post and hardly expected that his suggestion would be adopted."² Spring Rice wrote to Villiers on September 15, 1901:

"My dear Francis,

"... Rodd understands that he will get Rome: I am glad as he wishes it more than anything else in the world:

1. Sir R. Rodd: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.7; and Sir A. Hardinge: "A Diplomatist in Europe." p.187.
2. Sir R. Rodd: op. cit., Vol. 2, p.274.

But surely Whitehead is not going to be passed over? I know after 2 years in Berlin what a good man he is though absolutely unpretentious: and he certainly did well at Tokio."¹

Rodd did in fact obtain this promotion to Secretary of Embassy at Rome over the head of Whitehead at the beginning of 1902.

He was there as Chargé d'Affaires during Currie's absences, and he finally handed over to Bertie early in 1903.

Rodd was very popular with the Italians, and his period as Chargé d'Affaires was a success. He himself wrote in his memoirs:

"Owing to Lord Currie's illness I had to forgo my leave. When at the end of the year he resigned, the King of Italy took an opportunity to say to me that he hoped I might be left at his Embassy. The significance of his friendly words was explained when Prinetti told me that he had instructed the Italian Ambassador in London to express the wish that I might be appointed to succeed Lord Currie. Gratifying as was this evidence of goodwill, I knew that such a proposition was out of the question, and being myself quite innocent in the matter, I could only trust that I should not be regarded as a desperate intriguer."²

It is more than doubtful whether Pansa, the Italian Ambassador in London, acted on this suggestion. Nevertheless Barrington wrote to Lord Lansdowne on May 26, 1903, that,

"Pansa tells me he has been instructed to give a hint that in the event of Bertie leaving Rome the King of Italy would be very glad to see Rodd take his place.

"... He had told his Govt that such a promotion w.d be very unusual and that the app.ts of Herbert and Hardinge must not be looked upon as precedents."³

Rodd knew perfectly well that he would never become Ambassador at Rome until he had served elsewhere, as promotions were never

1. FO 800/23/p.218. Spring Rice to Villiers, September 15, 1901.
2. Sir R. Rodd: op. cit., Vol. 3, p.23.
3. FO 800/133/p.177. Barrington to Lansdowne, May 26, 1903.

made to the Head of a Mission from among the Diplomatic Staff already there. When, therefore, Egerton took Durand's place at Madrid, Rodd set his sights on the Legation at Athens. He wrote to his Chief on November 3, 1903:

"My dear Bertie,

"I got the enclosed telegram last night, The explanation followed this morning in a letter from Egerton written on the 30th in which he said it was probable I should be appointed to succeed him and that he recommended my coming to Athens for a day or two. I presume from his telegram he has now been instructed to ask whether someone else will be pleasing to the King of Greece. I wonder who it is. I thought the prospect was too good to be true because it was just the one thing I should have cared for, and one is little tempted to go on living for ever abroad in unsympathetic places. However I feel there are others who deserve it, especially Elliot who has been some six or seven years at Sophia. If he is the one I shall not mind so much. But it is hard to have been so near one's goal and just to miss it. I shall however always remember how kind you have been about it and gratefully acknowledge my debt."¹

In fact it was Elliot who was appointed Minister at Athens, and Rodd remained on at Rome. Nevertheless he had been marked out for rapid promotion, and it was natural that Bertie and Hardinge should have considered him as a possible Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office.

Cecil Spring Rice had been a "general favourite" when he had joined the Foreign Office in the early 1880s,² and had served as Précis Writer, or Assistant Private Secretary, to Lord Rosebery. He had then been posted at Washington, where he and Herbert had been a great popular success,³ Tokio, Washington again, Berlin,

1. FO 800/163/p.129. Rodd to Bertie, November 3, 1903.
2. Sir E. Howard: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.49.
3. See above, p.30.

Constantinople and Tehran, before joining Lord Cromer's staff at Cairo. By then he had obtained the rank of Secretary of Legation, and he wrote to his friend Villiers on September 22, 1901:

"My dear Francis,

"... By the way, most kind and remindful of men, would it be in your opinion possible to suggest to Eric that if there are promotions going from Secretary of Legation to Secretary of Embassy, I might be remembered? I say this because I hear Rodd gets promoted and he entered the service after me: although he is next before me in the diplomatic service. But I don't make any request as I daresay it would affect other people unjustly. But my promotion would cost nothing."¹

At the beginning of 1903 Spring Rice confided to Lord Rosebery that "I have told Lord Cromer that I am tired of doing nothing and shall take the first opportunity of going back to the regular service. There is nothing to do here."² Shortly afterwards Hardinge was transferred from St Petersburg to the Foreign Office, and Spring Rice was appointed Secretary of Embassy in his place. Scott wrote to the Foreign Office on February 5:

"My dear Sanderson,

"... Eric Barrington write to me that I am to have Spring Rice as Hardinge's successor - I am very glad to hear this.

"... you could not, from the little I know of Spring Rice, have sent me a better man to replace him"³

As Anglo-Russian and Russo-Japanese relations deteriorated at the end of 1903 Spring Rice was kept busy at St Petersburg.

1. FO 800/23/p.220. Spring Rice to Villiers, September 22, 1901.
2. Rosebery Papers Box 77, p.145. Spring Rice to Rosebery, January 8, 1903.
3. British Museum Add. MS 52304, p.51. Scott to Sanderson, February 5, 1903.

During Scott's leave he had "rather an anxious Chargéship: much helped," as he himself admitted, "by Louis Mallet who is an extraordinarily sympathetic ... friend."¹ Spring Rice's outstanding ability marked him out as the other possible successor to Hardinge at the Foreign Office.

In fact Hardinge felt that Rodd would be the better choice, while Bertie, who had worked with Rodd in Rome, opted for Spring Rice.

(15)

Sir Charles Scott, as we have seen, was given warning in the summer of 1903 that his appointment at St Petersburg would not be extended. That autumn Knollys, Bertie and Hardinge set in motion their next intrigue, using Royal influence, to secure the succession to Scott for Hardinge. They had to overcome an initial obstacle, because the King wanted to send Bertie to St Petersburg. Bertie was on leave in England "et le Roi a dit quelques temps ... à Bertie qu'il voudrait le voir, lui Bertie, à Pétersbourg. Bertie, tout en répondant qu'il irait où il plairait à Sa Majesté, ajoute que, dans ce cas, il devrait aller seul à Pétersbourg, lady Feodorovna (Bertie) étant d'une trop faible santé pour l'y accompagner."² Bertie added that he thought Hardinge would be a better appointment to St Petersburg, and wrote to tell his friend Knollys. The latter replied on

1. Strachey Papers 13/14/4. Spring Rice to Strachey, December 25, 1903.
2. G. Louis: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.135. Note by Louis, August 25, 1910.

November 28, 1903:

"My dear Frank,

"Thanks for your letter.

"I knew what the King's ideas now were concerning the appointments in question, and I had intended writing to you about St Petersburg to relieve your mind. If Lansdowne would consent to the app.t which like you I doubt, I cannot help thinking C. Hardinge would be the best man for the Post.

"He knows the Russians and the questions which affect them and us, and moreover he is 'sound' on these questions. He is also a 'strong' man, and combines I think strength of character with tact which is not always the case.

"The President, Hay and Senator Lodge are all so anxious that Spring Rice should go to Washington as Secretary of Embassy, that it seems to me not unlikely that some arrangement might be made for his going there. Moreover I hear that he is not a good man of business and w.d not therefore do well at the F.O. Putting him aside, who would do there, as you doubt Rodd's capacity or fitness for the Post?"¹

Knollys explained the situation to Hardinge three days later, on December 1:

"My dear Hardinge,

"Frank Bertie was at Castle Rising last week when the King was there, and he was told by H.M. that he intended to bring your name forward for the Embassy at St Petersburg.

"Bertie thinks that Rodd would not be 'stiff' enough for your place at the F.O. and adheres to his opinion as to the fitness of Spring Rice for the Post. I think he is wrong, besides which, as I told him, the President, Hay and Senator Lodge all are anxious that he (S. Rice) should be moved to Washington, as Secr. of Embassy of course."²

But, as Villiers wrote on the following day, December 2, Spring Rice was not be posted to Washington:

1. FO 800/163/p.130. Knollys to Bertie, November 28, 1903.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.1. Knollys to Hardinge, December 1, 1903.

"My dear Springy,

"... I want to let you know that when Senator Lodge was here for the Alaska boundary business he urged both Lord Lansdowne and Mr Balfour that you should be transferred to Washington as Sec. of Embassy. He has since written to Lord L. saying that the President approved his recommendation and abounded in the same sense. Lord L. looking at the matter from a purely service point of view was unable to entertain the idea because he c.d not spare you from St Petersburg. So you have scored heavily all round, much to my satisfaction.

"Mallet asked me whether from a private point of view you would have liked the transfer. I said not... Was I right?..."¹

Bertie's reluctance to go to St Petersburg did not signify any desire on his part to remain in Rome. On the contrary, he had set his sights on obtaining the Paris Embassy, which was due to be vacated by Sir Edmund Monson at the end of 1904. By the end of 1903 the negotiations for an Anglo-French Convention were reaching maturity, and Anglo-German relations were steadily deteriorating. Bertie wanted to be Ambassador at Paris for political as well as personal reasons. Similarly Hardinge had for long been anxious to bring about an Anglo-Russian agreement, and his appointment as Ambassador at St Petersburg would also suit him politically as well as personally. We shall see later that during 1904 and 1905 Russia collapsed both from within and without, thereby providing Germany with a unique and unexpected opportunity to move towards a European domination, and thereby lending Anglo-French and Anglo-Russian relations a new importance. Though this is looking ahead, Bertie and Hardinge undoubtedly considered it important that they themselves should be the

1. FO 800/23/p.233. Villiers to Spring Rice, December 2, 1903.

British Ambassadors in the capitals of England's new and imminent friends. It will be useful to remember this political aspect when examining the course of the future intrigues after this stage. From about 1903-04 when Anglo-German relations seriously deteriorated, and particularly from 1904-05 when the power of Russia was temporarily destroyed, Bertie and Hardinge began to further not only their own careers but also those of some of their colleagues. It was for this reason that the men who began to occupy the more influential posts in the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service increasingly shared the new suspicion of German foreign policy, and were thus able to implement personally the policies that they began to advocate.

(16)

That December, the plan they had been advocating for sending Hardinge to St Petersburg and Bertie to Paris, and effecting a reconciliation with the two Powers in the face of the German menace, began to take shape, as Hardinge described to Bertie on December 4:

"My dear Frank,

"... I followed you at Windsor and there heard of the King's suggestion that you should go to St. P. but I told Knollys that I felt sure that Lady Feo's health would not permit it and that you would be badly wanted at Paris. Apparently he told the King and I took the opportunity of pushing your name for Paris when the King talked to me. I have since heard that the King intends to push me for St. P. which is very flattering and which of course I should like, but I anticipate great opposition on the part of Lansdowne who finds me useful and would like to keep me where I am.

"I can however regard the situation calmly as I have done nothing to push my name forward and do not intend to move

in the matter. I should like it very much however for many reasons and feel sure I could do the job at St. P. quite as well as anybody else. Nicolson has always been in my opinion the most likely candidate for Scott's succession, but his wife would certainly be a great drawback as she shuns society and dresses like a housemaid. Knollys has already been discussing my successor and I suggested Rodd while I hear that you think he would not do, but I know that Lamps dislikes Spring Rice and would probably do all he could to prevent him coming in. I think however that there is no hurry about the settlement of this point as it is very far from certain that there will be a vacancy in the office.

"Lansdowne asked me to interview Benckendorff at Windsor ... and I for the first time believed that it might be possible to come to an agreement ... and the negotiations are really making some progress now ... there is nothing like trying."¹

Shortly afterwards the King decided to see Lord Lansdowne and personally press the appointment of Hardinge to St Petersburg. Lansdowne sent his Private Secretary, Eric Barrington, to ask Knollys what it was that the King wanted to discuss, and the latter reported on December 17:

"My dear Hardinge,

"E. Barrington came to see me today and in the course of conversation he asked me what the topics were on which the King wished to see Ld. Lansdowne tomorrow. I mentioned several of them and among others that of the Embassy at St Petersburg. I then took advantage of the opportunity to tell him plainly that the King wished you to go there and he (B) admitted at once very 'nicely' that you would be the best man for the Post, but added that as you had been so short a time at the F.O. it would create another bouleversement (as he called it) were you to leave it now. I asked him if you did not go whom he would suggest and he mentioned the names of Nicholson (sic) and Goschen,² but not at all enthusiastically, admitting that the first had no 'presence' and that the second would be hardly up to the Post.

1. FO 800/163/p.131. Hardinge to Bertie, December 4, 1903.
2. Goschen was the Minister at Copenhagen.

"However the King told me this evening ... that he did not intend to give way about you, and he sc...ed (illegible) the idea of Goschen.

"I have told the King of my conversation with Barrington.

"I asked the King this evening whether he did not think the St. Petersburg question ought to be settled as soon as possible, and he quite agreed."¹

Although the King saw Lansdowne on December 18 nothing positive was arranged, as Knollys wrote to inform Bertie five days later:

"My dear Frank,

"... As regards the St Petersburg Embassy, nothing has yet been settled, except that it is not to be offered to you. But the King has spoken both to Balfour and Lansdowne in favour of C. Hardinge, and I think it will end by his being appointed.

"The King as you know is opposed to Nicolson going, and Goschen, whose name has been brought forward, is from what I hear a second sort of Scott. The difficulty I fancy at the F.O. is to find a really good successor to Hardinge for they don't appear to be very enthusiastic about either Spring-Rice or Rodd."²

The following day, Hardinge also wrote to Bertie, and in a long letter described the situation as he saw it:

"My dear Frank,

"... If Paris and St. P. were to fall vacant at the present moment I think there is no doubt that you and I would get them but what will happen in three months and nine months it is impossible to foresee. I told you in my last letter that I thought there was a Cabal amongst the higher officials in the F.O. against your getting St. P. (sic. Paris?) and I will tell you why I think so. Eric evidently came to tout me one day about Petersburg and when I said that of course I would like to get it he went on the old track of saying that I could not be spared at present but that if Lascelles went to Paris I should have a very good chance of Berlin. I retorted that I did not

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.3. Knollys to Hardinge, December 17, 1903.
2. FO 800/176/p.169. Knollys to Bertie, December 23, 1903.

think that Lascelles would go to Paris and if he did I failed to see that I could not be spared in April if I could be spared in October. My idea is that if the King protested as he certainly would against Lascelles leaving Berlin they would try to conciliate him by telling him that I would do all right to take his place. However I wrote privately to Francis Knollys and told him of what Eric had said and I have since heard that the King intends to stick to his guns. At the present moment there is no doubt that the King is determined on your going to Paris and on my going to St. P. We have a very good mutual friend in Knollys who will I feel sure do his utmost to keep the King up to the mark. The King told me at Windsor that he would not hear of Lascelles being moved.

"I also hear that Lansdowne is determined to get rid of Villiers and send him to a Legation, possibly Lisbon. He gets more hopeless every day and it is astonishing how disliked he is by all the younger men at the F.O.

"As for Rodd, I do not see what he is to get. I do not gather that he can expect much support in the F.O. For instance, Lansdowne would not hear of his going to Athens and as far as I can see Bunsen's post¹ will not be vacant before the late autumn at earliest, and I shall not be surprised if, in the event of my making a vacancy at the F.O., it is filled by Maxwell.² The fact is the Rodds suffer from swelled heads and I do not see what he has done to deserve promotion after only two years as Secretary of Embassy. If he goes in for Parliament he will have the advantage of finding his own level there.

"... I agree with you in thinking that the less our friends talk the better for us."³

At the beginning of 1904 Hardinge took some leave from the Foreign Office and had leisure to keep Bertie fully informed of developments. It had, as we have seen, been decided to move Villiers from the Foreign Office to a Legation abroad,⁴ partly because he was considered inefficient, and partly also because he was not considered to be a suitable successor to Sanderson

1. Secretary of Embassy at Paris.
2. A Senior Clerk in the Foreign Office.
3. FO 800/163/p.134. Hardinge to Bertie, December 24, 1903.
4. See also FO 800/23/p.218. Spring Rice to Villiers, September 15, 1901.

as Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office. It had now also become necessary to think of an eventual successor to Sir Francis Plunkett, the aged Ambassador at Vienna, who was due to retire in 1905. Hardinge wrote to Bertie on January 2, 1904:

"My dear Frank,

"... my experience of affairs over which Villiers has control is that they are generally in arrear. It generally takes him an hour to do what other people can do in ten minutes. Ld. L. is of the same opinion as you as to Lisbon being too good a post for Villiers and thinks he might do all right at Stockholm or The Hague. I know that the King's idea is that Nicolson should succeed you at Rome and that Gosselin should go to Vienna. I think these moves would be excellent in every way. I do not think that the French would care very much to have as English Ambassador a man who is 'persona gratissima' with the German Emperor, but what I consider to be your strongest card is that I know that the King will not hear of Lascelles going to Paris as there is nobody who can properly fill his place at Berlin. The King will, I believe, be very firm on this point, and I will do my best to keep him up to the mark. Your greatest ally however is Knollys who has very decided views as to L. remaining at Berlin and your going to Paris.

"... I have heard nothing further of my own prospects and do not expect to hear more for some time, but the Favorita told Humphry a few days ago that I am to have a big post shortly."¹

Some days later, Hardinge again wrote:

"My dear Frank,

"... As far as I know there is no question of Rodd or Spring Rice succeeding me. I think the opinion at the F.O. is that neither would do...

"I had an hour's talk with the King a few days ago and I found him as strong as ever on the subject of your

1. FO 800/183/p.141. Hardinge to Bertie, January 2, 1904. The Favorita was Mrs George Keppel; Humphry was Hardinge's brother-in-law, brother of Bena Hardinge.

going to Paris and I dinned into him that there is nobody else. If there should be a change of Govt. you will probably be all right with Rosebery at the F.O."¹

By January 1904 Russia and Japan were on the verge of war, and it began to be said that at such a time it would be unwise to replace the British Ambassador at St Petersburg. In these circumstances it was just possible that Hardinge's proposed appointment would not take place after all. Nevertheless Bertie and Hardinge still gave thought to the question of finding a successor for the latter's post at the Foreign Office, as may be seen from Hardinge's next letter to Bertie, dated January 11:

"My dear Frank,

"... As regards the St. Petersburg succession I think it is not unlikely that the F.O. will use the arguments you mentioned for postponing any decision although Lansdowne has more than once expressed to me his lack of confidence in Scott. I may possibly hear something from Francis Knollys when I get back to London as it has been only through him that I have heard anything of the discussions which have taken place on the subject. In any case the question has to be settled one way or the other very shortly, and I must possess my soul in patience... Eric (Barrington) is quite hopeless...

"... I hear that old Lamps would like to have me back again already but I turn a deaf ear to all such hints and intend to have my leave just as much as anybody else. I go back to the fold on the 20th.

"I will bear in mind what you say about my succession at the F.O. if it becomes vacant, but until then I can do absolutely nothing unless my opinion is asked. I also have a very high opinion of Walter Townley and I know him well as I worked with him for more than three years in Paris, and I think he is worth six Rodds. I believe he is at present destined for the post of 1st Secy at Constantinople."²

Townley himself wrote to Satow two days later:

1. FO 800/183/p.145. Hardinge to Bertie, undated.
2. FO 800/163/p.137. Hardinge to Bertie, January 11, 1904.

"My dear Sir Ernest,

"... Of course you have heard that Sir Charles Scott retires in March. There is considerable speculation as to who his successor will be. At Petersburg I found that Charles Hardinge was distinctly favourite, but in London I am told that is not at all the opinion of the Foreign Office... Perhaps ... (Villiers) may get the Embassy."¹

The question remained in suspense for the rest of January and the first half of February. Scott was naturally anxious to know the name of his successor, while Spring Rice, who was engaged to be married to Lascelles's daughter Florence, was anxious to make preparations for his wedding. On January 21 Sir Charles Scott wrote to the Foreign Office:

"My dear Sanderson,

"... Have you any idea of who will be my successor here? - I am interested as I am making my preparations for vacating this Embassy in April - selling furniture etc - and Spring Rice in view of his marriage is also personally interested in my movements."²

By January 26 even Knollys had to report to Bertie that "nothing yet settled about the St. Petersburg Embassy,"³ but on the following day Sanderson explained the situation:

"My dear Scott,

"In reply to your enquiry as to your successor.

"Nothing has been settled yet but everything as far as I can see points to Charley Hardinge. The King I am told is strongly in favour of him and Balfour and Lord Lansdowne not unfavourable.

"I am afraid Nicolson and some others will be greatly disappointed and for Hardinge's own sake I would rather that it should have come two years or so later. But

1. PRO 30/33/9/15. Townley to Satow, January 13, 1904.
2. FO 800/115/p.259. Scott to Sanderson, January 21, 1904.
3. FO 800/183/p.151. Knollys to Bertie, January 26, 1904.

there can be no doubt that in many ways he has great advantages. He has not been spoken to yet and is at this moment in bed with an attack of blood poisoning supposed to be the result of eating a bad oyster - So pray do not mention what I say to anyone until I write again. I have told Lord Lansdowne that it would be considerate to let you know as soon as possible when the selection is made."¹

On February 8, 1904, the Russo-Japanese War broke out, and Hardinge wrote to keep Bertie informed:

"My dear Frank,

"... I do not know whether current events will modify Lord L's decision as to Scott's retirement in April, but as the war is likely to last a year or two, it seems to me it would be better to hasten rather than delay it. I heard from Knollys quite privately that things were going all right as regards St. P. but it appears that it would be rash for me to build my hopes on it in view of the uncertainties raised by the war and also by the apparent weakness of the govt. I hope very much it will come out all right as I am most anxious to get that post, though under present circumstances it would not be a very pleasant one.

"I cannot think that the rumour of Rodd having refused Dresden can be correct as I do not think there has been any question of Gough being moved, but I hear privately that Rodd made himself disliked in Paris by prospecting there for Bunsen's post, and that the F.O. are annoyed about it. I do not see any prospect of Bunsen's post being vacant till next autumn when Nicolson may get your succession at Rome and he may get Tangier."²

It was not until the evening of February 13 that Lansdowne finally saw Hardinge and offered him the Embassy at St Petersburg. The following day Hardinge wrote to Bertie:

"My dear Frank,

"... I am now able to tell you that Ld. Lansdowne offered St. P. to me last night which I of course accepted.

1. British Museum Add. MS 52299, p.164. Sanderson to Scott, January 27, 1904.
2. FO 800/176/p.174. Hardinge to Bertie, February 8, 1904.

He told me he had hesitated to let me go on account of the weakness of those at the top,¹ and he said that he saw no reason for prolonging Scott during the war which might last any time, especially as I know everybody at St. P. and the work as well. He was awfully nice about it and in fact made me the offer in a most charming way. It is to be kept secret for a few days... I believe I am to go out there towards the end of April.

"Now I have been saying to myself that if I had not got my post in the F.O. last year I should still have been 1st Sec y at St. P. and that as it was you who got me the post at the F.O. I am really more indebted to you than to anybody else for the Embassy at St. P. for without your assistance towards the F.O. I should never have got to St. P. I assure you I am more grateful to you than I can say for all that you did for me which has been a stepping stone for me to good fortune. Francis Knollys has also been an excellent friend to me, as also the King...

"... My opinion is that there is a certain amount of obstruction at the top of the F.O. to that idea (i.e. Bertie's transfer to Paris), but I am quite convinced that the King will override it all, as now that Lascelles is put on the shelf there is absolutely no other candidate in the field. My only fear on the subject is that the govt, to judge by the stupid way they are going on, will be put out of office before long in which case it will be impossible to foresee who will be at the F.O. and what his ideas may be, but your safeguard is the King and I feel certain that he will get his own way."²

1. See India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/179/285. Chisol to Curzon, January 7, 1904: "I am sorry Charlie Hardinge has been away all this time on a holiday. His influence with Lord Lansdowne is considerable and very useful."
2. FO 800/176/p.176. Hardinge to Bertie, February 14, 1904. Hardinge wrote in his memoirs: "It was on the 1st December 1903 that I learnt for the first time from Lord Knollys that the King intended to put my name forward as a successor to Sir C. Scott, Ambassador in Russia, whose mission was to terminate in the spring of 1904. To me it was a most unexpected surprise. Again I heard a fortnight later that, when my appointment had been mooted to Sir E. Barrington, Lord Lansdowne's Private Secretary, who had demurred on account of my alleged usefulness at the Foreign Office, the King had definitely stated that he intended to insist upon my appointment. It was on the 15th (sic) February that the post was offered to me by Lord Lansdowne and, of course, accepted with enthusiasm." Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.97-98.

Two days later Hardinge also wrote to Sir Charles Scott:

"My dear Scott,

"Greatly to my surprise I have been offered the Embassy at St. Petersburg in succession to you, which offer I have of course accepted, and am naturally very much flattered. This information is at present private and unofficial, but I would not have liked you to hear the news from anybody else. I fear that I shall be coming at a difficult time, but I have had the advantage of nearly five years at St. P. under you and consequently it is not 'terra incognita' while my year at the F.O. has given me greater experience and a larger insight into the views of the Govt and F.O. which should be of use to me. I shall hope to have a talk and your advice later.

"Winifred sends her love to Lady Scott and asks me to say that she will miss her too dreadfully in St. P.."¹

Meanwhile King Edward wrote to his friend "Charlie" that "I have long wished that you should occupy the post of Ambassador at St. Petersburg and am delighted."² Lansdowne wrote on February 19:

1. British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.127. Hardinge to Scott, February 16, 1904. See also FO 800/12/p.50. Hardinge to Lascelles, February 17, 1904: "Private. You have always been so kind to me that I think you may perhaps be pleased to hear that I have been offered, and have naturally accepted, the Embassy at St. Petersburg in succession to Scott. It has been a great surprise to me and I feel very much flattered at being chosen to fill so difficult a post at the present moment. My wife is so pleased to think that she will have Miss Lascelles as a companion there and I too am delighted that she and Springy will both be with us. The news is not yet to be made public." Also Rosebery Papers Box 79, p.18. Hardinge to Rosebery, March 7, 1904: "Very many thanks for your very nice and most welcome letter. It is just because you have always shown me so much kindness that, as soon as all the formalities were finally settled, I wished particularly to tell you myself of my appointment before it was announced in the Press. Whatever success or good fortune I may have had during the last few years I always feel most grateful to you for having given me such a good start."
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.7. King Edward VII to Hardinge, February 15, 1904.

"Dear Sir Charles Scott,

"You will, I have no doubt, be glad to know the name of your successor as early as possible. I therefore send you a line to say that the King has decided to appoint Charles Hardinge. I have mentioned the selection in confidence to Benckendorff who is going to St. Petersburg for a few days. I mentioned to him, by the King's desire, that His Majesty thought this selection would be agreeable to the Emperor, as Hardinge was well known to H.I.M. as well as to our King, while Mrs Hardinge was one of the Queen's ladies.

"They are bound under present circumstances to find their position a difficult one, and I think you are rather to be congratulated on the conclusion of your term of Office in view of the ready credence which appears to be given in Russia to the baseless charges against us in the foreign press.

"I doubt whether you should ask for the Emperor's formal 'agrément' to the new appointment until shortly before you leave St. Petersburg which, as I understand, you propose to do at the end of April. The exact date is however a matter in which you will of course consult your own convenience."

(17)

Hardinge's appointment to St Petersburg created a vacant Assistant Under-Secretaryship in the Foreign Office. He and Bertie had not been able to agree to press for the promotion of either Spring Rice or Rodd, and the idea of choosing Walter Townley had never come to anything. There were in fact only two real candidates - Harry Farnall and Eldon Gorst.

1. British Museum Add. MS 52297, p.126. Lansdowne to Scott, February 19, 1904. See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/179/289a. Chisolm to Curzon, February 17, 1904: "Charlie Hardinge is going to St. Petersburg - to my mind the best appointment that could be made. The exhibition poor old Scott makes of himself in the last Manchuria Bluebook is really too pitiable. He leaves at the end of April."

Farnall was a Senior Clerk in the Foreign Office and had been Hardinge's main rival for the Assistant Under-Secretaryship a year earlier. This time Sanderson and Villiers were determined that he should obtain the promotion.

Gorst was a diplomatist who had joined Lord Cromer's staff at the Agency in Cairo and had recently been in London helping to negotiate the details of the proposed Anglo-French Convention. Cromer, who had a very high opinion of Gorst, wanted him "to hold an appointment at home to fit him for his (Cromer's) succession at Cairo,"¹ and had persuaded the King to support his candidature.² Lansdowne had earlier promised the next vacancy to Farnall but was prevailed upon by the King to give it to Gorst.

On February 21, 1904, shortly after his own appointment to St Petersburg, Hardinge turned his attention to his successor at the Foreign Office, and wrote to his friend Bertie:

"My dear Frank,

"Very many thanks for your letter. I felt sure that you would be pleased at my promotion.

"The question of my successor is being discussed at the F.O. and Sanderson is running Farnall for all that he is worth. On the other hand the King told me as a secret that it is already settled that Gorst is to succeed me. Nobody knows it at the F.O. but I believe Lansdowne is lying low, and that it has been settled between him, Cromer and the King. Lamps and Co will have a rude facer later on but I cannot help thinking that it will be rather a good appointment. He has plenty of grit, and as for ability he is second to none. My only criticism of him is that he is

1. British Museum Add. MS 48682, p.1. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, March 4, 1904.
2. Cromer and the King did not, however, like each other. For example Cromer's son, Lord Errington, once wrote that "H.M... hates my Father like the devil!" See Guildford Muniment Room 173/24/59. Errington to Cranley, July 8, 1908.

a little hairy-heeled. We all know that Farnall is possessed of all the virtues that are known, but I really think that those who recommend a man like him for the post of Under Secretary at the F.O. are guilty of levity and are not aware of what is required for the incumbent of such a post. You would have laughed if you had seen Lamps the other day when I told him my private opinion that Villiers was quite useless and that that was the prevalent opinion in the F.O. I added that I was quite confident that he would never be appointed to be head of the Office under the present régime, and that he would be lucky if he got a Legation. I heard afterwards that he had made inquiries on the F.O. which confirmed my views and the deduction which he made was that his term of office must be prolonged beyond the age limit. It is very extraordinary how little he knows of the Office and of the general opinions there."¹

Shortly afterwards, on March 2, Hardinge wrote again:

"My dear Frank,

"The 'agrément' to my appointment to St. P. has arrived, so I imagine that it will be published forthwith. Gorst's appointment is a 'secret de polichinelle' which has not aroused much enthusiasm in this office. Lamps is in fact disgusted and I am told that as a protest he refuses to write the minute of appointment. It appears that at the time of my appointment he gave some assurance to Farnall that he should get the next, and he is annoyed at seeing that it is worth no more than the many Russian assurances that we know of."²

Nine days later Hardinge added that "the irritation against Gorst's appointment as my successor continues but he is quite able to look after himself and is sufficiently strong to make his influence felt when he gets here."³

While the irritation in the Foreign Office continued Lord Lansdowne sought hurriedly to find an alternative post for Farnall. Lord Cromer was very keen to have the Count de Salis transferred to his staff at Cairo, and wrote to Lansdowne on the

1. FO 800/183/p.153. Hardinge to Bertie, February 21, 1904.
2. FO 800/183/p.161. Hardinge to Bertie, March 2, 1904.
3. FO 800/183/p.163. Hardinge to Bertie, March 11, 1904.

subject on March 4.¹ Lansdowne, however, decided that Farnall should obtain Gorst's Egyptian post as compensation, and sent a telegram to this effect. Cromer immediately gave way, but sent a protest that "Foreign Office exigencies take precedence of local considerations,"² and pointed out that "Farnall cannot be named officially until Gorst occupies his F.O. place, as the salary will not be available till then."³ On March 27 Lansdowne sent the following letter of explanation:

"My dear Cromer,

"Amid my more serious preoccupations arising out of the French negotiation, I have been greatly exercised in my mind over the Caisse appointment, nor am I by any means rendered happy by your decision not to press me further for De Salis. I had quite made up my mind that you were to have him, and, having had my growl, I should not have given the matter a further thought. Nevertheless, I am glad you have consented to take Farnall. He is far senior to De Salis, and has done a lot of able and honest work for us. He has just missed an Under-Secretaryship, and is, I know, disappointed and anxious for a change. What made matters worse for me was that it was known in the Office that I wished to put in one of the seniors, and my face would have been somewhat blackened if I had not done so... But I will say no more on this subject, except that it vexed me to differ from you with regard to it, and no one feels more strongly than I do how much is due to the 'man on the spot' in all such cases of selection."⁴

On the same day Hardinge wrote to explain the situation to Bertie:

"My dear Frank,

"... Farnall is going to Egypt to succeed Corbett at the Caisse. There was a struggle between Lansdowne and Cromer over it but Lansdowne won the day. Larcom will be disappointed as he hoped to get it. This has removed Farnall from the possibility of being Under Sec.y which I think is

1. FO 633/6/p.327/no. 342. Cromer to Lansdowne, March 4, 1904.
2. FO 633/6/p.328/no. 343. Cromer to Lansdowne, March 20, 1904.
3. FO 800/124/p.183. Cromer to Lansdowne, Tel., March 26, 1904.
4. FO 633/7/p.127/no. 190. Lansdowne to Cromer, March 27, 1904.

a good thing as he is too grotesque, and perhaps the Egyptians will think that his high heels, tight pants and flowing ties are the latest things in 'chic.'¹

(18)

Hardinge's promotion to St Petersburg caused considerable resentment in the Diplomatic Service, where it was widely felt that the King ought not to intervene as he had. Eyre Crowe, for example, was "critical of Edward VII for insistence on reviving the royal authority, which the failing Queen had allowed to lapse." He remarked that "the King must be taught that he is a pawn in the game."² The chief sufferers were Goschen, the Minister at Copenhagen, and Nicolson, who was still at Tangier. Rennell Rodd apparently also complained and threatened to leave the Service, as Hardinge wrote to Bertie on March 2:

"My dear Frank,

"... I wonder what Rodd now thinks. There will be no vacancy until October and Bunsen will be a difficult man to pass over. He won't leave though! Any more than Goschen who I hear announces his intention to do so if I go to St. P. These threats frighten nobody."³

Hardinge continued on March 11 that "Goschen at Copenhagen is like a bear with a sore head and has been writing angry letters to Sanderson in which he will come off second best. That sort of thing never can do any man good."⁴ On March 27 he wrote to Bertie again:

1. FO 800/183/p.177. Hardinge to Bertie, March 27, 1904. See also Appendix II.
2. Lord Vansittart: "The Mist Procession." p.46.
3. FO 800/183/p.161. Hardinge to Bertie, March 2, 1904.
4. FO 800/183/p.163. Hardinge to Bertie, March 11, 1904,

"My dear Frank,

"The only two grumblers that I have heard of who protest against my appointment are Goschen and Greene but nobody could possibly take either of them seriously. The latter when protesting in a letter to Eric spoke of me as an outsider imported into the service, an expression which amused me somewhat, since nobody could be a more rank outsider than he is in every sense of the word."¹

Shortly afterwards Hardinge wrote proudly that "Goschen has complained that he is being 'Hardingised' by not getting St. P.."²

Nicolson, however, seemed to accept the new moves without protest, as Valentine Chirol wrote on March 25, from Tangier:

"My dear Lascelles,

"... This is a perfect haven of repose. The Nicolsn are themselves a picture of placid domestic felicity... He hopes for Rome if Bertie gets Paris, but he takes things philosophically, and does not grumble at all about Hardinge's appointment which he cordially agrees is an excellent one. They will have to find another post for him, whatever happens, for as soon as the Anglo-French agreement is concluded, our position here will be so radically altered that neither in the public interest, nor in fairness to him, could they leave him here to inaugurate a new régime which must necessarily be a diminutio capitis for the Brit. representative in Morocco."³

(19)

Now that Hardinge had obtained the Embassy at St Petersburg the Royal faction began to look ahead and make plans for Bertie's appointment to the Embassy at Paris. Hardinge informed Bertie

1. FO 800/183/p.177. Hardinge to Bertie, March 27, 1904.
2. FO 800/183/p.185. Hardinge to Bertie, April 5, 1904.
3. FO 800/12/p.67. Chirol to Lascelles, March 25, 1904. See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/179/305. Chirol to Curzon, March 26, 1904: "He (Nicolson) has been here now over 8 years, and is beginning to look anxiously for promotion. The King in fact held out to him hopes of St Petersburg when he was at Gib. last spring, but he has taken Hardinge's appointment very well and agrees that it is an excellent one."

on March 27, 1904, that "I think that people at last realise that it lies between you and an outsider. I am glad to say that there is a very strong feeling at the F.O. against outsiders."¹ Rodd had let it be known that he also was a candidate for Paris, but it was suspected that he was being pushed forward by his wife, who happened to be an octroon. Consequently Hardinge added to his letter to Bertie: "Lady Rodd is to produce a black baby this week. It is a pity that he is so entirely under her thumb."¹

The British Ambassador at Paris was Sir Edmund Monson. After a career as Minister at Buenos Ayres,² Copenhagen, Athens and Brussels, he had been appointed Ambassador at Vienna in 1893. He had rejected both the St Petersburg and Berlin Embassies³ but had accepted the Paris Embassy in the summer of 1896,⁴ where he had remained ever since. Although the Anglo-French Convention was negotiated during his appointment at Paris, he was "hardly on speaking terms with Delcassé"⁵ and he was approaching the age of 70. On February 23, 1904, he sent the following letter to Bertie, after a conversation with Reginald Lister:

"My dear Bertie,

"... I have a horror of appearing to make mischief, but I have told Reggie Lister, and I think myself bound to

1. FO 800/183/p.177. Hardinge to Bertie, March 27, 1904. Cf: India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/162/p.80/no.19. G. Hamilton to Curzon, April 3, 1903; and India Office Library MS Eur. F/102/21/p.76. Curzon to Godley, May 20, 1903.
2. For an amusing incident, see Lord F. Hamilton: "The Vanished Poms of Yesterday." p.259-263.
3. Salisbury Papers E/Monson/23. Monson to Salisbury, August 14, 1895.
4. See, e.g., British Museum Add. MS 51255. A. Paget to Paget, July 3, 1896.
5. Rosebery Papers Box 77, p.145. Spring Rice to Rosebery, January 8, 1903.

tell you, that Lily Rodd (those octoroons have apparently all of them floral names) was, as usual, discussing service changes at a dinner party the other day, and her interlocuter was Asquith, who, it is stated, said to her that although if the present Govt were in office when I vacate this Embassy, you would almost certainly be my successor, you would not be the choice of the Liberals if a change of Govt put them in power. Knowing that Reggie is intimate with Asquith I have told him this without hesitation, in order that he may find out if Lady R. is lying or not, and that he can counteract as far as he can her malicious intriguing."¹

Hardinge, however, sent the following advice from the Foreign Office on March 14:

"My dear Frank,

"... I would not bother my head, were I you, about the tactics of the Rodd faction. They are well known here and are of no avail. I happen to know that he is running for your succession, but he has not the very faintest chance of succeeding in getting it. He ran for my succession, but for that also he had not the slightest chance as Gorst had been decided upon long before the offer of St.P. was made to me.

"I have often thought that the only possible outsider for Paris who might receive the support of the King is Esher, but I have heard during the last few days from an absolutely reliable source that the Lansdownes are furious with Esher at the manner in which he has bundled out Roberts and his crew from the War Office, Charlie Fitzmaurice among them, so I do not think that Lansdowne will ever propose him!"²

During the spring and summer of 1904 Bertie and Hardinge continued to correspond about the proposed appointments to Paris in 1904 and Vienna in 1905. For example Hardinge wrote on April 4:

1. FO 800/183/p.157. Monson to Bertie, February 23, 1904.
2. FO 800/183/p.169. Hardinge to Bertie, March 14, 1904. For the bundling out of "Roberts and his crew from the War Office," see N. d'Ombraïn: "War Machinery and High Policy, 1902-1914." p.46.



"My dear Frank,

"I do not know where Gregg got his information. It is the first time that I have heard of the suggestion of Villiers for Vienna. In my own mind I think it is pretty certain that Gosselin will get it. He is the King's candidate and also the candidate of everybody else in the F.O. who has ever mentioned the subject to me. I think it quite possible that Lisbon may be offered to Villiers and he ought to be very much pleased with such an offer although I am sure he will make it a grievance. He is in my opinion absolutely useless.

"As regards Paris, I do not think Esher has much chance... It therefore reduces itself by elimination to you, and I still think that you are 1st favourite. Even some of your friends in the F.O., who are not your friends, realise that you are the only possible candidate. You will be interested to hear that a notice has been sent to Monson to the effect that he will be put on his pension on the 6th Oct.

"I have so far said nothing to Gorst resp. Lamps, Villiers and Co. and I do not know whether I shall say very much to him as I do not know him well enough to trust him. I am working at the F.O. till about the 15th or 16th and shall then leave off altogether.

"I expect to start for St. P. about the 6th or 7th May."¹

On the following day he added that "Lady Rodd will look foolish when Rodd is appointed to Tangier! a not at all improbable eventuality."²

In May Hardinge left for St Petersburg, and for the first time since the beginning of their intrigues, neither of the two men was in London to further their ambitions. Nevertheless, writing on May 11, the day before his departure, Hardinge felt confident of Bertie's chances of obtaining the Paris Embassy:

1. FO 800/183/p.181. Hardinge to Bertie, April 4, 1904.
2. FO 800/183/p.185. Hardinge to Bertie, April 5, 1904.

"My dear Frank,

"I am off to St. P. tomorrow and I have been so busy recently that I have not had time to write to you at all.

"I am able however to tell you that your interests are not being neglected here. When I saw the King on Sunday last he said to me 'I really must set to and get it settled that Bertie should go to Paris in Monson's place' and on inquiry I find that he said the same thing to Knollys. He added to me 'Lansdowne seems to me to be better disposed towards the idea than he was,' and from what I hear I really think this is the case. You have also a warm adherent in the Prince of Wales, not that he counts for much, as he told me that he was very keen about your appointment to Paris. I think that everything is progressing for you very favourably, and there seems to be now a general impression abroad that you will get Paris, but for Heaven's sake do not say to anybody that you are quite happy at Rome and do not want to move... You have enemies who would be only too glad to utilise such statements against you... and you have the example of Nicolson before you who, owing to similar statements, has been left to rot at Tangier...

"I am wondering whether Gorst will do well at the F.O. They have succeeded in reducing him to a position similar to that occupied by Gosselin... His political work is ... practically 'nil.' In my opinion his abilities will be wasted, but it is impossible to help a man who will not help himself, and he has voluntarily allowed himself to be reduced to the position of a nonentity...

"... The Govt is much stronger again and will go on for some time."¹

Writing from St Petersburg, on June 9, Hardinge remained confident of Bertie's chances:

"My dear Frank,

"... I do not think you need alarm yourself about your chances of Paris. I think they are extremely good and almost a certainty...

1. FO 800/183/p.194. Hardinge to Bertie, May 11, 1904. Cf: FO 800/183/p.177. Hardinge to Bertie, March 27, 1904: "I wonder whether Gorst will be a success in the F.O. He has of course heaps of ability, but I wonder whether he will like the routine work and do it."

"If the Goose gets Vienna which I think probable I believe Villiers will be shunted to Lisbon. Bad luck for Lisbon but a good riddance of a useless man from the F.O."¹

Despite the King's support and Hardinge's optimism, it was by no means definite that Bertie would obtain the Paris Embassy. Rumours spread that the Embassy had been offered to Lord Derby and Lord Cadogan, and even Lord Londonderry,² and although these proved to be unfounded Lord Onslow was still hoping for the appointment in the middle of June.³ Louis Mallet, who was Lord Lansdowne's Précis Writer, wrote on June 2:

"Dear Bertie,

"... The next Ambassador to Paris will have a great rôle to play. It has never been so necessary before to have someone there with his eyes open and above all open to German design. I hope it will be you."⁴

Bertie replied on June 11:

"My dear Mallet,

"You say that you hope that I may be the next Ambassador at Paris. Of course I should like to be but I know I am not the so-called 'Foreign Office candidate' any more than I was for this Embassy. The little man Lord L. did not mean me to come here and he does not want me to go to Paris...

"I do not think the Germans would like me to be at Paris... The Rodd faction have put about that I am not to remain at Rome, but this is with the expectation that he would become Ambassador here."⁵

Louis Mallet was now Bertie's chief correspondent in the Foreign Office. In his next letter, dated June 24, 1904, he was so

1. FO 800/176/p.185. Hardinge to Bertie, June 9, 1904.
2. Guildford Muniment Room 173/24/84. Onslow to Cranley, June 1, 1904.
3. Guildford Muniment Room 173/24/85. Onslow to Cranley, June 15, 1904.
4. FO 800/170/p.61. Mallet to Bertie, June 2, 1904.
5. FO 800/170/p.63. Bertie to Mallet, June 11, 1904.

confident that he asked Bertie whom he would like as Secretary of Embassy at Paris, in order to recommend his friend Reginald Lister:

"My dear Bertie,

"... From all that I hear, I fancy you can count on Paris as an absolute certainty though this is of course in confidence. Supposing de Bunsen got Tangier, who would you like in his place? Personally I think Regy is cut out for it and as Tounley (sic), who is only 2 above him, got his Secretaryship of Embassy last year, there would be nothing outrageous in this promotion. He knows everyone in Paris and is liked by French people and would, I should think be the greatest help to you. If you liked the idea, I fancy it could be worked possibly best through the Personage who is interested in you...

"I fear there is not much chance for an Embassy for Rodd just yet. I imagine he would sniff at Tangier even if they offered it to him; so he will have to wait. Possibly Lisbon might do for him if Gosselin went to Vienna."¹

Bertie answered Mallet's letter on June 29:

"My dear Mallet,

"Many thanks. I will not say a word. If your expectation turns out true, which naturally I hope, I think Reggie would be ideal as Secy or Councillor. The objection which would be put forward would be that he could not be given the rank of Minister so soon. I do not think that it is necessary. The only reason for the rank is facility for seeing the Minister for F.A. and I am sure that Reggie would be content to do a little waiting for interviews and for the rank till he had earned it. The rank ought to be the reward of merit and an inducement to a man to remain where he is useful and not to strive after Paris on account of the additional rank.

"You think that Rodd might perhaps sniff at Tangier and you talk of Bunsen perhaps getting it. I conclude therefore that you suppose that Nicolson would go to Rome.

"In the first place I do not consider Nicolson and wife (sic) at all suitable for Rome and if he be moved from Tangier there would be other places for which he would do. Rodd might sniff at Tangier but why more than Bunsen?

1. FO 800/183/p.198. Mallet to Bertie, June 24, 1904.

"MacDonald¹ is longing for Rome, at least he was, and he deserves well of his country. If there are valid reasons against his appointment I would choose Egerton or Goschen in preference to Nicolson. I certainly should offer Tangier to Rodd. If he declined there would be a good reason to leave him where he is for some time longer to take his turn in later promotion, and I should keep Bunsen at Paris until Plunkett's retirement next February produces another general post.

"I do not know what Madrid is like socially. Perhaps from that point of view the Nicolsons and Howards might pass muster...

"Copenhagen is a difficult post to fill on account of the royal family connection and I dare say that Buchanan or Johnstone might be preferred to Bunsen.

"It is important to get rid of Villiers from the F.O. if possible before the disappearance of Sanderson. Lisbon is an important place for our interests and I do not think that he is fit for the post. He might do at Tangier now that we have handed over Morocco to France, or at Munich, Dresden or Berne."²

During July and the first half of August Bertie remained in suspense about the Paris Embassy. Hardinge wrote from St Petersburg on July 21:

"My dear Frank,

"... Have you heard anything about Paris yet? I do hope that it is all right and that you will get it. It will I think be very difficult to get the King to consent to anybody else being appointed. Mind you let me know as soon as you hear anything."³

It was not until the middle of August that Lord Lansdowne finally made up his mind.

1. MacDonald was Minister at Tokio. See Appendix I.
2. FO 800/183/p.202. Bertie to Mallet, June 29, 1904.
3. FO 800/176/p.188. Hardinge to Bertie, July 21, 1904.

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The appointments to be considered were the new Ambassador at Paris, to replace Sir Edmund Monson, and the changes which would result from any general reshuffle of posts. The one thing that was clear was that Sir Arthur Nicolson would have to be transferred from Tangier, as a result of the altered British position in Morocco following the Anglo-French Convention of April 1904. Nicolson was in London at this time and "received very friendly assurances" from the King, but, as Chirol informed Hardinge on July 27, "the F.O. still holds its counsel with regard to impending moves."¹

At the beginning of August the Legation at Stockholm suddenly became vacant as well, and Hardinge wrote to Bertie on the 9th:

"My dear Frank,

"I hear that Bill Barrington has resigned. I wonder who will get Stockholm. I should think Bonham. I think it is not at all unlikely that Rodd will be offered Tangier, and this might have some attraction for Black Lily as she would there be comparatively white.

"I hope to hear before very long that you have got Paris. I do not well see who can be your rival... I believe Egerton will succeed you and Nicolson go to Madrid. Any other combination would be objectionable, although I think Nicolson ought to go to Rome instead of Egerton."²

On the following day Chirol wrote to tell Hardinge of the latest developments:

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.122. Chirol to Hardinge, July 27, 1904.
2. FO 800/176/p.190. Hardinge to Bertie, August 9, 1904.

"My dear Hardinge,

"... Monson has turned out of the Embassy which is now in the hands of the decorators etc. Cadogan's name is again being mentioned. Lady Howe went over to Paris and boldly asked the President to interest himself on behalf of His Ldp.; Loubet replied that Kings and Emperors could do that sort of thing, but not a humble President. George Murray¹ who had met Bertie at a previous week-end, told me last Sunday he thought B. might not be unwilling to come back to the F.O. when Lamps retires, if he does not get Paris - so sick does he profess to be of being abroad. 'In Downing Street one can at least pull the wires whereas an Ambassador is only a d-d marionette!'"²

A few days later the important decisions were finally arrived at.

First of all Rennell Rodd was promoted to be Minister at Stockholm.³ Then it was definitely decided to give Bertie the Paris Embassy from January 1, 1905. On August 15 Lansdowne sent a telegram to Madrid offering Egerton a transfer to Rome⁴ and, when this had been accepted, he sent the following letter, dated August 18:

"My dear Nicolson,

"You will remember our conversation at the Travellers.

"I hope you will find it agreeable to succeed Egerton at Madrid as from Jan. 1st of next year. If so, it will be a great pleasure to me to feel that I have been able to do something towards the recognition of the excellent work you have done for us in Morocco."⁵

1. George Murray was Joint Permanent Secretary of the Treasury.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.130. Chirol to Hardinge, August 10, 1904.
3. Sir R. Rodd: op. cit., Vol. 3, p.43-44; and Cartwright Papers. Rodd to Cartwright, August 14, 1904.
4. British Museum Add. MS 49747, p.111. Barrington to Sandars, August 16, 1904.
5. FO 800/336/p.39. Lansdowne to Nicolson, August 18, 1904. See Cartwright Papers. Gosselin to Cartwright, August 28, 1904; and Cartwright Papers. Cartwright to his father, September 3, 1904.

Nicolson had hoped to be given the Rome Embassy, but Chirol explained on September 7:

"My dear Lascelles,

"... So Nicolo has got his Embassy all right, though he will be a little disappointed that it isn't Rome. The explanation is that his knowledge of the Moroccan question will be so valuable in Madrid!"¹

Monson was very pleased that Bertie had been chosen as his successor, and wrote on August 23:

"Dear Lord Lansdowne,

"... I am personally delighted that my successor is to be Bertie, for whose abilities I have a very real admiration, and who is a friend of very long standing. It is also a pleasure to me that Lady Feo, whose father was my Chief here nearly fifty years ago, should have the opportunity of returning to her old home as its mistress."²

Lansdowne replied three days later that "I am very glad that Bertie's selection has been well received and particularly to find that you are yourself glad that he should follow you - I feel no doubt that he will do well."³

It is significant that from this point on the influence of Knollys seems to have declined. Nine days after Egerton was offered Rome, and eight days after Nicolson was offered Madrid, Knollys wrote:

"My dear Hardinge,

"... You will have seen in the newspapers that Frank Bertie has been appointed to Paris. I don't know what will

1. FO 800/12/p.112. Chirol to Lascelles, September 7, 1904.
2. FO 800/126/p.162. Monson to Lansdowne, August 23, 1904. Bertie "had married a daughter of the Lord Cowley who was Ambassador at Paris down to June, 1867." See Sir H.H. Johnston: op. cit., p.121.
3. FO 800/126/p.164. Lansdowne to Monson, August 26, 1904.

be settled about Rome, but I should think they cannot do better than move Egerton there and Nicolson to Madrid. The latter has in fact been as good as told that he is to have the next vacancy (Embassy)."¹

The appointment of Rodd to Stockholm meant that de Bunsen, the Secretary of Embassy at Paris, was passed over, but he wrote contentedly to Barrington on September 13:

"My dear Eric,

"... Thanks for what you say about Stockholm. I don't at all grudge Rodd his promotion. For choice I should personally prefer a more active post and I am well content to stay on here for the present - and to help inaugurate the new régime. Bertie is having a fieldday with Schomberg Macdonnell."²

"For service reasons" Rodd "was not to proceed to my new post for some little time,"³ but it was nevertheless decided to give his post as Secretary of Embassy at Rome to Reginald Lister. Walter Townley, who was passed over and remained at Constantinople, wrote to Satow on September 30:

"My dear Sir Ernest,

"... Reggie Lister has got Rome, an appointment that will call forth much grumbling, as though his intelligence is recognized, his advancement is considered to be due to Court influence, and he jumps over eight men without having done much publicly to deserve such a leap... Bunsen is to get a move next summer, he says, presumably he will fill the place that will be vacated by the fortunate individual

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.144. Knollys to Hardinge, August 24, 1904. See also Appendix III for another incident at this time.
2. FO 800/126/p.173. de Bunsen to Barrington, September 13, 1904. Schomberg Macdonnell was a former private secretary of Lord Salisbury, and was now the Secretary to the Office of Works. His rows with Bertie concerning the house and grounds of the Paris Embassy were to be frequent in the coming years.
3. Sir R. Rodd: op. cit., Vol. 3, p.43-44.

who gets Vienna: I say fortunate because with the filling of Vienna all the Embassies will have an occupant for at least five years."¹

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The "service reasons" that kept Rodd at Rome were the failing health of Sanderson, and the absence on leave of Bertie. Sanderson "was a man of vast knowledge and complete competence, but he belonged emphatically to the old school"² and had been deeply disturbed by the recent successful intrigues of Bertie and Hardinge. It was easy for juniors to laugh at "'Lamps' Sanderson" as "a survival from the mild hilarities of nineteenth century 'Punch,'" who "had thick glasses and thin legs, was a great listener to the great, a well-stored official of noted and unoriginal ability, who became suddenly formidable when he fussed into a Department."³ He had however been a very useful Private Secretary in his younger days, and had been an efficient and conscientious Permanent Under-Secretary since 1894. He had a great sense of humour which frequently revealed itself in his letters to Lord Salisbury, was noted for his kindness to children,⁴ and actually published a book of children's stories.⁵ But he

1. PRO 30/33/9/15. Townley to Satow, September 30, 1904.
2. Sir J. Tilley: op. cit., p.69.
3. Lord Vansittart: "The Mist Procession." p.45. Sanderson was "nicknamed 'Lamps' after the thick round goggly pebble-spectacles from the depths of which blue pin-point eyes shot their penetrating ray." See E. Marsh: "A Number of People."p.375
4. See, e.g., M. Buchanan: "Ambassador's Daughter." p.27.
5. Lord Sanderson: "Four Stories for Children." This book, published in 1911, contains "The Story of the Forty Wise Men who had to provide a Bath of Milk for the King," "The Story of the Chinese Student who was Pulled into a Picture," "The Story of Munachar and Manachar," and "The Real Story of Old Mother Hubbard."

had always been "at times crotchety to deal with,"¹ and this fault had greatly increased since Lord Lansdowne had taken over the Foreign Office in 1900. Sanderson was out of sympathy with the new "anti-German" feeling in the Foreign Office, and was not always easy in his relations with the Foreign Secretary. Lord Onslow has recalled the following little incident:

"I remember when we started playing polo that Hubert Montgomery drew a caricature of Sanderson playing. He showed it to Sir Francis Bertie, who was much amused. At that moment Lord Lansdowne sent for him. 'I must take this into the S. of S.,' said Bertie, and he did. That evening there was an entertainment at Lansdowne House. It so happened that a good many of us arrived together, including Sanderson and Montgomery, and we all were announced one after another.

"'How do you do, Sanderson?' said Lord Lansdowne; and then, looking at us over 'Lamps'' shoulder, he went on loudly, 'I am so interested to hear you have taken up polo.' 'Lamps' was quite at a loss to understand."²

In the summer of 1904 "the health of Sir Thomas Sanderson, who had for so many years acted as Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, compelled him for a time at any rate to renounce all active work, and Bertie, who went to London in July, 1904, was detained there to take his place."³ Bertie had not planned to return to Rome until "towards the end of Sept.r,"⁴ and it suited his interests temporarily to supervise the Foreign Office while lobbying for the Paris Embassy. Hardinge wrote to him on August 9 that "I am very sorry for poor old Lamps, though I know that you are not, but it is rather sad to see him

1. FO 918/26/p.111. Dering to Russell, February 4, 1876.
2. Lord Onslow: "Sixty-Three Years." p.65.
3. Sir R. Rodd: op. cit., Vol. 3, p.43.
4. Cartwright Papers. Rodd to Cartwright, August 14, 1904.

break down as he has no other resource in life and I fear that he will never be much good again for work now."¹

At first it was believed that Sanderson would only be away for a few weeks, and Chirol informed Hardinge on August 10 that "poor old Lamps has been very seedy and is only slowly getting better. However he is due back at the end of the month,"² Nevertheless Sanderson had still not returned by the end of September, and Bertie remained at the Foreign Office.³ The latter wrote on September 28:

"My dear Lascelles,

"Your letter ... is most kind and charming. I thank you for it very cordially and so does Feo...

"I hope to see you in November for I do not expect that Bossy Sanderson will be fit to do much work before then even if he comes back. If he were wise he would retire for he has earned his full pension and will reach the age limit (65) on Jan. 1. 1906."⁴

It was not until the middle of November that Sanderson was well enough to return to the Foreign Office, and even then he was "only allowed by his Dr. to do a little work."⁵ He himself wrote on November 29 that "I am not regularly back at the F.O. yet" and that "Bertie is now staying on till December 13 which gives me an additional period of comparative rest."⁶

1. FO 800/176/p.190. Hardinge to Bertie, August 9, 1904.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.130. Chirol to Hardinge, August 10, 1904.
3. See British Museum Add. MS 48682, p.86. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, September 25, 1904: "Frank Bertie, who does not take up his new duties as Ambassador at Paris till the New Year, and now is meanwhile running the F.O. in the absence of Sanderson."
4. FO 800/12/p.128. Bertie to Lascelles, September 28, 1904.
5. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.224. Knollys to Hardinge, November 15, 1904.
6. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.263. Sanderson to Hardinge, November 29, 1904.

Bertie remained at the Foreign Office until December 13, explaining to Hardinge on November 28:

"My dear Charlie,

"... I think that I told you that Rodd on the occasion of the King's Birthday dinner had his own health drunk immediately after H.M.'s on the ground of the day being also his birthday. The parson proposed it having been invited to do so by letter from Rodd. Is it conceivable to be such an ass!

"He did not at all like missing the Christening festivities so when he got to London he endeavoured to impress on Mallet that if I could not be there, which I ought to be, Reggie Lister was too young to look after Prince Arthur of Connaught and he (Rodd) would be ready to return to Rome for the occasion. The result of his push is that I remain on till Dec. 13 and Reggie is to be presented to the King of Italy as Chargé d'Affaires."¹

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Sanderson's illness for several months in 1904 made the question of his successor of the very greatest importance. He was anyway due to retire at the beginning of 1906 on account of his age, but it now appeared that his retirement might be brought forward to an earlier date. During the autumn of 1904 the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service began to look around for a successor.

There were three candidates in the Foreign Office itself - the three Assistant Under-Secretaries. Villiers was Sanderson's own choice, but it was clear that he was not acceptable to Lansdowne. Gorst, meanwhile, was becoming increasingly unpopular and unsuccessful, while Campbell does not seem to have been in the running.

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.259. Bertie to Hardinge, November 28, 1904.

In the Diplomatic Service there seem to have been only two men who were considered suitable for the post - Bertie and Hardinge. The former had recently been offered the Paris Embassy and made it clear that he had no intention of returning to the Foreign Office permanently. He went back to Rome in December 1904 to pack up, before taking over at Paris in January 1905. Hardinge, on the other hand, had only been Ambassador at St Petersburg for a few months. If Sanderson could remain at the Foreign Office until the beginning of 1906, or if some temporary successor could be found, then there was a possibility that Hardinge might after all become Permanent Under-Secretary. But for the time being there could be little question of his leaving St Petersburg so soon. Nevertheless it seems that Hardinge began to aspire to Sanderson's eventual succession in the autumn of 1904, following the Dogger Bank Incident.

Hardinge had inherited a very difficult position from Sir Charles Scott in May 1904. England had been allied to Japan since 1902, yet Japan was now at war with Russia. Russia was the ally of France, and the Anglo-French Convention was signed in April 1904. Any mismanagement of British interests at St Petersburg therefore threatened to upset England's new foreign policy, at a time when Germany was becoming increasingly powerful. As Sir Constantine Phipps, who had been promised an Embassy for the previous four years, wrote in February 1904: "Whoever wants to go to St. P. at this moment I do not envy him!"¹

1. British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.125. Phipps to Scott, February 10, 1904.

On February 18, 1904, Scott informed Sanderson that "we are in the happy position of being almost boycotted by our best Russian friends, who say their personal feelings to us remain unchanged - but they scarcely can restrain their feelings against our Country - and evidently do not like meeting us."¹ Shortly afterwards he pointed out to Lansdowne that "we are almost practically boycotted by even our best Russian personal friends," and warned that "I think the Hardinges must be prepared to find the position a little difficult at first."² In March Louis Mallet wrote that "I hear the most disquieting accounts from St. Petersburg of the ill feeling against us," commenting that "it is chiefly due to the 'Times' articles and to German intrigue." He added that "the Scotts are asked no where."³ Shortly afterwards Bertie wrote:

"My dear Rosebery,

"... I do not envy Charlie Hardinge and it is not a case of sour grapes. I don't think that there is much good to be done at present at Petersburg for you are sent from pillar to post. What has to be said ought to be said very strongly to the Ambassador in London for him to pass it on to Petersburg to the proper authority whoever that may be."⁴

Despite these gloomy forecasts Hardinge calmly set about making his preparations. Monson wrote to Bertie on February 23

1. FO 800/115/p.275. Scott to Sanderson, February 18, 1904.
2. FO 800/140/p.202. Scott to Lansdowne, February 27, 1904.
3. Strachey Papers 15/4/2. Mallet to Strachey, March 2, 1904. See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/179/306. Spring Rice to Curzon, March 27, 1904: "Life is not exactly pleasant here with a general and universal boycott of this Embassy."
4. Rosebery Papers Box 79, p.22. Bertie to Rosebery, March 26, 1904.

that "Charles Hardinge writes very modestly about his promotion. He is extraordinarily lucky in his advancement, but his future post will not be a bed of roses."¹ On the following day Hardinge himself wrote to Lascelles:

"My dear Sir Frank,

"... Thank you very much for your congratulations on my appointment which I appreciate very warmly...

"I shall look forward very much to seeing you on our way through and we will gladly avail ourselves of your proffered hospitality if your house is not full.

"As regards my plans I will tell you as much as I know. Scott writes to me that he leaves in April which is vague. On the other hand Spring Rice writes that Scott proposes leaving in the middle of April. If that is so, I expect that I should probably have to go out there quite at the beginning of May."²

He also wrote the following letter to St Petersburg:

"My dear Scott,

"Many thanks for your letter and kind congratulations which I warmly appreciate.

"... I have been away for a few days for my father-in-law's funeral...

"As regards my plans I have not been told when I shall be expected to go out to St. P. but as far as I am personally concerned I am only too anxious to meet your wishes and to suit your convenience. I understand from Spring Rice, who has written to me about his own matrimonial arrangements and with whose anxiety on the subject I entirely sympathise, that as at present arranged you propose leaving St. P. about the middle of April, in which case I should probably come out at the end of the month or at the beginning of May. I rather fancy that Ld. Lansdowne will not approve of any long interregnum under present circumstances.

1. FO 800/183/p.157. Monson to Bertie, February 23, 1904.
2. FO 800/8/p.403. Hardinge to Lascelles, February 24, 1904. Cf: PRO 30/33/9/15. Spring Rice to Satow, March 24, 1904: "Hardinge comes soon; May 1. Scott stays till then."

"I hear gloomy accounts of the attitude of society towards our Embassy, which seems to me foolish and childish but none the less unpleasant."¹

In March Scott decided to delay his departure, and Hardinge informed Bertie that "old Scott is hanging on to St. Petersburg until the end of April so I shall probably not go out there till about May 10."² He wrote again on April 18:

"My dear Scott,

"... I have finished my work at the F.O. and am off to the country tomorrow for a little holiday before I leave. My movements are still somewhat vague but when I have seen the King who will be back this week I shall probably be able to settle with Ld Lansdowne the date of my departure. In any case I shall hope to see you in London before I start abroad."³

Finally, as Hardinge wrote in his memoirs, "I left for St Petersburg on the 12th May and reached my post on the 15th."⁴

Hardinge found the social position of the British Embassy at St Petersburg as isolated as it had been described by Scott. For example Georges Louis, noting a conversation with Sir Arthur Nicolson in 1909, recorded that the latter had said:

"Mon avant-dernier prédécesseur, Scott, était très populaire dans la monde russe. Arrive la guerre avec le Japon, et tout de suite on le boycotte. Personne ne venait plus chez lui. Personne n'alla à la gare quand il partit.

1. British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.129. Hardinge to Scott, February 24, 1904.
2. FO 800/183/p.177. Hardinge to Bertie, March 27, 1904.
3. British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.147. Hardinge to Scott, April 18, 1904. See also British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.132. Hardinge to Scott, April 6, 1904; and British Museum Add. MS 48682, p.1. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, March 4, 1904: "C. Hardinge is to go as Ambassador at St. Petersburg. It is a great promotion, but I expect the appointment will be justified. He already knows the ropes there; and his very nice wife will stand him in good stead."
4. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.100.

"Hardinge, qui le remplaça, ne put, malgré ses qualités personnelles et celles de sa femme, remonter le courant. Après été resté ici deux ans, il partit sans avoir donné son ricevimento: il n'aurait eu personne. Jamais de grandes réceptions. Il ne donnait que de petits dîners de douze."¹

When Lord Onslow visited St Petersburg in December 1904, he noted:

"I think he (Hardinge) was extremely glad to see us, as his wife and children are in England, and Russian society (by whom he was well received when he was Secretary of Embassy), has completely boycotted the Embassy, with the exception of one or two; consequently Sir Charles is thrown on the society of his staff."²

Despite this Hardinge was able from the very beginning to improve the political situation. On July 27 Lansdowne thanked him for his "excellent work,"³ and added on August 24 that "you are doing capitally for us."⁴ Spring Rice wrote to Rosebery a week later that "your old protégé Hardinge is doing very well."⁵

In October 1904 the Russian Baltic Fleet set off on its celebrated journey to the Far East, where it was immediately destroyed by the Japanese at Tsushima. While it was still in the North Sea, however, on the night of October 21-22, it fired

1. G. Louis: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.62. Note by Louis, October 29, 1909.
2. Guildford Muniment Room 173/13/24. Memorandum by Onslow, January 1905. This boycott was all the more telling as, despite the War, St Petersburg Society was more active than ever. See India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/180/64a. Chirol to Curzon, June 2, 1905: "Charlie Hardinge... (said) he never remembered such a gay winter as this in St. P. - no big court functions of course, but any number of small parties and the theatres and opera and ballet crowded as seldom before.'
3. FO 800/140/p.237. Lansdowne to Hardinge, July 27, 1904.
4. FO 800/140/p.255. Lansdowne to Hardinge, August 24, 1904.
5. Rosebery Papers Box 79, p.77. Spring Rice to Rosebery, August 31, 1904.

on and sank some British fishing trawlers on the Dogger Bank. The result was the worst Anglo-Russian crisis since Penjdeh. Hardinge rose to the occasion and managed the situation in St Petersburg with great firmness and tact, and the credit for the satisfactory outcome of the dispute was largely his. Chirol wrote on November 1:

"My dear Hardinge,

"... I need hardly say that everybody speaks very warmly of the way in which you have handled the matter. Lord Lansdowne told me you had been 'simply admirable,' and Balfour used the same words in talking to Sir George Clarke."¹

From St Petersburg Spring Rice, Hardinge's Secretary of Embassy, wrote on November 10: "You may imagine that we have been very busy. Hardinge has done very well - kept his head and his temper and been as firm with his own government as with the Russians."² Hardinge also received the congratulations of Sanderson;³ of Maxwell, the Head of the Eastern Department;⁴ and of Davidson, the Legal Adviser who had to deal with the problems

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.212. Chirol to Hardinge, November 1, 1904. Sir George Clarke was the Secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defence.
2. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.432. Spring Rice to Ferguson, November 10, 1904. See also Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.440. Spring Rice to Roosevelt, December 7, 1904: "I wish you had a really good Ambassador here. Our man here is a very good one. Strong and independent."
3. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.235. Sanderson to Hardinge, November 18, 1904: "I must congratulate you on the part you have taken in pulling us through this very unpleasant and at one time threatening incident. It was an occasion requiring much coolness and nerve."
4. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.255. Maxwell to Hardinge, November 28, 1904: "We all think that no one could have managed the business more admirably than you have done."

involved when the case was finally referred to arbitration.¹

It was during this period that Bertie was temporarily at the Foreign Office. On September 27 Chirol had written to Lascelles that "I went to see Bertie last week who has taken up his old work at the F.O. between his two Embassies. I found him ... exercised about a question ... 'What are we to do if the Baltic fleet gets out to the Far East and coals at Kiao-Chau?'"² Hardinge himself had written on the following day:

"My dear Frank,

"... How glad I am that you were at the F.O. instead of that poor creature Villiers... What the F.O. are going to do when you go to Paris I do not know. It is a public misfortune that you will not long be there, and when you go Gorst is absolutely the only alternative."³

Hardinge's skilful diplomacy during the Dogger Bank Incident soon afterwards considerably increased his influence and prestige, and consequently improved his chances of succeeding Sanderson himself. On November 9 Lord Knollys wrote to the Prime Minister to tell him that the King felt that "it must be a great assistance" having Hardinge at St Petersburg at such a time: "he thinks ... you and Ld. Lansdowne ... have a Representative at St. Petersburg ... who apparently has shown great judgment under very difficult circumstances, and H.M. feels sure that every consideration is paid to

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.218. Davidson to Hardinge, November 11, 1904: "I also want to congratulate you most heartily and sincerely on the magnificent manner in which you have looked after British interests all through this trying time."
2. FO 800/12/p.118. Chirol to Lascelles, September 27, 1904.
3. FO 800/176/p.193. Hardinge to Bertie, September 28, 1904. Cf: Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.130. Chirol to Hardinge, August 10, 1904: "Gorst seems to be doing well."

his advice."¹ In December 1904 Lord Onslow, who was a member of the Cabinet, went to St Petersburg to visit his son Lord Cranley at the Embassy. He wrote to his colleagues on December 31:

"I have seen both Count Lamsdorff and M. de Witte. The former was not much disposed to talk, and I had to just say to him what I wanted to bring home, which was that ... Hardinge had often had to act so quickly that there was no time to give instructions, but that in every case where he had done so, he had only 'dévancé' those instructions, and used exactly the language we should have wished."²

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By the autumn of 1904 the rival candidates were beginning to put forward their claims to the Vienna Embassy. The first in the field was Sir Nicholas O'Connor, who had preceded Scott at St Petersburg,³ and who had been Ambassador at Constantinople since 1898. Valentine Chirol wrote on October 3:

"My dear Lascelles,

"... I am expecting to see O'Connor turn up here any day now. I am afraid he will be disappointed again if he is coming home, as I understand, to put in a plea for Vienna. I believe it has been promised to Gosselin who is to be succeeded by Bunsen. Fergus does not realise,

1. British Museum Add. MS 49684, p.119. Knollys to Balfour, November 9, 1904. Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador in London, seems to have been misinformed about Hardinge's success at St Petersburg. See P. Cambon: op. cit., Vol. 2, p.169. P. Cambon to H. Cambon, November 8, 1904: "Sir Ch. Hardinge, l'Ambassadeur anglais à Pétersbourg n'a pas compris que lorsqu'on veut arranger une affaire, il faut s'en tenir à l'essentiel, ne pas trop télégraphier, distinguer entre les paroles dites exprès pour être répétées et les propos plus au moins en l'air, dont le compte rendu peut tout remettre en question."
2. Guildford Muniment Room 173/13/23. Memorandum by Onslow, December 31, 1904.
3. See British Museum Add. MS 52299, p.27. Sanderson to Scott, April 24, 1901.

I fear, that he is never likely to get a post where court and social functions play an important part. His wife has been a good deal better this year but she is still subject to strange moods which make her quite impossible."¹

Gosselin had been in Lisbon since 1903 and had always been the favourite candidate, but Goschen, the Minister at Copenhagen, was still pressing for promotion.

Maurice de Bunsen was being tipped as the most likely successor as Minister at Lisbon, but in October Sir Arthur Hardinge, the Minister at Tehran and a cousin of Charles Hardinge, suddenly decided to press his own claims. Arthur Hardinge had been Minister at Tehran since 1900, but had not been a success² and was anxious for a return to Europe.³ Tower, a diplomatist, wrote to Satow on October 28:

"Dear Sir Ernest,

"... The rumour is that Gosselin succeeds Plunkett at Vienna, and it is supposed that there will be a fight for Lisbon, the best candidate being Bunsen, but Sir A. Hardinge from Tehran, is said to be travelling home post

1. FO 800/12/p.134. Chirol to Lascelles, October 5, 1904.
2. See, e.g., British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.209. Graham to Scott, March 25, 1903: "I gather, privately, that Arthur Hardinge is not thought to be doing well at Tehran." See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/162/p.101/no.24. Lansdowne to Curzon, April 24, 1903: "Arthur Hardinge has his defects as well as his good qualities. He has shown himself tenacious and industrious... He is, however, perhaps too fond of endeavouring to meet the Persians with their own weapons. On the other hand, Durand, whose methods were of the opposite kinds, was voted a failure." See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/179/285. Chirol to Curzon, January 7, 1904: "(A.) Hardinge ... is said to have bungled the whole (Bushire) business badly. I think ... (his) stock is falling rapidly." Also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/179/289a. Chirol to Curzon, February 17, 1904: "He has dished his chances of an Embassy for some time to come, I think."
3. See, e.g., India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/179/129. A. Hardinge to Curzon, July 23, 1902.

haste, to secure the reversion of that, or indeed any post which may relieve him from Persia, where he appears not to have been a success."¹

Townley wrote to Satow on November 6:

"My dear Sir Ernest,

"... Lowther goes to Tangier... Gosselin it is generally believed will get Vienna and Bunsen go to Lisbon, but Arthur Hardinge has hurried home to make good his claims and threatens to resign, as he sees no fun in remaining another six years at Tehran."²

Bertie, however, assumed that de Bunsen would be leaving Paris anyway, and attempted to push Reginald Lister for the Secretaryship of Embassy at Paris. He wrote to the Foreign Office from Paris on February 10, 1905:

"My dear Mallet,

"I hear that Alan Johnstone is giving out that he is coming here as Secretary of Embassy. I hope that such is not the case for I do not think that he would be suitable for the place...

"There is no doubt who would be the best candidate from the public service point of view viz Reggie Lister. I do not say so because I like him personally...

"I write this on the supposition that Plunkett's time is drawing to a close and that there will be a series of moves in consequence and that Bunsen may leave Paris. I shall be very sorry indeed to lose him... If he goes I hope he will get a good post."³

Shortly afterwards he wrote to Hardinge:

"My dear Charlie,

"... So Plunkett is to go three months after his 70th birthday, and as he will therefore have to make his bow on May 3, the consequent moves will soon be announced I suppose.

1. PRO 30/33/9/15. Tower to Satow, October 28, 1904.
2. PRO 30/33/9/15. Townley to Satow, November 6, 1904.
3. FO 800/183/p.260. Bertie to Mallet, February 10, 1905.

"I hope that Reggie Lister will come to Paris. I do not want Alan Johnstone."¹

At the same time he again pointed out to Mallet that Lister "would be much the best man" for de Bunsen's post at Paris.²

On February 26, 1905, before any appointments had been made, the news reached the Foreign Office that Martin Gosselin had suddenly died at Lisbon. Sanderson wrote two days later:

"My dear Hardinge,

"We received upon Sunday afternoon the announcement of Gosselin's death. It is a dreadful blow and was quite unexpected. We do not yet know any details, but I am told that the accident in a motor car at Lisbon last year caused a rupture... We had been attached friends ever since he first entered into the Service, and I shall miss him dreadfully."³

Sanderson wrote again on March 7:

"My dear Hardinge,

"... I am greatly distressed at Gosselin's death. We were very attached friends, and he will be greatly missed. As far as I can make out he received some injury in the motor accident last year which should have been set right by an operation, but he had a horror of anything of the kind. The result of neglect was I believe almost certain."⁴

When Bertie heard the news he immediately wrote to the Foreign Secretary:

1. FO 800/183/p.278. Bertie to Hardinge, February 24, 1905.
2. FO 800/183/p.282. Bertie to Mallet, February 24, 1905. Cf: Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.224. Knollys to Hardinge, November 15, 1904: "F. Bertie wants to take Lister to Paris with him without the rank of Minister as he does not like a married Secretary!"
3. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.376. Sanderson to Hardinge, February 28, 1905. See also British Museum Add. MS 48683, p.23. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, February 27, 1905: "The sudden death of Martin Gosselin at Lisbon is announced today... It was given to few men to have such a great personal charm about him."
4. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.380. Sanderson to Hardinge, March 7, 1905.

"My dear Lansdowne,

"For some time past I have heard reports said to be on the authority of Alan Johnstone's friends that he was to succeed de Bunsen as Secretary of Embassy here. I hoped that the reports had no real foundation for Johnstone has no knowledge of Paris, and would not be suited to the place or the people as he is inclined to be pompous. Poor Gosselin's death makes the question of the Secretaryship a burning one if the consequent moves in the Service carry de Bunsen away and I therefore trouble you with a letter.

"I have no doubt that Lister would be the fittest person for the post for he has passed nearly 8 years in all at Paris and has plenty of ability, in my opinion much more than Johnstone, and great knowledge of French politics and the French, and is universally liked here. I do not recommend him to you out of any feeling of personal regard for I should suffer officially for an unsuitable appointment. I do not know that any reason is required for promoting what is termed 'over the heads of others' a man the best qualified for a post, but if you decide not to appoint Johnstone who is the Senior Secretary of Embassy the pill might be gilded by giving him the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary and Lister could well wait for that rank until he had shown that he deserved it."¹

Shortly afterwards it was decided to promote Goschen to succeed Plunkett as Ambassador at Vienna in October 1905; de Bunsen to succeed Gosselin as Minister at Lisbon; and Lister to succeed de Bunsen as Secretary of Embassy at Paris.²

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In the spring of 1905 Sir Constantine Phipps decided to resign his post as Minister at Brussels, and it was provisionally

1. FO 800/183/p.285. Bertie to Lansdowne, February 28, 1905.
2. The latter arrangement was not a complete success. See, e.g., FO 800/127/p.129. Bertie to Barrington, July 27, 1905: "I hear that Lister has asked for an attaché. I did not authorize him to do so. The fact is that some of the young gentlemen are too big for their boots and think it infra dig to do work which they might well do without loss of dignity."

decided to give it to Sir Francis Villiers at the end of the year. This made the succession to Sanderson even more important, and it will be as well to return to that problem now.

In October 1904 Bertie had put forward the suggestion that Sir Arthur Godley, who had been the Permanent Under-Secretary at the India Office since 1883, should be put in charge of the Foreign Office. Hardinge wrote to Bertie on October 12, 1904:

"My dear Frank,

"... Your suggestion of Arthur Godley as a successor to Sanderson is a splendid one if he would take it... Spring Rice who knows Gorst well says that he is an idle fellow although of course as able as can be. It will be a difficult job to find a suitable successor."¹

Shortly afterwards Valentine Chirol wrote:

"My dear Hardinge,

"... I saw Nicolson last week. He has gone back to Tangier for a couple of months before proceeding to Madrid. But he was going to look in at his new post on his way to Morocco and survey the new Embassy house. He was very fit and in excellent spirits, quite satisfied to have got onto the top floor, though for choice he would naturally have preferred Rome. I really think they ought to have retired Egerton; he is more inarticulate than ever. Now there will not be an Embassy going for years - assuming that Gosselin is appointed to Vienna - unless some of your Exc.cies receive the sort of promotion Phipps was told to wait for, which Heaven forbid! One of the worst rocks ahead however is Sanderson's succession, if he decides to go. It seems he has been strongly advised not to attempt to resume work, and as he has only about two years to run anyhow, it would seem to be mere ordinary prudence for him to make up his mind to retire now when he can still save his sight rather than run the terrible risk of a relapse if he stays on. Bertie is evidently very keen to get somebody from outside - between ourselves he mentioned Godley, who has a considerable reputation. But he admitted that there were very strong influences in the Office which it would be difficult to override. What I fear is that

1. FO 800/176/p.195. Hardinge to Bertie, October 12, 1904.

Sanderson has made the F.O. for so many years a one-man show, that when he goes, the rather obsolete and defective machinery he has mainly kept going by his own motive power will collapse altogether. Is there anybody else in diplomacy you think would be capable of taking the job? I know of no one. The fact is it is not a very attractive job to a man who is not a demon for work and men of the necessary standing and experience in the diplomatic branch prefer very naturally the easier life and higher pay of a Minister - or, as the case may be, of an Ambassador."¹

A few days later there occurred the Dogger Bank Incident.

During November 1904 attention began gradually to turn towards Hardinge as the only possible successor who was not an "outsider." As early as November 1903 Davidson had written of Hardinge that "I fear ... that we shall not keep him long as I cannot imagine any one preferring the succession to Sanderson (which is in his grasp - I am sure - at present) to an Embassy in Europe."² And in January 1904 Townley had written that the Foreign Office thought "that he has done so well that he will jump Villiers and Campbell to succeed Sanderson."³ Now in November 1904 Davidson wrote to Hardinge that "it is a very good thing for imperial interests that you are in your present lofty position, but it is a very bad thing for this poor office that you are not here to succeed Sanderson at a date which cannot I think be far postponed. What will happen to us then God only knows!"⁴ Cecil Spring Rice, who discussed the question with Hardinge, wrote to his Liberal friend Munro Ferguson on November 10:

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.185. Chiro1 to Hardinge, October 18, 1904.
2. PRO 30/33/7/2. Davidson to Satow, November 5, 1903.
3. PRO 30/33/9/15. Townley to Satow, January 13, 1904.
4. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.218. Davidson to Hardinge, November 11, 1904.

"It would undoubtedly be a very good thing to get him back at the F.O. But though he is willing to go if asked - he is not willing to present himself as a candidate. The pecuniary loss is very considerable... As you say, it is absolutely essential that someone who has experience abroad and the courage of his opinions should be there and he is undoubtedly the best man for the place. If you come into office, he would relieve the Government of many anxieties, for you could be pretty sure that the new Secretary of State was well advised. Nobody could be more moderate and safe than Hardinge."¹

Meanwhile in London it had been proposed to give Sir Eldon Gorst an Indian appointment, as Sir Edward Hamilton noted in his diary on November 10:

"That will make the Foreign Office weaker than ever, and to find a successor to Sanderson, when his time comes - and some people think it has - will be a great difficulty. Arthur Godley himself has been thought of, and I think he would go, but he would not like to be uprooted from the India Office, and he thinks himself he is not good enough with his French."²

Towards the end of November 1904, while still temporarily in charge of the Foreign Office, Bertie began actively to put forward Hardinge's name as Sanderson's successor. He wrote to his friend on November 28 to explain his tactics:

"My dear Charlie,

"... I have not said anything to Lansdowne about that Sanderson succession but I have told Arthur Balfour that I

1. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.432. Spring Rice to Ferguson, November 10, 1904.
2. British Museum Add. MS 48682, p.109. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, November 10, 1904. See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/183/p.20/no.22. Curzon to Dawkins, March 30, 1905: "It will be a calamity to lose Godley at the India Office. But he is, in my opinion, too good for it; and if he can talk French sufficiently well to bamboozle the Ambassadors, I should think he will be invaluable at the Foreign Office." See also Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.224. Knollys to Hardinge, November 15, 1904: "If he has to retire, his place will be a most difficult one to fill up."

know that if you were asked to come back you would be ready to do so on suitable conditions and I suggested that meanwhile if you could not be spared from Petersburg Godley would be the best to hold the place until you could come, say in three years' time. A.B. would like you to be here. Sanderson has however no intention of giving up. He means to return when I go viz Dec. 13. I think that he will break down. His temper has not been improved by his illness and he passes his time in writing offensive minutes and letters about the reorganisation of the office. To me he is civility itself when he comes to see me every three or four days, but he is more disliked than ever."¹

When Hardinge received this letter he wrote to Sanderson that "I am very pleased to hear that you are able to return to your work,"² and indeed he had cause to be for he knew that his own succession depended on the latter's ability to continue until the situation at St Petersburg had improved. For the moment Godley remained the most favoured candidate, though of course he was not wanted by the Foreign Office itself. Knollys explained on January 11, 1905:

"My dear Hardinge,

"... Sanderson has resumed, in full vigour, his work at the F.O. but whether the state of his eyes will allow him to go on with it, is I think doubtful. The idea that Sir A. Godley would be a good successor to him, gains ground, though I have not heard the matter discussed by any F.O. officials. I may however add that the King is inclined to think from what he has heard of him, that he would be a good man for the Post. It is a pity that Gorst should not have come up to the expectations which were formed of him for I believe there is no doubt he is a very clever man."³

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.259. Bertie to Hardinge, November 28, 1904. Cf: Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.255. Maxwell to Hardinge, November 28, 1904: "He comes back to work on Dec. 13 - I hope not to break down but I have my doubts. I shall be sorry to lose Bertie who has been most pleasant. He does not fuss, and never rings that bell."
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 6, p.54. Hardinge to Sanderson, December 8, 1904.
3. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.316. Knollys to Hardinge, January 11, 1905.

By the beginning of 1905 it was clear that the rump end of the Conservative government, led by Balfour, could not be expected to last much longer - or at any rate without a general election. The exact timing of the election was of the very greatest concern to the Foreign Office, particularly since Sanderson's successor had yet to be named. Mallet expressed his apprehension in a letter to Bertie, of January 27:

"My dear Bertie,

"... I don't think H.M.G. will be in much longer. I hear Joe tells everyone that he wants an early Dissolution and the Situation depends on him. They say that Campbell Bannerman is coming here or Ld. Elgin. In the latter case we shall have that bum sucker (sic) Babington Smith as an Under Secretary. What an awful combination - Lamps and Campbell-Bannerman - and I foresee that Villiers will succeed the former and all the good seed sown during the last few years will come to nothing.

"Gorst continues to give dissatisfaction and I hear that the boys will not go to his room now because he is so infernally rude. He never sends a letter to Ld. L. of any kind and Law came into us last night in a great state of mind because he had authorized the signature of a commercial Treaty without referring it to Ld. L. Law says he is afraid of being asked questions by Ld. L. which he will not be able to answer."¹

In March 1905 "the project" was "mooted" of appointing Sir A. Macdonnell to succeed Sanderson,² but it came to nothing. Hardinge meanwhile decided to return to London for family reasons,³ and Chirol wrote on April 18:

1. FO 800/174/p.5. Mallet to Bertie, January 27, 1905.
2. Sir A. Fitzroy: "Memoirs." Vol. 1, p.244. Diary entry by Fitzroy, March 11, 1905. Macdonnell had been Lieutenant Governor of the United Provinces from 1895 to 1901, and was Permanent Secretary at Dublin from 1902 to 1908.
3. Guildford Muniment Room 173/15/18. Hardinge to Onslow, March 13, 1905.

*My dear Lascelles,

"... I am looking forward to seeing Hardinge over here in a few days. His name is now quite openly mentioned as Sanderson's probable successor, though to me it still seems too good to be true. Villiers is apparently to be consoled with Brussels."¹

Hardinge himself wrote that,

"Towards the end of April 1905 I went home on four weeks' leave for rest...

"During my stay in England the King was very kind to me and invited me to stay at Sandringham. I returned to St. Petersburg on the 29th May."²

Meanwhile "Bertie a indiqué au Roi Hardinge comme particulièrement apte aux fonctions de sous-secrétaire d'État permanent."³

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By the summer of 1905 it had become clear that Hardinge could become Sanderson's successor as Permanent Under-Secretary if he wanted to. There were, however, financial difficulties to overcome, as Hardinge wrote to Bertie on June 21:

"My dear Frank,

"... As regards Lamps I hear that Lord L. does not intend to renew him at all, and everybody I meet tells me that it is an open secret that I am to be his successor, but nobody in a responsible position mentioned the matter to me except Francis Knollys. I told him that I was quite ready to accept the offer if made, on certain conditions and he did not think them at all excessive. Being an Ambassador I think I may legitimately claim to be treated in a different manner than if the post had been offered to me in the ordinary way of promotion by seniority. I hope you do not think that I should be wrong in making

1. FO 800/11/p.195. Chirol to Lascelles, April 18, 1905.
2. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.115. See also PRO 30/33/10/8. Chirol to Satow, May 9, 1905.
3. G. Louis: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.134. Note by Louis, August 25, 1910.

such a condition in the event of Ld. L. making the offer to me. Tell me your opinion. What I should like would be a personal allowance of £1000 a year and my time at the F.O. to count towards an Amb.r's pension. With my present pay and my own private means I am very comfortable indeed and I do not want to have all the worries of work at the F.O. and money bothers at the same time. Please regard all this as most private as the offer of the U.S.ship may not even be offered to me. I shall probably in the end do whatever I am asked to do. Another argument in favour of a personal allowance is that in my opinion the U.S. ought to be in a position to entertain in a modest way foreign ambassadors etc. This is really the best way of getting information and pushing one's work."¹

Bertie replied on July 5:

"My dear Charlie,

"I received your letter of June 21 just as I was leaving Paris for a ten days stay in London.. I hear that the King is furious with Phipps who is reported to have made disparaging remarks regarding Goschen. Brussels is too important for Villiers with such an old fox to deal with as Cleopold (sic).

"I think that there is no doubt whatever that you will be offered Lamps' succession, no matter which side is in office. In my opinion you should not be too exacting in your terms for acceptance. You would be more than justified in claiming that time at the F.O. should count as service abroad for Ambassadors pension but the Treasury would probably require that your stay at the F.O. must have exceeded a certain term say 5 years before it counted unless you retired on ill-health grounds. I do not advise that you should put forward any conditions as to your position as Under Secretary being enhanced owing to your having been an Ambassador. You will make your own position by your ability and at the F.O. the Permanent Under Secretary is above the Parliamentary one.

"As to personal allowance of £1000 additional to the £2,300, whence is it to come? If the Treasury entertained such a proposal - by Treasury I mean a Chancellor of the Exchequer - the other Under Secretaries at the C.O. the W.O. the H.O. would clamour for increases and Secretaries to the Treasury who rise to £2,500 a year would claim that the Treasury is and always has been the best paid and must be so continued. I do not believe that the Lords Commissioners would face the storm. The salary cannot be supplemented from S.S. as an understanding was given many years

1. FO 800/183/p.326. Hardinge to Bertie, June 21, 1905.

ago that Salaries should never again be so increased. Perhaps cousin Bena might as a Bed Chamber woman have an apartment assigned to her at some Palace which might indirectly swell the emoluments of your post.

"I return to Paris in a few days."¹

Hardinge sent his reply on July 16:

"My dear Frank,

"Many thanks for your letter. If Lamps' succession is offered to me I will bear your advice in mind. I must have expressed myself badly, but I had no intention of implying that my position as Under-Secretary should be enhanced and I fully recognise the truth of what you say, that the position is dependent upon the occupant.

"I quite admit the correctness of what you say about a personal allowance, but I do think that the occupant of the post should be in a position to entertain modestly, but properly, Ambassadors etc, I do not think that the Permanent Under-Secretary's salary allows any margin for that. I hate all questions connected with money and all I want is to be able to live comfortably within my income and entertain etc properly. However you may be quite certain that if Lamps' post is offered to me I shall not make any difficulties although I shall keep a stiff upper lip on the subject of my pension which I think justifiable in view of the fact that I should only have a little more than a year to serve for it."²

Bertie answered this letter on July 25:

"My dear Charlie,

"Yes, stick to it as regards your counting F.O. service as qualification for Ambassador's pension. You would not however be allowed to retire on it till you are 60. At least I think that the Treasury would rightfully make difficulties. Moreover before then you will probably be at some Embassy other than Petersburg?

"I agree with you that Under Secretary ought to be able to entertain Ambassadors etc and that on the salary of £2300 it would not be easy to do so, but whence is the money to come? We have no fund for 'Frais de représentation' and I am afraid that there would be difficulty in charging anything for that purpose to the S.S..

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.449. Bertie to Hardinge, July 5, 1905.
2. FO 800/163/p.141. Hardinge to Bertie, July 16, 1905.

"... If you succeed Bossy do you think that the infatuation in certain quarters and at the F.O. for Rodd the Rotter would carry him to Petersburg as your successor there? The Sweden Norway quarrel has been a god send for him."¹

On August 14, Hardinge sent another letter to Bertie; he too was concerned lest Rodd should obtain the St Petersburg Embassy:

"My dear Frank,

"... I hear that there is talk of Lamps continuing at the F.O. for another year. He himself wants it, and perhaps Ld. Lansdowne does not like to fill up the post just before leaving office. I do not know whether there is any foundation for the report beyond what Lamps has told Spicer²...

"If I do succeed Lamps which seems to be the general impression I feel sure that a great attempt will be made to bring the black lily here, and I think it would be a very indifferent appointment as he is as weak as water. Nicolson would in my opinion be the best to bring here although she is not quite à la hauteur de la situation. Still people would remember that she is Lady Dufferin's sister and that would help."³

Bertie sent his reply from Dunrobin Castle, Sutherland, on August 27:

"My dear Charlie,

"I answer your letter of Aug 14 which took a long time to reach me.

"Lamps caused it to be made known to Ld. Lansdowne that he would be ready to stay on. I understand that no answer was given. That means I imagine that when the end of the year comes (Lamps will be 65 in February next) Ld. L. will see what combination smiles to him, whether he can have your services or must seek another. I know that he would like to have you at the F.O. and that he does not mean to appoint Gorst who, I hear, thinks that

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.480. Bertie to Hardinge, July 25, 1905.
2. Spicer was Sanderson's Private Secretary.
3. FO 800/184/p.40. Hardinge to Bertie, August 14, 1905.

it only requires Villiers to be disposed of elsewhere for him to step into Lamps's shoes.

"I have reason to know that an Embassy, not any particular one, was mooted for Villiers but the idea was snuffed out by H.M. Phipps will remain, I hear, till the end of the year and Villiers is talked of as the successor. I think him unequal to the task. He might be sent to Norway or Bucharest.

"H.M. is a believer in Rodd and I said nothing to him to disenchant him. Perhaps he will overwrite himself. I cannot imagine a worse appointment to Petersburg than the Rodd and Lily. To ingratiate himself with the Government to which he is accredited he would give way in everything. Nicolson would, as you say, be much superior."¹

Hardinge's answer was dated September 11:

"My dear Frank,

"Many thanks for your letter from Dunrobin which contained a most interesting account of Lamps' actual position. I am sure that what you say is correct since we should all have been certain to have heard of it if his tenure of office had really been prolonged.

"Spring Rice has just returned from leave and tells me that Villiers recognises that he is a failure and is in despair. He would like to go, but says that his pension would be insufficient. He therefore wants a good post. The King was quite right in snuffing out any idea of his getting an Embassy, but I do not see any real reason why he should not do all right at Brussels. There is precious little to do there and after all he is presentable.

"I quite agree with what you say about Rodd. They would soon take his measure here and would play with him as they used to play with poor old Scott. I have no opinion of him and never had, but he would do very well some day at an Embassy where there was nothing else to be done but to smile and look pleasant. However I feel certain that if I go to London, H.M. will at once suggest him for this place. I should like to see Nicolson come here and Satow² go to Madrid. If Satow gets nothing he will retire and he is a very clever, cultivated and agreeable man, who has done excellent service and would do well almost anywhere."³

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.503. Bertie to Hardinge, August 27, 1905.
2. Ernest Satow was a noted scholar who had preceded Nicolson at Tangier, whence he had been posted to Tokio from 1895 to 1900, and to Peking since 1900.
3. FO 800/163/p.143. Hardinge to Bertie, September 11, 1905.

Bertie replied on September 25:

"My dear Charlie,

"My reason for thinking Villiers unsuitable for Brussels is the cunning of the King Leopold and the importance of the Congo question. He might do at the Hague or Bucharest. I am sorry for Phipps¹...

"I quite agree with you as to the merits of Satow and I should like to see him in a good post, and McDonald (sic) also.

"When I was last in the entourage of H.M. I rather gathered that Rodd ... had lost ground. He had over-written himself. Unfortunately Lansdowne thinks highly of him...

"Tyrrell writes to me that Sanderson since his return from leave has been expending his energy on wiping the floor with the Heads of Departments. Louis Mallet arrives here today on his way home from Italy where he has been travelling with Reggie Lister."²

At the end of September Lord Lansdowne provisionally made up his mind about the appointments to the Foreign Office, St Petersburg and Brussels. He wrote to Balfour on the 28th:

"My dear Arthur,

"... There are a number of impending moves in the diplomatic service, and it is impossible to deal with these transfers and promotions unless they are taken into consideration simultaneously and as a whole...

"Phipps leaves Brussels before the end of the year, and we shall have to replace him. I had some thoughts of offering the appointment to Villiers.

"But the question of a successor for Sanderson has also to be decided. On the whole I lean towards Charles Hardinge. If he comes to us, St. Petersburg becomes vacant. For that I lean towards Nicolson who is I think quite to be trusted anywhere. This would leave Madrid empty. Should Madrid become available I think Villiers might reasonably expect it. He would do quite well there and would like it better than Brussels.

1. Phipps was at Brussels for six years and never received the Embassy that he had been promised.
2. FO 800/163/p.145. Bertie to Hardinge, September 25, 1905.

"The King will very likely mention some of these other (sic) appointments to you, and you may like to know what is in my mind. I should be ready with a full blown scheme including consequential moves, by the time H.M. comes South. But if he approved of my suggestion I could find out beforehand whether Villiers would like to take a diplomatic post."¹

Shortly afterwards he informed the Prime Minister that "I have been through the diplomatic changes with the King, and he likes the general outline of my proposals."²

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In October 1905 Hardinge decided to return to England to look after his interests. He wrote to Lansdowne on the 15th that "I shall be in England in a fortnight and shall hope to see you very soon afterwards,"³ and to Knollys on the 17th that "I have settled to leave St. Petersburg on the 25th and shall arrive in London on Sunday 29th."⁴ He was well advised to return when

1. British Museum Add. MS 49729, p.163. Lansdowne to Balfour, September 28, 1905.
2. British Museum Add. MS 49729, p.184. Lansdowne to Balfour, October 8, 1905. Chirol set out on a trip to India in October 1905, and tried to sound Lansdowne before leaving. See Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.544. Chirol to Hardinge, October 3, 1905: "I have some hope that when I get back I may find you permanently installed not far from here. I meant to have tried to 'draw' Lord L. on the subject when I saw him last week, but before I could get on to the subject, the 'unspeakable Turk' was announced and I had to retire. I shall see him again before I start and have another try... I hope you will let me have news from you occasionally - especially if anything is settled about the F.O.. Everybody talks about your going there - except those in whose hands the decision lies. Sanderson in the meantime is going strong and his temper at any rate is most lively. I don't think he means to go, unless he has to."
3. Hardinge Papers Vol. 6, p.134. Hardinge to Lansdowne, October 15, 1905.
4. Hardinge Papers Vol. 6, p.135. Hardinge to Knollys, October 17, 1905.

he did, as the financial difficulties came to a head at this time.¹

Mallet wrote on October 19:

"My dear Bertie,

"The King has told Ld. L. that C. Hardinge would not accept the Under Secretaryship unless the pay were raised. Ld. L. says that he has consulted Mr. Balfour and that such a proposal would be quite out of the question, and that there is no use in raising it.

"I hope that Hardinge will not find it impossible to accept the post in these circumstances. It would be too great a misfortune for it would mean Sanderson's prolongation and succession ultimately by Gorst if the Liberals come in. The Permanent Under Secy gets £300 more than any other Under Secy and I fear that there would be (no) hope of getting the pay raised.

"Do do your best with C.H.. Everyone hopes he will come here. There is much to be done in the way of reorganisation here."²

Hardinge actually left St Petersburg on October 25, and he recalled many years later in his memoirs that,

"When I reached home I found that the question agitating the Foreign Office was the succession to Lord Sanderson, who was due to retire on the following 1st February, having reached the age of 65, and was suffering at the same time from his eyesight. I was spoken of, but with my knowledge of what the position entailed I was not very enthusiastic over the idea, though I did not turn it down, for although it entailed heavy pecuniary sacrifices upon me I had always realized that the only way to get on in the service was to disregard material advantages and to seek only for power."³

On October 31 Hardinge saw Lansdowne and was offered the Permanent Under-Secretaryship. He deferred making a decision until it could be established that his time at the Foreign Office would

1. He was also well advised to return because Sir George Clarke, the Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence, was lobbying Balfour for Sanderson's succession at this time. See N. d'Ombraïn: op. cit., p.181.
2. FO 800/184/p.77. Mallet to Bertie, October 19, 1905.
3. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy". p.118-119.

count towards his Ambassador's pension, so Lansdowne immediately wrote to Austen Chamberlain, the Chancellor of the Exchequer:

"My dear Austen,

"... À propos of Hardinge, I am most anxious to bring him into this office to replace Sanderson. We want new blood and new ideas as to organization, and I know no one else half so well fitted as Hardinge.

"But he would give up an Embassy worth £7800 for an Under Sec.yship worth £2300. He suggested an increase in the emoluments, but I said it was impossible for me to ask for this. He then fell back on the proposal embodied in the memo. which I enclose. It seems to me eminently reasonable, and I know Balfour will support it. I wish you would consider it favourably, and give me a very early reply. I have a number of diplomatic appointments to make, and they 'pivot' upon this one. My own impression is that Hardinge would not improbably, after a few years here, return to the diplomatic service, but he may fairly ask to have his pension secured."

The enclosed memorandum ran as follows:

"Sir Charles Hardinge was appointed Ambassador in April 1904, and has resided at his post for 18 months. In another 18 months he will, therefore, be entitled to an Ambassador's pension of £1700 a year.

"The approaching retirement of Sir Thomas Sanderson will render vacant the post of Permanent Under Secretary in the Foreign Office, and Sir Charles Hardinge has been sounded as to his readiness to accept the appointment.

"He has expressed his willingness to do so, but he points out that, as he is a poor man, with a family, he would not feel justified in vacating an appointment which in 18 months' time would entitle him to receive a pension of £1700 a year, for one which in 15 years would only entitle him to receive a pension of about £1300 a year. He therefore hopes that H.M. Government will see their way to the promise of an Ambassador's pension, supposing that he were, from ill-health or any other reason, obliged to retire from the public service.

"There is no precedent which exactly suits the circumstances, though the case of Lord Cromer is, in some respects, similar.

"Constantinople was vacant, and Lord Cromer's claims in every way entitled him to have the refusal of it, but he could not be spared from Cairo, and he was therefore

given a promise that, on his retirement, the Government would lay a minute before Parliament proposing that he should be allowed an Ambassador's pension.

"The chief point of similarity between the two cases lies in the fact that in each instance the Government have asked a distinguished official to sacrifice his personal interests on public grounds. In the present case there seem to be excellent reasons for generous treatment."¹

That night Hardinge dined at the Russian Embassy, where he met Sir Edward Hamilton, Joint Permanent Secretary of the Treasury. The latter noted in his diary:

"I have been dining at the Russian Embassy... The Hardinges who have just come back from Russia were there. I understand he has had Sanderson's place at the F.O. offered to him. He is not particularly keen to come and will only come on his own terms, which include better pay by £500 a year... he is the only man for the place. I don't think we can refuse to agree. There is an awkwardness about our refusing. Our salaries go to £2,500 a year. There is a sort of concession to the general idea that the Treasury is the highest office. But can the Secretary or Secretaries in the Treasury land us a row like an indiscrete Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office? Altogether I should agree to take C. Hardinge on his own terms."²

Encouraged by Hamilton's attitude Hardinge decided to raise his terms, and wrote the following letter:

"My dear Lord Lansdowne,

"I am indeed very grateful to you for the mark of confidence and appreciation which you showed me yesterday in offering me the post of Permanent U. Secretary at the F.O. but before coming to a final decision as to whether it is possible for me to accept the post I would like to submit to you the following considerations which I was unable to present to you fully on the spur of the moment, but for which I request your friendly consideration and support.

1. A. Chamberlain Papers 17/1/74 + 77. Lansdowne to A. Chamberlain, October 31, 1905, with enclosed memorandum.
2. British Museum Add. MS 48683, p.84. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, November 1, 1905.

"1. The salary attached to the post is £2,300 which leaves a wide margin between it and my present salary of £7,800 and a very fine house. In order to fulfil properly the duties of U. Secretary at the F.O. the occupant of the post should be in a position, in my opinion, to receive and entertain in a modest manner, the Heads of foreign missions in London. For this the salary is entirely inadequate. I therefore ask that the salary may be raised or that a personal allowance may be granted to me in view of the exceptional fact that although many Under Secretaries have become Ambassadors no Ambassador has ever yet become an Under Secretary, nor does it seem to me probable that the case will occur again in the near future. To show that my request is not without precedent I may mention that the salary of Ambassador at Berlin was raised from £7000 to £8000 in order to compensate Sir F. Lascelles for the loss suffered by a transfer from St. Petersburg to Berlin after only a year's occupancy of the former post, and that a personal allowance of £1000 a year was given to Sir H.D. Wolff while Minister at Bucharest to compensate him for the loss of salary on transfer from Tehran, and this allowance was not continued to his successors. I have also heard it said that it was proposed to offer Admiral Sir J. Fisher an increase of £500 a year in his salary as an inducement to continue his service at the Admiralty but I do not know how far this is correct. I may mention however with regard to my own case that I have heard from a private source that the Treasury would not be indisposed in view of the exceptional nature of my case to make some small concession in this sense if the matter was placed before them.

"2. In about 18 months I shall have completed the service required to entitle me to an Ambassador's pension of £1700 on retirement. In view of the fact of diplomatic and civil service pensions being on a more liberal scale, it would be impossible for me to qualify in the F.O. for a pension of similar amount, and to accept the prospect of a F.O. pension would entail the loss of pension accruing from more than 25 years in the Diplomatic Service. I would therefore ask that service in my case at the F.O. might be allowed to count towards the completion of the term required to entitle me to an Ambassador's pension on retirement. I may be permitted to quote the case of Lord Cromer who, I understand, is to receive an Ambassador's pension on retirement although he has never been Ambassador.

"In submitting to you these considerations, which I do with some reluctance, as there is no discussion which I dislike so much as anything connected with money, I hope that you will not think that I am inspired in any way by mercenary motives since I can assure you that, were I a rich man, none of the points which I have submitted to you would have been raised, but as I am not entirely alone I have to take into account the interests of my wife and

children. I hope therefore you will allow me to defer my reply to your offer which you put to me so kindly, and at which I am very flattered, until you have been able to decide upon the points which I have raised and which I trust you may be able to support.

"I am so sorry to give you so much trouble when I know how occupied you are."¹

Lansdowne sent this letter on to Chamberlain with the following covering note:

"My dear Austen,

"I send this as a supplement to my letter of yest.y.

"I don't know what foundation there is for Hardinge's statement that the T.y would not regard unfavourably his first proposal.

"No one would be better pleased than I if he is right."²

On November 8 Balfour's Private Secretary, Sandars, saw Hamilton about Hardinge's proposed appointment, and Hamilton noted:

"Sandars came and had a talk this morning about Sanderson's successor at the F.O. Lansdowne wants to offer the place to Charles Hardinge, who notwithstanding he is an Ambassador is willing to accept it provided he gets a personal allowance of £500 a year. I told Sandars that if the Government had made up their minds that he was the best man, it wasnt for the permanent Treasury to decline to make the allowance special and personal to him: so important was the selection of the right man for the post."³

At this point there seems to have arisen a misunderstanding. The Foreign Office wrote to the Treasury asking them to make the concession about Hardinge's pension, but making no mention of his claim for a larger salary. This surprised Hamilton, who wrote

1. A. Chamberlain Papers 17/1/76. Hardinge to Lansdowne, November 1, 1905.
2. A. Chamberlain Papers 17/1/75. Lansdowne to A. Chamberlain, November 1, 1905.
3. British Museum Add. MS 48683, p.87. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, November 8, 1905.

in his diary on November 9:

"C. Hardinge has accepted without making any stipulation about salary. At least Lansdowne in communicating with the C. of E. made none."¹

On the following day Chamberlain replied to Lansdowne, hoping that the following wording "will meet your wishes:"

"The Treasury will treat Sir Charles Hardinge's service at the Foreign Office as if it were service in an Embassy, and will award him on retirement a diplomatic pension of the same amount as they would have awarded if he had remained at St. Petersburg.

"This is, I think, in terms all that you have asked...

"He shall not suffer in pension by serving at the Foreign Office."²

Hamilton noted the following day:

"I cannot help thinking there is some misunderstanding about C. Hardinge's salary. I was told so positively that he would not accept the F.O. unless he was given a special salary. Thereupon I took the line of saying that apart from his being the indispensable man it was awkward for the permanent Treasury to oppose any raising of his salary."³

On November 13 Hardinge discovered the mistake that had been made, and went to talk the matter over with Hamilton. The latter recorded:

"There has been a mistake about C. Hardinge's salary. He came to see me today. I could only refer him to the First Lord and the Ch. of the Exchequer. He is so obviously the right man for the right place, that he can dictate his own terms."⁴

Soon afterwards it was "privately agreed to" by Lansdowne and

1. British Museum Add. MS 48683, p.88. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, November 9, 1905.
2. FO 366/755. A. Chamberlain to Lansdowne, November 10, 1905.
3. British Museum Add. MS 48683, p.88. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, November 11, 1905.
4. British Museum Add. MS 48683, p.89. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, November 13, 1905.

Chamberlain that Hardinge should have the extra salary.¹ On November 23 Bertie wrote to Hardinge:

"My dear Charlie,

"I thank you for your letter of the 20th.

"I am delighted that you have been given the appointment. I did not think that the Treasury would consent to an increase in money. You are very lucky to have persuaded them against their will and I congratulate you...

"I do not feel that Villiers will do well for Lisbon, and Bunsen though an excellent Counsellor and official has, so it seems to me, been weak about Madeira."²

Two days later Eric Barrington minuted:

"Lord Lansdowne wishes the Treasury to be formally informed of the selection of Sir C. Hardinge to succeed Sir T. Sanderson on the retirement of the latter from the post of Permanent U. Sec.y for F.A.

"The letter should point out that Sir C. Hardinge, in complying with the wish of H.M.G. that he sh.d undertake the duties of the post, is giving up a highly paid app.t abroad for one of much less value. Lord Lansdowne hopes therefore that in consideration of the sacrifice which he is making the Treasury will be able to make some compensation to him by granting him a special personal allowance of £500 a year in addition to the salary of £2,300 assigned to the post."³

The letter was dated November 29,⁴ the Conservative government resigned on December 4, the minute of appointment was signed by Lansdowne and dated December 6,⁵ and the Treasury's reply was sent on December 14:

"Sir,

"In the circumstances represented in the Marquess of Lansdowne's letter of the 29th ultimo, relative to the

1. FO 366/755. Minute by Sanderson on draft of Foreign Office to Treasury, 29/11/05.
2. FO 800/179/p.20. Bertie to Hardinge, November 23, 1905.
3. FO 366/755. Minute by Barrington, November 25, 1905.
4. FO 366/755. Foreign Office to Treasury, November 29, 1905.
5. FO 366/761/p.119. Minute by Lansdowne, December 6, 1905.

appointment of the Rt. Hon. Sir Charles Hardinge ... to succeed Sir Thomas Sanderson as Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury sanction (i) the grant to Sir C. Hardinge of a special personal allowance of £500 per annum and (ii) the continuance during his tenure of office of the allowance of £300 per annum for management of the Foreign Secret Service Fund, in addition to the normal salary of £2000 a year assigned to the post.

"On his Lordship's recommendation My Lords also sanction the retention of the services of Sir Thomas Sanderson for a period not exceeding four or five weeks after the 11th of January, on which date he reaches the age of 65, until Sir C. Hardinge is ready to replace him. My Lords understand that no overlap of salary payments for the outgoing and incoming Under Secretaries will arise under this arrangement."¹

Meanwhile, as Lord Onslow wrote on November 27, "all the papers praise Charles Hardinge's appointment to the Foreign Office."²

Vansittart recalled that Hardinge was appointed "amid more heartburning... To us younger men the appointment was an improvement... We expected no nonsense about fair shares: bad representatives got bad posts, and the King's Charles got the good ones."³

1. FO 366/755. Treasury to Foreign Office, December 14, 1905.
2. Guildford Muniment Room 173/24/93. Onslow to Cranley, November 27, 1905. See also Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.552. MacDonald to Hardinge, October 25, 1905: "I heard by this bag that you were going to replace Sir Thomas Sanderson at the F.O.. I am simply delighted because I can now keep you closely au fait with everything that goes on here." Also Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.563. MacDonald to Hardinge, November 21, 1905: "I see in the local papers the good news confirmed, that you are to go to the F.O., I don't know whether you will like this, I know I shall!"
3. Lord Vansittart: "The Mist Procession." p.56. See also Lord Kilbracken (i.e. Sir Arthur Godley): "Reminiscences." p.199-200: "Sir Thomas Sanderson, Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, was about to retire, and to my great surprise I heard rumours that I was to be his successor. I treated them with ridicule, but they persisted and became more and more frequent, until at last I began to think that there must be something in them. Finally things came to

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The year 1905 witnessed the collapse of Russia and, shortly afterwards, the eruption of the first Moroccan Crisis. It was decided to hold a Conference of the Great Powers at Algeciras to determine the future of Morocco, and Sir Arthur Nicolson was the obvious choice as British Delegate. He had, as we have seen, been the British Minister at Tangier for nearly ten years, and was in 1905 the Ambassador at Madrid. Lansdowne asked him to take on this extra responsibility in a letter of October 8, 1905, and Nicolson replied on November 3 that "I shall be most happy to be the British delegate at the Conference whenever it may meet."¹

It had become more than ever necessary to have a strong Ambassador at St Petersburg to counteract German influence and, if possible, to negotiate an Anglo-Russian colonial agreement. Once the decision had been made to appoint Hardinge to succeed Sanderson at the Foreign Office, Nicolson was chosen to become Ambassador at St Petersburg at the termination of the Algeciras Conference. On November 19 de Bunsen, who had succeeded Gosselin as Minister at Lisbon, "was informed by Lord Lansdowne that the

1. FO 800/337/p.21. Nicolson to Lansdowne, November 3, 1905.

such a pitch that some of my friends received letters, and even telegrams, from people in the Diplomatic Service, asking whether it was true that I was to be the new Under-Secretary. Nothing, however, happened as far as I was concerned; and very soon the appointment of Charles Hardinge, then Ambassador at Petrograd (sic) was officially announced... (Lansdowne later wrote) that my name had been very seriously considered... The change of office would have been very distasteful to me from every point of view, and yet, if it had been put before me as a duty, I should ... have been bound to accept."

King wished him to succeed Sir Arthur Nicolson as Ambassador in Madrid,"¹ and he wrote to Nicolson the following day:

"My dear Nicolson,

"You may imagine my feelings last night on receiving a tel: offering me the post of Amb.r to Madrid! This is my diagnosis. You go to St. Petersburg, C. Hardinge to F.O. via Sanderson, Villiers to Lisbon. But I know nothing - so do send me a line to relieve my curiosity, and also to give me some idea of when I shall probably be expected to move."²

Nicolson himself wrote on November 28:

"Dear Lord Knollys,

"I received a few days ago a telegram from Lord Lansdowne to say that he had been authorised by the King to offer me the post of Ambassador at St. Petersburg. I have most gratefully accepted the offer... It will not be an easy post to fill especially coming after so admirable a man as C. Hardinge."³

On the same day he sent his thanks to Lord Lansdowne "for having recommended me for the Embassy at St. Petersburg."⁴ Meanwhile Hardinge "urged that a good post abroad should be found for Sir F. Villiers, who was aspiring to the post to which I (Hardinge) had been named."⁵ Villiers wrote to Spring Rice on December 23:

"My dear Springy,

"... I am grateful for what you say about my app.m.t to Lisbon. The post is satisfactory to me in every way - I am pleased and shall be all the better for a change after 35 years grind here."⁶

In addition to these moves Arthur Hardinge was offered the Brussels Legation in succession to Phipps, and Spring Rice was promoted

1. E.T.S. Dugdale: "Maurice de Bunsen, Diplomat and Friend." p.210.
2. FO 800/336/p.116. de Bunsen to Nicolson, November 20, 1905.
3. FO 800/337/p.24. Nicolson to Knollys, November 25, 1905.
4. FO 800/337/p.23. Nicolson to Lansdowne, November 25, 1905.
5. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.119.
6. FO 800/23/p.251. Villiers to Spring Rice, December 23, 1905.

to be Minister at Tehran.

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These transfers were arranged just before Balfour gave his resignation to the King at the beginning of December. At a time of acute international tension immediately before the opening of the Algeciras Conference, the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service were particularly concerned that Grey should be chosen as the new Foreign Secretary. In particular Mallet and Spring Rice were anxious for his appointment because of their awareness of the grave issues involved. As early as 1898 Spring Rice had written to Ferguson:

"Last night I saw Metternich, the Kaiser's favourite diplomat. He talked of E. Grey with great admiration as having a real talent for Foreign Affairs. You see that everyone says the same thing, and you and Lady Helen ought to see that he spares a little time from his ducks to learn French."¹

Writing to Ferguson in November 1904 Spring Rice argued that,

"It would be very undesirable that a new Minister with a new Under-Secretary should go to the F.O. without a competent staff to advise him. I should strongly recommend that Louis Mallet (a convinced Free Trader) should be kept on as précis writer. It is a very important point and if you get an opportunity to suggest this, do. He is one of the few men there who is in the habit of thinking and he has any amount of courage."²

Mallet might have been a "convinced Free Trader," but he certainly was not eager that the Liberals should win the forthcoming election. On January 27, 1905, he expressed his fears

1. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit. Vol. 1, p.252. Spring Rice to Ferguson, July 16, 1898.
2. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit. Vol. 1, p.432. Spring Rice to Ferguson, November 10, 1904.

to Bertie lest either Campbell Bannerman or Elgin should take over the Foreign Office.¹ On April 4 he wrote to Hardinge:

"My dear Ambassador,

"... Personally I wish there were a chance of peace² being made before this Govt goes out of office. No one can tell what the next Govt will be - possibly all Socialists... The chance of renewing and extending the Agreement with Japan will be a small one in any case. I fear if the 'Little Englanders' are in a great majority, we shall have missed the opportunity of our lives... If you are of this opinion, it would do good if you saw some of the Liberal Leaders and drummed it into them. Of course Grey is quite sound."³

During the summer of 1905 these views were echoed by Knollys and Chirol. Knollys wrote to Hardinge on June 13 that "it would be a thousand pities if Lord Lansdowne left the Foreign Office before the conclusion of peace;"⁴ Chirol wrote on July 24:

"My dear Hardinge,

"... Of course if he (Edward Grey) and his friends were certain to rule the roost when the other party comes in, there would not be much cause for anxiety. But will they?... You will have a jolly time if its radical tail wags the next administration!"⁵

In October Mallet gave as a reason for wanting Hardinge at the Foreign Office: "the importance of having someone who will keep the liberals straight is overwhelming."⁶

By November 1905 it had become clear that the Conservative government's days were numbered, and Mallet wrote to his friend

1. See above, p.131.
2. Peace was not signed between Russia and Japan until September 5, 1905.
3. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.407. Mallet to Hardinge, April 4, 1905.
4. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.435. Knollys to Hardinge, June 13, 1905.
5. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.472. Chirol to Hardinge, July 24, 1905.
6. FO 800/184/p.77. Mallet to Bertie, October 19, 1905.

Strachey, a journalist, on the 24th:

"My dear St. Loe,

"The moment has come to make every effort to get Grey here. Otherwise everything will go to pot. Have you any means of getting at C.B. otherwise than through the Asquiths. If so, all pressure should now be brought to bear. Things are critical abroad. Germany is going to make a determined effort to capture the liberals and to ensure our quiescence in the event of their attacking France."¹

On December 5, the day after Balfour's resignation, Mallet described Grey to Bertie as the "right man" for the Foreign Office.²

In December 1905 Mallet decided to use his connection with the Asquiths to try to bring about Grey's appointment. The situation was complicated by the Relugas Compact between Asquith, Haldane and Grey, and it consequently took a long time before Campbell Bannerman was able to form a government. The Foreign Office was at first offered to Lord Cromer, and Hardinge wrote anxiously on December 8:

"My dear Maxse,

"... I hear rumours from London that Grey and Haldane are not to be in the new Cabinet, and in any case I believe there is no question of Grey coming to the Foreign Office. You can understand my anxiety as to who is to be the occupant of that Department.

"Thank you very much about your friendly words about my new appointment. I felt some diffidence in accepting so difficult a post with no knowledge of who my future Chief will be but I was encouraged to do so by my friends and hope that it will turn out for the best for the public interest."³

1. Strachey Papers 15/4/8. Mallet to Strachey, November 24, 1905.
2. G. Monger: op. cit., p.257. Mallet to Bertie, December 5, 1905.
3. Maxse Papers Vol. 453, p.173. Hardinge to Maxse, December 8, 1905.

Cromer, however, decided to remain at Cairo,¹ and eventually Asquith, Haldane and Grey all agreed to join Campbell Bannerman's government. Mallet's friend Reginald Lister, the Secretary of Embassy at Paris, was the brother-in-law of one of Margot Asquith's sisters, and the two men used her as their source of information. Once all three Liberal Imperialists had joined the Cabinet, and Grey had accepted the Foreign Office, Margot Asquith noted in her diary:

"So we are all in, and not one of us got what he wanted! I sent a telegram to Louis Malet (sic) at the Foreign Office, which I had promised to do:

"'Settled Maria;' and this is his answer:

"'Thank you and God. Suspense awful. Malet (sic).'

"The Foreign Office adore Edward Grey and were in a state of trembling anxiety lest he should stand out. Both Reggie Lister and Louis Malet (sic) had made me promise to wire to them the moment I knew of Grey's final decision. I suggested that 'Maria' would be a wiser signature than 'Margot.'²

Grey's appointment was very well received, and Sir Francis Campbell wrote that "we are all very pleased to have Sir E. Grey here who is a splendid man to work with."³ Count Mensdorff, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, reported to Vienna "that the whole diplomatic corps had an extraordinarily favourable impression of the new foreign secretary."⁴

1. P. Rowland: "The Last Liberal Governments." Vol. 1, p.12.
2. M. Asquith: "Autobiography." Vol. 2, p. 76. Diary entry by Mrs Asquith, December 8, 1905.
3. PRO 30/33/7/4. Campbell to Satow, December 15, 1905.
4. F.R. Bridge: "Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, 1906-1914." p.14. Mensdorff to Goluchowski, January 5, 1906. Mensdorff described Hardinge as "very clever and pushing"("sehr gewandter Streber")." Ibid. p.16. Diary entry by Mensdorff, December 7, 1905.

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With the appointments of Grey and Hardinge as Foreign Secretary and Permanent Under-Secretary in the first half of December 1905 we may bring to an end this study of the personal aspect of the transformation of the Foreign Office under Lord Lansdowne. One final point, however, remains to be mentioned. Hardinge wrote on November 27, 1905:

"Dear Lord Onslow,

"... I feel very much flattered at having been offered the post at the F.O. and I shall look forward to remaining there for the next few years. It is also as you say a great advantage to be in England for a bit especially as my boys are now arriving at an age when a father's care may be of use to them, and I have seen so little of my own country during the past 25 years that it will be a joy to me to feel that there is no immediate question of my going abroad again."¹

It is clear that Hardinge had no intention of remaining at the Foreign Office indefinitely, and in fact he hoped to succeed Bertie at Paris. He was therefore anxious to train somebody to be his successor as Permanent Under-Secretary. The man chosen was Louis Mallet.

Louis Mallet was "a French Protestant by blood,"² who had joined the Foreign Office shortly after Eyre Crowe, in 1888.

1. Guildford Muniment Room 173/15/57. Hardinge to Onslow, November 27, 1905.
2. A. Ramm: "Sir Robert Morier." p.131. Mallet (father) to Morier, January 26, 1878. See also T.H. Escott: "The Story of British Diplomacy." p.210-211 & 335-336; and V. Mallet: "Life with Queen Victoria." p.40: "The Mallets were descended from Mallet du Pan, the famous journalist from Geneva who did much to form moderate opinion during the French Revolution and whose advocacy of a limited form of monarchy for France on the English pattern got him into such trouble with the Jacobins that eventually he had to flee to England. His son, John Louis Mallet, was eventually given a job in the Audit

Lord Cromer owed his early advancement to Mallet's father and had taken Louis Mallet on to his staff at Cairo in 1898.¹ In 1900, however, he had returned to the Foreign Office² where he had worked in the Far Eastern Department under Bertie. In 1903 he had been appointed Précis Writer, or Assistant Private Secretary, to Lord Lansdowne, and in January 1904 Hardinge had remarked that "Mallet ... will make a very good private secretary some day if his health holds good."³

During 1904 Mallet's "anti-German" views brought him closer to Bertie, with whom he began to correspond regularly. In fact as early as June 1904 Bertie wrote to him that "I want now that C. Hardinge is gone to see you an assistant Under Secretary in training for the succession to Sanderson."⁴ It was obviously premature to hope for such an outcome, but by the end of 1905 Hardinge and Bertie had developed a plan for having Mallet appointed Private Secretary as a stepping stone to an Assistant Under-Secretaryship and, finally, to Hardinge's own succession. Such a plan meant deliberately setting aside the claims of Eyre

1. V. Mallet: op. cit., p.134. Mrs M. Mallet to B. Mallet, June 27, 1898.
2. V. Mallet: op. cit., p.217. Mrs M. Mallet to B. Mallet, November 12, 1900: "I spoke to Lord Lansdowne about Louis and he was kind and sympathetic... I hope something will come of it.
3. FO 800/163/p.137. Hardinge to Bertie, January 11, 1904.
4. FO 800/183/p.202. Bertie to Mallet, June 29, 1904.

Office. His grandson, who became Sir Louis Mallet, was a most distinguished civil servant who helped, when Permanent Under-Secretary at the Board of Trade, to negotiate the 'Cobden' Treaty, and afterwards became Under-Secretary of State for India."

Crowe, who was senior to Mallet. The other junior member of the Office who had shown outstanding ability was William Tyrrell. Hardinge's plan was that the latter should become Précis Writer and then Private Secretary. Between them Mallet and Tyrrell would prevent the promotion of Eyre Crowe, whom Hardinge did not consider socially acceptable as an eventual Permanent Under-Secretary.

For rather different reasons Cecil Spring Rice was also keen that his friend Louis Mallet should be appointed Private Secretary to Sir Edward Grey. He wrote to the latter in December 1905:

"Dear Sir Edward,

"May I in all humility and with great gladness hail you as my chief? We have had moments of grim anxiety here on that subject but I hope (though we have no news) that it is now settled...

"This is rather impertinent. But may I strongly recommend L. Mallet as private secretary?"¹

Through Hardinge's influence Eric Barrington was promoted to be an Assistant Under-Secretary in place of Villiers, and Mallet and Tyrrell were given the posts that the new Permanent Under-Secretary desired them to have. "Nothing could have been more welcome to Spring Rice than to see Sir Edward Grey at the Foreign Office, and his satisfaction was the greater because his friends Louis Mallet and Tyrrell became respectively chief private secretary and précis writer to the Minister."² Spring Rice wrote to Grey again, on January 3, 1906:

1. FO 800/72/p.6. Spring Rice to Grey, December 1905.
2. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 2, p.17-18. Note by S. Gwynn.

"Dear Sir Edward,

"... It is very pleasant, as I neednt say, to have you for chief. Most of us have looked forward to this as the best possible arrangement and your appointment was hailed with enthusiasm. It was especially pleasant to hear the French talk about it. I am perfectly delighted you have Malet (sic)."¹

(30)

In the four years from the end of 1901 to the end of 1905 the officials occupying the important posts in the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service had been radically changed. The chief beneficiaries of these changes were of course Bertie and Hardinge, but in general the transfers and promotions, which occurred during a period of rapidly deteriorating Anglo-German relations, brought to prominence men of the new "anti-German" persuasion, who advocated and were able to implement England's new foreign policy. They also took place at the same time as the thorough reorganisation of the Foreign Office. It will be necessary to examine that development in the next chapter if we are to understand fully both the rise of "anti-German" feeling and the implications of the new personal developments. Before doing this, however, it will be as well to make some concluding observations on the Bertie-Hardinge intrigues.

After a false start in the summer of 1902, Bertie and Hardinge had succeeded in advancing their careers annually. In the winter of 1902-03 Bertie obtained the Rome Embassy, and Hardinge took his place as Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office.

1. FO 800/72/p.16. Spring Rice to Grey, January 3, 1906.

In the winter of 1903-04 Hardinge was promoted Ambassador at St Petersburg; in the winter of 1904-05 Bertie became Ambassador at Paris. Finally in the winter of 1905-06 Hardinge became Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office. The earlier appointments were due almost entirely to the influence of King Edward VII and his Private Secretary, Lord Knollys.¹ Had Queen Victoria not died when she did, and had Lord Salisbury not resigned as Foreign Secretary and then Prime Minister when he did, it is inconceivable that Bertie and Hardinge could have brought about their promotions and transfers. Their opportunity would have passed by and other men would have been selected. It was a most timely coincidence for them that the Queen and Prime Minister disappeared at roughly the same time and, more particularly, at roughly the right time.

The developments that have been described in the present chapter were without precedent in the recent history of the Foreign Office, and have never again recurred on the same scale. However the important point is that both Bertie and Hardinge were men of outstanding ability who were fully able to carry the responsibilities that they acquired. If they had not been, then their advancement would have had the most serious consequences. As it was their very successes gave them the opportunities to increase their reputations and demonstrate their abilities. As

1. Hardinge wrote in 1907 that Knollys "is the only person who can influence" the King. See FO 800/185/p.92. Hardinge to Bertie, April 27, 1907. But see also Hardinge's note on the influence of Mrs George Keppel, written in 1910 and reproduced in P. Magnus: "King Edward VII." p.260. See also above p.88.

the four years from 1902 to 1906 passed by it is clear that the influence of both the King and Lord Knollys became less important. Bertie certainly owed his appointment at Paris as much to his own skill as to Royal support. It is doubtful that Hardinge needed any Royal backing at all in order to become Permanent Under-Secretary at the end of 1905. Far from having to use the King to browbeat Lord Lansdowne, he was able to dictate his terms to both the government and the Treasury.¹

The advancement of Bertie and Hardinge, and the consequent promotions that they sparked off, undoubtedly made the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service more efficient and more ably administered. At a time when Anglo-German relations were taking on a new gravity, and England's foreign relations were becoming more complex, they provided the Foreign Secretary with more resourceful advisers. At a time when the Foreign Office was being reorganised they undoubtedly brought about a régime that was better able to take advantage of the recent innovations. But what they also did was to turn the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service into a hotbed of intrigue, which had an unfortunate effect on the harmonious running of both organisations. Finally the success of Bertie and Hardinge had the most serious consequences for Eyre Crowe, who was not regarded favourably by the new

1. It is not really possible to evaluate the importance of Sandars, Balfour's Private Secretary, in these manoeuvres. He seems to have been sympathetic towards the ambitions of Bertie and Hardinge, and Sir Edward Hamilton wrote in January 1905 that "Sandars ... has acquired more personal power than any other Private Secretary I can remember." (British Museum Add. MS 48683, p.6. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, January 28, 1905. See also British Museum Add. MS 48682, p.126. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, December 14, 1904.)

Permanent Under-Secretary. We shall see in the next chapter that Crowe played a large part in bringing about the reorganization of the Office. He was undoubtedly one of its most talented and efficient members. Yet this counted for little with the socially conscious Hardinge, as Reginald Lister explained to Bertie on the day after Grey became Foreign Secretary:

"My dear Ambassador,

"... I drove up with Charlie Hardinge from the station yesterday. He told me in confidence that he had recommended Grey very strongly to take Mallet as his private Secretary and give the vacant Under-Secretaryship to Eric for the 18 months which he still has to serve. On his departure Mallet will be appointed in his place and trained eventually to succeed Hardinge. I think this is quite right. Crowe is far too much mixed up with middle class Germans, and far too uncouth a creature to be the Permanent U.S. as I believe Tyrrell wished him to be. I have always wondered at Louis' name never being mentioned when they got down as low as Crowe, but Hardinge tells me he has always been his candidate."¹

1. FO 800/163/p.147. Lister to Bertie, December 12, 1905.

C H A P T E R T W O

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGE: THE REFORM AND REORGANISATION OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE, 1903-1906

"If our Foreign Office were organized at home and abroad, so that the Foreign Secretary were kept properly informed by competent agents, such a mistake would be impossible."

Cecil Spring Rice in 1903, on Anglo-German co-operation during the Venezuelan Crisis.

(The need for reform and reorganisation - mounting criticism - the resignation of Arthur Ponsonby - Lord Lansdowne brings new methods - Villiers breaks the ice and suggests various reforms - the views of Sanderson, Hardinge and Lansdowne - the appointment of Willoughby Maycock as Superintendent of the Treaty Department - the Foreign Office reforms of 1903 - the appointment of the Cartwright Committee on the Registration and Keeping of Papers - the introduction of Councillors and "Chancelliers" to the Diplomatic Service - the recommendations of the Cartwright Committee - Sanderson tries to steer a middle course between the extreme attitudes of the Foreign Office and the Treasury - his task is made more difficult by the Treaty and Commercial Departments - he becomes increasingly irritable and unpopular - Eyre Crowe is given the responsibility for elaborating and executing the scheme for reorganisation - the first approach to the Treasury, March-June 1905 - the second approach, June-August 1905 - the introduction of the new organisation in January 1906 - miscellaneous reforms - Crowe temporarily supervises the General Registry - he becomes Head of the Western Department - Hardinge becomes Permanent Under-Secretary - the new system of Annual Reports - the responsibility and credit for the reorganisation)

(1)

The Foreign Office that Lord Lansdowne inherited in 1900 had changed little since it had emerged from the general reorganisation of government in 1782. Despite its expansion during the nineteenth century, its functions had remained the same as they had originally been: to provide the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs with the necessary clerical support. Since

1881 the Office had been divided into eight Departments, some political and divided on a geographical basis, others administrative and dealing with such things as Africa, Treaties, or Commercial affairs. These Departments were manned by a number of Junior Clerks, under a Senior Clerk. The latter was helped by an Assistant Clerk. Above the Senior Clerks were the Permanent Under-Secretary and the Assistant Under-Secretaries, who shared the supervision of the Departments between them. These officials were not expected to advise the Secretary of State; rather they were there simply to ensure that the Secretary of State was able to manage England's foreign affairs as smoothly as possible.

In the administrative Departments the Secretary of State had permitted a certain devolution of responsibility, but this was not at all the case in the political Departments. In the latter the work performed, and particularly by the Junior Clerks, was of the most routine nature; it was entirely clerical and presented a sharp contrast to the increasingly difficult and competitive entrance examination. The reports of Her Majesty's Diplomatic Representatives passed through their hands, and the replies and instructions of the Secretary of State were copied out by them as neatly as possible. They were privy to the most important secrets of State, yet they played little or no part in influencing the content of the correspondence with which they dealt. They very often became experts on the subjects covered by their Departments, yet they were not able to put this knowledge and expertise to any use. The Junior Clerk's "principal occupation," in the words of one Senior Clerk in 1879, was

"copying and putting by papers."¹ The spirit of the old Foreign Office was caught by Sir Thomas Sanderson's celebrated "Memorandum on official forms and the use and abuse of Red Tape for the Juniors in the Eastern, Western and American Departments," of October 1891.²

Lord Salisbury first became Foreign Secretary in 1878; he handed over the seals of office for the last time to Lord Lansdowne more than twenty-two years later. During these years the volume of business handled by the Office expanded greatly, yet the basic organisation of the 1870s was still intact in 1900. Lord Salisbury looked to the Foreign Office to provide him with the necessary clerical support, while he himself personally managed England's foreign relations. He was reluctant to allow any real devolution of work and responsibility even to his Under-Secretaries; he was certainly opposed to the devolution of work to the Foreign Office Clerks. His daughter has admitted that,

"his real defect, and one which was a cause of chronic complaint among all those who worked for him, was his unwillingness or incapacity to delagate responsibility, even of the most limited kind, in the larger questions which he kept in his own hands. He must not only direct a policy, he must take every step in its pursuit. He must himself consult the original sources of information and select the facts on which to base his action, and must then decide upon it without the disturbance even of

1. FO 366/369/p.117. Wylde to Tenterden, July 22, 1879. For more details of the work performed by the Junior, Assistant and Senior Clerks in the old Foreign Office, see Appendix IV.
2. FO 366/391. Memorandum by Sanderson, October 1891. The most useful books on the old Foreign Office are: Sir J. Tilley and S. Gaselee: "The Foreign Office;" A. Ward and G.P. Gooch: "The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy." Vol. 3, chapter 8; R. Jones: "The Nineteenth Century Foreign Office;" and Z. Steiner: "The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898-1914."

suggestion from outside... At no stage did he seem capable of profiting by the assistance which a public man generally expects from his staff."¹

Whatever the constitutional justification for Salisbury's attitude, it was understandable that men like Bertie, Mallet and Crowe should have sought to acquire a greater influence over the execution of policy. As the volume of correspondence handled by the Foreign Office increased annually it became clear that a time would have to come when some devolution would be necessary. Devolution implied at the very least some measure of reform, and more probably a complete reorganisation.

By 1900 the Foreign Office was staffed by three separate classes of Clerks. There were, first of all, the Clerks on the Diplomatic Establishment, who were analogous to the First Division Clerks in the Home Civil Service. Second there were the Supplementary Clerks, who were men of a lower calibre and social position who had been introduced into the non-political Departments. Third there were the Lower or Second Division Clerks, who had been introduced gradually to replace the Supplementary Clerks and to bring the Foreign Office into line with the Home Civil Service. The Supplementary Clerks enjoyed an intermediate status between the Upper Division and the Lower Division Clerks. The Upper Division Clerks were, as their name suggested, on the Diplomatic Establishment of the Foreign Office. The Lower Division Clerks were members of the Home Civil Service. What the Clerks on the Diplomatic Establishment wanted was to hand

1. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 2, p.234-235.

over their routine clerical tasks in the political Departments to an enlarged body of Lower Division Clerks, and to benefit from a general devolution of work and responsibility in the Office in order to advise the Secretary of State and execute policy on his behalf.

There were three chief reasons why the Foreign Office was in need of reorganisation. The first two, which we have discussed, may be briefly summarised. First there was the quality of the new juniors. "It had become obvious, not so much to the authorities as to the staff of the Foreign Office, that the organisation was absurd. A body of men recruited by the severest form of competitive examination was employed for the first fifteen to twenty years of their career on work of the simplest possible character. This state of things was a subject of much conversation and discussion in the Office."¹ Second there was the great increase in the quantity of the business conducted, "the number of papers received being in round figures 37,700 in 1890, 48,000 in 1900 and 54,000 in 1905."² "It is fair to say that, apart from the discrepancy between the character of the staff and the nature of their work, there was a feeling that the questions with which the Foreign Office had to deal had grown so much in number and intricacy that there was work of a better kind waiting to be done if we could be allowed to do it."¹ The third reason, around which everything else revolved, was connected

1. Sir J. Tilley and S. Gaselee: op. cit., p.153.
2. FO 366/787/p.170. Report of Foreign Office Committee, November 14, 1918.

with the organisation of the Office and requires some explanation:

"From 1810 to 1890 the following practice prevailed at the Foreign Office: A brief summary of each document (whether received or despatched) was entered in a diary, and a docket was made on the document itself, which was folded for this purpose and for convenience of filing. This work was not centralised in a Registry, but was carried out in the several Departments of the Office. Each Department filed its own archives for the current and the preceding year, those of earlier date being annually transferred to the Library for ready reference until, after a lapse of 50 years or so, they were finally removed to the Record Office. When the archives reached the Library they were re-arranged and bound in volumes, and detailed summaries of their contents were made in indexed registers, which proved very valuable for purposes of research.

"Although this system was well devised, in practice considerable arrears occurred, and the 'Ridley Commission' of 1886-1890 recommended that the indexed registers in the Library should be discontinued and that the diaries hitherto kept in the Departments should be replaced there by a more detailed register of all the papers, that this register should be duly entered up and indexed every day, and that, at the expiration of two years, the papers, with the registers and indices complete, should be handed over to the Librarian for custody and eventual binding in volumes. Theoretically this recommendation appeared in some respects a good one, but in practice it merely led to the disappearance of the indexed registers which, as already explained, had been maintained in the Library from 1810 to 1890, while the Departments, under the increasing pressure of work, only kept a register which differed but little from the cursory diaries they had maintained prior to 1890, and omitted almost altogether to index the registers. Thus, for the period from 1891 to 1900, there was no index of the Foreign Office correspondence, and the duty of indexing had to be entrusted again in the latter year to the Library, who started this work with heavy arrears. From 1900 to the end of 1905 the several Departments continued to keep a daily register of the nature described, and the Library made an index after the papers had reached that branch; this index was not, however, made from the papers themselves, but merely based upon the entries in the departmental registers, and it is accordingly not comparable with the more carefully compiled registers which had been maintained in the Library from 1810 to 1890."¹

1. FO 366/787/p.170. Report of Foreign Office Committee, November 14, 1918.

In other words, "the registration and indexing system introduced in the Foreign Office in 1891 never worked satisfactorily, even after indexing was resumed by the Library in 1900."¹ It was beginning to become clear, at least to the juniors, that the only efficient method of registering and indexing the Office's correspondence was to create one or more Registries, with the sole responsibility for this task. These Registries would have to be manned by Lower Division Clerks, who could also carry out the other purely routine clerical functions hitherto entrusted to the Clerks on the Diplomatic Establishment. The latter would thus be freed to concentrate on duties more worthy of their intellectual abilities - on writing minutes, memoranda and drafts, and on thinking and advising. To sum up: on the one hand there was the ability of and need for the junior Upper Division Clerks to play a larger role in the management of foreign policy; on the other hand it had become necessary to reorganise the registration and indexing of papers. The first two reasons and the third reason were interdependent and complementary, but in practical terms the creation of one or more Registries was the fundamental reorganisation without which little could be done. A certain number of reforms could be introduced, but what was needed was a thorough reorganisation.

(2)

As the old century passed away and criticism of the prevailing system began to increase, so voices began to be raised

1. M. Roper: "The Records of the Foreign Office, 1782-1939." p.60.

in favour of reform and reorganisation. Sir Thomas Hohler recalled the early days of his career in the following words:

"I passed into the Diplomatic Service at the end of 1894, and began to work in the Foreign Office early in 1895. I disliked ... the work (which) was dull, consisting mainly of docketing letters, and copying out despatches, for in those days typewriters were unknown, and Queen Victoria would certainly have had a fit if a machine-made document had been handed to her. For any papers that were to go to Windsor or Balmoral, we had to use our special handwriting, the blackest of ink, and no blotting paper. The sealing of bags was a science that had to be acquired and diligently applied; and the unlimited supply of official stationary, quill pens, scrapers, sealing wax and red tape made a deep impression on my youthful mind."¹

Vansittart was even more critical:

"I was told off to fag and decipher, to fill the Cabinet's pouches with papers, to copy out telegrams in violet ink and rub them into scores on stacks of decomposing 'jelly-fish,' whose fragments were pervading. Once I sought escape, for under a tarpaulin like the gun at Dover Harbour was a typewriter, but as I sat down to explore it, the Head of the Department burst in exclaiming: 'Leave that thing alone! Don't you know we're in a hurry.' Disheartened by these sweats I could bring no zeal to my new work. The start could hardly have been more unpromising despite the patience of my elder colleagues."²

Gregory recalled that "during the robot era that ended with the departure of the great super-clerk, Lord Sanderson, members of the Foreign Office lived a pleasant routine existence which stultified their education, dulled their wits and deprived them of every kind of initiative." He considered that the Foreign Office "plodded heavily most of the day" and "did on the whole very little rational work."³ Frank Rattigan felt that "the work of a junior in the Foreign Office was something like that

1. Sir T. Hohler: "Diplomatic Petrel." p.1.
2. Lord Vansittart: "The Mist Procession." p.43.
3. J.D. Gregory: op. cit., p.18.

of an office boy in a big city firm. There was an immense amount of work, but it was all bottle-washing."¹ H.J. Bruce, who joined the Foreign Office in 1904, argued that "we were not expected, certainly not encouraged, to have any views of our own on the problems our elders and betters were dealing with."² And yet despite this concensus of opinion among the younger

1. F. Rattigan: "Diversions of a Diplomat." p.29.
2. H.J. Bruce: "Silken Dalliance." p.81. See also p.82: "'Sorting the print' ... took several hours. The rest of the time was taken up with cyphering and decyphering telegrams, which in those days was done by us in the Departments. The decyphering of telegrams was accompanied by a physically dirty job called 'bluing.' This meant that the decyphers of telegrams were written out in indelible copying-ink and pressed on to a gelatine pad. Enough copies were then taken off for the King, the Secretary of State, the Cabinet, etc. The next job was to decontaminate one's hands as far as possible from the stickiness of the gelatine and indelibility of the ink." See also Sir N. Handerson: "Water under the Bridges." p.20-21; "The Foreign Office ..., when I joined it in May 1905, was still very mid-Victorian... It was a stronghold of that immensely valuable asset in life, tradition; and though reform, both to keep abreast of the spirit of the age and to increase efficiency in the new scientific era, was long overdue, the old Foreign Office was irreplaceable. To the last Queen Victoria would read no despatches from her Ambassadors and Ministers except in long-hand, and handwriting was still one of the subjects in the Foreign Office and diplomatic examinations in which it was necessary to get a certain fixed percentage of marks. After her death a few women typists, possibly half a dozen in 1905, had been introduced into the Foreign Office, but all the work of entering and registering documents, docketing them (i.e. folding them up and writing a brief précis of their contents on the outside), 'blueing' telegrams (i.e. copying them out in special ink on a wax board and making an indefinite number of duplicate copies of them), and all other clerical work of that description was done by the clerks themselves. It was a job hardly worthy of the high standard of education and intelligence required of budding Foreign Office officials and diplomats, though possibly it had its good points as well as its bad. At any rate, it reduced the output of literature, much of it superfluous and jejune, which, thanks to stenographers, is nowadays poured out from the Office and its missions abroad in ever increasing volumes."

members of the Office "there were many people," Eyre Crowe testified about the old system, "who thought it was ideal."¹

On November 22, 1897, in a "Memorandum respecting the Registration and Indexing of the Foreign Office Correspondence," the Librarian discussed the system which had been introduced in 1891 and which was modified in 1900. In the course of this discussion he referred to alternative systems and made the following revolutionary suggestion:

"Another alternative to the present system would be the formation of a Central Registration Department, in which every paper arriving in and leaving the Office would be at once registered, and the registers subsequently indexed by a permanent staff. This would secure uniformity in the work and give all necessary facilities for reference, but it would involve the practical reconstruction of the whole Office."

It was precisely this reconstruction of the whole Office that was badly needed, implying as it did that the Foreign Office First Division Clerks would be relieved of their routine work; but the Librarian was obliged to admit that "so comprehensive a scheme, however desirable in some respects, would scarcely be deemed feasible."² Two years later Francis Bertie sent some ideas on reform to Lord Rosebery and argued that "there are ways of somewhat reducing the work of the Secretary of State without detriment to the public service or withholding from him information which he should have."³ Yet nothing had been done by the beginning of

1. Cd.7749, Q.43,569. Minute of evidence by Crowe, July 3, 1914.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda, Vol. 5, p.283. Memorandum by Oakes, November 22, 1897.
3. Rosebery Papers Box 75. Bertie to Rosebery, September 20, 1899. This was part of a memorandum in which Bertie explained "how a Prime Minister might possibly have his Foreign Secre-

1903. On January 8 of that year Cecil Spring Rice sent a long letter to Lord Rosebery in which he discussed the growing power of Germany and the inadequacy of British foreign policy to meet the threat. "The root of the matter," he argued, "is ... the question of efficiency. If our Foreign Office were organized at home and abroad, so that the Foreign Secretary were kept properly informed by competent agents, such a mistake¹ would be impossible." He continued:

"At the Foreign Office no one has time to think, Do you remember telling me how you wished to see the younger men making 'études' like Napoleon's secretaries, and an official, without current work, whose duty it should be to see everyone who came from abroad and study each new situation as it arose? The clerks are occupied in the press of current business; Sanderson never listens to anyone; has no personal knowledge of Europe and no general ideas; is an ideal official for drafting despatches and emptying boxes; but this is not the business of the head of an office; he should have time to think and the wit to make other people do the current work. As you know, and Lord Salisbury knew, he has the faculty of carrying out his master's orders but not of independent suggestion, or intelligent understanding. And his influence on the office and the diplomatic service is simply paralysing. As long as he is there the officials at home and abroad are simply useful as machines - and the Foreign Office is like Johnson's definition of fishing: a line with a fool at one end and a worm at the other."²

1. The mistake referred to was the Anglo-German co-operation during the Venezuelan Crisis.
2. Rosebery Papers Box 77, p.145. Spring Rice to Rosebery, January 8, 1903. See also Cartwright Papers. Leech to Cartwright, April 4, 1904: "The great fault in our service has to my mind always been that the mere clerical work for so many years prevents any intelligence from properly developing itself."

tary in the House of Commons without killing him, and without having another Cabinet Minister - other than the Prime Minister - with a finger in the Foreign Office Pie."

The most outspoken critic of the organisation of the Foreign Office was Arthur Ponsonby, a son of Queen Victoria's Private Secretary. He joined the Diplomatic Service via the Foreign Office in the early 1890s and became increasingly discontented with his work. His frustration finally came to a head in 1900 when he was transferred to the Foreign Office, and he testified several years later that,

"At that time (October 1900) I had been nearly nine years (sic) in the Service, and my work was still to copy out dispatches, to put numbers on papers, to sort confidential prints, and, more especially, to do up dispatch bags with sealing-wax and red tape. That occupied my whole time day by day, and the resentment caused by that inspired me to draw up this memorandum, which I presented to Sir Thomas Sanderson."¹

Ponsonby's memorandum was entitled "Suggestions for Reform in the Diplomatic Service" in "an endeavour to allow a greater degree of responsibility to the younger members of the service,"² and he commented that "I do not think he (Sanderson) received it with any favour."¹ Two years later Ponsonby resigned and went into politics. Sanderson himself has left us a long memorandum in which he discussed Ponsonby's resignation:

"When Mr. Ponsonby was transferred to the Foreign Office in February 1900 he had been for six years ... in the Diplomatic Service. After six months preliminary work in the Foreign Office, he served three and a half years in the Embassy at Constantinople and then passed two years in the Legation at Copenhagen, where he complained that there was very little work of any importance for a Second or Third Secretary. On his transfer to the Foreign Office he was placed in the Western Department where he was at first the junior and afterwards the

1. Cd.7749, Q.39,397. Minute of evidence by Ponsonby, May 21, 1914.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda, Vol. 3a, p.47. Memorandum by Ponsonby, October 17, 1900.

senior of the two men in the third room. According to the system then prevailing, the Senior and Assistant Clerks of each Department did the more important work of drafting Despatches and minuting papers, while the Juniors in the third room had the care of the less important correspondence, kept the Register, docketted and put by papers, cyphered and decyphered the telegrams, and despatched the bags to the various Countries. It was Mr. Ponsonby's business when Senior in the room to take the leading part in this work, and to see that it was properly performed in all its details.

"Some time after his arrival in London he published two articles in one of the Magazines, (I think the Fort-nightly Review) criticising the Diplomatic and Consular Services and suggesting radical reforms. The tone of these articles coming from a young man of such brief and restricted experience gave some offence and caused some amusement among the older members of the Services.

"About the same time he presented me with a bulky Memorandum somewhat on the same lines.¹ My recollection is that it advocated various changes, prominent among which were the amalgamation of the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service, alterations in the conditions for admission, and a very large increase in the employment of Second Division Clerks in the Foreign Office, and of men of a similar class in our Missions abroad.

"One cardinal defect in the Magazine articles and I think also in the Memorandum was that the writer appeared to have selected the system adopted in France as the model to be imitated, whereas a French Minister for Foreign Affairs had recently complained that, although the French Foreign Office was greatly over-staffed, he could get no special work done unless he or one of the Under Secretaries personally undertook it, and had applied to us for particulars as to our system which he believed to be far preferable.

"I read Mr. Ponsonby's memorandum, though I was greatly burdened with work, and I showed it to the Assistant Under Secretaries who were not impressed by it.

"I had some talk with him on the subject. I told him frankly that I thought some of his ideas were impracticable and others of doubtful advantage. I explained to him (probably rather hurriedly) the reasons why in 1894 it had been decided not to amalgamate the Foreign Office and the Diplomatic Service - and I impressed upon him that both

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda, Vol. 3a, p.47. Memorandum by Ponsonby, October 17, 1900.

in this matter and in regard to the increased employment of Second Division Clerks the question of cost was a dominant factor, and that careful study and thinking out of details to a far greater extent than he imagined would be necessary. As regards the employment of Archivists or Chancelliers abroad, I told him that these had been discountenanced in consequence of adverse evidence given by Ambassadors and others before the Royal Commission on the Diplomatic Service of 1862, and I asked him to cut out and paste together the evidence given before that Commission on the subject, in order that I might see how far it applied to present conditions. This he did for me.¹

"Shortly afterwards the third room of the Western Department began to make a succession of blunders in the despatch of the bags to the Missions abroad with which the Department had to deal. Some very tart remonstrances were received, and finally on three occasions at short intervals telegrams came from the Embassy at Rome announcing that the fortnightly Despatch bag did not contain the Confidential printed correspondence intended to keep the Ambassadors informed of the course of political events. These mistakes involved considerable inconvenience and some expense. On the third occasion I came down to the Office at an early hour, and inspected the third room before anyone had come. It seemed to me to be in a state of great untidiness and disorder, such as to explain any number of misadventures. I spoke strongly to the Head of this Department and insisted on certain re-arrangements and I also saw Mr. Ponsonby (with whom I was on terms of personal friendship). I told him (if I remember rightly) that the Office was being brought into discredit by these mistakes, that the manner in which he was managing the work under his charge was not calculated to inspire confidence in his suggestions of far reaching reform, and that I wished he would devote rather less attention to the improvement of the Universe, and rather more to the proper conduct of the part which he had to play in it.

"I am afraid he resented these remarks, for he alluded to them rather bitterly when in October 1902 he had decided upon resigning and I was urging him not to do so without careful consideration of his future. But he said that they had not influenced his decision, and I cannot think that they were excessive.²

1. This is preserved with Ponsonby's memorandum in Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a.
2. See Z. Steiner: op. cit., App.4, Ponsonby to Sanderson, August 5, 1902; Sanderson to Ponsonby, August 24, 1902; Ponsonby to Sanderson, undated; Sanderson to Ponsonby, August 30, 1902. Sanderson's "last words" to Ponsonby were

"As regards the Memorandum I do not remember that it gave me much assistance but it confirmed my feelings as to the expediency of certain changes."¹

(3)

The way was made clear for the introduction of certain changes in the Foreign Office when Lord Lansdowne succeeded Lord Salisbury as Foreign Secretary in November 1900. It was "Lansdowne's new methods of working (that) gave the necessary impetus for the transformation to be accomplished."² During 1905 Sir George Duckworth of the Treasury reported a conversation he had had with Sanderson:

"Lord Lansdowne, he said, was directly responsible for its inception, because, unlike previous Foreign Ministers, he insisted on work at the Foreign Office being conducted in an entirely novel manner. The novelty consisted in sending for a file of all the past papers bearing on a case as soon as a fresh question arises and asking to have an up-to-date memorandum on top of the file. Formerly, the secretary of state was accustomed to rely on his own memory, or on that of the chiefs of the Office. Now, questions are too numerous and too complicated for this to be possible; and Lord Lansdowne wishes that all the younger, as well as the older, men should be specialists in some branch of their work, and make it their business to keep papers up-to-date and to undertake to be the expert opinion on the facts of any particular question."³

Lansdowne felt that he was "very short of draftsmen in the Foreign Office" and was "not satisfied with the ability or stamp of the

1. FO 800/111/p.32. Memorandum by Sanderson, July 17, 1914.
2. R. Jones: op. cit., p.113.
3. T 1/10369/4480. Memorandum by Duckworth, July 3, 1905.

"If ever you want to get back you won't be able to." (See Lord Norwich: "Old Man Forget." p.123. Diary entry by Cooper, January 24, 1924.) In fact Ponsonby returned as Parliamentary Under-Secretary in the first Labour Government of January 1924.

men who are now coming into the service."¹ He attempted to remedy this at the top by bringing in Hardinge as an Assistant Under-Secretary at the beginning of 1903. Chirol commented that "Charlie Hardinge's appointment to the F.O. has done a great deal to inform it both with knowledge and with energy."² Further down the hierarchy the only thing to be done was to reform and reorganise the Office, in order to make better use of the existing men and to attract better men in the future.

It was in 1903 that the gradual process of transformation was initiated. On January 12 the "Regulations of His Majesty's Diplomatic Service" were revised, introducing a new rule whereby appointments of Ambassadors and Ministers were made for a maximum of five years unless specifically renewed.³ Then, on April 27, Francis Villiers finally broke the ice by sending the following letter. Sanderson's marginal comments are included at the relevant places:

"My dear Sanderson,

"I have several times lately mentioned the question of introducing some changes into our Office arrangements, and you expressed yourself ready to consider any suggestions which I might wish to make.

"There is no doubt that our present system is somewhat severely criticized. It is said that we obtain excellent material and then allow it to deteriorate by misapplication

1. India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/162/p.70/no.17. G. Hamilton to Curzon, March 27, 1903.
2. India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/179/235. Chirol to Curzon, June 7, 1903.
3. FO 371/168/37683. Regulations of His Majesty's Diplomatic Service, January 12, 1903. See also British Museum Add. MS 52302, p.118. Barrington to Scott, July 15, 1903; and British Museum Add. MS 49729, p.166. Lansdowne to Balfour, September 28, 1905.

- that is to say, we get clever young men and then for years give them work totally below their capacity.

"I cannot help feeling that the experience of recent years does to a certain degree justify this criticism, and if this is so we ought carefully to examine the reason and if possible find the remedy.

"In the first place the severity of the competitive test for entry into the Office has increased to an extent which necessitates qualifications of at least a promising order to ensure success. ("But this is only because the F.O. is more popular than other offices. If it were not, the competition would diminish. (T.H.S.)") The men who pass in therefore being well educated and of good average ability are surprised to find that they have no work, and no immediate prospect of work, which can furnish any proof of their intellectual capacity. They copy ("Very little comparatively. (T.H.S.)") what others have written, they cypher and decypher, seal up bags and envelopes, put by papers and keep the register, duties which require method and attention but do not afford opportunities for the exercise of original thought or of any special mental activity.

"The result is, I am sorry to say, a considerable amount of discontent among those who have been here a few years and who ought to be developing into useful men. The practical evidence of this is the desire to leave the Office. Exchanges are encouraged ("It was recommended by a Royal Commission that the two Services should be amalgamated. There were practical objections but wherever men have the means and don't mind the exile the higher prizes and easier life of the Diplomatic Service should be open to them. This is one of the attractions, not one of the disadvantages of the F.O. (T.H.S.)") and a number of those who go temporarily into the Diplomatic Service endeavour to make the change permanent as they find the life abroad, both immediately and prospectively far more attractive. Then - and this is perhaps more subversive of the feeling which we wish to maintain - comparisons are being more and more made between the work of our juniors and that which is entrusted to the juniors in other Offices. Young men, we are told, who go into the Treasury or Colonial Office are given work which exercises the brain ("Some of the letters which we get from the Treasury as the result do not encourage imitation. (T.H.S.)") after a few months, or even weeks, and at any rate have a chance of expressing an opinion upon the business of the Department to which they belong.

"The number of good men we have lost while still in the early days of their official life is sufficient to prove my contention - for instance, Nicolson, Austin Lee,

G. Murray, B. Mallet, A. Hardinge, Spring Rice,¹ C. Greene, Strachey, Lindley, Ramsay. ("...These (i.e. Nicolson - Spring Rice) are not recent experiences. (T.H.S.)") On the other hand there is not a single instance of a man exchanging into the Office and remaining permanently. ("L. Greville, Lehmann and Oswald, till they retired altogether. (T.H.S.)")

"I have so far dealt rather with the personal side. There is of course the far more important question of efficiency.

"I am of opinion that to enable the members of each Department to discharge their duties in the manner which will be most to their credit and which will give the maximum of assistance to the Secretary of State and Under Secretaries it is desirable that all ranks should be given the opportunity of doing work which involves a certain degree of responsibility.

"The only way of effecting this would be a devolution of work from the Under Secretaries and Heads of Departments downwards. The latter might have authority to settle matters of lesser importance without reference to superior authority ("The Under Secretaries have discretion as to this, though the letters require their signature. (T.H.S.)") and they could in turn entrust the junior Staff with as much independent and responsible work as could properly be allowed to their discretion. ("But how independent? They may make minutes, and write drafts, but someone should revise them. (T.H.S.)") A system of this kind besides introducing into the work of the juniors a higher degree of interest and importance than now exists, and besides leading to greater expedition in the despatch of business, would relieve the Heads of Departments and Under Secretaries of much unnecessary labour and leave more time for attention to important matters.

"I am not for a moment unmindful of what has been done during late years to relieve the juniors of mere routine work by the employment of Second Division Clerks and type writers and by the extension of printing. The work has, however, increased in proportion - has indeed rather outstripped our efforts. The return of papers received and sent, which is our only available statistic, shows a rise from 73,819 in 1890 to 108,904 in 1902, nearly 35%, and

1. Spring Rice originally joined the Diplomatic Service on a temporary transfer, and then decided to apply formally for a permanent transfer. He wrote that "I'm not keen but perhaps it is better, as things are in the F.O." See Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.119. Spring Rice to S. Spring Rice, January 31, 1892.

though there have during that period been very useful additions to the Staff I believe that some further additions and some rearrangement of the work of the juniors has become necessary.

"The most effective manner of giving the juniors time to attend to duties other than those of mere routine which at present occupy them almost exclusively would be -

"1. To remove all telegraphing from the Departments by the establishment of a cyphering room. This might be carried on by the 8 or 10 junior men in rotation and by the Attachés working in the Office. It would probably be found that 3, or at most 4, each man taking one week off duty would suffice in normal times.

"This room could also undertake the distribution of the daily telegram Sections and the despatch of pouches to the Cabinet.

"2. A great deal of ordinary work over which much time is wasted, such as appointments of foreign Consular Officers, applications to view arsenals etc, enquiries on all manner of subjects unconnected with foreign affairs, might be transferred to a non-political Department - for the general miscellaneous work I would suggest the Consular Department, and for the foreign Consular appointments the Treaty Department which already deals with those cases where an exequatur is required.

"If these recommendations should be adopted the business of the political Departments would be concentrated and relieved from the incubus of much trivial routine. The juniors would then be free to take their part in remedying the defects in our organization and in fulfilling the demands which in these days we are called upon to meet. They would be able to acquaint themselves fully with at least a portion of the business of their Department and would have time to prepare memoranda and to keep up dossiers on important questions each man taking one or more subjects and being held responsible for the accuracy and completeness of his own contributions. ("This is quite a different thing from dealing with matters on their own authority and is I think quite sound. But surely it is to some extent at least in practice now. (T.H.S.)")

"The assignment of additional work to the Consular Department would necessitate an increase of the Staff, and I would recommend the appointment of an Assistant and of one Clerk of the Second Division.

"As a smaller measure of relief it might be arranged that bags should be made up - if necessary in the Departments - by the Office Keepers. ("It is somewhat a matter of senti-

ment. But I should be sincerely glad that the making up of bags should be transferred altogether to other hands. (T.H.S.)" I mention this because whenever I have made enquiries as to the views held in the Office this point has always been prominently put forward.

"I should like to take the opportunity of offering another suggestion. Some comments have of late been made with regard to the manner in which we deal with the preparation and issue of Bluebooks. At present there is uncertainty and generally insufficient prevision. It is worth considering, I think, whether we could not meet the difficulty by the appointment of an additional Assistant who would superintend all matters connected with the publication of our Parliamentary Papers. He would be in constant communication with the Parliamentary Under Secretary and would devote his attention to Parliamentary requirements. He would anticipate the demand for Bluebooks by preparing materials in advance ("This is only practicable to a very limited degree. (T.H.S.)"), file the reports of all Foreign Office debates, Parliamentary questions and extra Parliamentary speeches, be familiar with former Bluebooks and know what has and what has not been made public on any given question. He would read carefully and file all the Office print according to subjects likely to become prominent. Throughout the early stages of a question and before a Bluebook became imminent he would be in regular communication with the Head of the Department concerned and make sure that all important papers were printed and no link in the chain missing. On the demand for a Bluebook he would first consult the Parliamentary Under Secretary as to the lines on which it should be drawn up and then go through the blue print with the Head of the Department. Subsequent stages might follow the existing course substituting the new man for the Assistant in the Department. It is likely that if developed on the above lines the post would absorb the whole time and energies of one man. ("It would be more than any man could manage if practiced in its entirety. (T.H.S.)") The appointment would need special qualifications and would have to be made by selection only.

"The mean annual cost of 2 Assistants would be £1500 and of one Second Division Clerk £210.

"There may of course be other means of attaining our object. I have sometimes thought we might have a general registry - but this would be entirely subversive of our present arrangements and it seems to me that the suggestions which I now put forward would be sufficient for the moment and would go a long way towards that reform of our system which I believe is required."¹

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.98. Villiers to Sanderson, April 27, 1903.

Though Villiers recognised the need for devolution in the Foreign Office his suggestions for a cyphering room, for a redistribution of the miscellaneous non-political work, for a Blue Book Department, and that the bags should be made up by the Office Keepers were slight in comparison with the reorganisation that was needed. He was right to regard a General Registry as "entirely subversive of our present arrangements." Sanderson, who had made his marginal comments on Villiers's letter, then wrote a memorandum in reply, giving his own views. This memorandum was dated May 2;

"The recommendations contained in this letter correspond in a good many respects with proposals which I was myself contemplating, but which Villiers requested me to defer until he had been able to put his own ideas into shape.

"I do not altogether agree in the exordium, but there would be no advantage in arguing over it.

"During the time that I have been Permanent Under Secretary I have done my best towards improving the prospects of the political Clerks and relieving them from copying and routine work of a non-confidential character. There have been added to the Political Establishment in the higher ranks

"1 Assistant Under Secretary

"1 Director of Protectorates

"2 Senior Clerks

and in the lower ranks only 2 Second Class Juniors.

"On the other hand the number of Second Division Clerks has been raised from 16 to 28 - and the typewriters from 2 to 8.

"The whole of the non-confidential copying and writing for signature, the preparation of indexes, the docketting of ordinary letters, and a large quantity of correspondence has been transferred to Second Division Clerks and Typists, and a mass of confidential copying is now dispensed with in consequence of accelerated printing.

"I am altogether in favour of extending the process as far as is practicable and of what is called devolution - which indeed within certain limits I have done my best to inculcate. The political work of the Office is however in a large degree so important and a blunder may produce such serious consequences that much greater supervision by the Secretary and Under Secretaries of State is required than in most public Departments. Our first duty after all is to see that the business is properly transacted and not that the young men are provided with work which they consider suited to their capacities. And I do not consider that keeping a register of political correspondence during part of the day is unimportant work or petrifying to the intellect."

Sanderson then examined Villiers's proposals in turn. He was not certain that the cyphering room would "produce any great change for the better," but felt that "the experiment might be tried."¹ He was in favour of a redistribution of the miscellaneous non-political work, but argued that the Foreign Office would only be justified in asking for an additional Staff Officer² rather than an Assistant Clerk.³ He agreed that the bags should

1. "Cyphering Room. I am open to conversion, but I do not feel certain that this will produce any great change for the better. It is not a question of transferring the work to other hands, but simply for collecting it in a lump in one place. The amount of telegraphing fluctuates exceedingly from day to day, and from hour to hour. We shall run the risk alternately of having men idle, and of considerable delay from congestion of work. However if a suitable room can be assigned, for there is also the architectural difficulty, the experiment might be tried. It will be necessary to have a man of some experience at the head of the room, but he ought to have discretion to summon men as required, and to send them back to the Departments when telegraphing is slack."
2. The Staff Officers were selected from among the more senior Lower Division Clerks.
3. "Miscellaneous Correspondence. I am quite in favour of handing over all the correspondence respecting foreign Consular appointments to the Treaty Department, which already deals with a portion of it. I should say that the requests for Miscellaneous Information might best be dealt with by the Librarian's Dept. which already takes requests for supply and exchange of publications. This would give

thenceforth be made up by the Office Keepers, and even felt that this might be done "under superintendence of a Second Division Clerk in a separate room."¹ Finally he supported the suggestion that an Assistant Clerk should be given the responsibility for the preparation of Blue Books, a task that could be combined with the Secretaryship of the recently established Committee of Imperial Defence.² Sanderson concluded:

1. "Taking up of Despatch Bags. I go rather farther than Villiers in this respect - and would be glad to examine whether we could not have all bags made up by the Office keepers under superintendence of a Second Division Clerk in a separate room where parcels and letters should be kept in proper compartments until the day of despatch. The despatches would be kept in the political Departments until that day and then brought down in closed envelopes by one of the political Clerks. Perhaps someone could ascertain how the arrangements of this kind are managed at the India Office, and what is done at the Colonial Office."
2. "Assistant Clerk for preparation of Bluebooks, etc. The duties which are suggested for this office are exactly those which Lord Salisbury wished to assign to Sir M. Gosselin, and in that case they certainly were not found to work. I think however that to have an Assistant who would be available for this kind of work and for various other questions during the recess would be of distinct advantage. When Mr. Balfour decided that the Secretary of the Defence Committee should be a member of the Foreign Office Staff I obtained a promise that he would support any application that we might in consequence find it necessary to make for the appointment of an additional Assistant Clerk, and I think it might be arranged that the Secretary of the Defence Committee should be an unattached Assistant Clerk available for the Parliamentary work." The Committee of Imperial Defence had been established in December 1902 and met in the Foreign Office under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister. See N. d'Ombraïn: op. cit., p.27 and 136.

us a fair ground for asking for an additional Staff Officer for that Department. I do not think that the transfer of correspondence of this nature affords any ground for asking for the addition of an Assistant on the political establishment with salary of £700 to £800 a year."

"The result of these changes would be the addition to the Staff of

"1 Assistant	£700 - £800
"1 Staff Officer	£300 - £500
"1 Second Div. Clerk or possibly two.	£ 70 - £350

"But if we can make out a good case for asking for two Assistants instead of one, I should of course be glad. We can no doubt find useful employment for them."¹

The reforms envisaged by Villiers and Sanderson were no more than ameliorations of the unsatisfactory situation that existed in the Foreign Office at that time. They came nowhere near the reorganisation that was badly needed. They also progressed slowly, and it was only nine days later, on May 13, that Sanderson wrote two further memoranda on the subject of the proposed reforms. The first was an instruction that the bags should in future be made up by the Office Keepers:

"I understand that the Junior Clerks would consider it a relief that they should be allowed to call in the Officekeepers to make up the Despatch Bags.

"With our present staff of Officekeepers I see no objection to one of them being called in to make up the crossed bags in each Department, provided that one of the Junior Clerks superintends the process, and is responsible for the despatches being put in, and for the bags being securely made up and properly addressed.

"The seal must not be taken out of the Department, and the crossed bags must, as heretofore, be delivered personally to the Messenger with the Certificate when they are sent by messenger."²

The second memorandum was a circular to the Heads of Departments:

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.104. Memorandum by Sanderson, May 2, 1903.
2. FO 366/760/p.491. Memorandum by Sanderson, May 13, 1903.

"I am engaged with Villiers in endeavouring to work out some arrangements for relieving the political Departments from the less important correspondence which now comes to them, and give (sic) more time for dealing with the more serious subjects. I hope that the change may enable us to introduce more method in organisation in the purely political work which has increased so much of late years. The matter rests much with the Heads of Departments. The Under Secretaries can scarcely do more than give general directions and advice, leaving practical application to the Senior Clerks.

"There are several points to which I think more attention might be given:-

"1. There is no regulation which makes it incumbent on the Head of the Department to minute all the correspondence sent up by him to the Under Secretaries of State. He is responsible for the minutes being in his judgment clear, sufficient, and correct. But it is within his discretion to assign a particular subject to any of the subordinate members of the Department, and to let him work it, prepare memoranda and make suggestions in regard to it. It is in fact desirable that this should be done as far as circumstances admit, and in matters of secondary importance, both for his relief, and for the education of the younger men and as a test of their capacity.

"2. There is a regulation, which is not sufficiently attended to, that all memoranda and minutes shall be initialled or signed by the writer.

"3. There are a good many papers in each Department which the Head of the Department is quite competent to deal with on his own authority. Some need not come before the Under Secretaries at all except in the form of a letter for signature, some might come up with a draft already prepared; with some, after the minute on the original paper has been approved, the Draft need not be submitted. From time to time I have pointed this out, but somehow we always seem to fall back into the same groove, and almost anything comes up, first with a minute and then as a Draft.

"4. The Memoranda on current questions ought to be continued up to date at more frequent intervals than is now the practice in some Departments, files of print and of telegrams on any urgent questions of the moment ought as a matter of course to be kept, and short tables of contents (similar to the register entries) should be attached to them in all cases when the collection becomes at all voluminous. One or other of the Juniors should be held responsible for each one of these being complete and in good order. If this were done, a good deal of time would be economised

which is now taken up in hasty searches for individual papers which are suddenly wanted for a special point, and there would be someone available with a special knowledge of each question. I do not say that this is altogether easy of accomplishment, but it is what we should endeavour to secure, and a considerable amount of progress might be made in this direction.

"I think some commencement of reform might be made in all these matters without waiting for changes which it must take some little time to arrange, and I would suggest that the Heads of Departments should discuss details with their superintending Under Secretaries."¹

Sanderson, however, did not circulate this memorandum to the Heads of the Departments. Instead, he showed it to Lord Lansdowne, along with Villiers's letter of April 27 and Sanderson's own earlier memorandum of May 2. Meanwhile Hardinge, who had joined the Foreign Office as an Assistant Under-Secretary at the beginning of the year, suggested to the Foreign Secretary that there should be a greater interchange between the Foreign Office and the Diplomatic Service among the lower ranks. In a letter to Satow of the following January, Hardinge wrote that,

"there should be more assimilation of the F.O. and Dipl.c Service, and I am of opinion that it should be made compulsory. It was only last spring that, when certain reforms were proposed in the F.O. and I was asked to write my opinion on them, I wrote that it should be made essential for preferment to the higher posts in the F.O. that the F.O. clerks should have served at least two years abroad in one or more foreign Embassies or Legations. My views did not meet with any support in the F.O. in the upper ranks as this test would have disqualified the three other Under Secretaries but it met with Lord Lansdowne's entire approval and he wrote a minute to that effect."²

Consequently Lord Lansdowne wrote a memorandum of May 15 giving his own views on the proposed reforms:

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.108. Memorandum by Sanderson, May 13, 1903.
2. PRO 30/33/7/3. Hardinge to Satow, January 17, 1904.

"I am glad to observe from these minutes that there is a consensus of opinion to the effect that we require not only an increase of the Staff but a change in the distribution of the work which it has to perform. As to the proposed increase I have a general impression that the Office is not overmanned for the work which it has to get through in ordinary times and that when some special and urgent question is being treated, the Department concerned is swamped by the extra calls which it has to meet.

"With regard to the question of distribution, it is clearly desirable that we should relieve the men who are supposed to be fitting themselves in the lower ranks of the Office for higher employment hereafter from work which has neither interest nor educational value.

"We cannot therefore go wrong in emancipating the juniors from their responsibilities in the matter of sealing up bags and doing up Cabinet pouches etc. The proposal to establish a cyphering room seems to me to be well conceived but the arrangement must be elastic - the stream of telegrams ebbs and flows and the room will have at times to receive help and must at others be prepared to give it. I have no doubt that the proposal to turn some of the Miscellaneous correspondence over to the Treaty and Consular Depts. is a good one but my opinion upon this point is worth little.

"Speaking generally I should say that from the moment when a Junior Clerk enters this office, his time should never be wholly occupied upon merely mechanical work and that his superiors should contrive to give him constantly some task to which he will have an opportunity of contributing touches however unpretentious of his own. A lad e.g. who had passed our entrance examination should surely be fit - say - to draft an ordinary despatch from rough notes supplied for his guidance by one of his seniors. If he has a fair share of such work, an occasional turn at indexing or copying will teach him methodical habits and improve his handwriting - which is not always exemplary.

"I think there is more room for devolution all through the Office. Too much of the work seems to me to find its way to the top. Papers and drafts not infrequently come to me which I have no time to look at and which might perfectly be disposed of by the Under Secretaries, and I know enough of the ability of some of the Heads of Departments to feel sure that the Under Secretaries might in turn safely entrust them with complete responsibility in dealing even with papers of importance. As to this, however, I can only affirm a general principle and express my desire that it should be acted upon so far as circumstances permit.

"The proposal to create a Parliamentary Branch commends itself to me - our 'Blue Booking' is a weak point. The compilation of these volumes is pregnant with trouble. We must provide means for the timely collation of the documents, their preliminary revision and their final editing. The work cannot be properly done if it is rushed at the last moment and the first processes should therefore be gone at as early a stage as possible. It is not very difficult to foresee that someday or other a Blue Book, as to, say, 'the Chinese Indemnities,' will be required, and it should be a comparatively simple matter to get together a 'dossier' with a good table of contents, kept up from week to week in such a manner as to make it possible to find a document at any moment without reading through the whole file. The compilation of these tables is by no means merely mechanical work and has its educational value. Norton wld make an excellent head of the Parliamentary Branch.

"I am attracted by Hardinge's proposal as to exchanges between our juniors and men of the same standing in the Diplomatic Service. Is there any objection to this? I understand that such exchanges already take place occasionally. Could not the same thing be done in the case of men higher up the service.

"I am quite prepared to sanction an application to the Treasury for the proposed additions to the Staff and it seems to me that we can make out a case for two assistants. I would at any rate ask for them.

"There are several useful suggestions in Sir T. Sanderson's minute of May 13 in which I generally concur and I hope that he will in consultation with the Under Secretaries find it possible to frame instructions in accordance with what I have said in this Minute for my approval."¹

Sanderson thereupon framed the instructions and, on May 22, wrote a further memorandum for the Heads of Departments:

"I circulate herewith for the private information of Heads of Departments some papers as to the proposed changes in the work of the office.

"A. Letter by Villiers.

"B. Some remarks by me.

"C. A mem. which I had prepared for circulation to Heads of Departments.

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.110. Memorandum by Lansdowne, May 15, 1903.

"D. Minute by Lord Lansdowne.

"E. The proposals I have framed for submission to him.

"We must get Treasury sanction for the proposed addition to our Staff of

"2 Assistants

"1 Staff Officer

"2 Second Division Clerks

and I understand that no examinations for the two present vacancies on the Establishment or for the two which will result from these additional Assistants can be held till July.

"It will be a question for consideration how far the proposed changes can be brought into operation meanwhile, but a good deal could I think be done as soon as we get the additional Second Division Clerks.

"If any difficulties occur to the Heads of Departments I shall be glad to hear them. In the meanwhile the less said on the subject to others the better."¹

This memorandum by Sanderson brought to a close the first stage in the initiation of the reforms. Cranborne, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, wrote to inform Bertie of the new development on May 22:

"My dear Bertie,

"... The cause of reform in the F.O. has really taken a start. There is we think to be a special ciphering room and a political or rather parliamentary department, and we hope an increase of the staff. Fairholme has broken down, Burke is overworked, and has gone on sick leave, so has Tyrrell. Sanderson even has been thoroughly knocked up."²

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.97. Memorandum by Sanderson, May 22, 1903.
2. FO 800/174/p.1. Cranborne to Bertie, May 22, 1903.

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While these reforms in the organisation of the Foreign Office were being discussed, the question arose of finding a new Superintendent of the Treaty Departments. The present Head, Robertson, was about to retire and Sanderson wanted to promote his Assistant, Willoughby Maycock. The importance of this lay in the fact that Robertson was an Upper Division Clerk while Maycock was a Supplementary Clerk. His promotion would therefore deprive the Upper Division of one of their more senior posts. More seriously it would pose an awkward question for the future. The Supplementary Clerks, as we have seen, were gradually being replaced by Lower Division Clerks, and Maycock was one of the last of them. When he came to retire the way might have been opened for the promotion of a Lower Division Clerk to the post of Superintendent of the Treaty Department, an outcome that would find little favour among the Clerks on the Diplomatic Establishment. Whatever Maycock's qualifications for the post, therefore, it was possible to argue that there was a principle at stake. The principle does not seem to have been referred to on paper, but it cannot have been absent from the minds of the people involved. On May 5 Sanderson minuted:

"I propose to submit Maycock's name to Lord Lansdowne for promotion to succeed Robertson as Superintendent of the Treaty Department. He does not in my opinion quite come up to the standard of what the head of that Department should be, but he is steady and hardworking and ... he has done a large share of the business with great assiduity. I think it would be an injustice to put anyone over him, and though not possessing remarkable knowledge or attainments, he will manage the Department very respectably.

Cranborne added "I agree," and Campbell minuted on the following day:

"I am very glad of this decision. I am sure he deserves it. Maycock works steadily and well, and though he may not have any 'remarkable attainments,' in the month I have been looking after the Treaty Dept. I have seen enough of him to say that in my opinion he has acquired a lot of useful knowledge in such tiresome questions as nationality, marriages, etc etc.¹

"The chief point to my mind, however, is that as Sanderson says nobody could be put over his head without injustice."

Villiers also supported the proposal, though his minute has unfortunately not been preserved. On May 7, however, Hardinge put forward his objections to the candidature:

"It is with some diffidence that I venture to differ from the recommendations of the three F.O. Under Secretaries, my Seniors, and more especially in view of the recommendations of Mr. Villiers who held for about six years the position of Superintending Under Sec.y of the Treaty Dept. which I now hold, and to whose opinion I attach the greatest weight and importance.

"I have only been three months in the Foreign Office of which one has been spent abroad, but during the two months that I have worked here I have carefully watched Maycock's work and I regret to say that in my opinion it does not come up to the standard of what I should like to see emanating from the Head of the Treaty Dept. Nobody could be more assiduous in his work than Maycock but unfortunately he is lacking in education and sometimes in judgment. He would always be an admirable second in a Department.

"I would prefer the appointment of an efficient Assistant Clerk to the vacant post if a suitable one could be found. If this solution was found to be unpracticable I would prefer the appointment of Mr. Hurst (if he would take the post). The latter solution presents many advantages since a great portion of the Treaty Dept. work is purely legal and has to be referred either to Mr. Davidson or Mr. Hurst. In this way much time and labour would be saved and the argument of the advantage of having a legal man at the Head of the Treaty Dept. might possibly save Maycock's face.

"I fully recognise that there is much that may be said in favour of Maycock's appointment from the point of view of justice and harmony but I, as Superintending Under

1. Campbell managed the department while Hardinge was abroad with the King. See Chapter One, p.60-63.

Secretary, am more concerned with the efficiency of the Department."

Hardinge then sent his minute to Sanderson who, later the same day, passed the minutes of all the Under Secretaries on to Lansdowne, together with a further minute of his own:

"I annex the minutes on this subject for Lord Lansdowne's consideration. The question is one of some difficulty, but on the whole I incline to the view taken by Mr. Villiers and Mr. Campbell. I admit that Mr. Maycock will not be an ideal appointment but I do not think that among the Assistants on the political establishment there is anyone particularly well qualified for this post. I think that for the transaction of the business a layman, with legal advice always available, is better than a lawyer, unless the latter is known to have the requisite knowledge and aptitude for dealing with official and diplomatic business. Any lawyer so appointed would in any case be very greatly dependent on the Department for information on precedents and (the) past history of cases - and as the appointment would imply a severe charge of incapacity and involve a stoppage of promotion for an indefinite time, there is no doubt that the staff would be greatly discouraged and demoralised."

Lansdowne signified his support of Sanderson with "I approve of Mr. Maycock's appointment."¹ The following week Sanderson wrote the minute of appointment, after further dispute between the Under-Secretaries:

"Lord Lansdowne,

"I submit that Mr. Willoughby Maycock, Assistant in the Treaty Department, should succeed Mr. Robertson as Superintendent of the Department. Mr. Maycock has had charge of the Department during Mr. Robertson's prolonged absences from ill-health, and has managed the work satisfactorily.

"... to date from Mr. Robertson's retirement."
(i.e. May 1).

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.38. Minutes by Sanderson, Cranborne, Campbell, Hardinge and Lansdowne, May 5-7, 1903.

Lansdowne initialled the minute.¹ Later that same month, on May 25, Hardinge wrote to Bertie about this episode and about the proposed Foreign Office reforms:

"My dear Frank,

"... Geo. Maycock was appointed. Everybody admitted that Hurst would have been a good appointment, but vested interests and red tape are of more account than efficiency in this office. They even admitted that Maycock does not fulfil all the requirements of Superintendent of the Treaty Department, but such considerations were immaterial to them. Villiers worked like a horse for Maycock, in return, I suppose, for all the flattery of the latter during six years.

"I hope before long to break down the tradeunionism (sic) that reigns here and of which Villiers is the champion. I have told Lord Lansdowne and Cranborne what I think of it all and shall rub it into Lamps and Villiers when I get a chance. I hear that Balfour and some of the Cabinet are very sharp in their criticisms of the F.O. now and I think they are quite justified in what they say. There is now a scheme of reform for this office which has been approved by Ld. L. of which the principal features are

- "1. a cypher room
- "2. a bluebook room
- "3. the office keepers to make up bags.

"This relieves the juniors to a certain extent, but the devolution of work which is the most important feature of the scheme remains entirely dependent on the Under Secretaries and is not likely to be put into practice so long as Sanderson and Villiers reign here."²

A week later, on May 31, Cranborne was also critical of Sanderson:

"My dear Bertie,

"... so far from time to time there is a cry for reform. Thus it is with us. We are proceeding, with many minutes and much deliberation. The Under Secretaries have been consulted semi-officially. The Permanent Under Secretary has given a great deal of thought to it, the Secretary of State has at length been approached with carefully drawn

1. FO 366/760/p.490. Sanderson to Lansdowne, May 14, 1903.
2. FO 800/163/p.123. Hardinge to Bertie, May 25, 1903.

general principles, he has been very sympathetic and has asked that these principles be crystallised in definite proposals. The Permanent Under Secretary is now engaged in crystallising. In the meantime a messenger is to tie up the bags instead of a first division clerk. But it is a shame to poke fun at him, for he is indeed overwhelmed in work. They tell me that this spring beat the record for the abundance of work which was supplied to the F.O.

"I was rather shocked at your account of your Chancery - it is clear that the F.O. is not the only place which requires Reform."¹

(5)

On June 12, 1903, the Foreign Office wrote to the Treasury requesting additions to the Staff of the Office in view of the proposed reforms.² Five days later, on June 17, Sanderson wrote a memorandum for circulation to the Heads of Departments:

"In connection with the changes which are in contemplation for relieving the political Departments from a portion of the correspondence now dealt with by them, and for which the Treasury has been asked to sanction some increase of the Staff, Lord Lansdowne wishes to call attention to the necessity of making better arrangements for the distribution of the work in each Department, and for assigning to each of the junior Members of the Staff, who are intended to be training themselves for higher employment hereafter, a certain share of responsibility and opportunities of exercising their judgment and acquiring experience.

"There are several points to which attention might with advantage be given:-"

There were five points, the first four of which were transcribed from Sanderson's own memorandum of May 13, omitting the last sentence in both points three and four.³ The fifth point was derived from Lansdowne's memorandum of May 15:⁴

1. FO 800/163/p.126. Cranborne to Bertie, May 31, 1903.
2. FO 366/754. Foreign Office to Treasury, June 12, 1903.
3. See above, p.184-185.
4. See above, p.186-187.

"5. Lord Lansdowne wishes to impress upon the Senior Clerks that, from the moment when a Junior Clerk enters this office, he should never be wholly employed upon merely mechanical work and that his superiors should contrive to give him from time to time some task in which he will have an opportunity of contributing touches however unpretentious of his own. Their individual aptitudes for different classes of work will vary, but anyone who has succeeded in the competitive examination for this Office should, after a very short experience, be competent to draw up memoranda on more simple questions, to make correct summaries of lengthy documents, or to draft an ordinary despatch from rough notes supplied for his guidance. There ought to be no difficulty in so arranging the duties of the several members of the Department as to give even the youngest a fair share of such work.

"The relief which during late years has been afforded by the large increase in the staff of typewriters and Second Division Clerks, and the arrangements now in contemplation for redistribution of part of the work, and the concentration of the cyphering in a separate room, should enable the Heads of Departments to make proper provision for giving effect to Lord Lansdowne's directions."¹

Three days later, on June 20, Sanderson showed this memorandum to Lansdowne, together with a copy of the letter to the Treasury of June 12. He minuted:

"I submit herewith a sketch of the proposed new arrangements for the Office and of a Draft to (the) Treasury asking for the necessary increase of staff."

Lansdowne wrote:

"These will do very well. You are, I think issuing instructions to the heads of departments, and you will no doubt let me see them when they are ready."²

Lansdowne then added a memorandum of his own to Sanderson's:

"Sir Thomas Sanderson's minute which is the outcome of the discussions which have taken place between us has my entire concurrence and I need supplement it by a few words only.

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.124. Memorandum by Sanderson, June 17, 1903.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.129. Minutes by Sanderson and Lansdowne, June 20, 1903.

"I am absolutely persuaded of the soundness of the policy of devolution to which the minute gives expression. As to the adequacy or practicability of the steps indicated for the purpose I speak with more hesitation. Only those who have a knowledge of the working of the Office, to which I cannot pretend, can speak with confidence upon this point.

"It is essential that the devolution which I desire should take place from the top to the bottom of the Office. Judging from the papers which now find their way to me I am convinced that the Under Secretaries, who obviously intercept a great part of the work, must be swamped with a mass of routine. The result can only be that their time is so occupied in handling comparatively unimportant papers that they can have no leisure for the study of more serious questions.

"Heads of Departments should in future be at liberty and should be encouraged to deal on their own responsibility with a larger share of the correspondence, and they must also be at liberty and be encouraged to leave to their Juniors the disposal of questions of secondary importance, even to the extent of minuting upon such cases. There ought to be in every Department two or three men training on (sic) who would be capable on (sic) an emergency of conducting the whole of the Department. It is the men who, when such an emergency arises, show that they are fit for these more important duties who will naturally be marked out for advancement.

"It may be that at the outset the altered procedure which I desire to see adopted will lead to a certain amount of confusion and to the commission (sic) of mistakes by those who for the first time find themselves in a position of greater freedom and responsibility. But it is only by running this risk that we shall arrive at the desired end."¹

Later on the same day Sanderson finished his instructions to the Heads of Departments. They elaborated in detail the new arrangements for a Cyphering Room, for handling Miscellaneous Correspondence, for dealing with Parliamentary Work and the Preparation of Blue Books, and for the making up and despatch of the Bags and Cabinet Pouches.² On June 26, six days later, Cranborne

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.127. Memorandum by Lansdowne, June 20, 1903.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.130. Memorandum by Sanderson, June 20, 1903. For the full text, see Appendix V.

wrote to inform Bertie of the situation:

"My dear Bertie,

"... We have applied to the Treasury for an increase in the Staff here to carry out the reforms. Ld. L. has sent round a memo. that more should be done by the juniors. As to the ciphering room the idea is that two or three of the boys should be told off for a week or a month during which they should do nothing but ciphering - I think there is to be a responsible head."¹

The Treasury finally sanctioned the Foreign Office's request on July 28:

"Sir,

"I have laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury your letter of the 12th ultimo proposing to add 2 Assistant Clerks, 1 Staff Officer and 2 Second Division Clerks to the staff of the Foreign Office.

"In reply I am to request you to state to the Marquess of Lansdowne that My Lords sanction these proposals as submitted, except that the scale of the Staff Officers should be £300 - £15 - £450 a year."²

Two days later Norton, who had been Cranborne's Private Secretary, and Alston were promoted Assistant Clerks, and Sanderson appointed,

"Mr. Tyrrell and Mr. Norton to be the two Assistant Clerks specially charged to look after the Confidential Print, the secretarial work of the Defence Committee, and the preparation of Bluebooks."³

On August 1 Sanderson wrote a further minute:

"As soon as the new Clerks of the Second Division have come to work in the Consular and Librarian's Departments the following changes are to be made in the apportionment of the work."⁴

The changes were as outlined in Sanderson's memorandum of June 20.⁵

1. FO 800/174/p.65. Cranborne to Bertie, June 26, 1903.
2. FO 366/754. Treasury to Foreign Office, July 28, 1903.
3. FO 366/760/p.501. Minute by Sanderson, July 30, 1903.
4. FO 366/760/p.498. Minute by Sanderson, August 1, 1903.
5. See above, p.194-195, and Appendix V.

It was not long before two new Assistants in the Bluebook Department had to be appointed. Tyrrell had been absent on sick leave since May,¹ and Norton resigned from the Foreign Office on September 29.² On November 11 Sanderson recommended Tilley to succeed Tyrrell and Max Müller to replace Norton, and Lansdowne agreed.³ This prompted Sanderson, eight days later, to outline their duties:

"Mr. Tilley and Mr. Max Müller being now regularly installed as the Assistants to look after Confidential Print and preparation of Parliamentary Papers, the Departments should send them all current print from the beginning of October, and let them know what Bluebooks are in contemplation or in course of preparation. They should have copies of all existing Revises.

"Their main duties will be as follows:-

"To see that the Daily Telegram Sections are complete, intelligibly arranged, and do not contain messages on mere matters of detail or of secondary importance,

"To take care that the other information sent to the Cabinet in the pouches is sufficient, and to bring to notice any defects.

"To see that the series of Confidential Print are produced with fair regularity up to date, and that there are no startling delays or gaps.

"To arrange with the Heads of Departments for the selection of Papers for Parliament... either undertaking the work or merely assisting and supervising as may in each case be most convenient.

1. See above, p.188.
2. FO 366/760/p.518.
3. FO 366/760/p.521. Minute by Sanderson, November 11, 1903. See Sir J. Tilley and S. Gaselee: op. cit., p.155; and Sir J. Tilley: op. cit., p.40. On November 18, 1903, the War Office (Reconstruction) Committee was appointed. One result was that the Committee of Imperial Defence obtained a permanent Secretariat in May 1904 with its own offices in Whitehall Gardens. It no longer sat in the Foreign Office and no longer used a Foreign Office Clerk as Secretary. See N. d'Ombrain: op. cit., p.5, 37, 44 and 136.

"To go through the subsequent revises with the assistance of a man from the Department concerned, checking references, making necessary suggestions for omission etc.

"To supervise the translations and Tables of Contents.

"They may when necessary apply to the Librarian for (the) assistance of a Second Division Clerk in the more mechanical details."¹

(6)

These reforms in the old organisation of the Foreign Office were complete by the winter of 1903, but, though both Lansdowne and Sanderson were "absolutely persuaded of the soundness of the policy of devolution"² and "altogether in favour of extending the process as far as is practicable"³ respectively, nevertheless, as Hardinge pointed out, these reforms only relieved the "juniors to a certain extent" and the devolution remained "entirely dependent on the Under Secretaries."⁴ The Foreign Office required more than mere reforms - it needed a complete reorganisation in the shape of a general registry and of facilities for the juniors to write minutes on the correspondence with which they dealt. In other words, what was required was, as Oakes wrote in 1897, "the practical reconstruction of the whole Office,"⁵ or, as Villiers put it to Sanderson in his letter of April 1903, something "entirely subversive to our present arrangements."⁶ Sanderson wrote later that "the alterations in the system of

1. FO 366/760/p.525. Memorandum by Sanderson, November 19, 1903.
2. See above, p.195.
3. See above, p.181.
4. See above, p.192.
5. See above, p.169.
6. See above, p.179.

registration and of keeping papers, and the employment of a considerably increased staff of second division Clerks were largely due to Lord Lansdowne's initiative."¹ The steps towards a reorganisation of the Office were actually taken at the same time as the reforms were being discussed. An unnamed person approached Lansdowne on the subject with the result that he wrote to Sanderson on May 22, 1903:

"Sir T. Sanderson,

"It has been suggested to me that in connection with the proposed changes in our Office procedure we might consider whether any improvements can be introduced in the arrangements for keeping and registering our papers.

"I believe that our arrangements differ from those prevailing in other Offices and I fancy that the F.O. is the only Office in which papers are folded as ours are. It seems to me that this question and also that of the establishment of a general registry might well be examined by a small Committee. Will you consider this and tell me what you think of the idea and what terms of reference you would propose?

"I am all for having questions of this kind examined, but the business which we transact is different from that of any other public Office and I am not at all convinced that what is good for them is necessarily good for us. The practice of folding our papers in small bundles has its inconveniences. When I was at the W.O. we introduced the system of keeping our papers in folio shape, but I remember that the change gave a good deal of trouble, and required a great deal of alteration of the presses etc.

"Our practice of circulating the papers in locked boxes would make it very difficult to deal with the papers in any other shape, and would require a complete change in the mode of docketing. But all these arguments could be thrashed out by a Committee."²

Three days later, on May 25, Sanderson drafted a memorandum for

1. FO 800/111/p.32. Memorandum by Sanderson, July 17, 1914.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.118. Lansdowne to Sanderson, May 22, 1903.

the Under-Secretaries which he then revised and sent on to the Heads of Departments on May 27, omitting the first paragraph and the last two paragraphs. These three omitted paragraphs were:

"Lord Cranborne,
"Mr. Villiers,
"Mr. Campbell,
"Mr. Hardinge,

"I have received the accompanying minute from Lord Lansdowne, desiring the appointment of a small Committee to examine the question of improving the arrangements for keeping and registering the correspondence of the office."

"As Lord Lansdowne wishes that a Committee should examine the subject I should say that the persons best qualified would be Mr. Farnall, Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Langley, Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Oakes and that they should simply be instructed to examine whether any improvements can be made in the arrangements.

"I do not think any attempt should be made to introduce such changes in connection with those which are at present in contemplation. Opinions are somewhat divided and doubtful as to how the latter will succeed, and it will at all events require some care and management to get them into good working order. If at the same time we commence experimental alterations in our systems of registering and handling the correspondence there will be considerable risk of our getting into a condition of chaos."¹

The revised memorandum as sent to the Heads of Departments on May 27 was as follows:

"The question of the mode of registering the correspondence in the Foreign Office was examined by the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments in 1890. Up to that date the system was that a Register of the correspondence dealt with and kept in each Department was kept by a member of the Department of some experience, and that after the lapse of two years the correspondence was turned over to the Library, where it was arranged for binding and much more elaborate Registers were made, from which alphabetical Indexes were compiled.

"This plan involved a certain waste of labour as the original registers were used only for a few years, otherwise it worked very well. Indexes and elaborate registers

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.115. Sanderson to the Under-Secretaries, May 25, 1903.

were in practice not much required for recent correspondence which was fresh in memory. But as the correspondence increased the Staff of the Library became unable to cope with it, their Registers and Indexes fell into arrear, and a number of temporary Clerks had to be retained for the purpose of working the arrears off.

"The Royal Commission condemned the system and recommended that registers and indexes of the correspondence should be kept in each department.

"This recommendation was adopted, but after some years trial it was found that the daily indexing of papers in the political departments in addition to keeping the registers was too severe a tax on them, whenever there was a pressure of work, and that the indexes became unsatisfactory and fell into arrear. I therefore obtained Lord Salisbury's sanction to the compilation of indexes from the registers being undertaken in the Library after the correspondence had been handed over to that Department. The delay in the preparation of the indexes does not I think cause any serious inconvenience in practise (sic) but I do not feel sure that the registers kept in the political Departments are always satisfactory as giving sufficient material for a complete Index.

"Lord Lingen, in a supplement to the report of the Commission, stated that the system of departmental registration appeared to him to be essential to the separation of the confidential from the other papers that are daily received, and indicated his preference for a division of the work between the political and the subsidiary departments in which latter Second Division Clerks would be employed.

"I am not aware that any member of the Commission or indeed any one whose opinion is of weight, and who has given careful attention to the subject has pronounced in favour of a general registry for this Office which shall include the confidential political correspondence. The advantages of a general registry is (sic) that the work is done by experts methodically and with great uniformity of detail. The objections to its adoption for our diplomatic correspondence are patent. In the first place, although individual papers can as an exception be pushed through the general registry with tolerable rapidity, the great proportion of the work is necessarily delayed, papers do not come up for consideration until a considerable time after receipt and are not despatched until a considerable time after their signature. We have constantly the experience of being informed by other Departments that letters have been sent to us which reach us at the expiration of two or three days. As Secretaries of State are impatient at times of our comparatively rapid procedure as being too slow, I am convinced that the plan of a general registry would cause great dissatisfaction. The second and even more serious objection is that while we

should no longer have in each Department the special knowledge of its correspondence which the Departmental Register gives the body of second Division Clerks employed in the Registry would have a more complete knowledge of the general tenour of current diplomatic negotiations than is now possessed by anyone except the Secretary and Under Secretaries of State. They are exactly the class whose discretion we are least able to trust, and the experience of other Offices shows that the risk is a serious one. It is not I think possible to make a division in the diplomatic correspondence and reserve from the registry the more confidential papers. Great confusion would result. There would be no great objection as far as I can see to a general registry for the non political Departments though I doubt if it would be of any great benefit, as these Registers are already kept by Second Division Clerks.

"As regards the form in which our papers are kept it has been in practise for more than 100 years, though the present method of docketting with an abstract of their contents was I believe introduced by Lord Palmerston in 1828 (sic).

"The plan of folding Despatches in four is clearly convenient for the purpose of sending them about in locked boxes, just as that of laying them out flat is convenient when they are carried about in flat baskets or trays. Bundles of Despatches on varied subjects are more easily handled and searched when folded and docketted according to our system. Files of correspondence, especially when printed, on a single subject are more easily studied when laid out flat. The plan of keeping papers laid out flat was tried as an experiment for some time in the Commercial Department¹ and abandoned eventually as cumbrous and inconvenient. I do not however know that the experiment was considered as conclusive, and it is possible to suggest some modifications of our present system."²

The Committee was not in fact appointed until June 17. On that day Sanderson wrote a memorandum for the Heads of Departments:

1. The experiment lasted from 1887 to 1889.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.119. Memorandum by Sanderson, May 27, 1903.

"Lord Lansdowne wishes a Committee consisting of

"Mr. Farnall
"Mr. Maxwell
"Mr. Langley
"Mr. Cartwright
"Mr. Oakes¹

to examine whether any improvements can be made in our existing arrangements for registering and keeping the correspondence.

"I annex a short memorandum and the Report of the Royal Commission of 1890 which examined the question of the arrangements for registering and indexing the papers.

"The Committee might possibly get some valuable hints by ascertaining the arrangements made for registering confidential correspondence in the India Office, Colonial Office, Admiralty and the Intelligence Division of the War Office. Special regard should be paid to the need for rapidity as well as secrecy (sic), and to the large amount of correspondence in our political departments which is confidential.

"Supposing the present system of departmental registration to be continued, some plan for periodic inspection of registers by a competent Committee should be considered.

"As regards the form in which papers are kept, it might be considered whether our present system of folding them in four is the best."²

(7)

It was almost a year before this Committee produced its recommendations, but matters did not stand still in the meantime. During this period there was a reform in the Diplomatic Service. Sanderson wrote later that,

"When Sir C. Hardinge came to the Office as an Assistant Under Secretary of State in 1903 I discussed with him

1. Farnall, Maxwell and Langley were the Senior Clerks in the African, Eastern and Far Eastern Depts. Cartwright was Chief Clerk and Oakes was the Librarian.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.123. Memorandum by Sanderson, June 17, 1903.

a rough sketch I had made for alterations in the grading of the Diplomatic Service, and asked whether he would take the matter up and work it out. He did so and eventually produced a complete scheme which was adopted."¹

In his memoirs, however, Hardinge did not mention Sanderson's contribution:

"I also proposed, and got accepted, a new system of grading in the Diplomatic Service which corresponded more with the system existing abroad, and which would exclude the depressing possibility of a long stage of eleven or twelve years as a Second Secretary, from which I, like many others, had suffered. That system has been in force since 1904."²

Whatever Sanderson's contribution, Hardinge set about a rearrangement of the grading and salaries of the junior members of the Diplomatic Service. However, the innovations that took place were not, in fact, solely the work of Hardinge. Cromer wrote to Gorst in 1905 that "Charles Hardinge started the idea of having ... a permanent archivist instead of one of the present Secretaries,"³ but this was not in fact the case. It was actually Lascelles who suggested the creation of both "Councillors" and "Archivists," or "Chancelliers" as the latter were sometimes called, during the course of 1903. The correspondence between Hardinge and Lascelles also demonstrates Hardinge's antipathy towards Sanderson and Villiers, and his scepticism that their desire for a reorganisation was at all genuine. After reading Sanderson's pessimistic memorandum of May 25 Hardinge had written to Bertie that the "devolution of work which is the most important feature of the scheme ... is not likely to be put into practice

1. FO 800/111/p.32. Memorandum by Sanderson, July 17, 1914.
2. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.97.
3. FO 366/755. Cromer to Gorst, July 19, 1905.

so long as Sanderson and Villiers reign here."¹ At the end of September Hardinge sent his scheme for a rearrangement of the grading and salaries of the junior members of the Diplomatic Service to Lascelles, who replied at the beginning of October. Hardinge then wrote to Lascelles on October 7:

"My dear Sir Frank,

"I think that your idea of changing the title of the First Grade is a good one. It would, if such a word as 'Councillor' were adopted legalise the use of the title 'Conseiller' which I always gave to myself at Tehran and St. P. so that there should be no question of my ranking as Premier Secrétaire and being placed after foreigners with that rank. I shall look forward with much interest to your observations."²

Lascelles sent his reply on October 16:

"My dear Hardinge,

"Here are a few observations which your scheme for the grading and Salaries of the Junior members of the Diplomatic Service has suggested. I don't much suppose that the idea of allowing many Secretaries to take pensions will be sanctioned as the Treasury would probably object to the expense of pensioning healthy men in the prime of life but from the point of view of the Service it comes to pretty much the same if men became incompetent through loss of health or through inability to take personal initiative. My object in proposing a new title for the 1st grade was to bring our Secretaries to the same rank as their foreign Colleagues, and to justify the practice which obtains in some cases of Secretaries of Embassy and Legation putting Conseiller on their cards. I think also that the 2nd grade might well be called 1st Secretaries and thus be assimilated to the Premiers Secretaires in the French Service, and I

1. See above, p.200-202, for the revised version of Sanderson's memorandum of May 25, and p.192 for Hardinge's letter to Bertie of May 25, 1903.
2. FO 800/12/p.332. Hardinge to Lascelles, October 7, 1903. (This letter has been incorrectly filed amongst the Lascelles Papers as belonging to 1905. The correct date can be calculated from a reference later in the letter to the funeral of "Mungo" Herbert. See above, Chapter One, p.63-64.) See also A.D. Kalmykow: op. cit., p.77.

have the less hesitation in making these suggestions as no extra expense will be incurred in carrying them out.

"Have you ever considered the question of having Chancelliers in our service? There is a good deal to be said for and against, but on the whole I am inclined to think they would prove an economical and useful institution, but that would involve a greater change in the system than you contemplate at present."¹

Hardinge replied on October 21:

"My dear Sir Frank,

"I am much obliged to you for your mem.m and I entirely agree with you as to the necessity of a change in the title of Secretary of Embassy, as also the point that all 2nd Secretaries after ten years service in that grade should have the rank of First Sec.y...

"The question of Chancelliers is one which meets with general approval in the Dip.c Service ... but unfortunately the question was raised before the Royal Commission in 1893 and definitively (sic) vetoed. It would therefore be rather premature to raise it again just yet, although it is a very obvious and necessary reform. We are gradually getting Translators in most Legations and some Embassies and they will be the thin end of the wedge.

"In preparing my scheme I have felt very much that my hands have been tied, that no radical reform is at the present moment within the region of possibility and that I had to do the best I could with our system as it is. I think however that if worked out it can only make towards efficiency. If I remain in this office any time I shall make a desperate push for 2nd Division Clerks in the political departments, and then Chancelliers in our Missions abroad would be a rational sequence, but so long as Sanderson remains at the Head of this office it would be useless to suggest such a change."²

On December 15 the Foreign Office wrote to the Treasury proposing the creation of the class of "Archivist," and proposing a rearrangement of the Grading and Salaries of the Junior members of the Diplomatic Service.³ The latter proposal involved a saving

1. FO 800/18/p.122. Lascelles to Hardinge, October 16, 1903.
2. FO 800/12/p.347. Hardinge to Lascelles, October 21, 1903. (This letter has also been incorrectly filed as belonging to 1905. See below, p.274, note 5).
3. FO 366/754. Foreign Office to Treasury, December 15, 1903; FO 366/755. Minute by Sherwood, July 15, 1905.

and was accepted, but the former only came into the Embassies and Legations gradually. Hardinge wrote to Satow on the subject of these reforms on January 17, 1904:

"My dear Satow,

"Very many thanks for your letter and mem.m. It is, in my opinion, the views of people like yourself, who are free from the prejudices of the service, which are the most valuable as you are able to detect more clearly the defects of a service to which those brought up in it are very often blind.

"Now, as regards pensioning diplomatists on compulsory retirement at earlier age limits I entirely agree with you, but I have not dared to touch the subject of pensions, as I have been told on good authority that if we attempt in any way to increase the liability of the Treasury for pensions at earlier age limits than at present, they will seize the opportunity to revise the whole system of pensions with a view to reducing their scale. Such a measure would I believe be very unpopular in the service and must therefore I think be avoided, certainly for the present.

"I am also at one with you in thinking that there should be more assimilation of the F.O. and Dipl.c Service... The younger men in the F.O. have I think more go in them than the older lot, and when the present lot at the top of the F.O. have gone, I think that my views, which coincide with your's, will prevail."¹

Opinion was not totally in favour of these reforms. For example, Townley wrote to Satow on November 6, 1904:

"My dear Sir Ernest,

"... It is hard to say as yet what the result of instituting Councillors and First Secretaries will be. As far as things have gone at present it seems to have entirely disorganized the whole service. Councillors are selected as it pleases the powers that be, and First Secretaries are too big for the position of the Head of the Chancery as formerly, and don't relish small posts in the same capacity, even with the additional inducement of taking charge. The result is they all clamour to become Councillors, Ministers or to have some temporary Chargé work... It may come out all right in time; for the present it does not seem a success."²

1. PRO 30/33/7/3. Hardinge to Satow, January 17, 1904.
2. PRO 30/33/9/15. Townley to Satow, November 6, 1904.

But the idea of employing archivists gained widespread approval. Nicolson, for example, was reported as being "strongly in favour of having an Archivist,"¹ and Bertie made suggestions concerning them. He wrote to Sanderson on September 14, 1905:

"My dear Sanderson,

"As Mr. Cuthbertson is to be appointed Chancellor here, would it not be well that he should go through a short course of training in the Library of the Foreign Office so that he may know how to register and index in the most approved fashion?

"I think that a definition of his duties ought to be given by the F.O. otherwise the 'Secretaries' will probably endeavour to foist on him whatever they may dislike doing themselves."²

(8)

Although the Committee which had been appointed in June 1903 "to examine whether any improvements can be made in our existing arrangements for registering and keeping the correspondence" did not produce its recommendations until May 1904, it did make a preliminary report on November 13.

"The meetings of the Committee appointed to consider questions connected with the registry and keeping of papers were interrupted by the leave season. The Committee has now got to work on a definite plan.

"The several members will each visit the principal Offices in London and see what elements can be adopted from the systems in use in those offices.

"They have already observed that men of the Second Division are employed in other offices in connection with the keeping even of confidential papers and they think that a beginning might very well be made, by way of experiment, by employing a man of the Second Division to sort and put by papers in one of the political departments.

1. FO 366/755. Barrington to Lansdowne, July 10, 1905.
2. FO 366/755. Bertie to Sanderson, September 14, 1905.

"It is suggested that a man who has already seen service in the Library might be employed each morning on this work. The arrangement would be purely experimental; for it would at present have the manifest disadvantage of bringing a man of the Second Division into rooms where men of the First Division are at work. Later on the Committee hope to be able to make suggestions to obviate this disadvantage."¹

On receiving this preliminary report Sanderson wrote to Lansdowne the same day:

"Lord Lansdowne,

"The annexed recommendation by the Committee on the system of registering and keeping correspondence has been made somewhat on my suggestion. The amount of Confidential Print in the E stern Department is now so great that its daily arrangement occupies a good deal of one man's time and attention. It is not desirable that a Clerk of the Higher Division should be tied to such a (sic) work, and I think the best arrangement for the time being at all events is that a trustworthy Clerk of the Second Division should come in for an hour or two each day to put these papers by."

Lansdowne immediately agreed with this suggestion:

"The proposal entirely recommends itself to me. It cannot be right that the first division clerks should be employed in sorting papers and putting them by. It is true that considering the importance of the documents, we cannot allow them to be handled by any but 'trustworthy' persons, but that quality is I hope to be found outside the Higher division as well as inside it."²

The final report of the Committee was completed on May 18, 1904. By this time, however, one of its members had had to leave. This was Farnall, who was especially mentioned in the Report as having done most of the preparatory work and as having produced the draft report that formed the basis for the first part of the

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda, Vol. 3a, p.136. First Recommendations of the Committee on Registration etc, November 13, 1903.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda, Vol. 3a, p.135. Sanderson to Lansdowne, with Minute by Lansdowne, November 13, 1903.

Report. Sanderson and Villiers had wished him to succeed Hardinge as an Assistant Under-Secretary when the latter went to St Petersburg, in order that he should help to implement the reforms that he was mainly responsible for suggesting, but Gorst had been appointed instead and Farnall had been seconded for service in Egypt.¹ The Report was therefore made in his absence.

The Committee reported that they had examined the systems of registration of papers in the War Office, the Intelligence Division of the War Office, the Admiralty, the Treasury, the Home Office, the Colonial Office, the India Office, the Board of Trade, the Board of Agriculture, and the Post Office; and they recommended on the strength of these investigations that the Foreign Office should establish a General Registry, to be separate from the executive departments of the Office. This Registry, which would lead to further devolution through its being manned by Second Division Clerks, would be based on the Colonial Office system.

In addition to the Central Registry the Committee recommended that there should be three Sub-Registries. The Central Registry would receive and number all the documents coming into the Office, placing each within a minute sheet or jacket, and would decide whether or not they were too confidential to go to the Sub-Registries. Those that did go would be fully entered in the Sub-Registries with dockets added, and a carbon copy of the docket would be kept while the document was immediately sent on to the relevant Department. The copies of the dockets would form the

1. See Chapter One, p.95-98.

basis for a complete index. Those documents that were too confidential to go to the Sub-Registries would be sent straight on to the Departments while the Central Registry kept a record of the docket to form part of the same index. Finally, the really confidential papers would be given a coloured border and would be kept only in the political Departments, while a copy of the docket was sent to the Central Registry.

"All papers to be laid out flat. To be put in 'jackets' of foolscap size, on which the docket and subsequent Minutes would be written. The dockets put on despatches abroad to indicate only the general nature of the subject. The full docket to be written and attached to the despatch in the Foreign Office.

"Paragraphs of despatches to be numbered.

"Drafts of replies to be kept with the papers to which they reply.

"A pretty full account of the action taken on each paper to be written at the end of the Minute on it.

"All papers to be entered and kept in the Sub-Registries under the serial numbers given to them in the General Registry.

"A Central Registry to be established on the ground floor, consisting of Chief Registrar, Deputy Registrar, and two Clerks, which would receive all papers, jacket them, give them numbers, enter them in a summary manner with a note as to their distribution, and send them either to the proper Sub-Registry, or, if they are of a specially confidential nature, to the proper Department.

"Three Sub-Registries, one for the Departments on each floor, consisting each of one or two Staff Officers, one Higher Grade Clerk, and two, three, or four Second Division Clerks.

"Separate Registers for each country - one for documents received, the other for those sent.

"The docket of each paper to be typed on the 'jacket' on its receipt in the Sub-Registry, with a carbon paper duplicate. The latter to be kept for entry in the Register, and the paper to be sent on at once to the Department to be dealt with.

"Abstracts of correspondence on all important current questions to be kept in each Department. In these Abstracts the General Register number of each paper to be noted in the margin.

"These Abstracts would be printed when important.

"Eventually the Registers and Abstracts would be looked through, and alphabetical Indexes would be compiled from them.

"For current purposes there would also be kept a rough alphabetical Index to each of the daily Registers in the Sub-Registries.

"Single papers, or papers of small bulk, might still be sent about in small boxes rolled up.

"For any moderate-sized files of papers draft boxes would be sufficient.

"Non-confidential papers might be circulated between the Departments and the Registries in baskets or unlocked portfolios.

"A Clerk of some twenty-five years' standing, with suitable knowledge of the system of general registry, to be obtained from some other Office to act as General Registrar and superintend the arrangements. To have a salary of £500 a-year.

"The rest of the staff would consist of five Staff Officers, fourteen Second Division Clerks, of which three of the Higher and eleven of the Lower Grade.

"Newly joined Clerks and Attachés would be employed in docketing and registering sufficiently to make them acquainted with the system.

"It is estimated that the transfer of the registering to the Second Division would render necessary an increase of six or eight men of that Division, but would enable us gradually to dispense with the six Second-class Junior Clerks of the Upper Division (salaries £100 to £200), and that we might then have, like other Departments, a single class only of twenty Junior Clerks of the Upper Division beginning with salaries of £200...

"It is proposed that the binding of correspondence should be delayed; that at the end of a certain period of years - say, ten - certain classes of unnecessary papers

should be destroyed, and the remainder then bound."¹

To facilitate these new arrangements, the Committee considered that telephone systems would have to be installed throughout the Office.²

(9)

The recommendation that there should be a decrease in the number of the First Division Clerks was bound to result in opposition in the Office, and this point was quickly taken up by Lord Percy, who had succeeded Cranborne as Parliamentary Under-Secretary during October 1903.³ Percy criticised this recommendation in a memorandum which he wrote in June 1904, and provoked a strong reply from Sanderson, who was away from the Office on sick-leave.⁴ Percy then wrote to Sanderson on November 17:

"My dear Sanderson,

"... I ought perhaps to say that my original memorandum upon which you founded your criticisms, and which I gave to Lord Lansdowne in June, was in no way intended to disparage either the reforms which have been already introduced in the Office or the general tenor of the Committee's recommendations with which in so far as I am competent to form an opinion I entirely agree; but to deprecate a specific proposal for the reduction of our staff, for which I could discover in the Report no adequate justification. I gather from your notes that the Committee itself regards this question as still 'sub judice,' but that you think there is a good case for reduction even if not to the extent which the Committee provisionally suggests. I feel very strongly that if we make a mistake in this matter now, we shall have deprived ourselves of any possible excuse on the score of

1. T 1/10369/4480. Summary of Recommendations made by the Committee on Registration and Keeping of Papers, June 22, 1904.
2. FO 881/8616*. Report on the Registration and Keeping of Papers in the Foreign Office, May 18, 1904.
3. FO 366/760/p.514. Minute of Appointment by Lansdowne, October 12, 1903. See also Chapter One, p.65.
4. See Chapter One, p.111-114.

pressure of work in future, in the event of a repetition by the Prime Minister or this Cabinet of those complaints which as you know have been by no means infrequent during the last few years."¹

Percy enclosed with this letter a memorandum which argued that the desired devolution would be jeopardised if the number of Junior Clerks was reduced. "We agree that more initiative and responsibility should be allowed to Junior Clerks," but this devolution "of a great deal of routine work which absorbs the attention of under-secretaries and heads of departments to the prejudice of problems of 'la haute politique'" was in danger. Percy felt that no reduction in the Staff should be made before the proposed reforms were put into operation, while a comparison with the German Foreign Office showed that England only employed 95 men as opposed to Germany's 240.

"In any case I submit that it is bad policy on our part to volunteer such a reduction of the staff as the Committee propose. The Treasury may be trusted to make that suggestion themselves, and in this matter of staff I would make no concession whatever to mere considerations of economy. It is one of the few cases in which not only public opinion but the opinion of Parliament and the Cabinet will be entirely on our side."

Promotion within the Foreign Office was exceptionally slow, and the recent improvement in this respect was no more than temporary.

"A net addition of two assistants was made on the sanction of the Treasury in 1903, thus bringing up the total number of Assistant Clerks from 7 to 9 while four vacancies were unexpectedly created in the same year by the retirement of Mr. Norton² and Mr. Fairholme,³ the death of Mr. Foley and the seconding of Mr Farnall.⁴ This

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.137. Percy to Sanderson, November 17, 1904.
2. See above, p.197 and Appendix V.
3. See above, p.188.
4. See Chapter One, p.95-98.

naturally afforded an abnormal opportunity of promotion for the Junior class."

Even with the proposed reforms the promotion would be slower than in the India Office and Colonial Office by about five or six years, from a Junior to an Assistant.

"I fully appreciate the force of his observations that, 'it is not at all convenient that the several members of a department should each have competent knowledge of particular subjects only of which the rest are comparatively ignorant,' though I am by no means sure that it would not be a lesser evil than that every member of a department should have a nodding acquaintance with all the papers and comparatively few an expert knowledge of any. The difficulty of securing for every individual leisure to acquire specialized knowledge as well as general information is precisely the reason why I earnestly hope that our demands in regard to staffing should err if anything on the side of an over-estimate rather than an under-estimate of our requirements."¹

Sanderson replied to this letter and memorandum on November 19:

"My dear Percy,

"Thanks for your letter. I apologize for inflicting so much reading and writing upon you on a matter in which we are substantially working for the same objects. If I had had an opportunity of discussing my Memorandum with you before I sent it to Lord Lansdowne this might have been avoided. I only wrote my Memorandum because yours seemed to me to show misapprehension of the present state of the Office and evidently and quite naturally gave Lord Lansdowne the impression that nothing had been done by me or others to give effect to his instructions of May 1903...

"Generally speaking my object is that all reductions should as far as possible be made at the bottom. Lord Lansdowne, the Committee and I are all agreed that we cannot tell what reductions, if any, can be made until the changes have been brought into full operation.

"You, I understand, think that we can ask the Treasury with success for the following:-

"A. Retention of Staff now belonging to the Protectorate Department.

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.139. Memorandum by Percy, November 1904.

"B. Addition of 6 or more Second Division Clerks for the new Registration Department.

"C. Retention of the whole Staff of 26 Junior Clerks who would in future be all of one class beginning with a salary of £200 a year.

"If you can succeed in obtaining these concessions in the present state of the Exchequer I shall be heartily glad. We can make any possible reductions later for the sake of economy and quick promotion. I am convinced that, with such support as I ordinarily receive, I should fail; and the recent discussions as to increase of pay of the Gendarmerie Officers in Macedonia do not give me much confidence.

"I hope this letter may terminate our correspondence and that we may concoct our plans of attack on the Treasury by word of mouth. I scarcely think we need trouble Lord Lansdowne with any of these papers. Will you circulate them again to the Under-Secretaries and Private Secretaries or not as you think best."¹

Sanderson was anxious to have the proposed reorganisation accepted before his imminent retirement, and he saw Percy's unpromising attitude as shortsighted. He felt that the Treasury would only accept the new proposals if the Foreign Office made some concessions for the sake of economy in the shape of a reduction in the number of First Division Clerks. He had, in fact, already sounded the Treasury privately, and received confirmation on this point. The Joint Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, Sir G. Murray, had written a private letter in reply, in which he remarked that "the segregation of work (i.e. the establishment of a general registry) ought not only to tend to efficiency and to the dispatch of business, but to economise force." Murray criticised the Committee's Report on a number

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.166. Sanderson to Percy, November 19, 1904.

of points and was not even satisfied with the reductions that it proposed and which Percy had criticised from the opposite extreme.

"I am afraid we could not accept the abolition of the six junior clerks as anything like an equivalent for the six to eight second division men you propose to take on."¹

Faced with these two extreme attitudes, both of which threatened to prevent the desired reorganisation from taking place, Sanderson became increasingly irritable, and this was abetted by the illness which had kept him from the Office during the summer and autumn of 1904.² He looked around for alternative economies, in order to facilitate the approach to the Treasury which was to be made early in 1905. In one respect Sanderson was successful. Cartwright, who had been a member of the Committee and who was the Chief Clerk, responsible for the King's Foreign Service Messengers, proposed a scheme on November 22 for a reduction in their number. Sanderson minuted on November 26:

"This is a valuable suggestion, as we shall have to apply to Treasury for increase of expenditure in other ways."

Lansdowne agreed,³ and Sanderson wrote to him on December 1:

"Lord Lansdowne,

"... I think we are much indebted for these suggestions to Mr. Cartwright, as they will facilitate our task in obtaining from the Treasury some necessary increases of expenditure in other directions."⁴

1. T 1/10369/4480. Murray to Sanderson, November 8, 1904.
2. See above, p.213, note 4; Sanderson was absent ill from July until half way through November, when he returned part-time only. Bertie continued to deputise for him until his full-time return on December 13.
3. FO 366/761/p.47a. Memorandum by Cartwright, November 22, 1904, with minutes by Sanderson and Lansdowne, November 26, 1904.
4. FO 366/761/p.47a. Sanderson to Lansdowne, December 1, 1904.

However, this was the only saving that Sanderson was able to make, and it was more than offset by a number of other requests for additional expenditure that had to be made to the Treasury. On June 25, 1904, Maycock, who had been promoted Superintendent of the Treaty Department in May 1903 against the wish of Hardinge, had written to Sanderson asking for increased pay in view of the great increase of work in his Department.¹ Sanderson could no longer keep this request to himself, and he wrote to Lansdowne on December 9:

"Lord Lansdowne,

"I received from Mr. Maycock, the Head of the Treaty Department, some months ago an application for an increase of salary on the ground of the great increase in the importance and amount of the work which now falls on the Department...

"I have consulted Mr. Villiers and Mr. Campbell and the Chief Clerk and we are all agreed that there is a good claim...

"I hope therefore that you will approve the accompanying draft to the Treasury."

Lansdowne minuted "I very gladly support this proposal,"² and the Foreign Office wrote to the Treasury on the subject on December 13.³ The Treasury sanctioned the increase on January 9, 1905.⁴

A further source of additional expenditure was attributable to the Commercial Department. On January 5, 1904, Law, the Head of the Department, had written that,

1. FO 366/754. Maycock to Sanderson, June 25, 1904.
2. FO 366/754. Sanderson to Lansdowne, December 9, 1904, with minute by Lansdowne.
3. FO 366/754. Foreign Office to Treasury, December 13, 1904.
4. FO 366/755. Treasury to Foreign Office, January 9, 1905.

"it cannot be doubted that the increase of the work of the Commercial Department has fully kept pace with that of the other Departments on the Establishment; and on that ground alone an addition to the staff of the Commercial Department is fully warranted...

"The general burden has increased during the past year to an enormous extent, not attributable to any particular cause except the growing interest shown in all quarters in our Foreign Trade and everything connected with it. The labour thrown on the Department during the last Session was very heavy and was such as to impose a severe strain on the health and endurance of the Second Division Clerks. I see no prospect of the burden being lightened in the future otherwise than by an addition to the Staff, without which, I fear, there will be a very serious risk of breakdown both in the work and the health of the Department."¹

Two days later the Foreign Office had asked the Treasury for an additional Second Division Clerk,² and the request had been sanctioned on January 16.³ On November 4 Sanderson wrote to Villiers and Campbell:

"Mr. Villiers,
"Mr. Campbell,

"Sir E. Gorst has suggested that some of the more formal letters sent from the Commercial Dept, such as simple covering letters to other Departments and acknowledgments of letters from private persons might be worded with compliments so as not to require the signature of an Under Secretary of State.

"I think we are all agreed in objecting to such forms being printed with a lithographed signature. Such letters constantly excite the wrath of outside correspondents and they render us personally liable for the wording of documents which we have not even personally glanced at.

"I do not however see any reason why simple covering letters to other Departments or the more ordinary covering forms to our Rep.ves abroad should not be worded 'with Compliments.'

"This is done by the India Office in letters to us

1. FO 366/754. Memorandum by Law, January 5, 1904.
2. FO 366/754. Foreign Office to Treasury, January 7, 1904.
3. FO 366/754. Treasury to Foreign Office, January 16, 1904.

and by us in letters forwarding telegrams to other Depts and in letters to the Intelligence Dept of the War Office.

"I think however that it should be a rule that all such letters should be initialled at the top left hand corner by the Head or Acting Head of the Department, and I should like to take the opportunity to make a further rule that all letters brought to the Under Secretaries of State for their signature or for the signature of the Secretary of State should be similarly initialled by the Assistant or acting Assistant of the Department who is already responsible for their correctness.

"Do you agree?"¹

Both Villiers and Campbell signified their assent. It was then decided that the system of keeping papers flat, which had been recommended by the Committee, should be introduced as an experiment in the Commercial Department. On November 17, the day on which Percy wrote to Sanderson, Cartwright submitted a draft circular concerning this experiment, and Sanderson minuted:

"Please show my suggestions to Law...

"I do not yet understand whence we are to produce the additional 2nd Div. Clerk."

Law then attempted to relate this issue to his need for still more staff in his Department.

"I have no further suggestions to offer as regards the Circular. But I strongly object to its issue until I receive a distinct assurance that the staff of the Dept is to be increased on the 1st of January. I do not for a moment suggest that the extra assistance sh.d be found in this Office. I venture to think that an application sh.d at once be made to the Treasury explaining the change which it is proposed to introduce in our system of registering and keeping corr.ce, the reason for it and the advantage we expect to derive from it."²

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 5, p.452a. Sanderson to Villiers and Campbell, November 4, 1904.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 5, p.452a. Minutes by Cartwright, Sanderson and Law, November 17, 1904.

Sanderson then wrote to Gorst, who was Law's Superintending Under-Secretary, on November 22:

"My dear Gorst,

"Here are the Draft Circular and Law's minute. The question of using the flat system for our papers is a distinct one which may or may not be combined with the adoption of a new system of registration for which Second Division Clerks are employed. We are not yet I think in a position to address the Treasury on the latter question and the discussion is likely to be somewhat prolonged.

"That however is a separate matter. What we have to explain to the Treasury if we ask for the immediate grant of a Second Div. Clerk in excess of our Estimate for 1904-5 is how the adoption of a different system of docketting by our Missions and Consulates abroad and ourselves at home for our Commercial correspondence will produce such an increase of work as to require an additional hand - the whole object of the plan being to facilitate work. If we are sure that it will increase work why make the experiment."¹

Gorst replied the following day:

"Dear Sanderson,

"I have spoken to Law on the subject of the extra second division clerk and he agrees that the question can be treated separately from the flat-paper scheme and is not a necessary consequence of it. On general grounds he considers his dept understaffed and had, I understand, made representations to this effect before the present proposals were put forward. Moreover, if his dept is to be the pioneer in trying an important Office change, he naturally does not want to be hampered by deficiency of staff.

"Under these circes. he is ready to go on without the clerk, if absolutely necessary, but if you can see your way to lending him another man from elsewhere until the new system is in working order, or if you could get the Treasury to sanction an extra clerk on general grounds, I would urge the expediency of such a course.

"In the meantime I would suggest that the Circular might be issued."²

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda, Vol. 5, p.452a. Sanderson to Gorst, November 22, 1904.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda, Vol. 5, p.452a. Gorst to Sanderson, November 23, 1904.

As a result of this letter, Sanderson wrote to Lansdowne on November 29:

"Lord Lansdowne,

"Sir E. Gorst has suggested that the plan of dealing with our papers laid out flat might with advantage be tried as an experiment with the Commercial correspondence before deciding whether it should be adopted as a general measure.

"The Commercial Department are quite in favour of making the attempt, and believe that it will prove successful.

"The accompanying circular has accordingly been drafted, and is submitted for your approval.

"I am afraid we may have to go to the Treasury for sanction to employ an additional Second Division Clerk from the 1st January next. The increase of expenditure during the current financial year will be insignificant (under £20) and the request is justified by the general pressure of business irrespective of this change."

Lansdowne remarked that the request was "amply justified,"¹ and the Foreign Office wrote to the Treasury on December 13 - the same day on which Maycock's increase of salary was requested and on which Sanderson returned to work permanently - "that it has again become necessary to ask for additional clerical assistance in the Commercial Department of this Office."² The Treasury sanctioned this addition on December 30.³

In his attempt to introduce the reorganisation scheme before his retirement, Sanderson was attempting to steer a middle course between the uncompromising attitude of the Treasury on the one hand and the Foreign Office itself on the other. He felt that

1. FO 366/754. Sanderson to Lansdowne, November 29, 1904.
2. FO 366/754. Foreign Office to Treasury, December 13, 1904.
3. FO 366/754. Treasury to Foreign Office, December 30, 1904.

some reductions would be necessary as a compromise, but not only was the Foreign Office unwilling to make these suggested reductions. it was actually requesting increases in expenditure instead, at this most inopportune moment. The result was that Sanderson became increasingly irritable and unpopular in the Office, as Bertie wrote to Hardinge on November 28:

"My dear Charlie,

"... His temper has not been improved by his illness and he passes his time in writing offensive minutes and letters about the reorganization of the office. To me he is civility itself when he comes to see me every three or four days, but he is more disliked than ever."¹

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.259. Bertie to Hardinge, November 28, 1904. See also Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.255. Maxwell to Hardinge, November 28, 1904: "Until we have a new system in operation and a good staff, whose time is not taken up with routine, we shall never be able to do the work properly. I have done my best to put this into Sanderson and he does not disagree." See also India Office Library MS Dur. F/111/180/14c. Dawkins to Curzon, February 10, 1905: "By the way I fear you may be losing Godley at the India Office. I hear that they are very anxious to get him to replace Giglamps at the F.O. whose health is bad and for whose complete restoration no very ardent prayers are offered. They don't seem very happy at the F.O. with Giglamps maundering while young Forst, who was brought from Egypt as Ass.t U.S., apparently does not give much satisfaction." Also F. Rattigan: op. cit., p.31: "The permanent head of the Foreign Office was a martinet of the old order. The relations between him and the junior clerks were those of headmaster and pupils at a private school. We were all terrified of him... I remember a discussion amongst a number of clerks one day at lunch, when one of them remarked to another, 'I can't think why a rich man like yourself can stay on in a life of slavery like this.' 'Well, if you feel like that,' was the reply, 'why don't you go? You are as well off as myself.' 'Possibly,' retorted the first, 'but then, you see, I have a definite object in staying on.' On being pressed to tell us this object, he explained that it was in order to refuse to subscribe to the wreath which would be sent by the Foreign Office on the demise of ... --- (i.e. Sanderson), our formidable chief."

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By the end of 1904 the time was fast approaching when the long expected approach to the Treasury would have to be made. The Treasury were actually given official warning of this in the letter from the Foreign Office of December 13, asking for an increase in the staff for the Commercial Department:

"Lord Lansdowne is desirous of giving more effectual assistance to the Clerks of the Upper Division by the establishment of a General Registry to be manned mainly or entirely by Clerks of the Second Division. His Lordship however defers making proposals on this subject until a complete scheme has been elaborated. In the meanwhile the present addition to the Staff is needed to meet immediate requirements."¹

Sanderson wrote later that the reorganisation proposals "were worked out with very careful study by a small Committee and eventually by Sir Eyre Crowe in communication with the Treasury."²

Eyre Crowe was the Assistant Clerk in the African Protectorates Department, but that Department was about to be disbanded "because we were doing work which was not ours,"³ the work being handed over to the Colonial Office. Percy had expected Crowe to be placed in the Parliamentary Department,⁴ but Sanderson wrote on November 19, 1904, that "I am anxious to retain the Assistant permanently for the Consular Department which is now without one, and for a time to employ him for carrying out the Registration scheme."⁵ Sanderson was anxious that the Foreign Office should

1. FO 366/754. Foreign Office to Treasury, December 13, 1904.
2. FO 800/111/p.32. Memorandum by Sanderson, July 17, 1914.
3. Cd. 7749, Q.37,035. Minute of evidence by Crowe, April 29, 1914.
4. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda, Vol. 3a, p.139. Memorandum by Percy, November 1904.
5. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda, Vol. 3a, p.166. Sanderson to Percy, November 19, 1904.

not have to reduce their staff when they handed over the Protectorates to the Colonial Office. He wrote to Lascelles on April 20, 1904, that "I am anxious to have the means of resisting demands for an immediate reduction on the transfer of the remaining Protectorates to the Colonial Office, which will probably take place at the end of the present financial year."¹ In November he wrote of the Assistant Clerk in the Department, "the Treasury will of course wish to reduce him on the first vacancy, thereby permanently retarding promotion."²

Crowe was informed sometime in November or December 1904 that he would be responsible for elaborating a complete scheme with which to approach the Treasury. The African Protectorates Department had shed the Central African Protectorate during 1904, and, with a decreased load of work, Crowe was able to turn his attention to the question of reorganisation before the Department was actually disbanded. Corbett has written of Crowe that "his alert mind was ever devising reforms:"

"I remember him, as quite a junior, drawing up a memorandum in which he demonstrated that by a judicious abbreviation of the antiquated terminal formulae of despatches a saving of time, labour and material might be effected equivalent to £300 a year, or the salary of a junior clerk. The proposal met with scant favour from the then ruling powers, as, indeed, did its author."³

In 1898 Crowe had spoken out in favour of "enabling Civil Servants to retire at any moment, with a pension (or deferred pay) propor-

1. FO 800/12/p.78. Sanderson to Lascelles, April 20, 1904.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda, Vol. 3a, p.166. Sanderson to Percy, November 19, 1904.
3. Sir V. Corbett: op. cit., p.46. Apart from Crowe's first three months in 1885, he and Corbett were only in the Foreign Office together "for a few months in 1895." The memorandum probably dates from that year.

tionate in amount to length of service," as being "in the best interests of the service:"

"It would (he had pointed out) facilitate the retirement of men who do not really desire to continue in the service, but who are practically precluded from resigning owing to the inability to earn a pension before completing the minimum number of years' service now prescribed as a qualification for a pension. A more regular flow of promotion being thus secured, it might be possible to abolish the system of compulsory retirement at a given age, which I have always been inclined to regard as wrong in principle and, in its effects, detrimental to the public service."¹

Now, in the winter of 1904-05, Crowe was given the task of arranging the Foreign Office's approach to the Treasury. He was anxious that his own views should be taken into account and on January 5, 1905, he supplemented the Committee's Report by writing a memorandum which embodied his opinions. He began, characteristically, by expounding the principles involved:

"All proposals for diminishing the establishment of junior clerks of the Upper Division as a set-off against the appointment of a number of additional Second Division clerks will, I trust, be very carefully scrutinized, with due regard to the objects for which the reforms are recommended. These objects I take to be twofold -

(a) By placing as much as possible of the routine and mechanical work into the hands of clerks of the Second Division, that work is expected to be better done;

(b) By relieving the junior clerks of the Upper Division from such work, they are to be set free to do other work which requires doing, but is at present neglected, and which will tend to give them a better training for higher and more responsible duties later on.

"2. Although this question does not, strictly speaking, enter within the purview of the matters referred to me, I may, perhaps, be permitted here to offer a few observations which I am anxious to make, because it seems to me important, in deciding any changes, to think not only of the immediate purpose, but also to make sure that such changes do not move

1. FO 366/716. Minute by Crowe, February 26, 1898.

in a direction which would make it more difficult, later on, to proceed with more far-reaching improvements recognized to be at present, perhaps, impossible of realization, but kept in view as an ultimate ideal to be attained at a future time."

Crowe was quite determined that there should be no reduction of the Upper Division Staff, but he also had in mind a more far-reaching reorganization than had the other men who had been so far consulted.

"3. I imagine that the Secretary of State would be more than glad to see, apart from any possible improvements in the quality of the work turned out by his Office, an extension of the scope of that work in several directions, which is, however, seen to be impracticable for want of time at the disposal of the staff. Most of the senior officers are, as it is, probably overworked. At the same time, is the Office, in all its branches, not suffering from a want of proper facilities for collecting, coördinating, selecting, focussing, and thus making available for actual use the vast material annually accumulating in its pigeon-holes and stately volumes? Much has been said at times about the necessity of establishing in the Office an 'Intelligence Department.' But, after all, the whole Office is one Intelligence Department, only it is not organized to produce its intelligence in a ready and compact form. I doubt the wisdom of having one Department to collect information and another to use it and advise on it. The obviously best plan is that each Department should collect its own intelligence. I venture to think that one of our real needs is the application of a little more historical spirit. Theoretically considered, ought there not to be always ready for reference a clear record of the foreign relations of Great Britain with every foreign country, and of each foreign country with every other? And would the Secretary of State not be glad to have short histories of all the principal events and occurrences of political importance, based on a careful collation of all the official, 'private' and secret, information stored in the Office? Would it not be of the utmost practical value to be able to read in a connected form the history of the Dardanelles, the history of the war between China and Japan, the history of the Eastern Roumelian revolution, to pick out a few subjects at random? The Memoranda which are at present furnished from time to time must appear a poor substitute for what, in theory, the Secretary of State ought to be in a position to call for.

"4. Now I believe that something could be done in the desired direction, if good use be made of the opportunity about to be offered by the introduction of a registry manned by Second Division clerks, and if, at the same time, the

services of our Chanceries abroad be utilized to a fuller extent than hitherto."

Crowe advocated that each Mission should send back to the Foreign Office an Annual Report "on the general state of the country in which they reside," and that these Reports should be used for the compilation of departmental histories.

"6. It is not expected that all this may be realized at once. But it would be a great pity if the present opportunity were allowed to pass without anything being done in the direction indicated. If, simultaneously with the appointment of a number of additional Second Division clerks, the establishment of clerks of the Upper Division is seriously reduced, then, no doubt, we may hope to see registers and indexes produced in a more perfect way, and much of the irritation hitherto experienced by the junior clerks in the opening years of their careers, at the inferior nature of the work required of them, will be allayed. But so far as the work turned out by the Office as a whole is concerned, there will hardly be much change.

"7. It is impossible to be blind to the fact that in the eyes of the general public, the House of Commons, and the press, the Foreign Office is just now more than usually on its trial. There is much criticism, mostly ill-directed. But at the bottom there is the idea that the Office deals habitually and systematically with matters of foreign policy in a more comprehensive, and at the same time detailed, way than is possible under our present organization, and on this assumption much of the criticism will from time to time appear fair and deserved.

"8. It is not suggested, of course, that any changes should be made merely in order to disarm the criticisms of the general, or even the intelligent, public. But our system may not unfairly be held to be open to the criticism that it hardly affords the Secretary of State that amount of practical assistance which he might, theoretically, expect from a really well-organized Foreign Office, and which would produce results not open to the same kind of attack. The root of the difficulty seems to me to lie in this - that whilst all hands are fully occupied in just 'carrying on' the daily business, hardly any one has the time or opportunity to engage on that wider survey of affairs and duties which, on reflection, seems the only satisfactory basis on which to establish the management of the foreign relations of the country. There are not a few men in the Office who would be most anxious to acquire and digest knowledge from the stores of documents and volumes lying closed under their hands, but who are absolutely precluded from doing so by

want of time. We all live terribly from hand to mouth. It is in virtue of these general considerations that I would deprecate any material reduction of the staff of clerks of the Upper Division. I feel sure that there is ample work for all of them to do. And if the Treasury would be persuaded that what is aimed at is not merely the better quality of registers and indexes, but a real and needed extension of the scope of duties of the whole staff, commensurate with modern developments and the growing complication of international relations, the prospect of increasing the expense of the Foreign Office Establishment by about £3,000 a year should have no real terrors for the Chancellor of the Exchequer."¹

It is clear from this memorandum that Crowe's vision of the future of the Foreign Office was more far-reaching than any of the opinions put forward hitherto. He began where the others had ended - for him devolution was taken for granted. Where Percy had opposed a reduction for the negative reasons of bad policy and of avoiding criticism, Crowe looked forward to the employment of the liberated staff on a more historical approach to the work of the Office, and, unlike Percy, Crowe provided Sanderson with solid arguments against making the compromise reduction.

(11)

On February 7, 1905, the "East Africa and Uganda Estimates 1905-1906" were completed and Sir Clement Hill minuted:

"I owe much to Mr. Crowe for the care he has bestowed in the final preparation of the estimates and for the admirable drafts and notes with which they will be submitted to the Treasury."

Lord Lansdowne added:

"It is very satisfactory that in handing over the Protectorates we should be able to give so good an account of our stewardship."

1. T 1/10369/4480. Memorandum by Crowe, January 5, 1905.

"I congratulate Sir C. Hill who has devoted so much time and attention to their affairs, and I concur in what he has said as to the value of Mr. Crowe's work."¹

These estimates were the last important task that the Department had had to perform, and the way was now clear for Crowe to begin his approach to the Treasury.

The first step was a letter to the Treasury of February 21:

"The Marquess of Lansdowne proposes that the office of Superintendent of Protectorates should be abolished from the 31st instant and that Sir Clement L1. Hill who has held it since its creation and will on that date have served over thirty seven and one-half years should be retired on the full pension to which he would have been entitled if he had served two and one-half years more."

In addition, this letter concluded:

"Lord Lansdowne proposes that the Staff of the Protectorate Department consisting of one Assistant Clerk, two first Class Junior Clerks, and three second division Clerks should be employed in the general work of the Office, as the Staff is at present inadequate for the proper performance of the work. His Lordship wishes to take this opportunity of introducing some changes in the organization of the Office which are much needed and which for purposes of convenience will form the subject of a separate letter."²

The Treasury replied on March 8:

"Sir,

"I have laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury your letter of the 21st ultimo respecting certain questions of staff which have arisen in connection with the transfer of the African Protectorates on the 1st proximo...

"My Lords assent to this proposal (viz Sir C. Hill) and request that Sir C. Hill's case may be submitted on the usual superannuation form...

"As regards the rest of the staff engaged on the work of the Protectorates My Lords will await the further

1. FO 366/761/p.60. Minutes by Hill and Lansdowne, February 7, 1905.
2. FO 366/755. Foreign Office to Treasury, February 21, 1905.

proposals of the Secretary of State referred to in the last paragraph of your letter."¹

The three Second Division Clerks were then transferred. The Library asked to be allocated one of them on March 10. Cartwright minuted:

"Three clerks will be released from the Protectorate Department at the beginning of April. I presume they will, temporarily at any rate, revert to the Library."

Sanderson added:

"The C.O. ask for the loan of one, another will be employed in preparing for the Registry. Can the third be used in the Library?"

Crowe, who was organising these arrangements, answered: "I should say: Certainly."²

Meanwhile Crowe worked on the reorganisation scheme. He later testified that "I, myself, examined carefully into the registers of all the Government departments before the system we now have was introduced."³ Everything was completed by March 6, and the Foreign Office sent to the Treasury a letter drafted by Crowe and signed by Sanderson, together with an undated memorandum by Crowe:

"Sir,

"In continuation of my previous letters on the subject of the transfer of the African Protectorates to the Colonial Office, I am directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to submit, for the consideration of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, the following observations and proposals with regard to the staff of this Office and its organization:-

1. FO 366/755. Treasury to Foreign Office, March 8, 1905.
2. FO 366/761/p.65. Minutes by Bradford, Cartwright, Sanderson and Crowe, March 10-13, 1905.
3. Cd. 7749, Q.37,046. Minute of evidence by Crowe, April 29, 1914.

"2. The correspondence of the Office during the past year has again shown a notable increase over that of any preceding year, to such an extent that the transfer of the Protectorates (bearing in mind that all diplomatic questions connected with them will still have to be dealt with here) will not reduce the work to its previous level. The staff of the Office, notwithstanding the additions which the Lords Commissioners have from time to time sanctioned, is not sufficient to deal with the work in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. The notable feature of the present condition of foreign affairs is that the Department is called upon to deal at the same time with a vast number of complicated questions, which it is impossible for those who are charged with the direction of the business to carry in their recollection, and for the proper treatment of which it is necessary that memoranda and abstracts should be constantly kept prepared up to date, and small selections of papers be always at hand.

"3. This work cannot be adequately and continuously performed by the same officers who are called upon to attend also to all minor details connected with the voluminous correspondence of the Department. The consequence is that the Secretary of State and Under-Secretaries are burdened with too large a mass of papers, and that their subordinates are subjected to excessive pressure at intervals in order to meet immediate calls for memoranda and information on urgent cases. Several instances of breakdown from overwork have recently occurred in consequence.

"4. Lord Lansdowne feels strongly that some measures are urgently required to remedy this state of things, and that they should be found, not so much in further increase of the Diplomatic Establishment of the Office, as in devolving a portion of the work now performed by it on clerks of the Second Division, as has already been done in other public Departments. The principal change which he wishes to propose in this direction is the establishment of a general registry, to be eventually manned entirely by Staff Officers and carefully selected clerks of the Second Division.

"5. The Diplomatic Establishment of the Office, including the Higher Division clerks employed in the Protectorate Department, consists of -

- "8 Senior Clerks
- "9 Assistant Clerks
- "20 First Class Junior Clerks
- "6 Second Class Junior Clerks.

"6. Lord Lansdowne is of opinion that the number of senior and assistant clerks is no more than sufficient for the work with which they have to deal, and that they should on no account be reduced. Whether and to what extent the

number of junior clerks can, without disadvantage, be diminished after the general registry has been brought into proper working order it is impossible now to say, but his Lordship can unhesitatingly promise that, on the occurrence of each vacancy in the Diplomatic Establishment, care will be taken to consider whether a reduction can be effected in the number of juniors.

"7. For the formation of the Registry Department, it is estimated that a staff of twenty-nine would be required, consisting of one Chief Registrar, one Assistant, three Staff Officers, and twenty-four clerks, of whom it is believed four might be boy clerks.

"8. Lord Lansdowne attaches importance to the rank and emoluments of Staff Officers being given to the clerks who will be charged with the supervision of the several sub-registries. It is proposed, contrary to the practice hitherto followed, to intrust the staff of the registry with the custody of all but the most secret papers. Much of the correspondence passing through their hands will be of a confidential character. The Heads of Divisions will occupy positions of special trust, which Lord Lansdowne thinks it would be both politic and right to recognize by investing them with proper rank, and by assigning to them such rates of salary as will tend to insure their prizing the responsibility thrown upon them, and to make them careful to justify the confidence reposed in their discretion. To the junior members the prospect of succeeding to the higher posts will be the most valuable incentive to good work and conduct.

"9. Copy of the Report of a Committee of Heads of Departments, to whom Lord Lansdowne had referred the question of the introduction of a general registry, together with a Memorandum showing the proposed organization and an estimate of the expenditure, are herewith inclosed.

"10. In order to reduce as far as possible the initial expense of setting the registry on foot, and also for the purpose of insuring a thoroughly satisfactory arrangement, Lord Lansdowne would propose that Mr. E.A. Crowe, the Assistant now employed in the Protectorate Department, and one of the juniors working under him, should for the first few months hold the office of Chief Registrar and Assistant Registrar, and superintend the organization of the Department. They would be transferred to political work as soon as the registry is in good working order, being replaced by Staff Officers of sufficient standing with the salaries assigned to them in the inclosed Estimates. Their transfer would set free two Second Division clerks, in addition to those enumerated in Section 7 of the Memorandum, who would complete the staff of the registry.

"11. It is estimated that, of the remaining twenty-three Staff Officers and Second Division clerks required, fourteen could be supplied from the staff already employed in the Office. An addition of nine Second Division clerks and four boy clerks will still be required, and Lord Lansdowne earnestly hopes that, in view of the importance of the change which he advocates, the Lords Commissioners will give their sanction to this increase.

"12. It will not be possible to introduce the change before the 1st July next, and the extra charge during the forthcoming financial year will barely therefore exceed £600, against which is to be reckoned the reduction of the salary of the Superintendent of Protectorates, and a very considerable saving which is anticipated from the alteration in the journeys of the King's Messengers.

"13. As regards the permanent expenditure which will result, Lord Lansdowne believes that the composition of the staff will not appear excessive on comparison with that of other Offices when regard is had to the amount of business to be dealt with and the rapidity with which it is necessary that it should be transacted, and still less when compared with that of the Foreign Departments of other Powers, in dealing with which any inferiority of this Department must place the country at a disadvantage."¹

In the memorandum that accompanied this letter, Crowe explained the new arrangements in greater detail. "In considering the question of the best means of giving practical effect to the recommendations of the Cartwright Committee," he wrote, "a number of points arise, on which the following observations are offered." In the succeeding paragraphs, he outlined the proposals for the registry and the three sub-registries. By quoting the maximum number of papers received in a single year, and by estimating the maximum number of papers that could be handled by each clerk in the same period, Crowe was able to calculate the number of men required in each of the sub-registries. He then outlined the staff that would be needed for the Central Registry, and, by

1. T 1/10369/4480. Foreign Office to Treasury, March 6, 1905.

comparing the sum totals thus arrived at with the number of Second Division Clerks already in the Foreign Office, the number of additional clerks for whose employment Treasury sanction was required was enumerated.

"It would be impossible, without disturbing the whole Departmental organization of the Foreign Office, to allot a connected suite of rooms on one floor to the proposed general registry. It is, moreover, very desirable for the rapid dispatch of correspondence and for quick access to papers required that rooms should be assigned on each floor to that portion of the general registry which deals with the papers of the Departments installed on that floor. In order that the central registry and the several sub-registries on each floor should have the means of direct and rapid intercommunication, it would be most convenient that the rooms to be set apart on the several floors should be situated over one another, and be connected by means of a small hand-lift, or shoot. According to a tentative list of distribution of rooms, which I have submitted for approval, the central registry and the 1st sub-registry would be on the ground floor, sub-registries Nos. 2 and 3 would be on the 1st and 2nd floor respectively. Each sub-registry would deal with the papers of three Departments."

Sub-registry No. 1 would deal with the papers of the Western, Eastern and Librarian's Departments, sub-registry No. 2 with those of the China, Commercial and Treaty Departments, and sub-registry No. 3 with those of the American, African and Consular Departments, the maximum totals for each group during the previous two years being 35,000, 51,000 and 31,000 respectively. Experience in the Consular and Commercial Departments showed that each clerk could deal with roughly 5,000 papers though "this, however, is, if anything, a very close allocation of work."

"In any case, it would appear impossible to count on more than 5,000 papers being dealt with by one clerk, and we shall be allowing for practically no margin of expansion by allotting seven clerks to Sub-registry No. 1, ten to Sub-registry No. 2, and six to Sub-registry No. 3. This would give a total of twenty-three. The clerks would all be interchangeable, so as to allow for the relief of exceptional pressure in any one sub-registry by temporarily drawing upon the staff of the others.

"There remains the staff for the central registry to be provided."

Here Crowe was able to employ the experience of the Colonial Office central registry, using "figures supplied to me."

"The Foreign Office received last year, exclusively of the correspondence of the African Protectorates Department, which will disappear on the 1st April next, over 63,000 papers, and the totals are increasing year by year. It is, I understand, intended that the central registry should also undertake the management and distribution of all the confidential print of the Office, except the telegraph and special Cabinet sections (which would be distributed from the Cypher Room). This would require, I should say, the whole time of two clerks. I would therefore suggest that the Assistant Registrar and one clerk should be principally charged with the print work, leaving the rest of the work to be done, under the Chief Registrar, by three clerks. These clerks would, however, all be interchangeable in case of need, so that during hours of pressure either in the registries or in the print-distributing work they would mutually assist each other. The staff of the central registry would accordingly consist of one head, one assistant, and four clerks."

The General Registry, consisting of the central registry and the three sub-registries, would therefore require twenty-nine men in all, as against the fourteen Second Division Clerks already available in the Office.

"This would leave fifteen to be still provided... I have not taken into account the services of any Attachés or newly-appointed junior clerks on the Diplomatic Establishment who may be temporarily attached to the registry. Experience shows that the services of men at that stage are not practically available for taking a fair share of work off the shoulders of the trained men, but that, on the contrary, time has to be given to their instruction, and much inconvenience is caused."

Crowe concluded his memorandum with a reference to the Library and the system of indexing:

"It is understood that the Library will continue to make the final index of the correspondence. There can be no question that a good and full index is essential for the successful work of the Foreign Office. The Committee suggests for consideration the adoption of the 'card index'

system. I hope that this proposal will be seriously entertained. I believe an arrangement could be devised which would combine all the advantages of a complete index to the whole of the correspondence (instead of the present system of separate indexes for each country), and a kind of table of contents of all the more important papers arranged under headings in alphabetical order. I only refer to this in the present connection in order to point out that we cannot, as Sir G. Murray has suggested, think of weakening, not to speak of abolishing, our Library Establishment.¹ It is generally computed that one clerk can, doing his work carefully, index 12,000 papers a-year. This allows a margin for leave and accidents... The Librarian's Department will, of course, continue to have other important duties to perform, although it will be relieved, like the other Departments, of the work connected with the registration of its current correspondence."²

At the same time as this official letter of March 6, "further information and explanations in support of the proposals were ... forwarded in a semi-official letter." The reaction of the Treasury, and of the Permanent Secretary, Sir George Murray, in particular, was most unfavourable and "more than two months elapsed without any communication" from the Treasury on the subject. The Foreign Office was, however, anxious to introduce the new system on July 1, so "private enquiries were made which resulted in a proposal from ... (the Treasury) that the scheme should be examined conjointly by representatives of the two Offices." E.G. Harman of the Treasury was deputed to discuss the matter with Eyre Crowe, and their discussions lasted over a period of about ten days. On May 30 Harman reported to Murray, recommending that the proposals of the Foreign Office should be

1. In a marginal comment, Murray wrote: "I did not suggest either." Nevertheless he had done so in his letter to Sanderson of November 8, 1904. See above, p.216.
2. T 1/10369/4480. Memorandum by Crowe, March 1905. Enclosure in Foreign Office to Treasury, March 6, 1905.

sanctioned:

"Proposed F.O. Registry.

"I have been into this matter with Mr. Crowe, after reading the papers and going through the Registry and Paper-room here.

"Your main criticism was that there should be one Registry and one Paper room, whereas F.O. propose to have

"a Central Registry

"3 Sub Registries

"and to retain the 'Library.'

"I find there are reasons, which, on the whole, and in all the circumstances, seem to me good ones for such an arrangement...

"They ... propose to extend throughout the Office the system which has now been tried and found to work well in the Commercial and Consular Departments...

"The object, in fact, is not so much to establish a mere registration Dept, as to relieve the Upper Staff of all the mechanical labour, which they represent is now so great as to preclude the proper conduct of the more important business...

"So long as men were recruited by nomination and came in early in life they were apparently more content to acquiesce in the old system, but when they obtained posts by competition at a later age they began to contrast the duties in which they were actually employed, and likely to be employed for many years, with the severe standard of education required. This is, no doubt, what has been going on for some time at the Foreign Office, where the examination, though with limited competition, is nevertheless understood to be pretty severe... I can recollect being advised for my own good that it was a delusion to suppose there was any 'scope' in a Government department and that the best thing I could do was to regard the post I had the good fortune to obtain as a 'fellowship in the middle of London'... The F.O. now desire a similar change (to that in the Home Office) and I should doubt whether it can be resisted... I am bound to say, from what I have seen, I think they are probably right...

"On the whole I should be inclined to let the F.O. try their experiment in their own way."¹

1. T 1/10369/4480. Memorandum by Harman, May 30, 1905.

But Murray would have none of this, and when the Treasury replied on June 16 it was to reject the proposals:

"Sir,

"The Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury have under Their consideration your letter of 6th March last making certain proposals with regard to the staff of the Foreign Office, and They have also caused personal enquiry to be made by one of their Officers into the contemplated arrangements.

"The main feature of these proposals is the formation of a Registry Department with a staff of

"1 Chief Registrar
"1 Assistant Registrar
"3 Staff Officers
"20 Second Division Clerks, and
"4 Boy Clerks.¹

Of the 25 Staff Officers or Clerks of the Second Division required for this purpose it is proposed to provide 16 from the staff already employed in the Office and to appoint 9 additional Second Division Clerks from outside. These 9 Clerks do not, however, represent the real addition which would be made to the staff of the Office, seeing that the transfer of the Protectorates to the Colonial Office since the date of your letter has made redundant one Assistant Clerk, two First Class Junior Clerks, and three Second Division Clerks."

The Foreign Office had argued that the increase in the annual mean expenditure would be £2,931, but the Treasury now criticised this figure and asserted that the increase would really be £6,161.

"From the information which has been placed at their disposal My Lords understand that the object of the formation of the Registry is not to provide for new work except to a very limited extent, but to concentrate in one branch work which is now distributed over several. Such a measure ought not, prima facie, to involve any increase of cost. The economy arising from concentration should compensate for any additional labour which may be required for improved methods or for the more efficient performance of the work in the new branch.

1. See above, p.233, para.7.

"My Lords are disposed to think that some portion of the additional cost involved in these proposals is due to the following causes:-

"(a) The number of staff Officers is unnecessarily large owing to the formation of Sub registries. If the whole of the work were concentrated in one Registry, three staff Officers would probably be found sufficient in lieu of five.

"(b) The maximum of the Staff Officers' scale should not exceed £400. A scale of £300-400 is usually found sufficient for work of this character.

"(c) With the exception of 4 Boy Clerks the whole of the subordinate staff consists of the Second Division Clerks. But in any Department, such as a Registry, in which the work is mainly of a routine character there should be a much larger proportion of grades inferior to the Second Division; and My Lords suggest that more boy clerks as well as some Assistant Clerks (£55-£150) should be employed.

"But even with these modifications the scheme would involve an increased cost which My Lords cannot regard as justified by the growth of work in the Department. They are of course aware that there has been a considerable growth in recent years; but They were under the impression that a corresponding increase of staff had been provided. For example in the year 1899 one Senior Clerk (£900-50-£1,000), one First Class Junior Clerk (£200-20-£600) and one Second Class Junior Clerk (£100-10-£200) were added to the establishment. The Assistant Clerks' Class (£700-25-£800) was increased by one in 1900 and again by two in 1903; and in 1902 two Second Class Junior Clerks were added.

"My Lords have not failed to take note of the statement made in your letter as to the pressure under which the duties of the Foreign Office Staff are now carried out, and the need for some relief in order to enable the work to be more effectually performed; but after considering all the circumstances of the case They are unable, on the information at present before Them, to see any sufficient ground for making at once so large an addition to the staff as is represented by salaries amounting at the mean of the scales to £6161 per annum, a sum which is more than equivalent to the average salaries of 15 First Class Junior Clerks. They would therefore be glad if the Secretary of State would be good enough to give further consideration to the subject and endeavour to frame some more economical scheme."¹

1. T 1/10369/4480. Treasury to Foreign Office, June 16, 1905.

The refusal to sanction the Foreign Office proposals that Sanderson had predicted had thus come about, but the Foreign Office was not to be put off by this. Montgomery, who had become Lord Percy's Private Secretary in September 1904,¹ wrote to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary on June 21:

"Lord Percy,

"The specific suggestions which the Treasury make with a view to effecting economies in the proposed Registry scheme are

"(1) that the number of 'Staff Officers' should be reduced by making one Central Registry (without sub-registries)

"(2) that the maximum salary of the 'Staff Officers' should be reduced from £450 to £400, and

"(3) that boy clerks and 'abstractors' or 'assistant clerks' should take the place of some of the ordinary second division clerks.

"There are objections - more or less grave - to all these suggestions, but there is no need to enter into them now.

"The really important point in the Treasury letter is that the Lords Commissioners refuse to sanction the General Scheme of reorganization as a whole, even if modified in accordance with the above suggestions, on the ground that, as no reduction in the general Staff of the Office is suggested, the added expense would be too great. They ask that a more economical scheme may be put forward.

"The scheme proposed by the Foreign Office provided for a staff no more than adequate for the proper discharge of the duties of the Office; it was carefully considered here from every point of view by those most competent to judge of the necessities of the case, and it was approved by the Secretary of State.

"The reasons why a staff which is not a 'starvation Staff' is essential are clearly set out in the Memo: which

1. FO 366/761/p.10. Minute of Appointment by Percy, September 15, 1904.

you wrote in November last¹ and in several mema by Mr. Crowe. The Treasury have had the latter before them.

"The Treasury have little or no knowledge of the more important work of this Office and they cannot be judges of what Staff of the upper division is necessary; there is, therefore, no prospect of the repetition of our arguments in the form of an official letter having much effect.

"Would not the best course now be to speak to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to point out the necessity for the adoption in its entirety of the scheme as originally proposed, to make it clear that a compromise will not attain the objects aimed at, and to lay particular stress on the fact that this is a case in which increasing work and increasing calls upon the Office render increased expenditure necessary and not a case in which - as the Treasury seem to imagine - any economies can be expected from us in return?"²

(12)

Despite this letter of Montgomery's, it was decided that "a repetition of our arguments in the form of an official letter" should be made, but that this should be reinforced by personal appeals to Balfour and to Austen Chamberlain, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Foreign Office wrote to the Treasury on June 29, and the letter was backed up by four enclosures; the first showing the numbers employed in the Foreign Office under the registry scheme in 1890 compared with the contemporary figures, the second giving a return of correspondence between 1826 and 1904, the third providing Reports from the European Embassies on the staffing of the foreign ministries of the other Great Powers, and the fourth giving a comparative statement of the strength and

1. See above, p.213-215.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.169. Montgomery to Percy, June 21, 1905.

cost of the registry staff at the Treasury, the Colonial Office and under the proposed Foreign Office scheme.

"Sir,

"I am directed by the Marquess of Lansdowne to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant, relative to the scheme for the establishment of a General Registry in this Office to be manned by Staff Officers and Clerks of the 2nd Division.

"The proposals for this purpose after being the subject of some preliminary informal communication with your Department were eventually submitted to it officially in my letter of the 6th of March. Further information and explanations in support of the proposals were at the same time forwarded in a semi-official letter. It had been Lord Lansdowne's desire to introduce the system on the 1st of July, and as more than two months elapsed without any communication from your Department on the subject, private enquiries were made which resulted in a proposal from you that the scheme should be examined conjointly by representatives of the two Offices. This proposal was welcomed by Lord Lansdowne, and Mr. Crowe of this Office who had been entrusted with the elaboration of the scheme was deputed to meet Mr. Harman of your Department for the purpose. An intimation was at the same time made that other officers of experience belonging to this Department who had studied the matter would be available at any time if required for purposes of consultation.

"The discussions between Mr. Crowe and Mr. Harman were continued for about ten days¹ and it was understood that Mr. Harman appeared satisfied with the explanations given as to the soundness of the scheme. No request was at any rate made for any further information with regard to it.

"It is, in these circumstances, a matter of much regret to Lord Lansdowne to find that after the scheme has been before the Lords Commissioners for a period of more than three months, its effect is apparently still misunderstood."²

The Foreign Office letter continued by reiterating that the total increase of the mean annual expenditure as a result of the introduction of the General Registry would be £2,931 as originally stated, rather than the £6,161 that the Treasury's calculations

1. Treasury marginal comment: "2 or 3 - There was an interval."
2. Treasury marginal comment: "not at all."

had arrived at. They pointed out that the Treasury had misunderstood one part of the Foreign Office's letter of March 6,¹ and that the retention of the Upper Division Staff of the African Protectorates Department was necessary quite apart from the proposed reorganisation.

"The three Second Division Clerks who had been attached to the Protectorates Department, and who are at present required to deal with the arrears into which the work of the Librarian's Department has fallen, are also treated as redundant, and as increasing the estimate of expense of the Registry by a sum of Six hundred and thirty pounds.

"In connection with this item Lord Lansdowne must altogether dissent from the statement made in your letter that 'from the information which has been placed at their disposal My Lords understand that the object of the formation of the Registry is not to provide for new work except to a very limited extent, but to concentrate in one branch work which is now distributed over several.'²

"No information that could properly lead to such a conclusion has been furnished by this Department. It was on the contrary distinctly stated in paragraph 4 of my letter of March 6th that the proposals were made for the purpose of 'relieving the Diplomatic Establishment of the Office by devolving a portion of the work now performed by it on Clerks of the Second Division.'³

"The object is in fact not merely to concentrate in one branch work which is now distributed over several, but to transfer to a new branch a considerable portion of the present duties of the Political Staff, in order that the latter may be free to devote itself to more important work which is now, from pressure of business, either omitted or inadequately performed.

"Viewed in this manner, the salaries of the three Second Division Clerks hitherto attached to the Protectorates Department may legitimately be included in the cost of the Registry, which may then be regarded as a plan for relieving the Political Staff of all the more mechanical portion of its present duties at a cost of Three thousand five hundred and

1. Here Murray commented: "Yes I am sorry. This was my mistake."
2. See above, p.239.
3. See above, p.232.

sixty-one pounds, by the employment of twelve additional officers and clerks of the Second Division, and four Boy Clerks.¹ If, as an alternative plan, the work of registration and the care of the correspondence were to be entrusted to second Division Clerks attached to each Department, without the establishment of a general Registry, additions to the staff of that class would be required, reaching probably a total not less than that proposed in the scheme now under consideration, but the result would be far less satisfactory, and the relief to the Political Staff much less effective.

"Considering the enormous increase in the volume and complexity of the work with which the Foreign Office has to deal, Lord Lansdowne cannot consider that the request which he is making for further additions to the staff is unreasonable. I am to refer to the annexed table (A) showing the number and cost of the establishment in 1890, as compared with that of the present time and with that which is proposed by the new scheme, and to enclose (B) a Return of correspondence dealt with annually. It will be seen that in 1890 there was an establishment, including the Secretary and Under Secretaries of State, of seventy nine costing Forty-one thousand four hundred pounds a year, dealing with a total correspondence of less than Seventy-four thousand papers, that at the present date there is an establishment of One hundred and seven costing Fifty thousand five hundred pounds and dealing with a total of over One hundred and ten thousand papers, (as estimated from the returns of last year exclusive of the correspondence of the Protectorate Department) and that what is desired is an addition bringing up the numbers to one hundred and twenty at a cost of Fifty-three thousand four hundred pounds. That is to say that, while the business has increased by fifty per cent the proposed increase in cost is roughly about thirty per cent. It may be doubted whether the increase in the volume of correspondence adequately represents the actual increase of work, as efforts are constantly being

1. Testifying before the Royal Commission on the Civil Service in 1914, Crowe said: "We strongly protested against the employment of boy clerks when they were first imposed upon us." "At the time when the boy clerks were forced upon us by the Treasury we were of opinion that it would be very much better to use the youngest of the second division clerks for a time in doing that work (i.e. entering in the register), and we thought it would do them no harm, and then draft them on to ordinary work." Cd 7749, Q.36,919 + 36,921. Minutes of evidence by Crowe, April 29, 1914. This seems an overstatement, as even the Foreign Office letter of March 6 accepted the principle of their employment. See above, p.233, para. 7.

made in various ways to reduce the number of despatches and telegrams. It certainly does not adequately represent the increased number of important questions to be studied.

"Printed returns, which I am also to enclose (C), of the Foreign Office establishments of other Great Powers, show that they are far better provided in the matter of Staff, though the questions and interests with which they have to deal certainly do not exceed, either in their number or in their diversity, those on which this Office is constantly engaged.¹

"I am especially to call attention to the very large Staff of the German Foreign Office which has no doubt been arranged on thoroughly businesslike² principles, and is not likely to have been settled upon an unnecessarily extravagant basis.³ It is known from the accounts given by His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin that that Office with a staff numbering no less than Two hundred and forty-three persons is very hard worked.

"With regard to the criticisms of the details of the scheme made in your letter, Lord Lansdowne desires me to offer the following observations:-

"(a) The proposed formation of sub-registries, is, in Lord Lansdowne's opinion, a mere matter of detail. There is not accommodation in this Office which would allow of the Registry being conducted in a single room,⁴ and for purposes of rapid reference it is essential that the several Departments should be within a short distance of their respective Registers. It is therefore proposed that the Registry should be carried on in rooms vertically above one another and connected by a small lift, instead of being placed in adjoining rooms on the same floor. It is not perhaps absolutely necessary that there should be a Staff Officer in each of these rooms, and Lord Lansdowne would be prepared to start the scheme with four Staff Officers, with the reservation that if in the future any reduction should be found possible in the juniors of the Political Establishment⁵ another Clerk in the Registry should receive promotion to the post of Staff Officer.

1. In the memorandum that Percy sent to Sanderson on November 17, 1904, (see above, p.213-215), he referred to the number of men employed in the German Foreign Office. A circular was then sent to the Embassies to the Great Powers on November 29, 1904, and the reports were sent back between December 10, 1904, and March 25, 1905. FO General 55/3.
2. Treasury marginal comment: "Teutonic."
3. Treasury marginal comment: "Salaries are very much lower."
4. Treasury marginal comment: "I think this is a point."
5. See above, p.232-233, para. 6.

"(b) Lord Lansdowne doubts the policy of reducing the maximum pay of the Staff Officers in the Registry from Four hundred and fifty pounds to Four hundred pounds but, until trial has been made of the system, he does not wish to claim for those employed in this Department a higher scale than that which is given in the Treasury and the Colonial Office.

"(c) Considering the importance and the confidential character of the work which is carried on in this Office, and the temptation to which its members may at any time be exposed to reveal items of intelligence to the agents of Foreign Governments or of the Press, Lord Lansdowne feels the strongest objection to the employment in the Registry of men holding the position of Assistant Clerks with salaries ranging from Fifty-five pounds to One hundred and fifty pounds and with no assured prospect of advancement.¹ He thinks also that until their utility and trustworthiness have been tested it would be very unsafe to employ a larger number of boy-clerks than is provided for in the scheme. A comparative statement is enclosed of the Staffs of the Registries of the Treasury and Colonial Office and of the proposed Foreign Office Staff (D). It will be seen that, in comparison with the number of papers to be dealt with, the Foreign Office proposal is less expensive than the system of the other two Departments. The employment in increased proportion of men of a lower class and of boys would almost certainly necessitate an increase in numbers and whilst less satisfactory would not be in reality more economical.

"Lord Lansdowne earnestly hopes that the scheme, subject to the modifications which I have mentioned under (a) and (b) will be reconsidered by the Lords Commissioners and that its actual features and the grounds on which he has urged it may receive their serious attention. The alteration which it involves in the organization of this Office is, in his opinion, necessary in order that the Secretary of State may receive the support and assistance which he requires and which he has a right to expect in the performance of very arduous work."²

This letter from the Foreign Office was sent off on a Thursday and at around the same time Sanderson went to the Treasury himself to urge that the Foreign Office proposals should be accepted. He saw Sir George Duckworth, Austen Chamberlain's Private Secretary,³

1. See above, p.240. para. (c).
2. T 1/10369/12288. Foreign Office to Treasury, June 29, 1905.
3. See, e.g., British Museum Add. MS 48682, p.58. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, June 28, 1904.

who reported to his Chief on the following Monday, July 3:

"Chancellor of the Exchequer,

"Sir T. Sanderson came to see me last week in some perturbation of spirit as to the reception which had been accorded by the Treasury to his proposals for the creation of a Registry Department at the Foreign Office.

"Lord Lansdowne is to speak to you personally on the subject; but, before he does so, Sir Thomas wants you to know exactly how it was that the scheme came into existence."

Sanderson pointed out that it was Lansdowne who "was directly responsible for its inception."¹

"Sir Thomas wants to carry through the reforms during his tenure of office. He is the embodiment of the old system; but he sees the need for, and would like to be the means of introducing the new.

"He could manage to carry on with the addition of 2 or 3 Second Division men, if the Treasury insisted; but it would be at the cost of the work, and would not be possible after he left, as, with all due modesty, he remarked there is no one else there with quite the experience and power of memory which he himself possesses, - a memory which at present is a Registry in itself.

"He begs, therefore, that you will reconsider and modify in some way the Treasury letter."²

Sanderson was followed by Lord Lansdowne and Lord Percy, both of whom spoke to Chamberlain on the subject and urged that the scheme should be accepted. But despite this Murray remained adamant, minuting on July 18 that "we ought to press for a reduction in their Upper Division of one Assist. Clerk (£750) and three junior clerks (£400)."³

Chamberlain, however, could not afford to ignore the requests of Lansdowne and Percy. After both men had been to see him he

1. See above, p.174.
2. T 1/10369/4480. Memorandum by Duckworth, July 3, 1905.
3. T 1/10369/12288. Minute by Murray, July 18, 1905.

wrote the following letter, dated July 31:

"My dear Lansdowne,

"Foreign Office Reorganisation

"Though far from convinced by the F.O. letters that so large an increase of your staff is necessary and though believing (as I think I have good reason to do) that the F.O. clerks of the Higher Division have more holidays and are less hard worked than the Higher Division Clerks in my own Office, I have assented to your proposals.

"In this I have been moved by the v(er)y strong and urgent rep(resenta)tions made by yourself and Percy that the incr(ease) in j(umio)r Staff was nec(essary) if you were to receive fr(om) the Office the assistance wh(ich) you have the right to expect.¹ But in assenting to the increase for which you have asked, I desire to impress upon you, if I may, that there will in future be no excuse for your Office if they fail to do the work thoroughly and well. And I hope that you will take the opportunity of stating to them what it is that you require and that you will insist that they give it to you. Unless this is done, I have no defence for the increased expenditure. There is no office in the public service which has been treated more generously than the F.O. Even now they retain privileges which no other office shares, and you have a right to demand and receive from them the best that men can give."²

On the same day Chamberlain wrote the following minute for his Treasury officials:

"I am convinced from what I have seen and heard that the F.O. work is not properly done at present, but I have great doubt whether so large an extension of staff is necessary in order to do it properly in future. But Ld. Lansdowne and Ld. Percy, who have both taken a good deal of trouble about the matter, are convinced that it is, and so is Sir T. Sanderson who has always been the pillar of the old system. On the whole therefore I am decided not to press our objections further. Their scheme may be accepted with the small modifications they have offered."³

1. Chamberlain originally wrote the following sentence, but crossed it out in the draft: "I have heard enough from you, and still more from Percy and Balfour, to convince me that the work of the F.O. is not done in such a way as to give the S. of State the assistance he has a right to expect; and my own observations such as they are, bear out these comments."
2. A. Chamberlain Papers 17/1/69. A. Chamberlain to Lansdowne, July 31, 1905. See Appendix VI.
3. T 1/10369/12288. Minute by A. Chamberlain, July 31, 1905.

As a result of this the Treasury wrote a grudging letter on August 3:

"Sir,

"The Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury have before Them your letter of the 29th June relative to the proposed scheme for reorganising the Foreign Office and establishing a general Registry.

"Their Lordships, who had given considerable care and attention to the scheme submitted to Them with your letter of 6th March, regret that the Secretary of State should be under the impression that the scheme has been misunderstood in this Department.

"The reorganisation of the Foreign Office desired by the Secretary of State has for its object to strengthen the political staff of the Department, and this object is to be attained partly by the absorption of certain officers from the abolished protectorate Department, partly by 'devolving a portion of the work now performed by the political officers on Clerks of the Second Division.'

"It was precisely this feature of the scheme which was present to Their Lordships when They observed that the object of the Registry was 'not to provide for new work, except to a very limited extent, but to concentrate in one branch work which is now distributed over several.'

"Turning to the financial effect of the proposed reorganisation My Lords do not find, except in one particular, that They have overestimated the additional expenditure involved."

The Treasury then rehearsed their arguments of June 16 that the real additional cost was £6161, and not the total that the Foreign Office had advanced, even including the concession made by the latter on this point.¹

"The difference ... represents the salaries of the officers from the Protectorate Department.

"My Lords have not of course argued that these salaries should be included in the cost of the proposed Registry, but they are unable to understand on what ground the salaries of the Assistant Clerk and the two First Class Junior Clerks

1. See above, p.244-245.

from the Protectorate Department can be excluded from a calculation of the cost of the general scheme of reorganisation of which the Registry forms part, and Their contention is supported by the statement in your letter to the effect that 'the services of these gentlemen are required to enable the Political Staff to deal with its present duties and they are at the present moment so employed.'

"Their Lordships adhere to Their opinion that the scheme proposed is unduly expensive, involving as it does an additional expenditure equal to the cost of more than 12 first class junior clerks at the mean of their scale.

"Nevertheless in deference to the strong opinion expressed by Lord Lansdowne Their Lordships will not withhold Their assent to the scheme proposed with the modifications contained in your letter of the 29th June last and they sanction accordingly the employment of:-

"(A Registrar)	at £300-£400 each
(An Assistant Registrar and)	
(Two Staff Officers)	

with an allowance of £50 to the Registrar:

"Nine Second Division Clerks (in addition to the three Second Division Clerks transferred from the Protectorate Department) and Four Boy Clerks at 14/- to 18/- a week each.

"Their Lordships note the assurance conveyed in your letter of 6th March that on the occurrence of each vacancy in the Diplomatic Establishment care will be taken to consider whether a reduction can be effected in the number of Junior Clerks, and They trust that in view of the very considerable increase of force now available it may be found possible before long to effect such reductions."¹

But this was not the end of the haggling. The Foreign Office replied on August 9:

"Sir,

"I have laid before the Marquess of Lansdowne your letter of the 3rd instant (12288) relative to the scheme for establishing a General Registry in this Office.

1. T 12/27/12288. Treasury to Foreign Office, August 3, 1905.

"Lord Lansdowne desires me to offer his acknowledgments to the Lords Commissioners for their consideration in sanctioning the expenditure required on his assurance that the proposed arrangements appear to him necessary for the proper conduct of the business.

"He regrets however that there still seems to be considerable misapprehension as to the grounds on which the change has been recommended, and the expenditure which it will actually entail.

"You state that at the commencement of my letter of the 29th of June that expenditure is estimated at Two thousand nine hundred and thirty-one pounds. It will be seen however on reference to my letter that no such statement was made. It was stated, and the proposition is undeniable, that the present mean expenditure in salaries will be increased by that amount, and this statement was made as a preliminary to discussing what portion of the present mean expenditure could properly be added to this sum in estimating the real additional cost of the new system."

The Foreign Office then returned to the familiar financial arguments.

"There remains a sum of One thousand five hundred and fifty pounds, representing the salaries of one Assistant and two First Class Junior Clerks, who were previously employed in the Protectorates Department and who on the transfer of the administrative work of the Protectorates to the Colonial Office have been actively employed in the other work of this Office. It is argued in your letter that the continued employment of these gentlemen forms part of the general scheme of reorganization and that their salaries must therefore be included in the estimate of cost. But apart from the establishment of the Registry there is no such scheme of reorganization. One of the two Junior Clerks in question was required in order to enable the African Department to deal with the diplomatic work connected with the African Protectorates which still falls to this Office. The additional assistance furnished by the retention of the other two Officers has been no more than sufficient to enable other branches of the Office to deal with the current business on the present system. Even with their assistance the Staff is not more than is required for the transaction of the ordinary work.

"In view of the preparations which will be required for the introduction of the new system, and which have been held in abeyance during the six months that the matter has been under consideration of your Department it will scarcely now be possible to introduce the change before the 1st of January next. It will however be desirable to obtain the

services of the additional Nine Second Division Clerks and the four Boy Clerks some time before that date, say from the 1st of December, in order that they may assist in the preliminary arrangements and make themselves acquainted with the system so as to begin with a thorough knowledge of the work to be performed."¹

The Treasury sanctioned this request that the nine second division clerks and the four Boy Clerks should be employed from December 1, in a letter of August 16, making no reference to the financial arguments.² The Foreign Office wanted to be able to select these second division clerks, but were not permitted to do so. Crowe later testified that "we made an endeavour when starting the registry to get a principle of selection accepted, but it was ruled out as being contrary to the general rule of the second division service. We must take the men who are assigned to us."³ Meanwhile Lansdowne sent the following reply to Chamberlain's impertinent letter of July 31:

"My dear Austen,

"I was obliged to put off until the end of the week thanking you for your letter...

"I am extremely glad that you have agreed to the increase for which we ask and to know that you were moved by the strength of my representations.

"You express your belief that the F.O. Clerks of the higher division have more holidays and are less hard worked than those serving in your Office, and you go on to impress upon me that there will in future be no excuse for my Office if they fail to do the work thoroughly and well. You ask me moreover to take the opportunity of 'stating to them what it is that I expect of them, and of insisting that they give it to me.'

1. T 1/10369/15123. Foreign Office to Treasury, August 9, 1905.
2. T 1/10369/15123. Treasury to Foreign Office, August 16, 1905.
3. Ed. 7749, Q.37,082. Minute of evidence by Crowe, April 29, 1914.

"No-one could, I venture to think, read these words without inferring that in the past the staff of my Office have been indolent and indifferent, and that they have failed in their duty not merely because they were short-handed, but because they were in the habit of shirking systematically.

"Let me assure you that nothing is further from the truth. Many people believe that the F.O. Clerk of these days does not differ from the type which Thackeray was so fond of describing in his novels. I think they would be surprised if they knew how much hard grind and how little recreation fall to the lot of the modern F.O. Clerk.

"When we first asked for this increase of establishment I made it my business to collect information as to the hours of work and the subjects dealt with in the different departments, and I am absolutely convinced that our staff, and particularly the senior members of it, have during recent years not only worked hard, but been over-worked; the number of hours they put in is checked, and is, I believe, not less than that given in the case of the other Public Offices; the average attendance of our higher division clerks is about 7 hours throughout the week and between 5 and 6 hours on Saturdays; and many other Offices have a Saturday half-holiday which is not given to us.¹

"I have however never believed that the mere number of hours put in by a public servant was the measure of his usefulness. I wish you would look at the tables marked A and B showing the subjects dealt with in the Eastern and Commercial Departments last autumn. I need not dwell upon the burden thrown upon us by such questions as those concerning Macedonia, Crete and Morocco, and those arising out of the war - e.g., the North Sea incident. The staff of each of these is 6 to 7 men, besides which under the present system the mechanical work of entering, docketing and putting by papers has been dealt with in addition to minuting and drafting despatches and memos.

"Without the re-organisation which we are proposing, and which will have the effect of giving some relief to our higher division clerks from the mechanical drudgery which they now have to perform, we should certainly run the risk of a bad breakdown, and if there have in the past been occasions on which cases may have seemed to you and others to have been insufficiently worked up, the explanation must be sought not in the indolence of the workers but in the fact that it was impossible for them to do justice to so many different subjects.

1. Marginal comment by Murray: "when the state of public business will permit."

"Since I have been at the Office, several of our best men have broken down from over-work. I can call to mind one case in which the head of a department forewent his leave for three years, with the result that he was invalided and has never been the same man since. Another, an Assistant, a first-rate worker, was invalided from the same cause and has retired on pension. Sanderson's serious illness was clearly due to it, and these are not solitary cases.

"You tell me that you have good reason to believe that we enjoy privileges not shared by the other Public Offices. I need not tell you that if you are able to show that we enjoy any improper privileges I am ready to discuss the propriety of continuing them. The only privilege which I have been able to trace is that in calculating leave the F.O. take the calendar month as the basis of their calculation instead of a month of 28 days.¹

"Please forgive me for inflicting all these details upon you, but it is necessary that I should do so for, unless I have misinterpreted your letter, you desire that I should address to the Office a 'statement' founded upon it. I am strengthened in this belief because I notice that the word 'Private' which was at first inscribed on the first page has been struck out, presumably because you did not wish me to keep the letter to myself. I could not with any self-respect pass on without a strong expression of my own disagreement the censure which is to be read between the lines of your letter - a censure which would be as unjust as it would be disheartening.

"On the other hand, the relief which this re-organisation will give to the Office will most certainly afford to every member of it a strong incentive to 'give the best that men can give,' and, so far as my own opportunities go, I will certainly make it my business to see that it is given. The team will however pull more vigorously without such a crack of the Treasury whip as you would apparently like to administer.

"P.S. Brodrick, on leaving the Office, wrote: "I recently had the opportunity of mentioning to Lord Salisbury how very favourably the F.O. contrasts with any other Office which I have had to do with during the 12 years I have served, in promptitude, dispatch and zeal of all concerned to get the best possible business turned out."²

1. Marginal comment by Murray: "The O. in C. says nothing about months, but refers to days."
2. A. Chamberlain Papers 17/1/71. Lansdowne to A. Chamberlain, August 7, 1905. Brodrick had been Parliamentary Under-Secretary from 1898 to 1900.

Sanderson wrote later that "after much delay and resistance the Treasury at last gave their sanction and the changes were brought into operation just before I left Office."¹ The new arrangements commenced on January 1, 1906, and two long memoranda were written to serve as a guide. On December 29 Sanderson circulated a "Memorandum respecting the General Registry for the Guidance of Heads of Departments,"² and on January 1 Crowe had the "Provisional Instructions for the General Registry" printed.³ "Amongst several characteristics which distinguish the system adopted in 1906 from the earlier practice" were the following:

"The collection of all documents received in a Central Registry where they are opened, placed flat in separate minute sheets, classified, numbered, and recorded in a first register; the docketing and re-entry of the papers in Subordinate Registries, and their preparation in due form for the Department concerned; the execution in a Sub-Registry of all routine action prescribed in the minutes; the preservation of all current archives in a Sub-Registry, in the form of files arranged numerically; and the introduction of a system of card-indexing governed, or intended to be governed, by a single body of rules. Finally, it was expressly laid down that 'as regards all questions connected with the custody, registration, and indexing of papers, the Librarian would exercise a general superintendence' over the Registries."⁴

Crowe testified that "we introduced the changes at the chanceries at the same time by correspondence and we issued circulars."⁵

1. FO 800/111/p.32. Memorandum by Sanderson, July 17, 1914.
2. FO 881/8552. Memorandum by Sanderson, December 29, 1905.
3. FO 881/8550. Memorandum by Crowe, January 1, 1906. The memorandum was anonymous, but Crowe's style is recognisable and it would have been his task to produce such instructions. In addition, there is a correction in the memorandum in Crowe's hand. See also FO General, 1844-1932, for the same correction.
4. FO 366/787/p.170. Report of Foreign Office Committee, November 14, 1918.
5. Cd. 7749, Q.43,569. Minute of evidence by Crowe, July 3, 1914.

(13)

There were other innovations that took place at this time as well. Mallet wrote to Bertie on October 19, 1905, that "there is much to be done in the way of reorganisation here."¹ He had already written on March 31, 1905:

"My dear Bertie,

"I quite agree that the printing arrangements are a disgrace to the F.O., but so long as T.H.S. thinks them perfect what are we to do? However I will do my best to get something done and if necessary, speak to Lord L. about it."²

There was also a move towards a reorganisation of the system of commercial attachés. Gorst wrote on October 31, 1905:

"My dear Nicolson,

"... Under the existing system the Commercial attachés (who were appointed as a sop to Parliamentary criticism) are no real use to commerce and merely do work which the Councillor and Chancery ought to be doing. For some time I have been anxious to see whether something could not be made of these appointments."³

It was not until July 1906, however, that Gorst and Llewelyn Smith of the Board of Trade reported on the "System of British Commercial Attachés and Commercial Agents,"⁴ recommending that, with the exception of Austin Lee at Paris, London should be the headquarters of the Commercial Attachés for Europe, rather than the Embassies abroad, "so that they could be in close touch with the mercantile and manufacturing communities."⁵

1. FO 800/184/p.77. Mallet to Bertie, October 19, 1905.
2. FO 800/179/p.1. Mallet to Bertie, March 31, 1905. See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/102/21/p.56. Sanderson to Godley, May 14, 1903; and India Office Library MS Eur. F/102/21/p.90. Curzon to Godley, June 4, 1903.
3. FO 800/336/p.106. Gorst to Nicolson, October 31, 1905.
4. FO General 55/3/8838. Report by Gorst and Llewelyn Smith, July 6, 1906.
5. Sir J. Tilley and S. Gaselee: op. cit., p.247.

A further suggestion came from Maycock, who wrote to Sanderson on November 23 advocating a fresh classification of the subjects to be dealt with by each Department:

"Dear Sir Thomas,

"The approaching institution of a general Registry here affords, I think, a good opportunity of settling, with some more precision than at present exists, the subjects which the different depts of the office should primarily take. I would respectfully suggest that you ask the Heads of the different depts to draw up a list of what they now handle; it could then be considered and revised, and a well defined list printed for the guidance of registrars.

"As matters now are depts are constantly asked 'is this yours?' or 'is it ours.' It would not be impossible to so préciser the topics as to remove all doubts.

"To give one example. The Consular dept have of late been dealing with Registration questions. We¹ deal with nationality questions generally. The two are closely allied. A Consul raises some question as to whether he sh.d register A. Then it comes to us for obs.vs or, not infrequently, to deal with. Thus one case gets into different registers and the tracing of it in the future becomes a matter of no little difficulty...

"If we go to the stores and want a bottle of pickles we know for certain that we shall get them in the grocery dept and shouldn't think of going to the 'Drugs' for them.

"I think if we could lay down more closely than at present who takes what it would be useful both here and abroad and the moment seems opportune for doing so.

"Pray forgive me for troubling you with this suggestion, but I think you will agree with me that it may advantageously be considered, in the interests of uniformity."²

Sanderson then circulated this letter of Maycock's to the Heads of Departments together with a minute of his own:

"I have received the enclosed letter from Maycock advocating a fresh classification of the subjects to be

1. The Treaty Department.
2. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.172. Maycock to Sanderson, November 23, 1905.

dealt with by each Department.

"I do not think any classification can be made which will avoid questions arising as to the particular Department to which certain papers shall be referred, or a certain amount of overlapping in the subjects dealt with by the separate Departments. This is in the nature of things and to take Maycock's own example 'The Stores,' I know of cases in which two different Departments deal with different qualities of the same article, and of not infrequent instances in which some unlucky person has been referred backwards and forwards over half the building in the quest of some particular purchase.

"But it may be as well that each Department should draw up a list of the subjects with which it is at present dealing in order that these may be examined and revised."¹

At this time it was also felt that the Foreign Office should have a system of internal phones installed, and a letter was sent to the Treasury on the subject on December 2:

"The need of more rapid means of communication between different portions of this Office has always been greatly felt owing to the extent of the building itself and to the urgent nature of a large proportion of the work. The institution of a general Registry will further increase the necessity for constant messages between rooms at considerable distances from one another."²

The Treasury sanctioned the expenses of this installation on January 23, 1906.³

(14)

The drawn-out negotiations with the Treasury concerning the establishment of the General Registry had been conducted for the Foreign Office by Eyre Crowe. It had been he who had drafted the letters, and he who had entered into consultation with

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.171. Minute by Sanderson, November 23, 1905.
2. T 1/10369/22406. Foreign Office to Treasury, December 2, 1905.
3. T 1/10369/22406. Treasury to Foreign Office, January 23, 1906.

E.G. Harman. For the rest of the time between the disbanding of the African Protectorates Department at the end of March 1905 and the institution of the General Registry at the beginning of January 1906, Crowe acted as Cypher Clerk, the Assistant Clerk in the recently established cypher room.¹ It had originally been Sanderson's intention that Crowe should be transferred to the Consular Department, which had no Assistant Clerk, once the Registration scheme had been put into operation,² but, because of the delay occasioned by the Treasury, a new plan had to be substituted.

The Senior Clerk in the Consular Department was W.A. Cockerell, who was about to retire when he would be sixty-five on November 27, 1905. Crowe was only second in the line for promotion, and would not, therefore, step into Cockerell's place, but Sanderson knew that he would be given a Senior Clerkship at the beginning of the following year. Sanderson himself was due to retire on February 1, 1906, and this would lead to a general move up in the Office. If, on the other hand, the Permanent Under-Secretaryship were to be given to a diplomatist, Sir Charles Hardinge, then Villiers would be given a Legation in the diplomatic reshuffle, so that whatever happened a general move up was inevitable sometime in February 1906, and Crowe would then be given a Senior Clerkship. Sanderson therefore decided that Crowe would be transferred to the Consular Department as its Senior Clerk rather than as its Assistant Clerk. There would, however, be a delay

1. FO 366/1136. Minute by Hardinge, February 15, 1906: "Mr. Crowe having resigned his position as Cypher Clerk..."
2. See above, p.224.

after the date of Cockerell's retirement before Crowe could join the Consular Department, so Sanderson decided to apply to the Treasury to sanction an extension of Cockerell's service until the end of December. Before doing so he consulted Villiers, who was on leave, at the beginning of October. Villiers replied on October 7:

"My dear Sanderson,

"Many thanks for your letter. I entirely agree ... that it will be well to get Lord Lansdowne's sanction for keeping Cockerell on to the end of the year.

"After that date Drummond¹ is, I believe, perfectly able to deal with the Consular work until you can release Crowe from superintending the new arrangements."²

Sanderson sent a minute on the subject to Lord Lansdowne on October 18, and the latter agreed on October 20. On the same day the Treasury were asked to sanction this extension, and they did so on November 1.³

On December 31 Cockerell retired, and on January 1 Crowe took temporary charge of the General Registry, ready to take charge of the Consular Department once the Registry was standing firmly on its feet. At this point, when Crowe was about to move to one of the least desirable of the Departments in the Foreign Office, an unexpected event threatened to alter Sanderson's plans, and the latter wrote angrily to the Treasury on January 5:

1. Drummond was a Junior Clerk in the Consular Department, whither he had been transferred from the African Protectorates Department.
2. FO 366/755. Villiers to Sanderson, October 7, 1905.
3. FO 366/755. Minutes by Sanderson and Lansdowne of October 18 and 20, and Foreign Office and Treasury letters of October 20 and November 1, 1905.

"My dear Murray,

"Owing to Crowe's efforts the Registry has started very well, and seems to be working quite smoothly.

"In the interval Hopwood, Head of the Western Department, has broken down and is ordered by his Doctor to abstain at once from all work for three months. He is not strong and I cannot of course say whether he would have been saved from this catastrophe if the Treasury had allowed us to introduce the new Registry on the 1st of July last, as I had asked."¹

It was now decided that Crowe should take temporary charge of the Western Department as Acting Senior Clerk, and Sanderson wrote to inform Sir Edward Grey, the new Secretary of State, on January 15:

"Sir E. Grey,

"The new Registry has now been working for a fortnight and has got into such regular order that Mr. Crowe has been able to leave it in the hands of its immediate officers without further supervision from him. He has today taken charge of the Western Department.

"I think that the smoothness with which the change has been carried through, and the regularity with which the work has been carried on under it are very remarkable, and reflect the highest credit on his power of organization and of working out every matter of detail.

"I wish to bring his success to your notice and to recommend him for your approval.

"Mr. Villiers and Mr. Campbell entirely agree."²

On February 1 Sanderson finally retired, and was succeeded as Permanent Under-Secretary by Hardinge. On February 10 Villiers left the Foreign Office for Lisbon, and Barrington was promoted Assistant Under-Secretary in his stead. Two days later Hardinge wrote to Grey:

1. FO 366/1136. Sanderson to Murray, January 5, 1906.
2. FO 366/761/p.133. Sanderson to Grey, January 15, 1906.

"Sir E. Grey,

"I submit that Mr. E. Crowe, who is already Acting Senior Clerk in the Western Department, should be promoted to be Senior Clerk."¹

Crowe remained in the Western Department as Senior Clerk, but if Hopwood were to return he would have to transfer to the Consular Department after all. However, Crowe was spared this unwelcome appointment when, towards the end of Hopwood's three months' sick leave, the latter wrote to Hardinge on March 30 asking for his pension:

"My dear Hardinge,

"I told you last week that, guided by my Doctor's advice, I had reluctantly decided to retire. I now enclose a medical certificate, and trust that on the score of health I may be granted my pension. It is a great wrench to leave you all, but in the circes I have no doubt that it is the wise and proper course for me to take, and you will, I am sure, have what is necessary done on my behalf in the matter of pension.

"I should have liked to continue on under the new régime, of which I hear glowing accounts, but life is precious and I cannot afford to run any risks which can possibly be avoided."²

Hopwood's retirement dated from April 1.

In this way, Crowe took command of the Department which dealt with French and German affairs just one day before the opening of the Algeciras Conference on January 16, 1906, and only a month after Grey had succeeded Lansdowne and before Hardinge was to succeed Sanderson. He did so at the precise moment when, for the first time in the history of the Foreign Office, a Senior Clerk was able, as a result of the devolution of work on to the

1. FO 366/761/p.138. Hardinge to Grey, February 12, 1906.
2. FO 366/1140/11129. Hopwood to Hardinge, March 30, 1906.

General Registry and of the introduction of the system of keeping papers flat in jackets or minute sheets, to give official expression to his views on every topic with which he dealt. The reforms that Crowe had piloted through the negotiations with the Treasury benefited no one more than himself.

(15)

When Hardinge became Permanent Under-Secretary on February 1, 1906, he inherited a system whereby each of the Under-Secretaries, including the Permanent Under-Secretary, supervised a group of departments and divisions within the departments, under the overall authority of the Secretary of State. He immediately introduced an innovation whereby the Assistant Under-Secretaries continued to supervise the departments, but under the Permanent Under-Secretary as well as the Secretary of State, thus enhancing his own position. He circulated a minute to the Assistant Under-Secretaries on February 3:

"Important questions have often trivial beginnings, and the difficulty has been pointed out to me of deciding what is or may develop into a question of political importance. It seems to me therefore best that all the work (except in cases of pressing urgency) should pass through me to the Secretary of State, a mere glancing at the dockets being in many cases sufficient. The work entailed would be less than that of the S. of State."¹

Later the same day Hardinge sent another minute to the Office as a whole:

"In order that the Permanent Under Secretary should have a full knowledge of the work of the various Departments, and with a view to the proper co-ordination

1. FO 366/1136. Minute by Hardinge, February 3, 1906.

of the interests involved, the work sent to the Secretary of State from the Assistant Under Secretaries should (except in cases of pressing urgency where delay might entail serious results) pass through the Permanent Under Secretary... the despatches will pass through the hands of the Permanent Under Secretary before reaching the Secretary of State, instead of afterwards in circulation. This change will in no sense curtail the access of the Under Secretaries to the Secretary of State nor detract from their responsibility.

"It is very desirable that as much as possible of the ordinary routine work should be performed by the Heads of Departments without reference to the Under Secretaries, and that a sense of self-reliant responsibility should be thus encouraged. In the same manner the Heads of Departments should endeavour to distribute the work to the various Departments in such a manner as to encourage the Juniors to take an active interest in their work and to develop political initiative and a sense of responsibility."¹

At around the same time Hardinge introduced a new system for signing despatches in the absence of the Secretary of State. This duty had hitherto been carried out by the Permanent Under-Secretary but, as Hardinge himself wrote later, "when I occupied that position, I declined to perform that manual duty, as it took up so much of my time and left it to a junior Under Secretary."²

There remains but one more reform that should be considered - the introduction of the system of Annual Reports, an innovation with which Crowe was particularly associated. In his memorandum of January 5, 1905,³ Crowe had written:

"I hope it may not be long before all heads of Missions will be required to furnish full and carefully written Annual Reports on the general state of the country in which they reside, dealing not only with its trade, but with all events of public importance, its political relations with every other country, its interior organization, its military and naval forces, its finances, its education, its press,

1. FO 366/761/p.130. Minute by Hardinge, February 3, 1906.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 120, p.99, no.31. Hardinge to Holderness, June 16, 1914.
3. See above, p.226-229.

the history of all eminent political personages, etc. No doubt the first few Reports of such an annual series would involve much labour. But when the system is once in full working order, each subsequent Report would not entail more than the heads of Missions could readily undertake (see Lord Cromer's Reports). At the same time, every junior Diplomatic Officer should be required to submit once a-year a Report on some feature of interest in the public affairs of the country in which he is stationed. (Incidentally, these Annual Reports, both from heads of Missions and from the other members of the Service, would form a most useful criterion of the intellectual capacity, talents, and qualities of character of their authors, and would become the best guides for the consideration of all questions of promotion or transfers, and the fact that they would be considered also from this point of view would, in turn, react favourably on the quality of the Reports).

"It would be the duty of the various Departments in the Office to study, keep up to date, and add to these Annual Reports. These should form the nucleus of a body of information respecting each country, collected together in 'dossiers,' which would, in the course of years, become comprehensive and invaluable store-houses of intelligence. They would consist partly of printed documents, partly of copies of papers or extracts, and partly of notes and references to books and papers available in the Library. After a number of years, it would become possible to fuse and rearrange the political information gathered from the successive Reports into short histories, care being taken that every item of information bearing upon each particular country should find its way into the Department 'dossiers.' Histories of larger scope would, no doubt, require some more special training and gifts. Is it too much to hope that at some future time we may see a number of young University men, having such an historical training, employed in our Library, charged with the duty of compiling histories of certain periods, events, or incidents of importance, not for publication, but for the information and guidance of the Secretary of State and of the Office as a whole?"¹

It was not until the following year that positive steps were taken to introduce such a system of Annual Reports. On February 7, 1906, Crowe drafted a circular, which Hardinge revised and added to. The revised circular was then corrected by Sanderson and Crowe, and sent off to the heads of Missions as Circular A of

1. T 1/10369/4480. Memorandum by Crowe, January 5, 1905.

April 9, 1906:

"Sir,

"My attention has been directed to the fact that the consideration of important questions of general policy on which it is the duty of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to advise the King and His Majesty's Government would be much facilitated if reports were available in this Office dealing in a comprehensive and connected manner with the affairs of each foreign country in which His Majesty has accredited Representatives. In order that the large amount of valuable information which reaches this Department should be readily accessible in such a shape as to allow of the clear presentation of those issues to which, at the moment, particular importance is attached, it is essential that the facts material to their full consideration should have been previously collected and co-ordinated with particular reference to British interests.

"The establishment of a general registry in this Office, by insuring a more uniform and methodical arrangement of the official correspondence and a more efficient system of indexing, will, it is hoped, place the departmental staff in a better position to deal with matters of current business. That staff, being relieved of much work of a routine and comparatively mechanical character, will be able to devote more time and closer attention to the general study of foreign countries in their relations with Great Britain and with each other. Such study, to be profitable, must be founded on a wide and accurate knowledge of those countries. The knowledge must be systematic and up-to-date. It is not sufficient to have at hand the mass of detached or only partially-connected facts presented in reports recording the current events of the day. What is needed is a periodical and comprehensive survey of the international, political, economical, and other factors which affect and determine the position of each particular State in relation to the rest of the world. Only in the light of such a survey is it possible to appreciate correctly the exact position occupied by our own country in regard to any question of general importance.

"For reports on these lines the Secretary of State must necessarily rely in the first instance on His Majesty's Diplomatic Representatives abroad, whose general experience and acquaintance with the countries in which they are stationed, and whose personal intercourse with foreign rulers, governments, and public men, as well as with the representatives of third countries, enable them to draw reliable conclusions and to foreshadow coming developments.

"I accordingly request you to furnish to this Department at the beginning of every year a general report on the

country in which you reside. The report should deal fully with all events and matters of interest concerning that country which have occurred during the preceding twelve months, and should explain their bearing on its position and policy. I attach value to receiving, besides such statements of fact, the expression of your own opinion on men and affairs, and I therefore desire that, while taking full advantage of the assistance which your staff can give you in the collection and arrangement of the necessary materials, you will write the report yourself. I would deprecate, on the one hand, the interpolation in the body of the report of lengthy memoranda or notes on special subjects, and, on the other, the treatment of a subject by a mere reference to papers annexed as appendices. At the same time, there will, of course, be no objection to your calling attention, in reviewing any particular subject, to the source from which the facts may have been drawn, or to quoting short extracts from other documents.

"The reports will be treated as confidential, and there is, therefore, no reason why they should not include statements derived from the most secret sources...

"In order to give all members of the Diplomatic Service the opportunity of acquiring the practice of writing reports on general subjects, I consider it desirable that every member of your staff should, at least once in every twelve months, though not necessarily at specified periods of the year, submit, through you, a report dealing with some subject of public interest in the country in which he is stationed. The preparation of such reports should do much to foster a practical interest in the affairs of that country, and to assist you in framing your own annual reports.

"I am well aware that the compilation of reports of the nature indicated in this despatch will entail, especially at first, a considerable amount of extra labour on His Majesty's Diplomatic officers abroad. But this call on their time and energies will sensibly diminish as, with the progress of years, the system comes into full working order; the groundwork of the principal subjects will then have been exhaustively dealt with, and it will only be necessary to keep them up to date in the light of more recent information. I have already dwelt upon the general advantages which will be derived from these reports by this Department and by the public service. They will, moreover, afford to the Secretary of State for the time being, an opportunity of judging the ability, industry, and intelligence displayed in their preparation, and will form a valuable guide as to the suitability of the writer for transfer or promotion, or for selection to particular posts or for special duties."¹

1. FO 371/166/12374. Foreign Office Circular A, April 9, 1906.

A memorandum was enclosed with this Circular Despatch, indicating "the main heads under which the subject-matter of these reports should, if possible, be arranged." Accompanying this Circular A was a further Circular, B, which called for monthly "omnibus" reports.¹ "It was drafted by Hardinge himself," who "did not intend that the general monthly report should deal with anything but the general political situation."² At the same time, the Departments of the Foreign Office were called upon to produce memoranda on questions of current interest and importance. These memoranda were, like the Annual Reports, to be made available to the Secretary of State as soon as possible after January 1 of each year. For example, Hardinge minuted on October 16, 1906:

"I shall be much obliged if the Head of each Department will give me a list of the Memoranda upon current questions which are in the course of preparation in his Department stating exactly which of them is up to date."³

On October 11, 1907, Hardinge wrote a similar reminder:

"I wish to remind the Heads of Departments that the various Departmental Memoranda for the current year should be brought up to date by the 1st of January next in order that they may be submitted to the Secretary of State, when required, at any time after that date."⁴

Crowe's famous memorandum of January 1, 1907, was submitted as one of these departmental memoranda.

1. FO 371/166/12374. Foreign Office Circular B, April 9, 1906.
2. FO 371/1283/4122. Minute by Crowe of January 12, 1911, on Langley to Crowe, undated.
3. FO 366/1136. Minute by Hardinge, October 16, 1906.
4. FO 366/1136. Minute by Hardinge, October 11, 1907.

(16)

It is only recently that the documentary material has become available for a study of the reforms and consequent reorganisation of the Foreign Office, which lasted from 1903 until 1906. It is now possible, therefore, to correct earlier, distorted, accounts. As Permanent Under-Secretary from the inception of the reorganisation in 1906 until 1910, it was Hardinge who put the new system into operation, and he has taken much of the credit for their inspiration. He himself was not backward in contributing to this misleading impression. For example, he wrote to Lord Crewe on May 22, 1912, that "I have had some experience of reorganisation, as you may be aware that I entirely reorganised the Foreign Office when I joined that body seven years ago."¹ A year later, on April 22, 1913, he wrote to Sir Thomas Holderness, the Permanent Under-Secretary at the India Office, that "during my time in the Foreign Office I was also an apostle of reform and recast the whole organization."² Talking to Harold Nicolson in Paris on January 10, 1919, he said that "it was he who reformed the Foreign Office."³

During the 1920s and 1930s it became accepted that the reorganisation of the Foreign Office had been the responsibility of Hardinge and Crowe. For example Frank Rattigan wrote in 1924 that "Lord Hardinge reorganized the whole service and greatly increased its efficiency by removing three-quarters of the

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 118, p.54, no.23. Hardinge to Crewe, May 22, 1912.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 119, p.49, no.19. Hardinge to Holderness, April 22, 1913.
3. H. Nicolson: "Peacemaking 1919." p.230. Diary entry for January 10, 1919.

ordinary routine work - such as docketing, registration and filing of papers - from the shoulders of the first division Foreign Office Clerks."¹ Sir John Tilley, on the other hand, wrote of the "reforms of 1905" that "the arguments on which the appeal to the Treasury is particularly based were the work of Eyre Crowe ... who had been one of the Committee of Inquiry,"² while Alwyn Parker wrote of "a thorough reorganisation of the Foreign Office, for which Eyre Crowe was responsible."³

The two men who seemed to write with the most authority were J.D. Gregory and Harold Nicolson, both of whom published an inaccurate account. Gregory wrote in 1928 that "Lord Hardinge, with the help of Eyre Crowe, galvanised it (the Foreign Office) into life."⁴ He added:

"When the official chronicler comes to write up the inner history of the Foreign Office, as I suppose he will some day in the ordinary course of events, he will be very much at fault unless he places quite particular emphasis on the creative contributions of two of its long line of Heads - Lord Hardinge and Eyre Crowe. Lord Hardinge ... transformed the Foreign Office from an absurdly antiquated machine into a modern and effective instrument of work. He really dragged it from the dead, and he not only gave it new life and consciousness, but during his first tenure of office he nurtured its new life and made the outer world realise that it was something to be taken into account and recognised. The modern diplomatic service owes more than perhaps it will admit, because it has either never known or forgotten, to Lord Hardinge. He kept up its moral within: he dealt justly with all its members from top to bottom: and he fought its battles without.

"But I doubt whether he could have done all he did without the help of Crowe. Crowe worked solidly for three years, if I remember right, at the reconstruction scheme: and, when it was launched, it was he who manipulated the

1. F. Rattigan: "Diversions of a Diplomat." p.29.
2. Sir J. Tilley and S. Gaselee: op. cit., p.156.
3. G.M. Trevelyan: "Grey of Fallodon." p.168. Parker to Trevelyan, undated.
4. J.D. Gregory: "On the Edge of Diplomacy." p.18.

transition behind the scenes and made it go through without a hitch."¹

Harold Nicolson wrote shortly afterwards that the reorganisation had been "introduced by Lord Hardinge, on Sir Eyre Crowe's suggestion and initiative" - that Hardinge was "a progressive and ruthless administrator" who "had forced the Department to adopt a different method of presenting and preserving their papers."²

By the outbreak of the Second World War the story that the reorganisation had been the responsibility of Hardinge, who had been helped by Crowe, had become generally accepted. It received support from later writers. For example Sir Nevile Henderson wrote during the war that "Charles Hardinge ... initiated the long-overdue reform of the Foreign Office."³ Shortly afterwards Frank Ashton-Gwatkin added that "in 1905-1906 the Foreign Office was remodelled by Eyre Crowe and Lord Hardinge and transformed from a staff of clerks into a thinking department to assist the Foreign Secretary in the formulation of policy."⁴ Finally Lord Strang wrote in the 1950s of Hardinge that "it was during his first tour of duty in 1906 that business-like methods were introduced into Foreign Office procedures and that the great reforms in organisation planned (mostly by Crowe, then a junior) in the time of his predecessor, Sanderson, were put into effect."⁵

The only person who seems to have questioned this version was Lord Onslow. During the 1930s he wrote his own memoirs as

1. J.D. Gregory: op. cit., p.255-256.
2. H. Nicolson: "Lord Carnock." p.325.
3. Sir N. Henderson: op. cit., p.28.
4. F.T. Ashton-Gwatkin: "The British Foreign Service." p.68.
5. Lord Strang: "The Foreign Office." p.309.

part of his massive "History of the Onslow Family," and included the following passage:

"The office had been reorganised recently and I found it much changed since I joined in 1901. Harold Nicolson quite incorrectly attributes the changes in the office to Hardinge. This is inaccurate. They were all carried out while Hardinge was at St. Petersburg. It is quite incorrect to say that Hardinge introduced 'jackets' and the practice of keeping papers flat... The new system of registries, second division clerks, jackets, files and minute writing was entirely due to Crowe, with the blessing of Sanderson, who, though himself averse naturally to change, raised no objection to the reforms being put through for the benefit of his successors."¹

Onslow's family history was not written for publication, and was privately typed and bound. In the early 1940s he decided to publish a shortened and edited version of his own memoirs, but unfortunately he altered the above passage in order to make it conform to the accepted legend. In his book he wrote that "the new system of registries, second-division clerks, jackets, files, and minute-writing was due to Crowe and Hardinge, with the blessing of Sanderson, who, though himself averse naturally to change, raised no objection to the reforms being put through for the benefit of his successors."²

With the material now available it has finally become possible to trace the course taken by the movements for reform and reorganisation in the Foreign Office. Hardinge may now be seen largely as the administrator rather than the initiator of the new system. Crowe's role remains of the very greatest importance, but may be seen in its context as mainly executive.

1. Lord Onslow: "History of the Onslow Family." Vol.8, p.1990.
2. Lord Onslow: "Sixty-Three Years." p.133.

Tilley's description of the movement as "a case of revolution from below"¹ may be discarded, whereas the documentary evidence "presents an entirely different picture of Sanderson and Villiers from that contained in the Bertie-Hardinge correspondence."² That correspondence, which Dr Zara Steiner mainly relied upon,³ merely "extends," in the opinion of Dr Ray Jones, "to petty back-biting about the way the administrative machine was run."⁴ Their letters are, however, a great deal more helpful than Dr Jones supposes, but their full significance may only be grasped if they are correctly dated,⁵ and if they are correctly interpreted in their relation to the parallel, but separate, schemes for reform and reorganisation.⁶ They must also be seen in the context of

1. Sir J. Tilley & S. Gaselee: op. cit., p.153.
2. R. Jones: op. cit., p.112.
3. Z. Steiner: op. cit., Chapter Two, Part 2.
4. R. Jones: op. cit., p.111.
5. E.g. above, p.206. Hardinge to Lascelles, October 21, 1903, incorrectly filed amongst the Lascelles Papers as belonging to 1905 (see above, p.206, note 2). Dr Steiner quoted this letter, and dated it 1905 (op. cit., p.72). Dr Jones, who used Dr Steiner's article, "The Last Years of the Old Foreign Office," in which she also attributed the letter to 1905 (p.81), quoted this letter, giving Dr Steiner's article as his source, and wrote that "Hardinge's seemingly radical proposal to Lascelles in October 1905" was "less of an innovation than seems to be suggested" (op. cit., p.124). But Hardinge's letter, really written in October 1903, was actually written a month before Sanderson proposed the same innovation (Jones: p.123; above, p.209), and not two years after.
6. E.g. above, p.204-205 (and note 1 on p.205). Hardinge wrote to Bertie on May 25, 1903, that the "devolution of work which is the most important feature of the scheme ... is not likely to be put into practice here so long as Sanderson and Villiers reign here." Jones quoted this letter (p.121) and wrote: "His comment about devolution is very misleading, as it directly contradicts Sanderson's instructions to the heads of departments which were issued to them on 22 May (above p.187-188), three days before Hardinge wrote to Bertie." However, Sanderson's instructions dealt with the Foreign

the power struggle that was taking place at the same time.¹ But Dr Jones is right in his conclusion. Chirol wrote to Hardinge during 1904 that "what I fear is that Sanderson has made the F.O. for so many years a one-man show, that when he goes, the rather obsolete and defective machinery he has mainly kept going by his own motive power will collapse altogether."² Sanderson was aware of this danger, and prevented it by doing his utmost to push the reorganisation through before his retirement, despite the ill-health and unpopularity that the strain and necessity for compromise bequeathed to him.

1. Unlike Dr Steiner, Dr Jones does not appear fully conscious of this aspect.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.185. Chirol to Hardinge, October 18, 1904.

Office reforms, whereas Hardinge was referring to Sanderson's memorandum of May 25, the same day as Hardinge's letter, which dealt with the proposed reorganisation (above p.200-202), and in which Sanderson criticised the proposals. Jones himself wrote of this memorandum that Sanderson "was not at all enthusiastic" (p.122), and that he had "misgivings" (p.123).

C H A P T E R T H R E E

POLITICAL CHANGE: THE RISE OF "ANTI-GERMAN" FEELING IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE, 1884-1907

"Germany is no longer 'sated' as Bismarck used to say: but has become hungry again: and she has turned to what the France of Louis XIV and Napoleon was: a menace to Europe, before whom minor disagreements have to vanish."

Cecil Spring Rice in 1902

"The Japanese war on the one hand and on the other hand the fact that German naval expansion already immobilizes practically the whole of our Navy in the North Sea are two faits nouveaux within the last decade which seem to me to have revolutionized the whole situation."

Valentine Chirol in 1912

(England's occupation of Egypt - Germany's policy of blackmail - Lord Salisbury and moderate resentment - Thomas Sanderson and Frank Lascelles, and tolerant criticism - Joseph Chamberlain and hostility - Francis Bertie and a conflict of interests - Lord Lansdowne, Sanderson and Lascelles, and an attempt to stem the tide - the collapse of Russia and its influence on Anglo-German relations - Louis Mallet and Bertie, and the disappearance of the Russian balance - Cecil Spring Rice and the temporary weakness of Russia - Eyre Crowe and the disappearance of the Russian threat - Crowe as Head of the Western Department - Sir Edward Grey and support for France - Sir Charles Hardinge and an agreement with Russia - the "anti-Germans" and "pro-Germans" in 1906 - Crowe's Memorandum of January 1, 1907 - the reception and significance of the Memorandum - conclusion)

(1)

The rise of "anti-German" feeling, which helped to transform the Foreign Office from 1900 to 1907, had its origins more than a decade earlier in the African colonial crisis of 1884-85. It is not necessary to discuss here the course of Anglo-German relations before and after that crisis: our concern is with political opinions rather than with policies themselves.

Nevertheless the growing antipathy towards Germany that characterised the Foreign Office at the end of the nineteenth century cannot be understood unless certain salient facts are recalled.

England's occupation of Egypt in 1882, six years after she had acquired a controlling interest in the Suez Canal, had repercussions on the flexibility of her foreign policy. The British government of the day, under Gladstone and Granville, stopped short of outright annexation and allowed Egypt to remain an autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire. The Khedive's administration was largely controlled by the British Agent, the future Lord Cromer, but the country's finances, which were in a state of complete disarray, were subject to the overall supervision of the European creditors. In general terms this arrangement left the British dependent on the support of a majority of the European Great Powers whenever any new financial measures were contemplated.

Bismarck was not slow to appreciate the significance of this new situation. France and Russia could be relied upon to vote against the British on the Egyptian "Caisse de la Dette;" Austria-Hungary and Italy, left to themselves, could be relied upon to support the British. Germany was therefore given a casting vote which she could exploit whenever she wanted British support or acquiescence in some other sphere of foreign affairs. So long as England remained in occupation, (and in fact evacuation became increasingly less likely), the German government had at its disposal the wherewithal to levy diplomatic blackmail on the British. It is not possible to understand the course of Anglo-German relations, nor is it possible to understand the rise of

"anti-German" feeling in the Foreign Office, without a prior appreciation of this basic fact.

The African colonial crisis of 1884-85 was the first occasion on which the German government decided to levy this diplomatic blackmail.¹ The crisis was itself soon patched up, and Anglo-German relations later improved with the return of Lord Salisbury to the Foreign Office. Its significance for our purposes, however, lies in the fact that, far from being an isolated incident, it was actually the first of a series of such incidents. It is true that, generally speaking, Anglo-German relations were good from 1887 to 1892, and that they did not seriously deteriorate until after 1895. Nevertheless even during the heyday of Anglo-German co-operation there were occasions when the German government resorted to what can only be called diplomatic blackmail. It is not suggested that these incidents were in themselves important. What was important, however, was that they produced a feeling of resentment in London, which provided a fertile soil when the seeds of a genuine conflict of interests began to take root after 1895.

One reason why the German governments, after the fall of Bismarck, resorted to these tactics was their desire to draw England into the Triple Alliance. It was hoped that Lord Salisbury would be impressed by the inconvenience of German opposition, and would conclude that England's interests would be best served by definitely throwing in her lot with the Central Powers.

1. C.J. Lowe: "The Reluctant Imperialists." Vol. 1, p.60-63, identifies four reasons why Bismarck decided on this course of action.

As the Egyptian finances steadily improved, and Germany's opportunities for blackmail in that sphere consequently decreased, the German government began to use the same tactics in other spheres whenever suitable opportunities arose. The result was what the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, Kálnoky, described as Germany's "systematic provocation" of England,¹ which caused Lord Rosebery on one occasion to remark that Germany adopted a tone "which she might properly use in addressing Monaco."² The Krüger Telegram of January 1896 was sent as part of this policy.³ As Count Metternich later explained, it was one of Holstein's "favourite maxims ... that English interests were irreconcilable with french and with russian (sic) interests, that they were bound to remain hostile, (and) that he had only to wait until England would be obliged to ask for an alliance under more favourable terms."⁴

This German pressure culminated at the turn of the century in the unsuccessful Anglo-German negotiations, which revealed that there was a conflict of interests between the two Powers, and which coincided with the German decision to build a new and

1. W.L. Langer: "The Diplomacy of Imperialism." p.146.
2. C.J. Lowe: *op. cit.*, p.176.
3. *Ibid.* p.216-217: "Whilst there is very little evidence that Berlin thought in terms of blackmailing Rosebery into the Triple Alliance in 1894, there can be no doubt that this idea was very much to the fore at the end of 1895. This is obvious from the schemes of Holstein who, totally uninterested in the Transvaal but very much concerned with the European alliance system, thought in terms of some great cup with which to frighten Salisbury into line. If he himself did not view the Transvaal as the ideal debut for this line of action, Hohenlohe and the Kaiser certainly did."
4. British Museum Add. MS 46393, p.120. Metternich to Spender, November 2, 1925.

powerful battle fleet based in the North Sea. As the German government was seen to become less satiated, so Holstein's maxim lost its validity. England's dilemma has been summarised by one historian as follows:

"If Britain were isolated in Europe her empire became a standing invitation to attack and consequently, if for no other reason, there was a considerable incentive to assist in maintaining a balance of power. This had been a concept traditional since 1815 and it was all the more applicable in an era when naval predominance could no longer be taken for granted. Hence there was a basic British interest in opposing the hegemony of any one power, which remained throughout this period: the reason why this is not obvious at first sight is that it was concealed by other considerations. In Salisbury's eyes, even in the seventies, Germany was the only real potential menace to Britain because France and Russia were comparatively weak and, although his suspicions of Bismarck's intentions lessened after 1878, he never entirely abandoned this basic assumption, which came back into full flower in the late nineties. As France and Russia were the weaker powers, it was a British interest to avert any further deterioration of their position, a consideration which lay behind Salisbury's constant efforts to avoid a Balkan War in the seventies and eighties since this would give Germany a free hand in the West.

"But other interests led in an entirely opposite direction. The conflict with Russia over Constantinople, Central Asia and later over China, meant a certain identity of interest with the Central Powers; as did the increasing strain upon relations with France caused by Egypt. This, more than anything else, brought a direct involvement in European politics since, as Baring recognized by 1885, 'Berlin and not Cairo is the real centre of Egyptian affairs.' Hence the tightrope act of British diplomacy in the eighties and nineties; getting sufficiently close to Berlin to ward off any danger from the 'hungry powers,' yet not so close as to become a dependent, like Austria. As long as France feared Germany and Russia was blocked by Austria-Hungary the British position was relatively safe, since this wrecked the Dreikaiserbund, the real nightmare of British Foreign Secretaries. Hence, paradoxically, the welcoming of the Franco-Russian alliance, although it heightened British difficulties, because in the long run it both removed all danger of a revival of their bad dreams and provided a basic check to Germany. As long as Bismarck's Germany was eminently satisfied with the existing order of work affairs there was no real antipathy in London: it was only as the

restless spirits came to power in Berlin, intent themselves on a new Weltpolitik, that priorities began to change in England."¹

In other words, it was only when a conflict of interests began to emerge that the initial irritation of the Foreign Office began to turn into antipathy. It was, a little later, only when the conviction began to grow that Germany was attempting to create a hegemony in Europe that this antipathy slowly turned to hostility.

The rise of "anti-German" feeling in the Foreign Office prior to that final development may thus be summarised as follows. The Foreign Office was at first annoyed by the methods of the German government and its diplomatic representatives. It then began to regard German foreign policy as prejudicial to England's best interests and opposed to British foreign policy. These stages were part of a continuous process and were not clear cut. For England German pressure over Angra Pequena in 1884-85 was one thing. The sending of the Krüger Telegram in 1896 and the enactment of the second Navy Law in 1900, in connection with the lapse of the Mediterranean Agreements, were very much another. They resulted in the expected British overtures but, when the desires of England and Germany were seen to be incompatible, England was left with little alternative. She had already had to obtain Japanese support in the Far East. Now she could either accept the "entanglement" of the Triple Alliance, or she could drift into an isolation that was no longer splendid. The only other alternative was to retain her free hand by sacrificing

1. C.J. Lowe: op. cit., p.8-9.

certain colonial interests and ensuring diplomatic support from France and Russia. It was this third alternative that was favoured by Germany's influential and outspoken critics in the Foreign Office.

(2)

The process by which opinion in the Foreign Office changed from annoyance to a feeling of political hostility was, as we have seen, a long one, lengthened by a period of generally good relations from 1887 to 1892, and by the fierce rivalry between England and Russia in Asia, and between England and France in Asia and Africa. We shall be able to trace this gradual change if we examine the correspondence and memoranda of some of the English politicians and diplomatists concerned with Anglo-German relations. The stage was set by the occupation of Egypt by England in 1882, when Bismarck obtained his lever for diplomatic blackmail. Germany first exploited her position in the crisis of 1884-85, and rumblings of annoyance in England at German methods began to follow as a consequence. In a letter of March 5, 1885, Gladstone wrote to Granville that "England would find it more difficult to be friendly to German claims if they were presented as blackmail."¹ Salisbury's attitude towards Germany was no less friendly than Gladstone's:

"When on 11 June, 1885, Salisbury put an end to the sufferings of the second Gladstone cabinet, it was avowedly

1. A.J.P. Taylor: "Germany's First Bid for Colonies." p.79. Gladstone to Granville, March 5, 1885. The words quoted are Taylor's paraphrase.

a stop-gap government that he formed. But this did not prevent him from conducting an active foreign policy. Under the Liberals, Britain had been penned in a dangerous isolation; there was an urgent need to break out of it. By July Salisbury had mended the wire to Berlin with a set of judicious surrenders of expendable areas in east Africa and the Pacific. He went on to win German support where it mattered. He had support at Constantinople, he had the German vote at Cairo, he had elbow-room to salvage British foreign policy."¹

"I have been using the credit I have got with Bismarck in Caroline Islands and Zanzibar to get help in Russia and Turkey and Egypt," Salisbury wrote to Iddesleigh on August 24, 1885: "He is rather a Jew, but on the whole I have as yet got my money's worth."²

But this was only the beginning. Lady Gwendolen Cecil has written of "the recurrent revolt from Prince Bismarck's methods to which Lord Salisbury's correspondence bears witness and the distrust which they engendered in him."³ The new Prime Minister, describing the Angra Pequena "trouble," considered that Bismarck had been forced into "a menacing position upon a matter upon which we are not prepared to resist him to the end and the result will be a discreditable 'skedaddle.'"⁴

Salisbury developed his opinion of Bismarck's methods in a number of letters written during the following years. On February 23, 1887, he wrote to Sir Edward Malet:

1. R. Robinson and J. Gallagher: "Africa and the Victorians." p.257.
2. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 3, p.230. Salisbury to Iddesleigh, August 24, 1885. Cf: J.A.S. Grenville: "Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy." p.139: "It was one of Salisbury's favourite maxims that diplomacy was like a market place where you could get nothing without giving something in return."
3. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 4, p.63.
4. Ibid. Vol. 4, p.36. Salisbury to Currie, November 30, 1886.

"Your account of Bismarck's criticisms on our Egyptian policy is discouraging. He is hard to please. Unless we take the chestnuts out of the hottest part of the fire, he thinks we are shirking our work. But we cannot go beyond a certain point to please him, especially as his quid pro quo is purely negative.

"We have willingly ranged ourselves with the Central European Powers, -- that has always been our policy. A distinct estrangement from France has followed, which has cost us a pack of bothers in various parts of the world. But when he wants us -- as he evidently does -- to quarrel with France downright over Egypt, I think he is driving too hard a bargain. It is not worth our while. Our policy is not, if we can help it, to allow France either to force us out of Egypt altogether or to force us into a quarrel over Egypt. Therefore our negotiations must be circumspect, slow, and a little hazy and ambiguous. The Chancellor, of course, will like clear statements, definite policies, and a breach as soon as possible. Our position in Egypt is one that the public opinion here will not allow us to abandon altogether, but it is a disastrous inheritance, for it enables the Chancellor to demand rather unreasonable terms as the price, not of his assistance, but of his refusal to join a coalition against us."¹

On the same day, Salisbury wrote to Sir Henry Wolff:

"... we must keep it diplomatically in our power to satisfy France on account of Bismarck's attitude. His policy in a humbler walk of life would be called chantage... I heartily wish we had never gone into Egypt. Had we not done so, we could snap our fingers at all the world."²

In a letter to Sir William White, of April 5, 1887, Salisbury wrote that the main principle of Bismarck's policy was "employing his neighbours to pull out each other's teeth."³

In April 1887 Prince Bismarck took offence at the proceedings of the British Consul at Zanzibar and demanded his dismissal from the island. At first Lord Salisbury refused, but when Germany withdrew her support at Constantinople and Cairo he was obliged

1. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 4, p.40-41. Salisbury to Malet, February 23, 1887.
2. Ibid. Vol. 4, p.41-42. Salisbury to Wolff, February 23, 1887.
3. Ibid. Vol. 4, p.26. Salisbury to White, April 5, 1887.

to give way. He wrote to Charles Scott on May 4:

"It is not worth quarrelling with Bismarck at this juncture for the sake of maintaining H. at Zanzibar where he is not a success ..., so, on the understanding that I could do it without injury to him, I thought the balance of advantages was in favour of consent. But that circumstance does not affect the monstrousness of the demand or the danger we shall incur if we remain exposed to sallies of temper of this kind. It is only Egypt that puts us in this difficulty, for otherwise Bismarck's wrath would be of little moment to us. It is heartily to be wished we were delivered from this very inconvenient and somewhat humiliating relation."¹

Later that year, on November 2, Salisbury wrote to White:

"... After the experience I got of the Chancellor's pretty ways during Wolff's negotiations,² I do not wish to depend upon his good will, and therefore shall keep friends with France as far as we can do it without paying too dear for it. The threat of making us uneasy in Egypt through the action of France is the only weapon he has against us, and we are free of him in proportion as we can blunt it."³

On April 11, 1888, Salisbury wrote to Malet:

"The Chancellor's humours are as changeable as those of the French Assembly and you can never be certain that he will not try to levy a sort of diplomatic blackmail by putting himself against you on some matter in which you are interested, unless you will do something to gratify some of his unreasonable personal antipathies."⁴

In another letter, of November 25, 1889, Salisbury wrote that the Germans' "political morality diverges considerably from ours on many points."⁵ By the end of 1889, therefore, it is clear that Salisbury had come to resent Bismarck's policy of levying diplomatic blackmail upon him.⁶ Nevertheless it is as well to

1. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 4, p.43. Salisbury to Scott, May 4, 1887.
2. These negotiations concerned Salisbury's proposal that England should vacate Egypt, subject to a right of re-entry.
3. Ibid. Vol. 4, p.71. Salisbury to White, November 2, 1887.
4. Ibid. Vol. 4, p.100. Salisbury to Malet, April 11, 1888.
5. Ibid. Vol. 4, p.247. Salisbury to Portal, November 25, 1889.
6. See also *ibid.* Vol. 5, p.155.

remember that Anglo-German relations remained generally good during these years, and that the Zanzibar-Heligoland agreement was signed the following year. Salisbury looked upon France as England's chief rival, and also wrote to Goschen on October 14, 1888, that "Bismarck is an angel of light compared with Crispi... In cynical and arrogant injustice it is impossible to surpass Crispi's policy towards Zanzibar."¹

By the time Lord Salisbury returned to the Foreign Office in June 1895 Anglo-German relations had deteriorated - the New Course had been succeeded by the Siamese Crisis and the abortive Anglo-Congolese Agreement.² Six months later there occurred the Jameson Raid followed a few days later, on January 3, 1896, by the celebrated Krüger Telegram. In this telegram the German Emperor congratulated the President of the Transvaal on having preserved the independence of his country "without appealing to the help of friendly powers." Germany followed this threat with blackmail, warning Salisbury that England would be faced by a continental league unless she made an alliance with Germany.³ Salisbury was not impressed by this warning, and coolly remarked

1. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 4, p.236. Salisbury to Goschen, October 14, 1888.
2. Lord Kimberley, who was Liberal Foreign Secretary from 1894 to 1895, wrote the following year, after the Krüger Telegram: "I do not concur with Rosebery that the importance of the German Emperor's telegram is exaggerated. If it was merely a personal outbreak, it might not signify so much, but it is part of a settled policy, as was shown most unmistakably in the communications which passed both between Hatzfeldt and me, and Malet and the Berlin Foreign Office. Moreover German public opinion has been constantly hostile to us for some time past." See British Museum Add. MS 43527, p.81. Kimberley to Ripon, January 8, 1896.
3. A.J.P. Taylor: "The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918." p.365.

to the Queen that "the Emperor has been trying for six months to frighten England into joining the Triple Alliance."¹ Nevertheless it was after the sending of the Krüger Telegram that criticism of German policy and methods became more widespread. It was after January 1896 that the Foreign Office slowly began to regard German foreign policy as not merely irritating, but actually prejudicial to British interests.

Salisbury himself began to regret that there was little hope of a real improvement in Anglo-French and Anglo-Russian relations. He wrote to Lord Dufferin on January 14, 1896:

"The stormy weather of the political horizon is slowly abating..."

"Meanwhile France has been most civil. I still think that the two German Powers are our natural allies in Europe - but after the extraordinary outburst of hatred in Germany, I do not see how we can help edging somewhat more close to France. We cannot get very far - for there is Egypt. It is of course on Egypt that the German Emperor relies. He thinks we would sacrifice everything rather than be driven out of Egypt. But I do not think England would be disposed to purchase his support there by any territorial concessions elsewhere."²

At the end of August 1896 Salisbury wrote to E.B. Iwan-Müller, a journalist.³ He lamented the rejection of the Emperor Nicholas I's suggestions to Sir Hamilton Seymour for partitioning the Ottoman Empire, and desired "England and Russia to return to their old relations." "All we can do is to try to narrow the chasm that separates us." For the moment he felt that "there

1. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 5, p.135. Salisbury to Queen Victoria, January 12, 1896.
2. Ibid. Vol. 5, p.150. Salisbury to Dufferin, January 14, 1896.
3. See FO 800/342/p.144. Tyrrell to Nicolson, May 26, 1909: "Iwan-Müller who does the foreign politics of the Daily Telegraph and who is a very reliable journalist."

is no reason why Germany, under steady guidance, should not go with us, but steadiness is not the note of its Government just now."¹ Shortly afterwards he wrote to the Queen of his wish for "a better understanding with Russia."² He still wished to rely on German support, writing to Sir Frank Lascelles on March 10, 1896:

"We certainly wish to be good friends with Germany; as good friends as we were in 1892. That is to say, we wish to lean to the Triple Alliance without belonging to it. But in 1892, as now, we kept free from any engagement to go to war in any contingency whatever. That is the attitude prescribed to us on the one hand by our popular constitution which will not acknowledge the obligations of an engagement made in former years, - on the other, by our insular position which makes the burdensome conditions of an alliance unnecessary for our safety. Whether this attitude is reasonable or not it is the attitude we maintained from 1886 to 1892... There is no change.

"I was quite unconscious of any change from the disposition which animated us in 1892... we shall be exceedingly glad that the disposition mutually of the two Governments should be again as it was in 1892."³

However Salisbury was not blind to the realities of the changed situation. He remarked that "the Germans' only idea of a diplomatic approach is to stamp heavily on your toes."⁴ On December 5, 1896, he warned Cromer: "You must not count on Germany's support

1. Salisbury to Iwan-Müller, August 31, 1896. This letter was communicated to Sir Charles Hardinge in 1908. Hardinge copied it and returned the original. Hardinge's manuscript copy is in the Kent County Archives, U927/029/88. A typed copy can be found in the Hardinge Papers, Vol. 12, p.187. Gooch and Temperley saw this copy and included it in the Appendix to BD VI, p.780.
2. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 5, p.175. Salisbury to Queen Victoria, autumn 1896.
3. Ibid. Vol. 5, p.169. Salisbury to Lascelles, March 10, 1896.
4. Ibid. Vol. 5, p.146.

as a certainty. If she saw us in a difficulty she would attempt blackmail."¹

Salisbury did not change his attitude during his remaining years at the Foreign Office. In 1898 he wrote to Balfour about the Fashoda Crisis: "France certainly acts as if she meant to drive us into a German alliance: which I look to with some dismay, for Germany will blackmail us heavily."² Shortly before he left the Foreign Office in 1900 he commented that since 1895 "the policy of H.M. Govt, if it has had a bias, has rather leant to the side of Germany."³ But he was still not in favour of concluding an Anglo-German alliance, as he wrote on October 17, 1900:

"My dear Curzon,

"As to Germany I have less confidence than you. She is in mortal terror on account of that long undefended frontier of her's on the Russian side. She will therefore never stand by us against Russia; but is always rather inclined to curry favour with Russia by throwing us over. I have no wish to quarrel with her; but my faith in her is infinitesimal."⁴

(3)

This criticism of German methods was shared by the Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir Thomas Sanderson; by the Assistant Under-Secretaries, Francis Bertie and Francis Villiers; by Lord

1. FO 78/4895. Salisbury to Cromer, Tel. No. 125, December 5, 1896.
2. B.E.C. Dugdale: "Arthur James Balfour." Vol. 1, p.257-258. Salisbury to Balfour, April 1898.
3. British Museum Add. MS 52297, p.94. Salisbury to Scott, September 4, 1900.
4. India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/222/p.97. Salisbury to Curzon, October 17, 1900.

Salisbury's Private Secretary, Eric Barrington; and by the Ambassador at Berlin, Sir Frank Lascelles. It was also shared by Lord Lansdowne, who succeeded Salisbury as Foreign Secretary in the autumn of 1900.

In December 1896 Sanderson wrote to Lascelles that "the Germans have generally the habit of expecting to get better value than they give - and of not infrequently asking for the impossible."¹ He considered that "the Germans are under the impression that nothing short of a violent punch in the stomach makes us move."² In addition, his relations with the German diplomatists in London were not always harmonious. On April 12, 1899, for example, he wrote to Lascelles that "Hatzfeldt has been very impatient at the delay (viz Samoa) and takes up an aggrieved tone which is scarcely reasonable. He is very irritable now and does not bear contradiction, and ... today he burst out and we had a healthy row."³ In May 1901 Sanderson wrote that he found Eckardstein "a very horrible and pretentious bore."⁴

In March 1899 Sanderson wrote that "I suspect the Germans of being intensely anxious to prevent any rapprochement between us and Russia."⁵ During the Boer War he was outraged by the German attitude. He wrote in January 1900 that "the notes from Hatzfeldt about the Bundesrath and General (two German ships) are of a nature not usual except in cases of Admirals addressing

1. FO 800/9/p.71. Sanderson to Lascelles, December 2, 1896.
2. FO 800/9/p.76. Sanderson to Lascelles, December 16, 1896.
3. FO 800/9/p.244. Sanderson to Lascelles, April 12, 1899.
4. FO 800/115/p.52. Minute by Sanderson, May 28, 1901.
5. British Museum Add. MS 52298, p.103. Sanderson to Scott, March 15, 1899.

South American Republics."¹ In August 1900 he expressed similar feelings about German methods: "These tantrums occur at intervals when H.I.M. has expected Lord S. to play up to him and for one reason or another Lord S. has refused to rise to the fly... We have once or twice recently been treated with very little courtesy by the German Govt."² In the following year he criticised Germany's behaviour with regard to the Anglo-German China Agreement,³ and wrote that "the German Emperor ... is apparently furious with us for not having got into a quarrel with Russia" over Manchuria.⁴ Shortly afterwards he admitted that "I think in the long run the policy of trying to work comfortably with Russia is the only sound one."⁵

Sanderson continued to be critical of German methods during 1901 and 1902. For example he wrote to Lascelles on May 20, 1901:

"I think the German Govt make a mistake in supposing or making their public suppose that they can bully us into concessions by strong language. The reverse is the case. It only causes annoyance, and if the public noticed it here there would be a good deal of resentment. There is every desire to be just and friendly, but there are no people who get more indignant at any attempts at hectoring than we."⁶

The following year Sanderson wrote that "it seems to me that Holstein is a very dangerous man to have in a Foreign Office,"⁷ and that "I cannot help the conviction that there are hostile

1. FO 800/9/p.353. Sanderson to Lascelles, January 6, 1900.
2. British Museum Add. MS 52298, p.231. Sanderson to Scott, August 28, 1900.
3. FO 800/6/p.462. Sanderson to Lascelles, April 3, 1901.
4. PRO 30/33/7/1/p.70. Sanderson to Satow, April 12, 1901.
5. British Museum Add. MS 52299, p.27. Sanderson to Scott, April 24, 1901.
6. FO 800/10/p.132. Sanderson to Lascelles, May 20, 1901.
7. FO 800/10/p.220. Sanderson to Lascelles, January 15, 1902.

influences at the German Foreign Office constantly trying to create false impressions to our disfavour."¹ He expressed doubt about the Anglo-German agreement concerning the Portuguese Colonies² and he also agreed with Bertie in thinking that Germany "was not a suitable ally against the Russians,"³ and that a war between Japan and Russia would leave Germany "dancing round the combatants and ready to bleed whichever is first stunned."⁴ However, "rather than an agreement with Germany and Japan, Sanderson favoured a policy of non-intervention in the Far East for he was convinced that the Japanese could not effectively challenge the Russians. When in May 1901, Sanderson was asked to prepare the draft of an Anglo-German agreement, he wrote 'However the convention may be worded, it seems to me that it will practically amount to a guarantee to Germany of the provinces conquered from France, and that is the way in which the French will look at it. I do not see exactly what Germany would guarantee us.'⁵ He wrote of German methods in March 1902 that "the only permanent effect is to make them disliked and distrusted."⁶

We shall examine Bertie's attitude in some depth a little later, but here we may say that Villiers also complained of German methods,⁷ while Barrington remarked that "the Germans kick

1. FO 800/10/p.269. Sanderson to Lascelles, February 19, 1902.
2. FO 63/1359. Memorandum by Sanderson, August 10, 1898.
3. Z. Steiner: op. cit., p.40.
4. G. Monger: op. cit., p.28. Sanderson to Lansdowne, March 10, 1901.
5. Z. Steiner: "The Last Years of the Old Foreign Office, 1898-1905." p.74. ("The Historical Journal." 1963)
6. British Museum Add. MS 52299, p.93. Sanderson to Scott, March 26, 1902.
7. Z. Steiner: op. cit., p.41.

us in the street and kiss us in the cupboard."¹ Lascelles, who had to live with German diplomacy in Berlin, wrote to Bertie in March 1898 that "it would be more satisfactory perhaps if the Germans could learn to lie less clumsily."² Throughout his Embassy at Berlin, Lascelles was desirous of an Anglo-German rapprochement. In 1898 he admitted that he would like to see an Anglo-German alliance, though he was by no means blind to the realities of the situation:

"Of course I personally would like to see an Alliance between England and Germany ... but would any German Government ever take action that would turn Russia actively against them?... It is easy to understand that Germany should wish to be on good terms with Russia, and however much she may wish to come to a good understanding with us, which would be useful to her as regards her Colonies and her Commerce, I doubt whether she would go so far as to give us active assistance to prevent Russia advancing in Turkey, Persia or China... I am afraid she would rather see Russia take India, and would be willing to come to terms with her by giving up Kia-Chau...

"... I do not quite see what advantage we should gain from an Alliance with Germany which would probably fail us at the critical moment, unless we could offer her such advantages as would induce her to break altogether with Russia. I doubt whether 'expansion' beyond the seas ... would be sufficient as a quid pro quo."³

By 1900 Lascelles had modified his views in the light of recent events, though he still wished the two Powers to work together:

"I quite agree that in future we should deal with Germany as we should with any other country, and that we should not forget the way in which she has treated us. I also agree in your opinion that we do not want Germany nearly as much as the Germans want us...

"... I believe that the interests of the two countries demand mutual cooperation ... it does not appear to me

1. J.A.S. Grenville: op. cit., p.365.
2. FO 800/17/p.133. Lascelles to Bertie, March 19, 1898.
3. FO 800/17/p.140. Lascelles to Chirol, May 6, 1898.

to be wise to stir up envy hatred and malice between us."¹

Lord Lansdowne entirely shared this latter view, believing that it would never be to the advantage of Germany to let England "go under" before a European coalition, and that it was therefore necessary to purchase Germany's friendship with concessions.²

(4)

These German methods caused considerable feeling outside as well as inside the Foreign Office, and Salisbury remarked after the Krüger Telegram in January 1896 that "among politicians and officials no one will listen to a good word for the Germans."³ In this situation Joseph Chamberlain became particularly keen to effect a reconciliation by bringing about an Anglo-German Alliance. Chamberlain's negotiations cannot be examined here; what it is important to note is the fact that their failure, coupled with the reasons for that failure and the hostility between the two Powers occasioned by the Boer War, made Anglo-German relations still worse.⁴ Chamberlain himself joined the camp of those who criticised German foreign policy. He had realised even in 1898 that German policy had always been one of undisguised blackmail.⁵

1. FO 800/17/p.225. Lascelles to Chirol, March 15, 1900.
2. BD II, 92. Memorandum by Lansdowne, November 11, 1901.
3. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 5, p.153. Salisbury to Lascelles, January 22, 1896.
4. See, e.g., British Museum Add. MS 48679, p.20. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, January 16, 1902: "I dined this evening with Eckardstein, who is greatly exercised at the amount of anglo-phobia which has recently developed in Germany... He told me that very few people knew how dangerously near we had been to a general coalition against us after Colenso."
5. G.P. Gooch: "Before the War: Studies in Diplomacy." Vol. 1, p.215.

Nevertheless he had felt that "we pay Blackmail to Germany to induce her not to interfere where she has no right of interference" and that "it is worth while to pay Blackmail sometimes."¹ By 1902, however, when Cecil Spring Rice commented on the prevalent hostility towards Germany, he noted that "the change in Chamberlain's mind is most remarkable."² Lord George Hamilton, who had been one of Chamberlain's supporters in the pro-German section of the Cabinet, underwent a similar conversion, writing in January 1902 that he was "coming round to the belief that they (the Germans) are a detestable race and that the more we kick them the better friends we shall be."³ The Venezuelan Crisis of 1903 made the situation still worse,⁴ and wrecked the chances of Anglo-German co-operation over the Bagdad Railway.⁵ By the spring of 1903 anti-German feeling began to be interconnected with a new pro-French feeling.⁶

1. J.L. Garvin: "The Life of Joseph Chamberlain." Vol. 3, p.315.
2. Sir C. Spring Rice: "Letters and Friendships." Vol. 1, p.350. Spring Rice to Miss F. Lascelles, April 17, 1902.
3. G. Monger: op. cit., p.68. G. Hamilton to Curzon, January 16, 1902.
4. See, e.g., British Museum Add. MS 48680, p.73. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, February 13, 1903: "The Venezuelan business has been a disagreeable matter... It has brought out in a very remarkable way the anti-German feeling in this country, which has been very marked."
5. See, e.g., British Museum Add. MS 48680, p.112. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, April 14, 1903. See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/162/p.17/no.6. G. Hamilton to Curzon, January 28, 1903.
6. See, e.g., British Museum Add. MS 48680, p.115. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, April 21, 1903: "The anti-German feeling will probably be accentuated by a pro-French feeling which the King's coming visit to France is pretty certain to provoke." Also C. Andrew: "Théophile Delcassé and the Making of the Entente Cordiale." p.203. P. Cambon to Delcassé: "The English draw nearer to us in proportion as they feel the hostility between their country and Germany grow and become more acute."

(5)

It was in this situation that opinion within the Foreign Office began to move from merely criticising German methods to diagnosing a basic conflict of interests between the two Powers. It will be useful to examine this gradual shift as it reveals itself in the correspondence and memoranda of Francis Bertie. It was the situation in the Far East that was of the greatest importance in this process. It was necessary for England to secure an ally against Russian encroachments into China, and it soon became clear that Germany was not prepared to put herself forward for this role.

Bertie knew that it was necessary, however undesirable, to rely on German support in Egypt and elsewhere. An attempted agreement with Russia had failed, and England's differences with her and with France seemed irreconcilable. He therefore realised that all that could be done was to reduce England's dependence on Germany to an absolute minimum, while trying to prevent friction with France.¹ He expressed his opinion of German methods in a conversation with Count Mensdorff, an Austro-Hungarian diplomatist, in the summer of 1899:

"The Germans were like the Jews; they always wanted to get something by obstinately dickering for every petty advantage and, with it all, they were always unfriendly towards England ... the Kaiser only friendly when he wanted something; German friendship showed itself negatively: 'If you do that for us; we promise not to do anything against you.'²

1. British Museum Add. MS 49746, p.122. Bertie to Balfour, September 14, 1898.
2. A. Pribram: "England and the International Policy of the European Great Powers, 1871-1914." p.77.

In a memorandum of November 26 later that year, Bertie developed these ideas further:

"By desire of the Emperor I had some conversation with M. de Bülow today...

"As M. de Bülow encouraged me to speak quite frankly and gave me an opening to say something as to the causes of the difficulties in negotiating with England I told him that times had very much changed since the Bismarckian era. Prince Bismarck was a very dictatorial Minister and rather brutal in his methods. Lord Granville was most conciliatory and rather weak. Berlin had not entirely rid itself of the Bismarckian tone which had the effect of making Englishmen resent and resist proposals made in that way. Much more could be got from England by calm discussion than by bringing out heavy artillery on every occasion and stating that the non-solution of a question in a particular way would have a disastrous effect on the relations of the two countries."¹

Bertie was the Assistant Under-Secretary supervising the African and the Far Eastern Departments, and two questions were central to his thinking: the making available of a loan to Portugal, and support for Japan in the Far East. Like other members of the Foreign Office he had steadily become alienated by German methods. The combination of these two questions was to lead him further, and to make him view Germany's policy as opposed to England's best interests. In both cases he deprecated coming to an agreement with Germany.

In a memorandum of May 1, 1898, Bertie advocated an agreement with Portugal concerning a loan: "England to guarantee the Kingdom of Portugal against foreign attack on its colonial possessions and spheres of influence, with a reservation to England of a right of pre-emption in the event of the Sovereign of Portugal desiring at any time to part with any of them."

1. FO 800/170/p.14. Memorandum by Bertie, November 26, 1899.

His idea was that England should make available to Portugal a loan to be secured against the revenues of the Portuguese Colonies, and that Portugal should undertake not to cede any territory that would give access to the Transvaal from Delagoa Bay.¹

When negotiations were opened regarding a proposed Anglo-German agreement to partition the Portuguese Colonies in the event of Portuguese bankruptcy, he expressed his opposition in two memoranda. In the first, dated June 30, 1898, he argued that France and Russia "will claim to join in" and "that we should be squeezed - Portugal willingly assenting - into a financial arrangement which would constitute Delagoa Bay and Railway an international concern under Portuguese sovereignty. This might soon be followed by the assertion by the Transvaal of entire independence of England." Once Germany was granted pre-emptive rights over parts of the Portuguese Colonies, he argued, it would be in her interest to "hope that those possessions will fall away from Portugal," whereas "our interest ... is to promote good government and so prolong her life." In his concluding paragraph, however, Bertie referred to England's recurring need for Germany's support in Egypt and now also in South Africa, writing that "if for political reasons it is necessary to come to terms with Germany we might have with her an exchange of secret notes undertaking that whenever, if ever, the break-up of Portugal from internal causes should come about Germany shall receive certain specific portions of the spoil."² Bertie was opposed to an agreement with Germany

1. BD I, 65. Memorandum by Bertie, May 1, 1898.

2. BD I, 72. Memorandum by Bertie, June 30, 1898.

as he considered it unnecessary and dangerous. He realised the importance of retaining German support, but still hoped that that would not lead England into a one-sided bargain. In his second memorandum, dated August 10, 1898, he began by referring to this German pressure: "she makes the usual more or less covert threats that if we do not do so she will join Russia or France or both of them to our detriment all the world over." Despite this, Bertie was still opposed to concluding the proposed agreement, and the bulk of the paper explained his reasons solely on the merits of the case in question. But two paragraphs demonstrated Bertie's awareness of the larger points at issue. "Unless the proposed agreement with Germany provides for contingencies likely to arise in other parts of the world besides southern Africa it will not gain for us her support in Europe, the East, the Far East or the Pacific. It will not even satisfy her pretensions in Africa." Not only was Bertie opposed to thus giving way to Germany in the face of her blackmail, he also suspected that she would not fulfil her part of the bargain. The agreement with Germany was being negotiated in order to retain her support and prevent her from joining Russia and France. But Bertie pointed out that "Germany is not likely to risk a quarrel or even an estrangement with Russia for our benefit unless we guarantee her against France and Russia. This would involve a permanent quarrel between England and France," and even greater dependence on German support.¹

As early as August 1898, then, Bertie had already outlined the incompatibility of British and German foreign policy. He

1. BD I, 81. Memorandum by Bertie, August 10, 1898.

wished England to stop giving in to Germany's demands, realising that German friendship was not really available, unless at the price of joining the Triple Alliance, and for this reason he was thoroughly opposed to the series of overtures which were made, before and after the turn of the century, for an Anglo-German agreement. He expressed his fears in a letter to Arthur Bigge on November 28, 1899:

"M. de Bülow told me that the interviews with Chamberlain had been most satisfactory. We do not know here what passed. We can only hope that Birmingham has not given itself away either to Emperor or Minister. He is of a very sanguine temperament. He knows what he wants, but he does not appreciate the difficulty of realising his fond hopes."¹

On September 5, 1900, Bertie summed up "the difficulty of (Germany) making any arrangements with this country, the real reason being that the Germans always wanted a good deal, and offered little or nothing in return."²

Shortly afterwards, on October 16, 1900, the Anglo-German China Agreement was signed, by which the two Powers agreed to maintain the open door in China, as well as that country's independence and integrity. Bertie, whose antagonism towards German foreign policy had been aroused by her activity and suspected designs during the Boer War, had argued against it in a memorandum of September 13. On the specific point at issue he wrote: "Her pretensions are large, for she starts from the theory that by her occupation of Kiao-Chau and her agreement with China respecting Shantung she has acquired a special position there, and that it is not open unreservedly to British enterprise, but that the

1. FO 800/170/p.18. Bertie to Bigge, November 28, 1899.
2. FO 800/170/p.26. Memorandum by Bertie, September 5, 1900.

Yang-tsze region is open unreservedly to German enterprise." Once England had bought Germany out of the Yang-tsze valley with concessions between there and the Yellow River valley, "we should then have to fight out with France and other Governments, who have not recognised our Yang-tsze sphere of interest, any claims which we desire to support in the special sphere conceded by Germany." But the most important part of the memorandum contained an echo of what he had written in August 1898: "As to making use of Germany to come between the Russians and ourselves in China, we are not likely to have much success."¹ Germany would only offer a real Far Eastern agreement in exchange for a European agreement, in other words England's joining the Triple Alliance, and that was the one thing Bertie wanted to avoid. If diplomatic support against Russia was necessary, and it could not be obtained from Germany, then Japan was the only alternative. Bertie had in fact already suggested co-operation with her. In a memorandum of March 14, 1898, he had advised that England should support Japan in her occupation of Wei-hai Wei, and had also suggested that she should "come to an understanding at once with Japan" regarding a possible handing over of that port. He had advocated that England should occupy Wei-hai Wei as a "counterpoise to the preponderance of Russian and German influence at Peking," and to the Far Eastern triple entente of Russia, Germany and France generally.²

Bertie's attitude was therefore that an agreement should be come to with Japan: first to resist, in particular, the Russian

1. BD II, 12. Memorandum by Bertie, September 13, 1900.
2. BD I, 24. Memorandum by Bertie, March 14, 1898.

advance in China, and the power of the Far Eastern triple entente generally; and second to prevent England from being dependent on unavailable German support, and from being open to coercion concerning adhesion to the Triple Alliance. He was naturally sceptical about the Anglo-German China Agreement, and he showed this in a letter of January 15, 1901, to Lascelles:

"I want Ld. Lansdowne to take advantage of the inquiries to be made by the Japanese at Petersburg (in which they ask us to join) to ask the Germans what view they take of the Russian alleged arrangement regarding Manchuria and their acquisition of $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles by 500 yards of territory at Tientsin on the river approach to Peking from the sea. This might elicit the German interpretation of the Anglo-German Agreement and it would be best that we should know what not to expect from the German Government."¹

He felt sure that the Germans "won't move an inch if Russian proceedings are in question."² A month later, on March 9, 1901, his attitude was hostile: "The Germans want to push us into the water and then steal our clothes."³ In other words he accused Germany of attempting to push England into a diplomatic confrontation with Russia in which Germany would remain neutral.

The failure of the Anglo-German China Agreement, because of Germany's refusal to resist Russia in Manchuria, made Bertie consider support for Japan to be even more important, and an understanding with Germany to be even more undesirable. During 1901 he advocated an alliance with Japan in a number of forceful memoranda. On March 11 Bertie pointed out that "if we do nothing to encourage Japan to look to us as a friend and possible ally against Russia and France, we may drive her to a policy of despair,

1. FO 800/6/p.427. Bertie to Lascelles, January 15, 1901.
2. G. Monger: op. cit., p.23. Bertie to Lascelles, January 30, 1901.
3. FO 46/545. Bertie to Salisbury, March 9, 1901.

in which she may come to some sort of terms with Russia. I do not say that it is probable, but it is possible, and our interests would greatly suffer if she did." The memorandum was written during the Manchurian Crisis, before Bülow pronounced upon the German interpretation of the Anglo-German Agreement in the Reichstag on March 15.¹ The Japanese government had asked: "'How far may Japan rely upon the support of Great Britain in case Japan finds it necessary to approach (i.e. resist, which is war) Russia?'" Bertie discussed various possible combinations and their consequences, and concluded that if Japan were supported it would "guarantee that there would be no reconciliation between Russia and Japan." He felt that "this would be an advantage to England and Europe," and that "the yellow danger would be kept in check by Russia and the Russian danger by Japan."² On June 20 Bertie wrote that the dangers of a Russo-Japanese reconciliation could be avoided by a formal agreement between England and Japan. He felt that England should offer to Japan that "neither Power will without consultation with the other enter into a separate Agreement with any other Power in regard to China."³

In two memoranda of July 22 Bertie developed this idea further and argued that the advantages to be derived from such an agreement would far outweigh the satisfaction that would be felt at Berlin at this increased Anglo-Russian antagonism. Complementary to each other, and to an extent covering the same ground, they

1. I. Nish: "The Anglo-Japanese Alliance." p.120.
2. BD II, 54. Memorandum by Bertie, March 11, 1901.
3. G. Monger: op. cit., p.47. Memorandum by Bertie, June 20, 1901.

show Bertie's characteristically racy style, "free from the taint of ... officialese,"¹ and demonstrate how radically his opinion of German foreign policy had altered. The importance of Far Eastern affairs in bringing this about is self-evident:

"... The position of Germany in Europe makes it incumbent on her to do her utmost to please Russia and to throw difficulties in the way of any understanding or good relations between England and Russia and England and France.

"The German Government are constantly giving us information tending or intended to increase our distrust of those countries, and lately they have appeared to be anxious for an understanding between England and Japan directed against Russia and France.

"Having regard to the cynical policy generally pursued by Germany it is necessary carefully to consider what are her aims in this respect. She would probably be glad if England could come to an agreement with Japan to resist Russian and French designs in the Far East, as her own interests would be thereby protected without the necessity of her to offend Russia or France by being a party to such an understanding; and the existence of it -- which the German Government would take care should be known to Russia and France -- would relieve the German Government from some anxieties in Europe, and keep up ill-feeling between Russia and England. However in spite of this drawback we should certainly gain more than lose by an understanding with Japan; for to have no understanding with anyone would be dangerous. A reliable arrangement with Germany in opposition to Russia is not to be had, and Russia would probably not adhere to the spirit of any agreement with England, even if one were attainable which is not likely."²

"... Japan wants to make Germany a party to this suggested arrangement because though they distrust her they think that she would be more dangerous outside than inside such an understanding.

"Germany is not going to jeopardize her relations with Russia by entering into such an understanding and if advances were made to her she would only make use of them to make capital with Russia. She was anxious for an

1. L.M. Penson: "Foreign Affairs under the Third Marquis of Salisbury." p.1.
2. FO 17/1507. Memorandum by Bertie, July 22, 1901.

understanding between England and Japan to resist the recent proceedings of Russia in the Far East and promised to Japan benevolent neutrality, which the German Govt. said would keep France quiet. On inquiry, benevolent neutrality turned out to mean strict neutrality. Apparently Germany's object was to push England and Japan into war with Russia, Germany looking on as the honest broker, ready to mediate at any time on terms, and meanwhile helping herself to all the good things she could safely lay hands on.

"Germany would naturally be glad to see an agreement made between England and Japan to resist Russian and French intrigues in the Far East, as it would protect her commercial interests without the necessity for her to offend Russia or France by being a party to the understanding the existence of which the German Government would take good care should be known to Russia and France. It would keep up ill-feeling between Russia and England and lessen German anxieties in Europe.

"A reliable understanding with Germany in opposition to Russian designs in the Far East is not obtainable. Recent experiences of German policy in China show this."¹

Bertie wrote another memorandum on the subject of agreements with Germany and Japan on October 27, and incorporated within it many of the ideas of the two earlier ones of July 22. In this memorandum, his advocacy of an agreement with Japan was secondary to his deprecating one with Germany. Bertie admitted that "it would be a great relief" if Germany could be secured as a "sure ally" against Russia and France, but went on to point out that Germany would not be such an ally. He remarked on her strategic position and her need to keep "open sores between France and England" and between Russia and England. He again outlined Germany's recent activity in the Far East and repeated that "her policy is to foster ill-feeling between Russian (sic) on one side

1. FO 46/547. Memorandum by Bertie, July 22, 1901. The memorandum was rewritten and slightly revised on September 22, 1901.

and England and Japan on the other and to encourage both sides to persist in their respective claims taking good care not to commit herself to either party." Bertie's criticisms of German diplomacy extended to Europe as well, and he asked "what would her attitude towards this country be if she held England bound by a defensive alliance?" He added that "the interests of England and Germany are not everywhere identical," particularly as regards the latter's intention "to become a great naval power."

From a position of hostility towards German methods Bertie had now arrived at the conclusion that the interests of England and Germany were in conflict, both in certain areas of the world, and because of their inability to come to a "sure" agreement. He was not afraid that Germany was making a bid for European hegemony, but he was very cautious about Anglo-German relations:

"If we had a formal alliance with Germany we should have to shape our conduct over a large extent of the globe in accordance with her views and subordinate our policy to hers as in the case with Austria and Italy, or, if we acted independently, whenever we took measures necessary for the protection of our interests in some distant part of the world we might be told by Germany that we were bringing about a situation which might lead to an attack on us by France and Russia, obliging Germany without sufficient cause to take up arms in our defence, or Germany might find some moment opportune for herself, but inconvenient for us, for bringing on a war on a question on which we might not have a great interest. Discussions on these questions would cause bickerings and differences and might lead to estrangement and end in an open quarrel."

Bertie also remarked on the difficulty of deciding "whether in some particular case the casus foederis had arisen for the attacking parties are not necessarily the real aggressors." His conclusion was a half-hearted suggestion for a "Declaration of policy limited to Europe and the Mediterranean defining the

interests which we shall jointly defend."¹ To Bertie's relief the idea, when taken up by Lansdowne, was squashed by Salisbury, who wrote on December 6 that "it seems to be full of risks and to carry with it no compensating advantages."²

Lord Salisbury had not lost his faith in "isolation," and had written a memorandum on May 29, 1901, in which he had strongly opposed the suggestion that England should join the Triple Alliance. "Count Hatzfeldt speaks of our 'isolation' as constituting a serious danger for us," he had written; but he had asked: "Have we ever felt that danger practically?" His argument had been that "it would hardly be wise to incur novel and most onerous obligations, in order to guard against a danger in whose existence we have no historical reason for believing."³ In his memorandum of November 9, 1901, Bertie put forward a similar view, writing that "the best proof that isolation is not so dangerous as the German Government would have us believe is that during our two years of war, when we have had nearly a quarter of a million men locked up in South Africa, and we have had the opinion of the educated classes abroad as expressed in the Press, and the sentiment of the peoples of most countries against us, and when more than one Power would have been glad to put a humiliation on us, it has not been found possible to form a coalition to call upon

1. BD II, 91. Memorandum by Bertie, November 9, 1901. This memorandum was originally dated October 27, 1901; see FO 800/128/p.245. See also FO 800/6/p.441. Bertie to Lascelles, March 20, 1901, regarding the casus foederis.
2. BD II, 93. Minute by Salisbury, 6/12/01, on memorandum by Lansdowne, 4/12/01.
3. BD II, 86. Memorandum by Salisbury, May 29, 1901. Salisbury was not opposed to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. See I. Nish: op. cit.

(us) to desist from war or to accept arbitration."¹ Bertie actually went one step further and argued that England was vital to Germany's security:

"In our present position we hold the balance of power between the Triple and Dual Alliances. There is but little chance of a combination between them against us. Our existence as a Great and strong State is necessary to all in order to preserve the balance of power, and most of all to Germany whose representations as to the disasters which await the British Empire if His Majesty's Government do not make an alliance with her have little or no real foundation. Treaty or no Treaty if ever there were danger of our destruction or even defeat by Russia and France Germany would be bound in order to avoid a like fate for herself to come to our assistance. She might ask a high price for such aid, but could it be higher than what we should lose by the sacrifice of our liberty to pursue a British world policy, which would be the result of a formal defensive alliance with the German Empire."¹

By January 30, 1902, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance had been signed and there was no longer any serious question of an agreement with Germany. Shortly afterwards Bertie diverted his immediate attention from high policy to the furtherance of his own career. His policy, as we have seen, was based on two assumptions: that there was a balance in Europe between the Triple and Dual Alliances, and that Japan was the only Power that could be relied on to help restrain Russia in the Far East. In both cases the strength of Russia was vitally important, for the European balance was in effect a Russo-German balance, while the Anglo-Russian friction in the Far East was bad for England's relations with France as well as Russia. There were some younger men who took a less sanguine attitude towards England's continuing European "isolation," and felt that some accommodation with France and Russia was necessary now that the Anglo-German negotiations had failed. Bertie

1. BD II, 91. Memorandum by Bertie, November 9, 1901.

was not opposed to this policy, but pointed out that "if England be not bound to Germany and His Majesty's Government come to a general understanding with France and Russia, or either of them, the position of Germany in Europe will become critical."¹ Whether Bertie was right in assuming that England held the balance of power, and that these understandings would make Germany's position critical; or whether it was true that England's European "isolation" was no longer safe, and that it was necessary to make colonial agreements with France and Russia; the two most important aspects of the situation were the deteriorating relations between England and Germany, and the continuing and growing strength of Russia.

(6)

In the face of widespread criticism of German foreign policy, and particularly in view of the conclusion which Bertie had reached, Lansdowne, Sanderson and Lascelles began to take alarm. It was true that the Foreign Secretary caused Eckardstein to report to Berlin on more than one occasion that "Lansdowne merely reflected his under-secretary's (i.e. Bertie's) views."² Nevertheless Lansdowne, Sanderson and Lascelles began in 1902 to discourage the overt criticism of German foreign policy that was spreading among some of the younger members of the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service. Although these three men continued to resent the methods that characterised the diplomacy of the German

1. BD II, 91. Memorandum by Bertie, November 9, 1901.

2. Z. Steiner: op. cit., p.65.

government they did not believe that German policy was fundamentally irreconcilable with that of England, and they sought to patch up the quarrel. There were no doubt many members of the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service who shared their attitude; but gradually opinion amongst the majority began to shift towards the view of Bertie and his supporters.

The first sign of this new development may be seen in a letter which Sanderson wrote to Lascelles on March 5, 1902:

"My dear Lascelles,

"... Whereas some time ago I had to explain often enough that there were certain things we could not expect of the Germans however friendly they might be I have now, whenever they are mentioned, to labour to show that the conduct of the German Govt. has in some material respects been friendly. There is a settled dislike of them, and an impression that they are ready and anxious to play us any shabby trick they can. It is an inconvenient state of things, for there are a good many questions in which it is important for both countries that we should work cordially together. And of course if Ct. Bulow treads on our toes again the public will go off at once into another fit of rage and expect that we shall give as good as (or a little better than) we get."¹

Lansdowne and Lascelles shared Sanderson's view of the situation.

The former wrote on April 22, 1902:

"My dear Lascelles,

"... I am sanguine enough to hope that the bitter feeling which now prevails against us in Germany may not last for ever. Have we not a right to ascribe a good deal of it to the S. African war, and would the Emperor, Bülow, Holstein² and others have contemplated as they did an Anglo-German alliance, if hatred of Great Britain was

1. FO 800/10/p.298. Sanderson to Lascelles, March 5, 1902.
2. Lansdowne shared Sanderson's view of Holstein (see above, p.291). He wrote two days later that "Holstein seems to me an extremely dangerous personage, and quite unscrupulous in his statements." FO 800/10/p.227. Lansdowne to Lascelles, January 17, 1902. But see A.J.P. Taylor: "Europe: Grandeur and Decline." p.155.

to be regarded as for all time inherent in the sentiments of the German people?

"Five years hence, before the German naval programme has been carried out, the outlook both in S. Africa and in Germany may have altered enormously.

"And apart from sentiment I cannot see that it will ever be of advantage to Germany to let us 'go under' before a great European coalition.

"Is it not more likely that she will stick to her rôle of honest broker, taking advantage, if you like, of our difficulties in order to pursue a politique de pour boire at our expense, but without pooling her iron clads with those of France and Russia?"¹

Lascelles replied to this letter on April 25, and explained at length his opinion:

"My dear Lansdowne,

"... I have always been an optimist as to the relations between England and Germany for the simple reason that I believe that the interests of the two Countries demand a good understanding between them... The Germans are quite extraordinarily sensitive. They are always on the look out for fear they should be insulted, and at the same time they cannot understand that anything they may say or do could possibly give offence to other people. At the same time they are alive to their interests and they understand that, if England were to cease to exist as a great Power, they would be at the mercy of Russia and France, if those two Powers united against them. Supposing then that England 'went under,' and a quarrel arose between Germany on the one hand and France and Russia on the other, Germany would have to fight for (her) very existence as a state and would probably have to succumb to the two powerful neighbours. It is, therefore, I think most unlikely that Germany would lend her hand to anything which would be likely to seriously weaken the Power of England...

"The naval development of Germany was not in my opinion intended by the German Government to be directed against England. The German Government wish for a powerful Navy to be able to protect German interests all over the world irrespective of any other Power. They no doubt have made use of the animosity against England to obtain the necessary votes in the Reichstag, but although they may wish to become

1. FO 800/11/p.1. Lansdowne to Lascelles, April 22, 1902.

the equals of England on the sea, I do not think they would wish to annihilate her, even in combination with other Powers...

"... If our Fleet is strong enough to hold its own against a combination of any two Fleets in the world I believe we are safe, at all events as far as Germany is concerned."

Before he could send this letter to Lansdowne, Lascelles had a conversation with the Naval Attaché at the Berlin Embassy and he added a report of this as a postscript to his letter:

"Since writing the above I have had a talk with Captain Ewart, who has pointed out to me that the development of the German Fleet was directed against England. This was stated over and over again during the debates in the Reichstag, and the preamble of the Navy Bill states that its object is to create a Navy which will be equal to that of the greatest Sea Power. I must, therefore, modify my answer... I still think that it would be most unlikely that Germany would join Russia and France in making war on us, but she might make herself exceedingly unpleasant, by dictating terms which no doubt would be advantageous to herself, and which if we had been weakened by the war we might not be able to resist."¹

It was the building of the new German Navy, and the fact that it was being built in direct rivalry with the British Navy, which weakened England's European position and made her seek to overcome her colonial differences with France and Russia. Lord Cromer, who had had to put up with German methods in Cairo since the 1880s, was particularly worried by the new German naval expansion.

"According to Cromer," wrote Sir Edward Hamilton of the Treasury on June 26, 1902, "we need ... a really strong Navy. Depend upon it, he says, Germany wants to make herself master and will if she can, for she finds us in the way all over the world."² When

1. FO 800/18/p.70. Lascelles to Lansdowne, April 25, 1902.
2. British Museum Add. MS 48679, p.116. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, June 26, 1902.

Sir Horace Rumbold retired shortly afterwards at the end of a long career in the Diplomatic Service, he wrote an article for the "National Review" warning of the danger of the increasing German power and influence in Europe. His son wrote to him from Cairo that Cromer "is in entire agreement with your feelings as regards the Germans and recognises them as the enemy."¹

Despite the expansion of the German Navy, and the opinion of the influential Lord Cromer, Lansdowne, Sanderson and Lascelles continued to believe that England could afford to overlook Germany's methods. For example Lansdowne wrote on May 6, 1903, that "we are still suffering from an insensate hatred and suspicion of anything which can be described as of German origin and these feelings will not die in a hurry - it is ridiculous and to my mind humiliating."² At the beginning of 1904 Sanderson commented on the Russian Press as follows: "there is always a danger that by constantly preaching hostility the Russian press might produce the same impression that now prevails as to Germany - that Russia is so determinedly inimical that it is hopeless to attempt any understanding with her, and that any overtures she may make must be merely masks for some trick."³

Lansdowne, Sanderson and Lascelles had no illusions concerning Germany's methods, but they felt strong enough to disregard them. In this respect they agreed with Bertie but disagreed with the

1. M. Gilbert: op. cit., p.46. Rumbold to his father, September 11, 1902. See also Lord Newton: op. cit., p.118.
2. G. Monger: op. cit., p.122. Lansdowne to O'Connor, May 6, 1903.
3. British Museum Add. MS 52299, p.175. Sanderson to Scott, February 24, 1904.

promoters of the policy of rapprochement with France and Russia. Lascelles, for example, realised that "Germany will certainly not quarrel with Russia" because "her geographical position is such that she could not afford to do so."¹ So long as Russia remained strong they had no fears of Germany's ambitions, and remained eager to improve Anglo-German relations. Lord Lansdowne wrote on March 23, 1904:

"My dear Lascelles,

"... I welcome any evidence showing that Germany wishes to keep well with us. She has lain very low of late...

"... convince your German friends, if you can that they have a golden opportunity of burying the hatchet and earning our lasting gratitude.

"Holding these views, I need not say that I warmly approve the manner in which you received the ... overture."²

On April 8, 1904, the Anglo-French Convention was signed, removing French opposition on the Caisse de la Dette in Egypt. Lascelles wrote to Lansdowne on April 15 that "I think the agreement has come upon many Germans as a surprise, and to a certain extent as a disappointment ... as a disappointment because Germany will no longer have the power of playing off one Country against the other."³ The changes in Egypt that had been agreed to in the Convention were to be embodied in a Khedival Decree, and this would have to be accepted by the Powers. Lansdowne considered that Germany "will squeeze us if she can," and looked upon Germany's reception of the entente as "a test-case so far as (her) goodwill

1. FO 800/18/p.137. Lascelles to Barrington, March 4, 1904.
2. FO 800/12/p.69. Lansdowne to Lascelles, March 23, 1904.
3. FO 800/18/p.141. Lascelles to Lansdowne, April 15, 1904.

is concerned."¹ The German reaction was a disappointment to Lansdowne, Sanderson and Lascelles, Sanderson wrote of his fears on April 27:

"My dear Lascelles,

"It looks as if we were going to have a good deal of tight bargaining with the Germans over the Draft Decree respecting the Egyptian Debt.

"Our gracious Sovereign has minuted ... 'This looks somewhat like political blackmailing!'"²

Lansdowne's reaction was as strong as the King's, as he wrote on May 6:

"My dear Lascelles,

"The proposal of the German Government to make their concurrence in regard to the Khedival Decree dependent upon an all-round settlement, including such questions as Samoan Claims, South African compensation, and commercial relations with the British Colonies, looks to an ordinary observer like a great piece of effrontery."³

The following day, Richthofen wrote to Lascelles asking for a further £70,000,⁴ and Sanderson wrote to Lascelles on May 11 to let him know how the suggestion had been received: "Our august Sovereign was highly indignant at the cool demand for £70,000 as part of the German Blackmail, and indeed I don't see how it could be managed."⁵ When Austria and Italy accepted the Decree Germany felt obliged to follow suit, but this episode confirmed the opinions of the critics of Germany, and served further to undermine the ground from beneath the more moderate trio.

At the beginning of 1905 Austen Chamberlain, then Chancellor

1. G. Monger: op. cit., p.161.
2. FO 800/12/p.83. Sanderson to Lascelles, April 27, 1904.
3. FO 800/12/p.85. Lansdowne to Lascelles, May 6, 1904.
4. FO 800/12/p.87. Richthofen to Lascelles, May 7, 1904.
5. FO 800/12/p.90. Sanderson to Lascelles, May 11, 1904.

of the Exchequer, complained to Balfour about the behaviour of Sir Frank Lascelles in Berlin. His memorandum, and the comments which it provoked from Lansdowne and Sanderson, are of the very greatest interest. Chamberlain wrote on January 14, 1905:

"I have read with some concern Sir.F. Lascelles's despatches... I venture to submit some observations...

"I have no liking for an interchange of reproaches with Germany or any other Power as to the conduct of the Press, the Public or the Governments of our respective countries; but Count Bülow has thought fit, not for the first time, to raise a discussion of this character, and has accompanied his observations - again following an example set by himself - with scarcely veiled threats. To all his observations the British Ambassador has apparently listened without serious remonstrance. He has offered explanations where he had the right to defend them, and he has ... allowed the repetition of Count Bülow's threats to pass without remark.

"I confess that this attitude appears to me scarcely compatible with the dignity of the country which he represents. It would be felt as a humiliation by the public here, should the tenour of these conversations ever become known, and carefully calculated indiscretions of this character employed at critical moments are a familiar weapon of German diplomacy.

"But even more serious is the effect which this patient humble attitude on the part of the representative of Great Britain is likely to have on German Government circles. Our forbearance in the past has, I fear, been misinterpreted. We have gained no credit by the tacit acceptance of Count Bülow's complaints. Our patience is attributed to weakness; our explanations only lead him to be more exigeant. Encouraged by past experience, he now permits himself to lecture the British Government on its duty in regard to the Press of this country, and for the second time within a year informs the British Ambassador that if he does not receive the satisfaction which he desires 'he will be compelled, by force of circumstances, to lean on Russia.'

"I think it is time that we spoke with equal frankness... I am not aware that Germany has made any attempt to cultivate even the appearance of good relations with England except for the purpose of making a better bargain with some Third Power!

"Whatever Count Bülow may say, her navy is a standing menace to this country...

"It seems to me, I confess, intolerable that we should allow these repeated provocations to pass unnoticed, whilst permitting Count Bülow and Herr von Holstein to lecture and threaten the British Ambassador. It is even more intolerable that our only reply should be in the shape of explanations - I had almost said excuses - offered 'with bated breath and whispering humbleness.'"¹

Four days later Lansdowne explained to Balfour:

"My dear Arthur,

"... I have perhaps become so used to the querulous tone of the German Government that it produces less effect on me than it does upon our colleague. I am at any rate more inclined to meet it with ridicule than with violent indignation... Lascelles's remonstrances were no doubt of a somewhat mild description, but it can hardly be said that he did not remonstrate. He is never addicted to the use of strong language, and perhaps it would be better if he were sometimes a little more emphatic; but he has, I think, upon the whole held his own well, and obtained a position of considerable influence with the extraordinary personage to whom he is accredited...

"The Germans have no doubt behaved shabbily to us upon a good many occasions but it is not quite true to say that they have never made any attempt to cultivate good relations with us. They have generally supported us in Egypt, and you will remember that, at the time when Hatzfeldt left the German Embassy and Eckardstein was in command, a most energetic attempt was made to induce us to enter into closer relations with them. I am also bound to say that during the Venezuelan affair the Germans upon the whole ran straight so far as we were concerned. You will gather from these remarks that I am less inclined than Austen to take 'au grand sérieux' the observations of the two German statesmen."²

On January 20 Sanderson also commented at length:

"Dear Lord Lansdowne,

"There are two points ... which I venture to mention.

"1. I doubt whether any country is able to appreciate sufficiently the effect of its Press comments on another

1. British Museum Add. MS 49729, p.84. Memorandum by A. Chamberlain, January 14, 1905.
2. British Museum Add. MS 49729, p.77. Lansdowne to Balfour, January 18, 1905.

nation. We read cursorily the articles in our newspapers, think them well or ill informed as the case may be, and turn to other topics. But the articles on England in the German Press of which the spiciest bits are reported by the Times and other correspondents at Berlin with due comments and denunciations, seem to us to have much greater significance than they probably have for the German public...

"2. I doubt whether sufficient allowance is generally made for the difficulties of the German Government. Before they went to war with France they purchased the neutrality of Russia by promising to accept a modification of the Black Sea Articles of the Treaty of 1856. At the end of the war they forced upon France a frontier which de Courcel told me, and I believe with truth, that no French statesman or general could accept as a permanent and satisfactory settlement. The subject is mentioned as little as possible either in France or Germany, but it is the skeleton always present in the cupboard. Since that time German commerce has enormously increased and the German Govt have been driven by popular aspirations into various Colonial requisitions. Their naval inferiority is therefore now a serious matter not to be ignored. They are confronted with a Russo-French Alliance: the Triple Alliance is less effective than it was; Austria is weaker from internal dissensions, and is working with Russia in the Balkans; Italy from financial and other reasons has made friends with France: and we have followed suit. It is true that France shows no sign of an aggressive disposition, but she has obstinately refused to be reconciled to her loss of territory.

"It would be bad policy on the part of Germany to make any public admission of this unpleasant fact, and just as the Egyptian question was always dragged to the front in Paris, when there was danger of an acute question between France and Germany, so the possible antagonism of Great Britain is a very convenient pretext for the increase of the German fleet. But it seems to me that quite irrespective of Colonial Ambition Germany must feel it necessary to increase her navy and that unless she can feel sure that we will not at some untoward moment throw ourselves on the side of France, she must as a matter of precaution cultivate the good-will of Russia far more than it is convenient for her to do. It is only natural that she s.d let us know this and endeavour to keep our friendship on terms as easy to herself as possible. But I do not see that we can reasonably resent this, and as a matter of fact a certain amount of friendship with Germany would be valuable for us in any bargaining with Russia."¹

1. FO 800/145/p.252. Sanderson to Lansdowne, January 20, 1905.

Earlier the same month, January 1905, Sanderson had written to Lascelles:

"I wish we could make the lunatics here who denounce Germany in such unmeasured terms and howl for an agreement with Russia understand that the natural effect is to drive Germany into the Russian camp and encourage the Russians to believe that they can get all they want at our expense and without coming to any agreement with us."¹

At the end of March 1905 the German Emperor visited Tangier and sparked off the first Moroccan Crisis. Lascelles expressed his view of the situation in a letter of April 7:

"My dear Lansdowne,

"I could understand it if the Germans wanted to go to war with France, but this I do not believe to be the case...

"... It seems to me that there is a good deal of analogy between the action of Germany now with regard to France and her action with regard to England at the beginning of 1896... I suspect this is also a bit of bluff. I quite believe that if it comes to war, France would stand but a poor chance against the German Army, and her case seems to me to be such a bad one that she would not be likely to enlist the sympathies of any other Country."²

Later that year Sanderson wrote:

"My dear Lascelles,

"... I am glad to see that you are making a certain progress towards more comfortable relations between the two Countries. We must expect the Germans to be a little stand-offish for some time."³

1. FO 800/12/p.157. Sanderson to Lascelles, January 3, 1905.
2. FO 800/18/p.167. Lascelles to Lansdowne, April 7, 1905. See also Guildford Muniment Room 173/15/25. Lascelles to Onslow, April 11, 1905: "Personally I should be delighted at anything which would be likely to bring about a better understanding between England and Germany, but I very much doubt whether the deputation proposed ... would do any good in this respect. I am inclined to think that at this moment it would be likely to do more harm than good. The German Press would probably try to make out that England wanted to run after Germany and drop France."
3. FO 800/12/p.279. Sanderson to Lascelles, September 4, 1905.

Everything, however, depended upon what would happen at the conference due to open at Algeciras in January 1906. By then, there had been a change of government, a reorganisation of the Foreign Office, and the appointment of a new Permanent Under-Secretary.

(7)

From the 1880s until 1905 there had been, as we have seen, a growing resentment in the Foreign Office because of the methods of German diplomacy, and more recently there had been a growing suspicion of the aims of German foreign policy. Germany's methods and ambitions were inconvenient, and had to be taken into account in England's international calculations, yet they posed no real threat to British security at this time. The balance of power was maintained by the continued existence of the Triple and Dual Alliances, and it was noticeable that the continental Powers had not come together to exploit England's moment of weakness during the Boer War. England was still pursuing a policy of isolation or free hand in a Europe that was self-balancing.

The continued existence of this policy was, however, bound to be short-lived. The growth of the new German Navy posed a potential threat to the British Empire which could not be overlooked, and caused officials increasingly to advocate a policy of colonial agreements with France and Russia. There was, however, limited support for this policy before 1905. It is true that the Anglo-French Convention was concluded in 1904 and that it removed Germany's Egyptian lever of blackmail.

Nevertheless it was negotiated at the time primarily for colonial rather than European reasons, while no real progress had been made towards a similar understanding with Russia when the Russo-Japanese War put an end to such hopes. In this situation, and while the German Navy was still small, it seemed sensible to attempt to improve Anglo-German relations, while at the same time reducing Germany's opportunities for creating mischief by coming to terms with the French. Lansdowne, Sanderson and Lascelles felt that they could best achieve this aim by showing patience and conciliation in the face of the provocative behaviour of the adolescent German Empire. Where they differed from Bertie was in the latter's belief that the interests of England and Germany were irreconcilable and that the British should stand up for themselves in the face of German threats. But Bertie's criticisms were occasioned more by German methods than by German ambitions.

Bertie's attitude had been based on the belief that there was a balance of power in Europe and that England was not seriously threatened by Germany or any other Power. This was not, however, the view of all his contemporaries, and it will be necessary to make a small digression to explain why.

The European balance was essentially a Russo-German balance, but it was not an absolutely equal one. Germany's rapid economic expansion, particularly in the field of coal and steel, was fast making her the most powerful country in Europe. She could not hope to impose her hegemony on Europe because of the might of Russia, but she could nevertheless seek to exploit her position of paramount strength. Whether or not Germany was actually more powerful than Russia is not in itself important, nor indeed is it

verifiable. What is important were the long term prospects of the two Powers, and these may be explained by way of an analogy.

The two European Powers were like two cars driving down a straight road. The Russian car had started with a long lead, but the German car was driving much faster and was steadily catching up. It was clear that the Russian car was itself speeding up and that eventually it would travel even faster than the German car. It therefore followed that whether or not the German car overtook the Russian car it would only do so temporarily and by a relatively short margin, and that in the long run the Russian car would regain its overwhelming lead. The situation thus far seemed perfectly simple. Unfortunately all relative calculations were suddenly upset because the Russian car broke down, thus allowing the German car to acquire an unnatural and unexpected lead. The Russian car was certain to be mended sooner or later and would then begin the inevitable process of catching up and overtaking. But the overwhelming lead which the Germans had acquired offered them an opportunity which they could exploit to their permanent advantage. The breakdown of Russia's car was occasioned by her defeat in the Russo-Japanese War, and by the Russian Revolution of 1905. The way Germany could exploit the new situation was to make military and naval preparations as quickly as possible and then to embark on a war while Russia was still relatively weak.

Russo-German relations were, however, only part of the overall international picture. From the vantage point of over half a century it is now clear that the chief rivalry was certain to be between the Anglo-Saxon countries on the western flank of

Europe, namely the British Empire and the United States of America, and the Russian Empire on the eastern flank. Seen in their historical perspective the two German wars of 1914-18 and 1939-45 may be regarded as temporary distractions which obliged the rival flanking Powers to come together to dispose of an adversary which they both found a menace to their security. What is even more important is that these wars were primarily made possible because of the two periods of Russian weakness, first from 1905 until around 1913, and second from the Bolshevik Revolution and the Purges of the 1930s until the turn of the tide on the Eastern Front in the early 1940s.

It is this triangular relationship between the Anglo-Saxons, the Germans and the Russians which dominated international affairs in the first half of the twentieth century, before the East-West rivalry finally emerged after the Second World War. It is essential in the present thesis to remain ever aware of the inter-connection of the relations between England, Germany and Russia. The breakdown of Russia in 1905 had the most profound and far-reaching long term results. In the context of the present chapter it explains why certain of the more astute members of the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service were out of sympathy from an early stage with the "pro-German" or "Victorian," and certainly out-of-date, views of Lansdowne, Sanderson and Lascelles. Bertie, who originally occupied an intermediate position, was quite easily able to move over to the new "anti-German" or "Edwardian" camp which advocated agreements with France and Russia outside Europe to contain Germany inside Europe. The Anglo-German naval rivalry came to a head slightly later and strengthened this feeling, and

was lent an added significance by the imbalance in Europe, but was in its origins a separate issue.

In April 1902 Cecil Spring Rice included the following remarks in a letter to Florence Lascelles, the daughter of the Ambassador at Berlin:

"Dear Miss Lascelles,

"... You would be interested to see the effect created in England by the German treatment of us. The change is extraordinary. Everyone in the office and out talk as if we had but one enemy in the world, and that Germany. It is no manner of good trying to assure us unofficially or officially that they are really our friends. No one believes it now and the only effect is to disgust."¹

This feeling in the Foreign Office was spearheaded by two men in particular - Louis Mallet and Eyre Crowe. Mallet himself wrote many years later of Crowe that "he and 1 or 2 others were the protagonists in the F.O. of the struggles to enlighten successive Govts of (sic) the aims of Germany and of the German menace."² In the Diplomatic Service the chief protagonist was Cecil Spring Rice. These three men seem to have been much more conscious than their contemporaries of the threat posed to the security of the British Empire by the growing strength of Germany. Where they differed from one another was in their attitudes to Russia. Mallet appears to have viewed the Anglo-German confrontation in isolation, believing from the start that Russia posed less of a threat than Germany. Crowe, on the other hand, was conscious from the start of the triangular relationship between England, Germany and Russia. The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 and the

1. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.350. Spring Rice to Miss F. Lascelles, April 17, 1902.
2. Maxse Papers Vol. 469, p.557. Mallet to Maxse, October 15, 1915

Russian Revolution of 1905 weakened Russia to such an extent that she temporarily ceased to pose as serious a threat to the British Empire as Germany had come to do. After 1905, therefore, Crowe concentrated his attention on the growing German menace, aware that Germany had been presented with an opportunity, consciously or otherwise, to make a bid for European hegemony. Thus, like Mallet, he also came to view Anglo-German relations in isolation. Spring Rice was likewise keenly aware that England was threatened by both Russia and Germany, but he continued to attach importance to this dual threat even during Russia's moment of weakness. He realised that this would merely be a passing phase and therefore strongly opposed making any concessions in order to bring about an Anglo-Russian agreement. It is this difference of approach that makes the opinions of Mallet, Spring Rice and Crowe worth examining separately. Their arguments about Germany, particularly after 1905, were influenced by and dependent on their appreciation of Russian strength. It was during this temporary interlude, while England was threatened by Germany alone and not by Russia, that criticism and suspicion of German foreign policy became more pronounced than ever before. It gave Germany the opportunity to behave in the way that she did, and thus contributed to the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. The latter, in turn, appeared to remove the Russian threat still further, caused Germany to behave with still greater tactlessness, and permitted the British Foreign Office to devote its attention almost singlemindedly to the German menace. It was not until this interlude of Russian weakness came to an end that the British Empire was again faced with a dual threat. It is essential to

recognise that the years 1905-13 did represent a temporary and unique phase, which had a profound influence on Anglo-German relations.

(8)

When the Boer War broke out in 1899 Louis Mallet had been temporarily seconded to Lord Cromer's staff in Cairo. He wrote to his friend, St Loe Strachey, on November 7, 1899:

"Dear St. Loe,

"... you know I think Ld. S. the most dangerous Minister we have ever had. I always feared that his policy of drift would land us in disaster. Since this Govt has been in office, we have had a series of crises... Fashoda might easily have been avoided, by a timely warning to France - a warning which was never given by this Govt. Every clerk in the F.O. foresaw Fashoda. Now the great calamity has come. - I am loathe to believe that any war is necessary, and I am certain that, in spite of the raid, this one might have been prevented...

"There is no excuse for the Govt...

"... victory will be almost as bad as defeat... it means a military domination.

"Personally I would rather see S. Africa a Dutch Republic under our naval protection, prosperous and loyal, than be burdened with an Empire based on military force. I am a much stronger Imperialist than the ordinary Jingo. For I want an Empire and I want it to last and cover the Earth - But military empires rise only to fall. There is no object in Empire in itself won by conquest of arms. My Imperialism is by peaceful absorption by over-population, based on sound economic principles having for its only object the peace and prosperity and well being of its people. It was Cobden's ideal - one which the ancient world was incapable even of conceiving - It furnishes the one irrefutable answer to those pessimists who do not believe in human progress. Protected by our fleet, so beneficent an Empire would gradually embrace the world. I suppose there is no one of our Politicians who ever could imagine such a state of things... With Curzon in India, what might not happen when the Ameer dies. In a few years, Germany will have a magnificent fleet and we have thrown Holland with all her ports into her arms.

"No one realizes Germany (sic). The millions we shall spend on this miserable business, might have been better invested in Technical Education. We are being beaten in every market of the world, for want of proper education - All true social reform has been long in the background...

"In a few years Germany will have a magnificent fleet!! - and we have thrown Holland with all her sea ports into her arms!!

"No one seems to realize what Germany is doing...

"All idea of bettering the condition of the people - social reforms of any kind (-) must now be relinquished...

"... The prospect is as black as night to those who believed in our mission. But I hope and pray for the best. I should abandon all interest in public concerns and in life itself, if I thought the reverse.

"But my belief in the English race and character is so unshakable and my love so deep, that I think a saviour will arise."¹

Mallet felt that Lord Salisbury's policy had had disastrous results, and he had in fact had a very low opinion of *the Prime Minister* "for 10 years." He described Balfour, who had recently negotiated the Anglo-German Agreement concerning the Portuguese Colonies, as "his contemptible nephew." He wrote at the beginning of 1900 that "I adhere to what I said in my last letter but all that is past discussion now and no sane man can think of anything but retrieving the past and saving the situation."²

On his return to the Foreign Office Louis Mallet was placed in the Far Eastern Department, where he worked under Bertie's supervision. His growing criticism of German foreign policy clearly revealed itself in 1902. In that year he paid a visit to Germany, and his brother Bernard wrote: "Louis writes from

1. Strachey Papers 15/1/19. Mallet to Strachey, November 7, 1899.
2. Strachey Papers 14/6/3A. Mallet to Strachey, February 7, 1900.

Germany that the new tone of the English press has done wonders there, and thoroughly alarmed the Germans. They are a set of bullies who ... want to be faced boldly."¹ It was not until 1904, however, that Mallet began to emerge as one of the leading critics of Germany in the Foreign Office.

Mallet was on friendly terms with John Sandars, who was Balfour's Private Secretary, and through him he hoped to influence the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. Even before Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese War he wrote on February 24, 1904:

"Dear Sandars,

"... It is notorious that Berlin news agents are responsible for the dissemination of anti-English views in St. Petersburg and I venture to think, at the risk of being accused of being anti-German (which I am not) that Germany is by far the greatest danger we have to be on our guard against just now. She will leave no stone unturned to involve us in this war and if she succeeded, we should be at her mercy."²

He commented a few days later that "I hear the most disquieting accounts from St Petersburg of the ill feeling against us" which, he felt, was "chiefly due to the 'Times' articles and to German intrigue."³

Meanwhile Bertie's views had been developing still further. In September 1902 he had told Mensdorff, an Austro-Hungarian diplomatist, that "the old game begins anew. France wants to play England off against Germany, and Germany England against France. Both seek to sow discord."⁴ In April 1903 Lord

1. Strachey Papers 10/5/15. B. Mallet to Strachey, November 11, 1902.
2. British Museum Add. MS 49747, p.74. Mallet to Sandars, February 24, 1904.
3. Strachey Papers 15/4/2. Mallet to Strachey, March 2, 1904.
4. A. Pribram: op. cit., p.95-96.

Cranborne had still been able to write to Bertie: "It looks from several symptoms as if we could have a very close understanding with France by holding up one finger, but that would hardly suit even such a Germanophobe as yourself."¹ But Bertie's views had changed by the time the Anglo-French Convention was signed, a year later in the spring of 1904. Because the Convention was not aimed against Germany, it was not generally realised to what extent it would affect Anglo-German relations. Mallet and Bertie, however, immediately understood the significance of the rapprochement.

In the summer of 1904 it was arranged that King Edward VII should pay a visit to his nephew, the German Emperor. Mallet, who realised the possible implications of such a visit, wrote on June 1:

"My dear Sandars,

"I don't know whether the King's visit to Kiel is likely to be raised in the Cabinet tomorrow, but it appears to me that the King should be given a good talking to by Ld L before he goes. It is unfortunate at the present moment in any case, in view of the Emperor's recent utterances at Karlsruhe and Saarbrücken but we should make every effort to limit it to a mere family meeting. The Emperor is, however, to be accompanied by his Ministers and Metternich is going over for it, and I see the King is to take 10 men of war with him. Is this necessary? The Germans will do all in their power to give the visit an international and political character. The Emperor will not impossibly try to lead the King on into making some indiscreet reference to Japan and Russia and offer his honest brokerage with Russia - but this wld be fatal and anything that might arouse suspicion in Tokio should be carefully guarded against.

"It is not likely that the Emperor will propose an understanding with England at present but if he did, the King should answer that we should be agreeable, if he will add no more to his fleet. Until that day we must remain on our guard...

1. FO 800/181/p.109. Cranborne to Bertie, April 12, 1903. Cranborne added that "I prefer the middle position, the 'tertius gaudens.'"

"The Khedival Decrees policy has been the greatest success."¹

On the following day Mallet wrote to Bertie, who had by then been appointed Ambassador at Rome:

"Dear Bertie,

"It is splendid to have got Italian consent to the Khedival Decree so quickly. You see that Austria has followed suit and those d---d Germans are left in the lurch again. I would give them nothing, but wait quietly...²

"I am nervous about the visit to Kiel...

"Entre nous, I do not think that Mr. Balfour at all realises what may be expected from the Anglo-French understanding, and would be ready to make an agreement with Germany tomorrow. It seems to me that a close understanding with France is a great safeguard for us -- and that our object ought to be to keep Germany isolated in view of her nefarious projects with regard to the Austrian Empire and Holland, to say nothing of this Island. What have we to gain from an agreement with Germany? Nothing that I can see and the only terms on which I would make a treaty with them would be an understanding on their part to add no more to their fleet... The next Ambassador to Paris will have a great rôle to play. It has never been so necessary before to have someone there with his eyes open and above all to German designs."³

Bertie replied in the same tone on June 11:

"My dear Mallet,

"Your letter of the 2nd breathes distrust of Germany and you are right. She has never done anything for us but bleed us. She is false and grasping and our real enemy commercially and politically...

"... Metternich I know considers me to be anti-German, and my interviews re. China and S. Africa with Dr. Stuebel⁴ were not at all pleasing to the German Govt...

1. British Museum Add. MS 49747, p.101. Mallet to Sandars, June 1, 1904.
2. Cf: FO 800/170/p.58. Mallet to Bertie, May 20, 1904: "those beastly Germans ... we are very keen to confront them with Italy's acceptance."
3. FO 800/170/p.61. Mallet to Bertie, June 2, 1904.
4. See Chapter One, p.24.

"We have nothing to fear from Germany if we remain on good terms with France. She cannot without the active support of a naval Power such as France injure us. She wants ports and coaling stations and we ought to prevent her acquiring any from any minor Power even at the risk of war.

"Subject to this I would be very civil to Germany but not be bluffed into anything and bear in mind that whatever Germany's professions may be she is in terror of Russia and will never risk her real displeasure. She will always rather act with Russia than do what is right."¹

Mallet replied on June 24 that "it is refreshing to hear what you say about Germany. I entirely agree but it is rare to find anyone who sympathizes."²

Mallet meanwhile continued to write to Sandars about Germany. On July 22 he warned against overt signs of friendship towards Germany for fear that they would "destroy all chances of the French Convention going thru' the Chamber, coming ... on top of the Kiel and Plymouth visits and the (Anglo-German) Arbitration Agreement wh. have upset the French more than they care to admit." He added that unless the French "are certain of us, they cannot allow themselves to be outbid at Petersburg by the Germans and that is what the Germans are trying to do."³ He wrote again on November 11, 1904:

"My dear Sandars,

"Lascelles is over here and is very pro-German. He disbelieves the stories that the Germans were the people who warned Russia, because Bülow - who is the greatest liar in creation - assures him on his honour, that they did not do so. Supposing they are guilty of having done so, is it likely that they would admit it? It is to my mind a suspicious circumstance that they should be so ready

1. FO 800/170/p.63. Bertie to Mallet, June 11, 1904.
2. FO 800/183/p.198. Mallet to Bertie, June 24, 1904.
3. British Museum Add. MS 49747, p.107. Mallet to Sandars, July 22, 1904.

with denials of stories which have after all only appeared in some of the papers.

"We all know that Germany is anxious to see us at loggerheads with Russia, altho' Lascelles does not admit as much as this. He has apparently forgotten the rage of the Emperor a few years ago when he called H.M.'s Ministers a set of noodles for not having gone to war at that time.

"The activity of the Germans at the present moment in endeavouring to turn the tables on us is rather ominous. They threaten Lascelles that the sort of behaviour we are now supposed to be guilty of can only end in war. This reminds me of what happened when we prepared the Flying Squadron in answer to the Emperor's Tel. to Kruger.

"Lascelles had just arrived in Berlin but Holstein sent for Chirol and told him that the course we had taken could only lead to war. It was provocative to all the Powers and we must not be surprized if we found ourselves faced with a coalition.

"It only came out afterwards that it was the Germans themselves who were trying to get up the Coalition.

"History repeats itself and German methods are always the same...

"I confess that the present attitude of the Germans fills me with suspicion and (I) am strongly of opinion that we should be prepared for any eventuality, if by some unlucky chance Russia forces war upon us."¹

On January 17, 1905, Mallet wrote to Bertie:

"My dear Ambassador,

"... I am uneasy about the Germans. These threats and whimperings from Berlin are only a prelude to some demand and I think the Bagdad Rly. will be the subject of it...

"I feel sure H.M.G. will not entertain any proposal for an Agreement with Germany. There is no cause for it and it will be directly contrary to their policy of an Entente with France."²

Bertie replied on January 20 that "as to German threats and blandishments we can afford to treat them with becoming contempt."³

1. British Museum Add. MS 49747, p.122. Mallet to Sandars, November 11, 1904.
2. FO 800/170/p.66. Mallet to Bertie, January 17, 1905.
3. FO 800/170/p.67. Bertie to Mallet, January 20, 1905.

By this time Russia had effectively been defeated by Japan, and revolution had broken out in St Petersburg: the German demand which Mallet had feared was not long in coming. At the end of March 1905 the German Emperor made his provocative speech at Tangier and sparked off the first Moroccan Crisis. Bertie wrote on March 31:

"My dear Mallet,

"The French Government are agitated about the visit of the Emperor and the speeches of Bülow about Morocco... I hope that we shall not do anything to smooth matters between the French and German Governments. If we advised the French to make concessions they would be furious. Of course the Germans would like a coaling station on the Atlantic coast. That would not suit us. Let Morocco be an open sore between France and Germany as Egypt was between France and ourselves."¹

Mallet, however, who had a more realistic appreciation of the European balance, immediately began to advocate a firm policy, and wrote on April 20:

"My dear Sandars,

"... One of the objects of this Morocco demonstration is to prove to the French the valuelessness of an understanding with England in which they will succeed if we do not back them up.

"How far are we prepared to go? I would not hesitate but would let the French know, when they come to us, that we would fight if necessary.

"It would not come to that for Germany would not fight both France and England. But ... we must avoid all appearance of egging them on... We ought to make up our minds what policy to pursue."²

Five days later Mallet, who had by now become Lansdowne's Précis Writer, or Assistant Private Secretary, wrote to Bertie that

1. FO 800/170/p.73. Bertie to Mallet, March 31, 1905.
2. British Museum Add. MS 49747, p.200. Mallet to Sandars, April 20, 1905.

Fisher "is a splendid chap and simply longs to have a go at Germany. I 'abound in his sense' and told him I would do all I could with Lord Lansdowne."¹ He warned Sandars in May that "the Germans are now engaged in an endeavour to persuade France that they have gained nothing by their agreement with us and in this they will probably succeed."²

Bertie, by this time, had been appointed Ambassador at Paris. On May 20 Maurice Paléologue, a senior official at the French Foreign Ministry, "dined at the house of the Marquise de Breteuil with Sir Francis Bertie, the English Ambassador, Lady Feodorovna Bertie" and others. Paléologue recorded that "in the smoking room, Sir Francis Bertie, jovial and impulsive as ever, suddenly remarked to Courcel³ and myself: 'It's not enough to have created the entente cordiale; we must give it muscles and the wherewithall to show its strength. We shall never save the cause of peace until the brawlers and trouble-makers in Berlin are afraid of us ... (sic).'"⁴ Bertie was only slightly less outspoken in two letters which he wrote on May 12. The first was to the Foreign Secretary:

"My dear Lansdowne,

"... It is evident that Germany will take the first opportunity of any difficulty that we may be in to humiliate

1. C. Andrew: op. cit., p.285. Mallet to Bertie, April 25, 1905. Cf. N. d'Ombraïn: "War Machinery and High Policy, 1902-1914." p.71-72 + 75.
2. British Museum Add.MS 49747, p.177. Mallet to Sandars, May 13, 1905.
3. Courcel had been succeeded as French Ambassador in London by Paul Cambon in 1898.
4. M. Paléologue: "The Turning Point, Three Critical Years, 1904-1906." p.249. The translation quoted by C. Andrew (op. cit., p.285) ends with: "We shall preserve peace only if the obstreperous and restless elements in Berlin are afraid of us."

us. We shall not conciliate her unless we break with France and facilitate her preparations to become a really great naval Power to our detriment."¹

The other letter was to Maurice de Bunsen:

"I hope that Delcassé will weather the storm till things are settled, or more so than now.-- Germany is behaving as usual as the general mischief maker. The Emperor is furious at the Entente and will do all he can to break it. So long as France and England hold together, he will find it difficult to exercise the influence he desires to possess, for he will hardly go to war with such a bad case as he has in Morocco."²

In July 1905 Bertie even spoke firmly to Prince Radolin, the German Ambassador at Paris. Soon after he had become Foreign Secretary at the end of the year, Grey received a letter from a Mr Beit, at Hamburg, informing him of an interview that had been granted him by the German Emperor:

"Speaking of the English Ambassador in France (Sir F.L. Bertie), he contended that he was most rude to the German Ambassador. Meeting him in July at a private party, before other people he began to talk about the Morocco business, and said to him, 'You won't and sha'n't have this Conference.'³

This was no doubt a characteristic imperial exaggeration, but the incident had nevertheless taken place. Lascelles explained it to Lansdowne in a letter of August 3, 1905:

1. FO 800/127/p.53. Bertie to Lansdowne, May 12, 1905.
2. E.T.S. Dugdale: op. cit., p.205. Bertie to de Bunsen, May 12, 1905.
3. FO 800/13/p.34. Beit to Grey, December 29, 1905. Beit told the same story to Lord Esher shortly afterwards. See Lord Esher: "Journals and Letters." Vol. 2, p.138. Diary entry by Esher, January 18, 1906: "By request, I called yesterday on Mr. Beit... Speaking of the English Ambassador (Sir F.L. Bertie) he (the German Emperor) contended that he was most rude to the German Ambassador. Meeting him in July at a private party, before other people, he began to talk about the Morocco business and said to him, 'You won't and shan't have this conference.' The Emperor said it was so bad that Prince Radolin would have been justified in challenging him to a duel, but he restrained himself, and prevented a rupture at that time."

"I asked Mühlberg if he knew anything about an incident which was supposed to have happened between Bertie and Radolin, as a story was going about that the Emperor had complained ... that our Ambassador at Paris had insulted his. Mühlberg said that he did not know that the Emperor had spoken to anyone on the subject, but it was true that Radolin had reported that Bertie, whom he had met somewhere, had made some disparaging remarks about German action in Morocco, which he (Radolin) had pretended not to hear, and to which he had not replied. This was the nearest approach to anything in the nature of an incident of which he had heard."¹

In September 1905, a few months before the change of government, Bertie wrote to Sir Charles Hardinge:

"My dear Charlie,

"... The French 'idée fixe' is to be the means of bringing about an understanding between England and Russia. That was Delcassé's policy. If it could be effected German Bill might amuse himself as much as he liked within his own German ring. He could hurt nobody."²

Mallet meanwhile was still warning about the German danger in his correspondence. In the summer of 1905 the German government had secured the dismissal of Delcassé from the Quai d'Orsay and the agreement of France and the other Powers to the holding of a Conference to decide the future of Morocco. Germany then set about wooing the United States. Mallet wrote to his friend Strachey in July:

"Dear St. Loe,

"... Our information confirms the fear that William has nobbled Roosevelt completely. The importance of this cannot be overestimated. If it comes to a struggle with Germany, it will be a great disadvantage to have the moral feeling of America against us.

"... Hay's death is a terrible loss. I fear even Springy cannot now compete with William ... (who) poisons

1. FO 800/18/p.175. Lascelles to Lansdowne, August 3, 1905.
2. FO 800/163/p.145. Bertie to Hardinge, September 25, 1905.

R's mind agst us by every mail. Germany's designs agst this country become clearer every day."¹

He wrote again on July 18:

"Dear St. Loe,

"... The German object is to poison the wells of public opinion in the U.S. agst us. In this I fear they will succeed - we have no means of counteracting their influence..."

"... the best proof that we did not incite France lies in the fact that we first refused the Conference and then accepted it at France's wish. The French recognize that our conduct has been exemplary and the Entente much strengthened."²

On November 10 Mallet wrote to Leo Maxse:

"My dear Leo,

"... I thought you had heard abt Madeira.³ It is a perfect instance of German ambitions, at our expense, of their method of attaining them, of the proper way to treat their demands and of the result. If you care to hear it, I can tell you the story, in which I have taken the greatest interest from the beginning."⁴

By the middle of November 1905 it was clear that the days of the Conservative government were numbered, and Mallet wrote to Strachey on the 24th:

"My dear St. Loe,

"The moment has come to make every effort to get Grey here. Otherwise everything will go to pot. Have you any means of getting at C.B. otherwise than through the Asquiths. If so, all pressure should now be brought to bear. Things are critical abroad. Germany is going to make a determined effort to capture the liberals and to ensure our quiescence in the event of their attacking France.

1. Strachey Papers 15/4/1. Mallet to Strachey, July 1905. Hay was the American Secretary of State from 1899 to 1905, having previously been American Ambassador at London.
2. Strachey Papers 15/4/7. Mallet to Strachey, July 18, 1905.
3. For the Madeira affair, see G. Monger: op. cit., p.226-228.
4. Maxse Papers Vol. 453, p.142. Mallet to Maxse, November 10, 1905.

"Doumer whom I saw in Paris is convinced that the Germans are determined to attack them soon i.e. in the course of the next few months.

"We alone can now prevent that for Russia is paralysed."¹

At the beginning of December Balfour resigned and a temporary Liberal administration was formed pending a General Election. Grey was appointed the new Foreign Secretary and Mallet wrote on December 19:

"My dear St. Loe,

"... I am trying to impress on him (Grey) with all the force I can that if Germany means war, it lies with us to prevent it. The French are nervous, and they distrust the Liberal Gt because they fear they will not be prepared to see them through. The Germans are spreading everywhere that the new Gt will not stand by them and are endeavouring to intimidate them. My point is that great concessions on the part of France over Morocco will in the long run injure the Entente, almost as much as a war in which we did not side with them. We must go to Algeciras, determined to back up the French and see them through."²

Four days later he wrote to Sir Arthur Nicolson, who had been appointed British Delegate to the forthcoming Conference:

"My dear Nicolson,

"... I fear the conference will lead to trouble. Everything looks ominous but the attempt to capture the liberals here will I think fail so long as we have Sir Edward. It is clear that we must do what the French want us to do...

"If the Conference falls through over the Police question, I suppose the Germans will announce that they do not recognize the Anglo French agreement and will proceed to create difficulties for France in her policy of peaceful penetration. She will either end by exasperating the French and provoking them to war or else she will make them come to terms³ - everything really depends upon Russia."⁴

1. Strachey Papers 15/4/8. Mallet to Strachey, November 24, 1905.
2. Strachey Papers 15/4/9. Mallet to Strachey, December 19, 1905.
3. Mallet originally wrote: "or else she will bring them to their knees."
4. FO 800/336/p.135. Mallet to Nicolson, December 23, 1905.

Mallet and Bertie continued to be critical of Germany during the Conference. On February 22 Mallet wrote:

"My dear Bertie,

"... What do you think about those d--d Germans? I do not myself believe that they mean to attack but want to irritate France into making the first move. It may be all bluff and at any rate, I think that the only thing for us to do is to 'sit tight.'"¹

He elaborated this four days later:

"Our experience shows that Germany interprets concessions as signs of weakness and that they whet her appetite for further sops...

"... The whole question resolves itself into this. Do we or do we not believe that the German governing class and I fear the people now, look upon England as a country with whom they mean to try conclusions, the moment they can get up a coalition against us or as soon as they are themselves ready. The German Navy League and Pan-Germans openly preach the doctrine that Germany must contest with England the supremacy of the sea and we know the successful efforts both Leagues are making all over Germany to arouse an interest in the Fleet...

"In spite of present difficulties I believe that we were on the right road when we made the Entente, that Germany will not risk a war with England and France for some years to come ... and that in the broad sense time is on our side."²

Bertie was even more precise. In a "Memorandum given to the King before His Majesty went to see the President of the Republic," written on March 4, he pointed out that,

"German diplomacy is working at Paris to make the French believe that England desires a war between France and Germany and that when the crisis comes England will leave France in the lurch, and that therefore it is to the interest of France to submit to any terms that Germany may desire."³

1. FO 800/184/p.147. Mallet to Bertie, February 22, 1906.
2. FO 800/86/p.29. Memorandum by Mallet, February 26, 1906.
3. FO 800/184/p.166. Memorandum by Bertie, March 4, 1906.

After the Germans had given way at Algeciras there was an improvement in Anglo-German relations, and in September 1906 Haldane visited Berlin against the wishes of the Foreign Office. This visit brought to a head the strength of hostility within the Foreign Office to Germany, and to any attempt at an immediate reconciliation with that Power. Mallet had already criticised Haldane for conducting "informal negotiations with Metternich," as "there is no question that ... the German Govt have not changed the whole of their policy i.e. that they have not abandoned their fixed determination to draw France within their orbit and to dictate to them their foreign policy from Berlin." In fact Mallet considered that the Germans were trying to dupe England, and he had already warned in June 1906:

"It is true that the brutal method of effecting this object has failed but they have good grounds for assuming now that they will be successful. Is it not more likely that they are changing their methods and not their policy?"

"P. ce Radolin has ... constantly deplored the brow-beating policy, because he thinks that the objects of German policy namely the subjection ... of France can more easily be attained in this way."¹

When Haldane went to Germany Mallet wrote:

"Nothing could be better from a British point of view, if it is considered important that the British people should realize that the Emperor who is medieval despotic reactionary and the 'War Lord' and who should stink in the nostrils of every fine Liberal is the one danger to European peace."²

He felt that "if we had not stuck to France, there would have been war or a much greater risk of war and if we are now manoeuvred in a position which wld make it difficult for us to side actively

1. FO 800/92/p.88. Mallet to Grey, June 26, 1906.
2. FO 800/102/p.38. Marginal comments by Mallet on a printed copy of the diary sent by Haldane to the King from Berlin, September 1906.

with France in the future, I venture to prophecy (sic) that war will not long be deferred."¹

Mallet was, as has been said, one of the three most prominent critics of German foreign policy in the early years of the new century. Before Russia's collapse he considered that Germany posed the greatest single threat to the security of the British Empire and tailored his comments accordingly. The temporary destruction of Russian power did not change the emphasis of Mallet's warnings, but what it did do was to bring them a greater urgency, particularly because of the exposed position of France. It was because Mallet had never given the same priority to the Russian threat that he emerged as a singleminded critic of Germany earlier than Crowe; it was because the Russian threat temporarily vanished that Crowe became an even more forthright critic of German foreign policy; and it was because Spring Rice did not cease to attach priority to the long-term Russian threat that he tended to moderate his criticism of Germany, and opposed the new policy of Anglo-Russian rapprochement. But Mallet's persistent criticism of, and warnings about, German foreign policy were occasioned by a desire to improve Anglo-German relations, not because he was personally anti-German. He wrote in June 1906, before Haldane's visit to Berlin:

"If he (Haldane) is successful, he will estrange us from France permanently but I think circumstances will be too strong for him and that we shall probably end by being on worse terms than ever with Germany.

"If the thing could have been let alone we were already beginning to reap the fruits of the Entente with France in improved relations with Germany - (by) improved I mean such (as in) Ld. Salisbury's days - the Germans would have respected a strong and continuous ... policy

1. FO 800/102/p.38. Marginal comments by Mallet on a printed copy of the diary sent by Haldane to the King from Berlin, September 1906.

on our part and our intercourse with Germany would have soon become friendly and normal which is the sole object of the so-called anti-Germans."¹

(9)

Cecil Spring Rice was posted in Berlin at the time of the Jameson Raid and Krüger Telegram, and he was able to witness the way Berlin viewed the British reaction to the sending of the Telegram. Lady Gwendolen Cecil has written of "the comedy of rapid illumination which is presented in Sir Frank Lascelles' letters during that first week of January" 1896. "Up to the 4th," she wrote, "his reception in the Wilhelmstrasse had been awe-inspiring in its sternness: on the 8th he notes 'a great surprise' at the news coming through from England and detects incipient doubt as to whether, after all, some mistake has not been made: by the 11th his sense of humour struggles with official decorum as he describes the anxious cordiality, the protests of injured innocence with which he is now being met... The Emperor and his advisers had undoubtedly been completely taken aback by the storm which they had raised."² Spring Rice described this change in two letters that he wrote on January 11, 1896. The first letter was to Francis Villiers at the Foreign Office:

"The state of feeling in England is extraordinary. I am rather glad it has happened, for it has been a lesson. They have been kicking us for years, on the assumption that they were kicking a dead ass. It is a great surprise to see starting up a live lion. The effect is curious. The Press articles are almost friendly."³

1. FO 800/92/p.88. Mallet to Grey, June 26, 1906.
2. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 5, p.146.
3. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.189. Spring Rice to Villiers, January 11, 1896. Cf: Ibid. Vol. 1, p.186. Spring Rice to S. Spring Rice, January 9, 1896: "Germany

The other letter was to Lord Rosebery:

"Dear Lord Rosebery,

"A week ago every paper here was teeming with abuse against England: now they are all expressing surprise that England is abusing them. And a week ago it was said that Lord Rosebery's Government had attempted to isolate Germany and that now in revenge Germany had isolated England. Peace, it was said, was assured in Europe, because all the powers would satisfy their ambition out of Europe at England's expense. It looked very much like a European coalition based on animosity to England. Austria had tried to stand up for England in Constantinople but had been at once forced to withdraw; and Russia by the threat of war had forced Germany and the others to give an assurance that they would do nothing in Armenia and would prevent England doing anything.

"Thus England was quite alone and friendless. Italy was deeply offended at the Feila (? sic) refusal and she was the only friend we had left. Every German paper was exulting in the fact and it was impossible to read one which didnt contain an insult. Its hard to believe that an opportunity wasn't seized for doing what had been matured for a long time - ever since Bismarck wrote personally to Kruger at Lisbon to come to Berlin and talk with the old Emperor. It was assumed that England couldnt fight and that if she did that France would join Germany against her.

"It appears that we are ready to fight and that France will not join Germany against us. The sudden turn-on is most surprising. Its impossible to describe the effect.

"I only wish the English would howl a little less loudly: we may howl too long and spoil the effect.

"I hope you feel proud of your share in the navy. If it hadnt been for you, I believe that this could be the most terrible moment in English history and I hope that everyone realises it. It is simply a matter of being capable of self defence and of having the courage to use the means."¹

1. Rosebery Papers Box 73. Spring Rice to Rosebery, January 11, 1896. Count Metternich wrote in 1902 that before 1895-96 "the general view was that if only you trampled on an Englishman heavily enough he would give way to you." See E.L. Woodward: "Great Britain and the German Navy." p.24. (cont.)

has been for some years engaged in thwarting and flouting us in politics and insulting us in newspapers."

In the early months of 1896 England began to make preparations for an advance from Egypt into the Sudan, and on March 21 Spring Rice wrote that "for the next six months we shall have to be on good terms with Germany - for which privilege we shall as usual have to pay."¹ A month later he wrote again:

"Dear Lord Rosebery,

"... Germany shows its confidence that we are again so deeply engaged in Egypt that we are at their mercy - by renewing the campaign of newspaper abuse. In fact for the last ten years there has only been one month or two months respite and that was after the Emperor's telegram...

"For a short time there was a pause of intense fear and anxiety but the moment the Dongola expedition was known, the whole atmosphere changed. Le 'baton Egyptien' was again placed in their hands to beat us with when it pleased them."²

It was during 1896 that Spring Rice began to regard the interests of England and Germany as fundamentally hostile. Even after the Krüger Telegram he wrote that "in spite of all this abuse ... I can't help thinking that there is no deep-rooted hostility to England. We haven't yet attained the dignity of a 'natural enemy.'"³ He attributed the hostility in Germany to

1. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.201. Spring Rice to Villiers, March 21, 1896.
2. Rosebery Papers Box 73. Spring Rice to Rosebery, April 25, 1896.
3. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.195. Spring Rice to Villiers, January 18, 1896.

See also Rosebery Papers Box 73. Spring Rice to Rosebery, February 1, 1896: "after a pause, the official press is beginning to pitch into England again - but its clear they do so not because they believe in the possibility of war (indeed rather for the opposite reason) - but because they want to please Russia." Cf: India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/2/p.82. Spring Rice to Curzon, November 30, 1895: "One has to remember that there are two things the Govt here fears: one, the Colonial party in Germany: two, the possibility of the active military hostility of Russia. Neither feeling tends to make her inclined to be too friendly to us."

"the extreme anti English tendency of the officials of the Foreign Office" - and in particular Holstein - whose "real object ... was to create a permanent breach between the Emperor and England."¹

During the summer of 1896, however, he did begin to regard England as Germany's "natural enemy." He wrote to Curzon on June 6:

"My dear George,

"... England is no doubt terribly in the way of Germany now. She wants to expand out of Europe, and in Europe to have bygones bygones (having got all she wants) and outside Europe she meets us everywhere... Everything that is done by Germany at home and abroad is for (the) advancement of trade. And unfortunately for our good relations, England is the rival. It is in the nature² of things and all the Emperors in the world cant stop it."

Spring Rice remained critical of the methods of German diplomacy during the following year. For example he wrote on July 17, 1897:

"Dear Bertie,

"... There can be no doubt, I should think, that for the next year or so, the policy of the German Government will become more actively anti-English... It isn't so much his (the Emperor's) personal influence that makes against us, as the irresistible trend of opinion in Germany."³

Shortly afterwards he commented that "it appears that the best way (for Germany) to make friends with Russia is to abuse or to harm us,"⁴ explaining that "if they are not sure of England they

1. India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/3/p.83. Spring Rice to Curzon, May 23, 1896.
2. India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/3/p.88. Spring Rice to Curzon, June 6, 1896.
3. Salisbury Papers A/122/100. Spring Rice to Bertie, July 17, 1897.
4. India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/4/p.198. Spring Rice to Curzon, November 27, 1897. See also India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/3/p.189. Spring Rice to Curzon, November 16, 1896: "They can not afford to do anything which can be construed as unfriendly to Russia. England they can afford to insult with impunity."

must secure Russia." ¹ At the end of the same year he drew attention once more to Germany's policy of blackmail in a letter to Francis Villiers. ²

The success of Germany's policy of blackmail depended, as we have seen, on two factors: a desire in England to reach an agreement with Germany, and the existence of an area where this agreement could be expressed. Unofficial overtures, when not rebuffed, came up against the absence of the second prerequisite, and in the face of failure, German hostility and arrogance assumed a different importance. It was at this time that Bertie and others came to see a conflict of interests between the two Powers. Like Mallet, however, Spring Rice was not personally anti-German - "his dislike of German policy was not allied to any feeling against the German people, whom he thoroughly respected." ³ He wrote to Curzon on January 22, 1898:

"My dear George,

"... The Government and classes dependent upon it hate England with a fixed malignity of detestation...

"The fact is that hatred is to a certain extent disinterested - so that they would do a thing wantonly to annoy - or make a harmless thing annoying - for no purpose. You see this people is not loved in Germany itself: nor is Germany very popular among non German Austrians. They

1. India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/4/p.202. Spring Rice to Curzon, December 4, 1897.
2. FO 800/23/p.107. Spring Rice to Villiers, December 26, 1897: "Marschall said openly to the Times correspondent that England ought to realise that she offered the best booty and that she had better pay blackmail as soon as she could. - We ought to pay blackmail for Germany's support and unless we do it, Germany very naturally calls the robbers from the hills... It makes one a little indignant ... but it is the policy which is advocated here quite openly - no secret is being made of it - and it seems to have fair prospects of success."
3. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.218. Note by S. Gwynn.

haven't the art of making themselves beloved, and it seems as if this wanton malevolence may ultimately result in the worst consequences to both England and Germany.

"I think myself the best remedy is the simple one of fear - To do nothing and say nothing till the moment comes when they are really and obviously in the wrong and clearly acting to our detriment and then to strike in such a manner that the whole world sees: or what would perhaps be better, to carry an intimation in clear language which nobody but the govt would see which would amount to an ultimatum. But I fear we shant be given the chance."¹

Spring Rice remained a strong critic of Germany during the Boer War. For example he wrote on March 7, 1900:

"My dear Hardinge,

"... I suppose the Germans have organized a campaign of all Europe in view of the conclusion of peace in S. Africa and that the lot of them will come and ask for a share. Germany will offer to be bribed off. She is the greatest professor of chantage in the whole world. Don't the Russians see that? Don't they catch on to the transparent policy of hetzen? They have made us quarrel with France about Egypt, Italy with France about Tunis, Austria with Russia about the Balkans: England is being egged on and Russia is being egged on near to (a) quarrel in order that when we fall out honest Germans may come by their own. You know that in Bismarck's day every effort was made to induce the Russians to send an army corps to Bulgaria, and England to send a fleet into the Black Sea: it was only the suspiciousness of the old Czar which defeated the little game... They wander along all our streams poisoning the water and call this real politik. It is absurd how we all play their game."²

Again, in 1901, he wrote from Tehran:

"My dear Strachey,

"... I have for a long time noticed the immense pains taken by the German press agencies to point out to Russia England's activity and policy in S. Persia... It is taken for granted that here at any rate is a point where England and Russia may be counted on to fall at loggerheads. Why?

1. India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/5/p.21. Spring Rice to Curzon, January 22, 1898.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 3, p.83. Spring Rice to Hardinge, March 7, 1900.

Because it is the policy of Germany to create and maintain such points of friction. Our interest is to diminish them."¹

By the end of 1902 Spring Rice had been transferred to Cairo.

On November 18 he included the following comments in a letter to Lord Curzon:

"There seems to be generally a very strong feeling about Germany which is natural enough. I believe that the next move of Prussia is the annexation of Holland... The naval preparations are probably directed to the object of keeping England in check, in case she objects... The policy of Germany, if she intends to lay hands on Holland, is if possible to get us into trouble with France and Russia, so that joint action between the 3 powers should be impossible. Thus every rumour of a difficulty with Russia is increased and multiplied: and I have no doubt our wickedness is rubbed into Russia, as Russia's into us. It is a pity that Russia is so stupid and spiteful that it is impossible to come to any sort of understanding with her: but we are being made fools of: as a war between us would only mean that Germany has a free hand to do what she likes in Central Europe. If someone could only make her understand the things that belong to her peace! The French are really changing a little in the direction of friendliness, but unless Russia does the same, this does not amount to much... I think we are in a very dangerous situation because the enemy now is at our doors; and quite half the Kingdom, and a quarter of the Cabinet dont seem to realise it at all... Since you left (in 1898) the European situation has changed very materially, owing to the change which has come over German policy: Germany is no longer 'sated' as Bismarck used to say: but has become hungry again: and she has turned to what the France of Louis XIV and Napoleon was: a menace to Europe, before whom minor disagreements have to vanish."²

He developed this theme during the Venezuelan Crisis, in a letter dated January 8, 1903:

"Dear Lord Rosebery,

"... I have been reading the history of 66 and 70 and the conclusion seems evident. That is, that Prussia has made herself the most perfectly organized power in Europe and has used her superiority, as was natural, in order to

1. Strachey Papers 13/14/2. Spring Rice to Strachey, September 17, 1901.
2. India Office Library F/111/224/p.31. Spring Rice to Curzon, November 18, 1902.

destroy less perfect organisations, in her neighbourhood. The governments of France and Austria knew perfectly well that they were inferior not in riches and population, but in fighting power: and were afraid to enlighten public opinion. And Prussia was able to play upon public opinion in those two countries so as to make her neighbours bring on a war, at the very time which suited her best. I think our turn is coming. Our government, like the other two, is afraid to tell the people the truth: and popular opinion is reaching that excitable state in which it will do nothing to make the country an efficient fighting power, and yet is quite prepared to bring on a war. The same policy of flattery and private assurances, so successful with France and Austria, who were lulled into a false feeling of hopefulness and security, is being tried successfully with us. And the same careful preparation of public opinion in Prussia, to prepare the people for the sacrifices of war, is being carried on at home, while the government ... is assuring us that the government is friendly.

"The answer to this policy is - (1) to be prepared at home: (2) to keep careful control of popular opinion and to prevent an outbreak unless at our own time, not Prussia's: (3) to remember that the channel is more important than the China Seas or the Persian Gulf and that the most dangerous enemy is not in Asia or Africa but in Europe, and at our doors.

"I should have thought that in view of what had happened in the last few years, we should be able to realise that France does not intend to attack us and that it would be quite possible to effect an understanding in the Mediterranean, by means of the mediation of Italy, which would release our Channel fleet for service where it is most needed. Everything was pointing that way.

"Suddenly we appear before the world, without any adequate reason, as allies of Germany: the French must naturally feel, that if at this moment, and for (sic) such flimsy grounds, at our own loss, we are willing to accept the dictation of Germany, it is no good attempting an understanding with us, when a word from a foreign sovereign is enough to make us forget our own interests and act (seemingly against America) in the interests of the power which has done everything to hurt us - as no-one knows better than the French. It is safer and wiser for the French to keep their intimacy with Russia and make what terms she can for herself with Germany...

"... Till things are ripe England can be assured of German friendship, France and Russia are encouraged to pursue anti English aims and Austria forced to keep quiet or act, out of fear, in concert with Russia.

"The answer to this policy would seem to be

"To arrive at some understanding with France Spain and Italy on the grounds of a common danger to Western Europe. To explain to France that England has no hostile designs against Russia, but must defend herself if attacked. And an offensive war undertaken by Russia would mean the absolute ruin of French finance. France therefore should explain to Russia that she cannot count on French support in an offensive war. Nothing in her treaty binds her to take sides with Russia in a single handed war against England. (This is a fact).

"England should reorganize her naval defences in view of an attack from the N. Sea and her land defences with a view to an invasion.

"As the U.S. are the natural base of England, for supplies, the cardinal point in a defensive policy is to be on good terms with America.

"Popular opinion should be kept in hand, and educated on these lines:

- (1) not to go astray on distant enterprises.
- (2) not to attack Germany or any other country unless prepared.
- (3) to face the fact that we are no longer safe from invasion and must be ready to endure all the terrible consequences if we still are to remain a great nation. That is, not to fall as Austria fell, in a fortnight."¹

The development of Spring Rice's views on German foreign policy until the beginning of 1903 may be summarised as follows. Until 1896 he criticised Germany's methods, and particularly her habit of blackmail. After 1896 he began to regard the interests of the two countries as fundamentally hostile; by the end of 1902 he was convinced that Germany was aiming for the hegemony of Europe. To counter this he advocated rapprochement with France and Russia, and military preparedness.

In view of Spring Rice's very early and very pronounced awareness of the growing German menace, it is something of a paradox that he was also unusually conscious of the threat posed

1. Rosebery Papers Box 77, p.145. Spring Rice to Rosebery, January 8, 1903.

by Russia. The explanation is that he regarded the rivalry between England and Russia as something that would become serious in the distant future, while the Anglo-German conflict would come to a head in the near future. Spring Rice, with a rare vision, significantly confided his fears of Russian expansion to his American friends. For example he wrote to Roosevelt on July 18, 1896:

"My dear Theodore,

"... I think the Russians ... will be a pretty big power - such a power as the world has never seen. They are quite conscious of it and mean to wait. They also mean to have a Government and civilization of their own. No suffrage - no liberty of religion or any nonsense of that sort. I wonder if they will succeed. I fear we shan't live to see."¹

He wrote again on September 14, 1896:

"My dear Theodore,

"... I wonder what you think of the European situation. It looks like the gathering of great forces for a struggle, not in the immediate (that would be better) but in the far future... Russia is self-sufficient. She is practically invulnerable to attack. She is growing and has room to grow. She is also gradually acquiring command over warlike races with which she can carry out a sort of military assimilation, for which her constitution is perfectly fitted... it is not at all improbable that Europe may be in a given period at the mercy of a power really barbarous but with a high military organization. Europe is busy providing Russia with the means of perfecting that organisation and the communications to bind the Empire together. And no power will attack Russia - no one can afford to. Russia therefore has simply to bide her time. If America disintegrates ... the future of the world is not improbably in the hands of the Slavs."²

He was quite clear about the role that America would have to play, writing to Senator Lodge on July 8, 1898:

1. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.208. Spring Rice to Roosevelt, July 18, 1896.
2. Ibid. Vol. 1, p.210-211. Spring Rice to Roosevelt, September 14, 1896.

"My dear Cabot,

"... I don't believe that England, the island, is strong enough, or will remain comparatively strong enough to defend English civilization alone... I welcome any step which America takes outside her continent because it tends to the increase of the common good."¹

Until 1903 Spring Rice continued to regard the Russian threat as less immediate than the German, and he therefore attached greater priority to the latter. What particularly concerned him was the possibility of a Russo-German combination, as he explained to Roosevelt on November 15, 1898:

"We are in difficult times. There can't be any doubt that on the whole the central European Empires hold together, and that they don't much favour the free peoples, especially those that speak English. They look upon the world as their preserve, and it may be said of Europe that it is their preserve. But, should the system extend out of Europe? That is the question which will be decided in the next fifty years. We have very great disadvantages - we free peoples... when one lives in Europe, one realises that at any moment a combination may be created that will be irresistible. I believe we should make a game fight of it. I only hope so - but it may possibly end very badly. In that case, the fall of England itself will not mean the destruction, or anything like it, of the work of England - provided that the different branches of the race have not got divided by irreconcilable hatreds. For whether the British Empire goes or not, the English people throughout the world will make such a power as can never be destroyed."²

During 1903 Spring Rice was transferred from Cairo to St Petersburg. He wrote on February 20 that "it will be an interesting job to be in Russia and learn something about it... I have never been in Russia, which is the missing link in my experience of the world."³ His residence at St Petersburg made him more

1. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.249. Spring Rice to Lodge, July 8, 1898.
2. Ibid. Vol. 1, p.269-270. Spring Rice to Roosevelt, November 15, 1898.
3. Ibid. Vol. 1, p.360. Spring Rice to Ferguson, February 20, 1903.

conscious than ever before of the potential power of the Russian Empire, the threat from which he no longer considered as remote as hitherto. He wrote to Lord Curzon on September 17, 1903:

"No one who lives here can doubt that Russia is a purely aggressive power - a growing organism - convinced of its conquering mission - and that whatever we do in the way of friendliness in S.E. Europe or elsewhere, we shall never be forgiven the crime of possessing what Russia wants to have. You see she has given up a direct attack on the Balkans (the tradition of 200 years) because she knows that it will cost her dear: she will only give up the idea of a direct attack on Persia India and China if and when she is convinced that she will have to fight for it at a disadvantage. And at present she is convinced that she neednt fight at all."¹

From this point onwards Spring Rice began to temper his criticism of Germany with his greater awareness of the threat posed by Russia. After 1903 Spring Rice's attitude towards the German menace was conditioned by the state of affairs in Russia. So long as Russia was militarily powerful he pointed to the dual threat to the British Empire. When Russia was weakened by war and revolution he warned with even greater urgency that Germany was seeking to obtain the hegemony of Europe. When Russia began to revive he was critical of making important concessions in order to purchase her temporary friendship against Germany. He remained one of the leading critics of German foreign policy, but during 1904, and after 1906, he was never so single-minded in his criticism as Mallet and Bertie were.

It was at the beginning of 1904 that the Russo-Japanese War broke out. England was the ally of Japan and was negotiating an agreement with France, the ally of Russia. The situation

1. India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/179/262. Spring Rice to Curzon, September 17, 1903.

was therefore one of the very greatest difficulty, and Spring Rice wrote to Leo Maxse's wife:

"We can't afford to quarrel with Germany and Russia. But I fear the quarrel with Russia is now irremediable and we must take for granted for some time to come that Russia is determined if she can to pay us out for what she supposes is our ... poisonous hostility. Should war break out and we be engaged in it, there can be no doubt that we shall have a Germany on our flank whom we must ménager - buy and buy at a very dear price.

"So I don't look forward to the future with much satisfaction, except so far as my private affairs are concerned and after all, those I suppose, are what most matter!"¹

A little later he wrote to President Roosevelt:

"Germany has for years been preparing popular opinion at home for a war with England. It is really her only true policy if she is to extend, and she must extend. I don't see how the war can be avoided... For the present Germany is not ready, and England will be flattered and courted... I think Germany has a good game to play in the immediate future, for Russia and England are now hopelessly hostile and this is Germany's chance either to take England's possessions by force, or by the threat of force and a peaceable arrangement...

"This sounds all fancy! but I really don't think it is. It is possible - perhaps almost probable. And the result is that Europe and Asia are likely to see the history of Napoleon and Alexander all over again, but on a much more formidable scale.

"This is the time when an Englishman thinks with some satisfaction that whatever happens to the old establishment there is a new branch on a larger scale, which no Emperor, however splendid, can do any harm to."²

At the beginning of March Spring Rice wrote a long letter in which he discussed the twin threats posed by Russia and by Germany, and began to advocate an agreement with the latter Power in addition to the agreement already being negotiated with France:

1. Maxse Papers Vol. 477, p.43. Spring Rice to Mrs Maxse, January or early February, 1904.
2. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.396. Spring Rice to Roosevelt, February or March 1904.

"My dear Strachey,

"... What does each country want? France and England want practically nothing except what they can give one another by mutual concessions without hurting anyone. An agreement with Spain and Italy would probably be easily secured and would settle all questions.

"Germany and Russia on the other hand are more difficult to deal with. Russia really wants the whole of Asia - and when she has it will use her power to exclude foreign trade. This is an economical menace of the most serious kind.

"Germany is a mystery. Does she simply want the destruction of England, pure and simple, as is advocated in her press and by the university teachers from Treitschke downwards - or does she want definite things which England can help her to get - either actively or passively? If the latter it would be quite possible also to arrive at an understanding with her on the basis of certain concessions. I would suggest a formal promise to afford her equal rights in India, the coaling stations and the Crown Colonies: so that her interests are bound up with the existence of the British Empire.

"If on the other hand, she wishes to continue her career of conquest and 'eliminate' England, as the great opponent - we can do nothing but keep our powder dry. In that case we must wait developments - that is an alliance between the two great autocracies for the destruction of the modern Venice. We may survive. It is unlikely that France would actively join although the bribes offered would be heavy: Spain would certainly join, for revenge and for Gibraltar. But France could hardly like to see a free nation, friendly to herself, eliminated. She could not well join us - because in that case she would be open to attack from the East; but her interests are so strongly against the destruction of an important counterpoise to the two great empires, that she would exercise a friendly influence - not for our victory, but against our absolute destruction.

"As for America it is almost inconceivable that she would look on with indifference while we were being destroyed - the main means of destruction being necessarily the intercepting of food supplies. But then arguments do not apply to a sudden and overwhelming blow: but to a long and obstinate struggle which would give these various influences time to formulate themselves.

"What we should be prepared for in the future (I do not mean certain, but possible) is a coalition between the two Empires, with the tacit consent of France...

"But I doubt whether we can prepare the ground by alliances. We cant substitute ourselves for Russia with the French. What we ought to do - and at once - is to remove all cause for trouble or dissension - to cultivate friendliness - to do everything in order that when the time of trial comes, there should be nothing between us to make an understanding impossible. As to Germany if an understanding is possible - let it be made. I doubt it. At any rate let us make it quite clear that we are not intending to aggress ourselves; and that if Germany acts against us it will be purely for predatory reasons. I fear that Russia is hopeless. To begin with the evident intention of the Russian people and govt is to pick a quarrel with us. Even if this werent the case it is a maxim here that Asia belongs to Russia and that no foreign Govt or merchant has the right to exist there. Also it is openly and frankly stated that Russia does not consider herself to be bound by her engagements, when circumstances change. So even if we made an arrangement with her - which is unlikely - it would ex hypothesi be of no permanent use. Therefore we must give up the hope of any arrangement of a practical kind. Thus we have one practically irreconcilable enemy, if we wish to maintain our position in Asia. As to Germany, she is far more dangerous to us because she threatens not an outlying possession but our vitals. We have good reason to believe that her policy is 'delenda est Britannia.' But she is bound by engagements: she 'stays bought:' so if possible it might be worth while to try to come to an arrangement as long as that arrangement is not in any way directed against France. As to France we ought to have concluded an arrangement - i.e. a settlement of pending differences (-) already. What is the cause of delay?

"In general I should say our policy was to have no outstanding question of foreign politics with France or Germany - to abstain from aggression in word or deed - to prepare ourselves for an attack of a very serious kind, especially on land and at home."

1. Strachey Papers 13/14/7. Spring Rice to Strachey, March 3, 1904. He returned to the subject a fortnight later. See Strachey Papers 13/14/9. Spring Rice to Strachey, March 17, 1904: "If there is such a spoliation alliance (between Germany and Russia) France could hardly join because her turn would come after England's: nor would America. But we ought to be prepared for it. If there is no spoliation alliance, then we can perfectly well cultivate friendly relations with both Russia and Germany, on the basis of a strictly non-aggressive policy. I think this latter point very important... I think the American advice in a crowd is a very good one. Be damned polite but keep your fists ready... I fear our fist is far from ready. So we shall

A month and a half later he again argued against making an agreement with Russia, as it would be worthless once circumstances had changed, and as he felt that Russia could only be contained by deeds, and never by words.¹

By this time the Anglo-French Convention had been signed. Spring Rice had been sending similar letters to Louis Mallet at the Foreign Office. His "mind always ranged far, and his anxiety was so great that he even urged on the Foreign Office in these days to attempt some agreement with Germany. Louis Mallet (however) chaffed him with turning Teutophil, and added that the Anglo-French agreement was still unsettled; signed in April, it could not receive ratification till the autumn; and to coquet with Germany would jeopardise this advance - which indeed had notably cleared the ground."² On April 13, therefore, Spring Rice wrote to Mallet again. The latter added some comments before passing the letter on to Lord Lansdowne:

"Dear Louis,

"Thanks for your letter. This agreement with France is splendid -- especially as regards Morocco and Egypt... What you say about Germany seems to me conclusive -- i.e. that if we now at once begin to make up to Germany France will think we are betraying her and the advantage will be

1. Strachey Papers 13/14/11. Spring Rice to Strachey, April 14, 1904.
2. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.414. Note by S. Gwynn.

have for a time at any rate to stay very low. So I think it would be a good thing to be as polite to everyone for the time - even to Germany, and not to take publicly for granted that Germany is our deadly enemy (although acting as we must, on the perpetual supposition that she may be). If she is aggressive we must be prepared. If she is not aggressive then we will and can be friends with her."

lost. At the same time the fact remains that we are in a dangerous situation if we are (as we are) on very bad terms with the two great military Empires...

(L.M. "I said that to approach Germany now would be fatal to the Entente with France which we ought to make the pivot of our policy.")

"... I don't believe in having two such enemies as Germany and Russia: I don't believe in the possibility of a permanent and stable arrangement with Russia unless sanctioned by force. I don't believe in the possibility of an arrangement with Germany directed against Russia...

"... I quite see how dangerous it would be to attempt at present any wide and far reaching agreement with Germany, if it would in any way, as it probably would, counteract the good effect of the French arrangement. The next step should be no doubt to use the French arrangement as a stepping stone to some sort of improvement in our relations with Russia... But it must be repeated -- an agreement with Russia which Russia can denounce and brush at any moment (sic) -- such as assurances as to spheres of influence etc -- is not of much good. It only means a renewal of the old dispute in a new form.

(L.M. "He means, we must have a Treaty.")

"What a splendid thing it is that by this agreement with France we have at last got a firm starting point for improving our relations with the other great powers of Europe -- and certainly it is a finger post pointing to Russia."¹

By the end of 1904, when it had become clear that Russia was unlikely to defeat Japan in the Far East, Spring Rice began to turn his attention towards the new threat posed by Germany. He wrote on December 4: "Of course, the policy of Kaiser Wilhelm is a secret to nobody now. It is to have the hegemony of Western Europe and leave the East to Russia."² He added the following April:

1. FO 800/115/p.300. Spring Rice to Mallet, April 13, 1904; with comments by Mallet.
2. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.439. Spring Rice to Roosevelt, December 7, 1904.

"Dear Mrs Roosevelt,

"... The break up of Russia is having a tremendous effect in Europe. It is just like the departure of a big bully from a school. The other bullies have such a good time and kick the little boys. Did you realise that France really is a little boy in comparison with Germany?... She can't fight, and England and Italy her new friends have such small armies that we can't protect her. So Germany can do pretty much what she pleases, unless she is ashamed. It makes it look as if times would be very interesting in Europe in the next ten years."¹

For this reason he continued to hope for a rapprochement with Germany, once the new Anglo-French entente had had time to establish its roots. He wrote to Lascelles in May 1905:

"Dear Sir Frank,

"I send a letter I have written to Knollys - He asked me to write. I fear you won't agree with a good deal of it. But I do think it important for us to remember that we must not encourage France to go to war in the present state of the Russian army and of our own. It would be simply criminal. Germany has the cards."²

In the summer of 1905 Germany took advantage of the new international situation to force the French government to dismiss Delcassé and to consent to the holding of the Algeciras Conference. Spring Rice was now convinced that Germany had embarked on a bid for European hegemony, and he wrote on July 10, for the benefit of President Roosevelt:

"the most serious aspect of the question is the general balance of power in Europe. Since 1870 the military party in Germany has twice (1875, 1887) done its best to bring on a war with France, with a view to bleed her to death, and so end once for all the cry for revenge. On both occasions the sovereigns of Russia and England appealed directly to the good old Emperor to urge him not to permit such a crime - and their appeals were backed by an immense naval and military force. On both occasions the appeals

1. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.469. Spring Rice to Mrs Roosevelt, April 26, 1905.
2. FO 800/12/p.193. Spring Rice to Lascelles, May 2, 1905.

were successful. But now, the Russian army does not exist for Europe. And the English fleet cannot prevent the invasion of France. The German Government, after publicly stating that their interests in Morocco were not affected, and after a year's interval, during which occurred the crash of Russia, suddenly proclaimed that their interests were vitally threatened and must be defended, even at the risk of war. The French people, who had no very great interest in Morocco or in the diplomatic triumphs of French Foreign Ministers, refused to incur the risk of a terrible war on account of a political scheme to which they were indifferent. They had to yield. As a result, it is plainly evident to the whole world, by this tremendous object lesson, that, as soon as the military power of Russia is broken by an external enemy, and that of Austria by internal dissensions, Germany is perfectly willing and able to threaten France with a war of 60 against 40 millions. England cannot allow France to be annihilated or turned into a province of Germany, to be directed as a subservient ally against herself. In case of such an act of aggression, England, in self-defence, will have to fight, and the war will, if it does break out, be a terrible one and will mean that we must organize an immense land army to assist France against her enemy, which leaves France practically alone as a continental power against an enemy who has an immense numerical superiority. It is most probable that Germany will pursue her advantage, and that in the Morocco conference it will be made evident to the world and to the French people that France must yield, or incur the immense risk of war with the support of a power which has not an equal stake in the struggle. So far as the small interests immediately concerned are affected, we cannot complain. Germany may think them worth fighting about and France not; in which case France would have to yield. But if the negotiations result in the virtual surrender of French independence and the dictation by Germany of French policy, we are of course face to face with a very great danger. For my part, I shouldn't be sorry to see the English people convinced of the necessity of enduring the greatest sacrifices in a good cause. We shall, I hope, take to heart your own words to your people that 'We can only be saved by our own efforts and not by an alliance with anyone else.' At the same time, we do have a great confidence that in addition to the physical force which we provide ourselves, we shall have the moral force of believing that we are in the right, and that we retain the sympathy of men like you, whom we understand and believe in, and who, we hope, understand us.

"Of course, this is written on the supposition (which we trust is false) that the policy of Germany will be guided by pure aggression. German diplomatists at Rome and Madrid and German financiers in Paris have definitely stated (perhaps in bluff) what German policy will be; and there is a general feeling of alarm in Europe, much like that excited

by Louis XIV. And this feeling is based on very serious grounds: Nothing, however, will persuade the English and French people to be aggressive in order to anticipate possible German aggression. That is out of the question. The danger is that their peoples, which do profoundly detest the thought of war, may be suddenly confronted with a danger which can only be met by courage, resolution, and acts. And here comes in the great inferiority of a free commercial people in preparedness and military organisation. Their strength is in staying power - the strength of a monarchy in striking power; and in modern warfare the first blow counts for almost everything. Herein lies the ground for our anxiety."¹

He was afraid that the Americans would be tricked by the Germans, commenting on July 29 that "unfortunately there are signs that Roosevelt, especially now that Hay is gone, may in spite of his independent mind be more and more inclined to listen to the Kaiser."² He therefore sent a warning to Mrs Roosevelt, for transmission to the President.³ He was also afraid that the Liberal Opposition would fail to grasp the true importance of the new situation that had been created by the collapse of Russia. He therefore sent a very long letter to J.A. Spender, the editor

1. Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.476-478. Memorandum by Spring Rice, July 10, 1905.
2. Ibid. Vol. 1, p.483. Spring Rice to G. Balfour, July 29, 1905.
3. Ibid. Vol. 1, p.483. Spring Rice to Mrs Roosevelt, August 10, 1905: "Here in England, we don't at all know what to make of the present position of affairs in Europe. Two of the great powers have practically disappeared so far as active intervention in European affairs is concerned, Russia and Austria. Germany is by far the most powerful of the remaining powers, and she has an old feud to settle with France. If France is attacked, there is no Russia to help her and the English Army is at present practically negligible for a continental campaign. If France is forced to accept German hegemony, England remains the only independent great power, and we are in much the same position as during the Napoleonic wars... All this may be pure supposition and it is incredible that the Kaiser should deliberately bring on a war of pure aggression. But there is a strong party in Germany which desires it."

of the "Westminster Gazette," putting forward his views.¹ On October 5 he warned another journalist that "the real object of Germany is not to form a coalition against Japan, but to form a coalition überhaupt: I mean once Berlin (is) the common centre of common (sic) action between all three continental powers, that common action can readily be extended."² He was not, however, worried about the impending change of government in England, writing in September 1905 that "as for foreign policy I think Ld Lansdowne has acted much as a sensible liberal would have acted and that a sensible liberal will act much as Ld L has acted."³

Spring Rice, like Mallet, was therefore one of the three leading critics of German foreign policy in the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service. Unlike Mallet he had been very conscious

1. British Museum Add. MS 46391, p.142. Spring Rice to Spender, August 11, 1905. For the text of this and a subsequent letter, see Appendix VII. He included the following words: "Please excuse my writing at such length but I have special reasons (for America) to hope that the liberal party will in all things maintain the policy of cordial cooperation with France. We are now being assured that the liberals intend to throw France over in order to secure the good graces of Germany. The argument is being used not only in Germany but in America and France and it seems a pity that anything should be said or done by the liberal leaders to encourage the idea which I sincerely believe to be entirely false."
2. Strachey Papers 13/14/15. Spring Rice to Strachey, October 5, 1905. See also Strachey Papers 13/14/16. Spring Rice to Strachey, October 10, 1905: "I don't know whether we can prove that Germany is contemplating an attack on us. It seems to be clear that Germany did say that she meant to attack France." See also Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.498. Spring Rice to Mrs Roosevelt, October 5, 1905: "The unfortunate quarrel with Germany grows from bad to worse, and though I do not believe in war until the German navy is increased or until Germany has a really strong naval ally, yet the indications are most threatening."
3. British Museum Add. MS 46391, p.156. Spring Rice to Spender, September 13, 1905.

of the threat posed by Russia, and remained opposed to the policy of Anglo-Russian rapprochement if this was to be achieved at the price of important concessions. In the months preceding the Algeciras Conference he clearly stated his opinion that Germany was making a bid for European hegemony, and in this way foreshadowed the opinions of Eyre Crowe. But his fear of a Russian revival made him more anxious than Mallet for an improvement in relations with Germany. He wrote on January 5, 1906:

"My dear Louis,

"... I ... do my best to keep on good terms with the German Embassy (at St Petersburg) - and I hope with success. I think we should, now that we are sure that the govt realises the danger - and that France knows our real sentiments - do all we can to prevent that state of unnecessary excitement springing up in England which made it possible for Germany in 1870 to get France to declare war in a way that all the world condemned and precisely at the moment which suited Germany best. Ld. Salisbury was very strong about this."¹

(10)

Eyre Crowe was the third, and ultimately most outspoken, of the three chief critics of German foreign policy in the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service during these years. As with Mallet and Spring Rice his views were originally influenced by the events of the 1890s, but were fundamentally altered by the collapse of Russia in 1905.

1. FO 800/72/p.25. Spring Rice to Mallet, January 5, 1906. Mallet had written to Spring Rice in December 1905 that "Sir Frank (Lascelles) describes you as having entirely lost all your anti-German feeling, which has caused great alarm to all your friends." As Stephen Gwynn remarked, "Spring Rice must have been in conversation specially considerate of his father-in-law's feelings." See Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 2, p.17-18.

During the 1890s Eyre Crowe was an intimate friend of his brother-in-law, Spenser Wilkinson, the journalist and military historian. The latter had undertaken a detailed study of Imperial Defence with Sir Charles Dilke, and had realised as a result that "the measures requisite for defence were dependent on a sound foreign policy, of which the keystone must be the maintenance of a Navy adequate to secure the command of the sea in war." Spenser Wilkinson had therefore written "a series of essays pleading for a national policy" and had "then proposed an organisation for the reform of the Admiralty, an organisation which took the shape of the Navy League."¹

Spenser Wilkinson put forward his views in two important books. The first, called "The Great Alternative," appeared in 1894, and it was followed in 1896 by the second, "The Nation's Awakening," in which he restated his views for popular consumption.² In the first of these two books he wrote:

"We are compelled to choose between two extremes. England must either become a dependency of another Power holding the mastery of the sea or else she must herself command the sea and lead the world."³

This was the Great Alternative. Spenser Wilkinson recalled later:

"I reviewed British relations with the Continental Powers since 1882, giving a sketch of the Eastern question, of the occupation of Egypt, and of our difficulties with Germany and France. I gave an account of the underhand dealings by which Bismarck made the beginnings of a German

1. H.S. Wilkinson: "Thirty-Five Years, 1874-1909." p.vii.
2. At the end of 1894 Spenser Wilkinson also published a "Shilling Shocker" on the subject, which he hoped would help sell "The Great Alternative." See Spenser Wilkinson Papers 8/8. Wilkinson to J.A. Crowe, November 22, 1894.
3. H.S. Wilkinson: op. cit., p.186.

colonial empire. I suggested that foreign policy was a national matter having no relation to the rivalry between Liberals and Conservatives; that in the past in every great European crisis Great Britain had been the opponent of any Power that aimed at supremacy in Europe. That in alliance with States defending their independence she had been able to win her battles at sea, and as a consequence to acquire her Colonial and Indian Empire."¹

He played a leading part in founding the Navy League, which was designed to press for a General Staff at the Admiralty and for a stronger Navy at sea.² He did not, however, consider that ships were enough in themselves, and for this reason he urged that there should be a "national awakening."³ He also stressed the vitally important proviso that "the British Empire can subsist only so long as it is a useful agent for the general benefit of humanity."⁴

It is not possible to say with any certainty the extent to which Spenser Wilkinson influenced, or was influenced by, Eyre Crowe. He himself wrote that "I used to discuss with Crowe my theory of British policy, which he accepted without reserve, and both my political volumes were read by Crowe and his contemporaries in the office."⁵ In fact Crowe seems to have played an actual part in the writing of "The Great Alternative," "the later chapters (of which) were written in the Foreign Office, where I was staying with my brother-in-law, Eyre Crowe, then resident clerk."⁶ Spenser Wilkinson testified that Crowe "read my

1. H.S. Wilkinson: op. cit., p.187.
2. Ibid. p.190.
3. J. Luvaas: "The Education of an Army." p.272-273.
4. H.S. Wilkinson: op. cit., p.197.
5. Ibid. p.221.
6. This was in 1893 or the early part of 1894. In 1894 an "absolute rule" was laid down preventing the Resident Clerks from having relatives and friends to stay in the

manuscript as I wrote it, and agreed with the opinions I expressed."¹

The Krüger Telegram incident took place, as we have seen, in January 1896, between the publication of "The Great Alternative" and "The Nation's Awakening." Before 1896 Spenser Wilkinson had "flirted with the idea of a defensive alliance with Germany, if this could be accomplished without jeopardy to 'Greater Britain,'" by which he meant Great Britain, Australia and Canada. "But as a result of German diplomatic interference in South Africa in 1896 and her provocative challenge to British control of the seas, Wilkinson became 'completely cured' of the notion." He "did not regard a conflict between the two nations as inevitable, (but) from that moment on there was a new note of urgency in Wilkinson's plea for a national policy and the requisite military and naval strength to make it effective."² It was thus the Krüger Telegram which had brought about the need for a "national awakening," and it was the influence of that development which marked the differences between Spenser Wilkinson's two books.

It is not possible to say for sure that Eyre Crowe also began to view Anglo-German relations in a new light after 1896, but it

1. H.S. Wilkinson: op. cit., p.187.
2. J. Luvaas: op. cit., p.273.

Foreign Office even if "the room is sufficiently large to accommodate two persons decently." In 1896, when Spenser Wilkinson wrote "The Nation's Awakening," Crowe tried to persuade Sanderson to sanction an exception to this rule "for a few nights;" but the rule was upheld. See FO 366/760/p.131. Dallas to Crowe, May 13, 1896; with minute by Crowe, May 16, 1896.

seems more than likely. Certainly the new note struck by "The Nation's Awakening" alarmed both Sir Charles Dilke and Eyre Crowe's father. The latter wrote to Spenser Wilkinson on June 14, 1896:

"My dear Henry,

"... I see your book advertised, and hope to get it as soon as may be. I do not wonder at Dilke's objections. But after all if I compare in my long experience of politics the conduct towards ourselves of the various nations with which we have been thrown in contact, France, Russia, Austria, Italy and Germany, I cannot see that Germany has behaved worse than any of the rest. I recollect Austria signing a treaty of commerce of which Morier who drew it was very proud¹... and after a few years, Austria denounced the treaty and returned to the protective rates that we had negotiated to abolish, and left us unable to reimpose the taxes which we had remitted. When we told Austria, her conduct was unfair, and asked her to negotiate further, she said, No. We got all we wanted. You have nothing more to treat about. I equally recollect the solemn assurances from the Russians who were never to fortify Batoum etc etc. and which (sic) did precisely all those things which she swore by all the gods not to do. France has behaved in a multitude of small things exactly as Russia has done and as unblushingly explained away the resolutions of the past to warrant the encroachments of the future or present. Germany has been no better, but she is no worse as regards ourselves than the rest of the continental states. If therefore we must have an ally, we are at liberty to choose him fairly among the whole lot of which we know that one is as unscrupulous as the other. As to having an ally at all, the tendency of Englishmen is to take allies when they are wanted, not to foresee the wanting of them. Do we want an ally? You I fancy think we do. I agree. But then, what is to be the price, and is there not a chance, if we make an alliance in 1896 that another cabinet may say we won't continue it in 1898."²

This letter makes it clear that Spenser Wilkinson was looking around for European allies, which could in practice only be France

1. This commercial treaty had been negotiated in 1876-77.
2. Spenser Wilkinson Papers 8/44. J.A. Crowe to Wilkinson, June 14, 1896.

and Russia, as early as 1896. It was true that all the European Powers had over the years behaved equally badly towards England, but the recent developments in South Africa marked out Germany as posing a more immediate threat to the security of the British Empire.

In 1896 there was little that Germany could do, apart from intriguing to create a Continental League. In 1898, however, and more particularly during the Boer War in 1900, Germany enacted her two Navy Laws, under which a new High Seas Fleet was to be built with the stated aim of challenging British naval supremacy.

Germany was not, however, the only European Power which threatened British security. France, for example, made a bid for the control of the upper Nile which resulted in the Fashoda Crisis of 1898. At one point Spenser Wilkinson wrote to Joseph Chamberlain that "I can find no one accustomed to watch the French with knowledge who thinks they will give in without war and I do not think they will."¹ Conflict was in the end averted by the new French Foreign Minister, Delcassé, who realised France's strategic weakness and desired closer relations with England. It was Russia, however, France's ally since 1894, that posed the real threat at this time to the British Empire. For example Esmé Howard has written:

"During the short time that I spent at work in the Foreign Office, I noticed that, in those days at any rate, amongst the younger members there were continual epidemics of righteous indignation against the misdeeds of this or that Foreign Power, at that time principally against Russia.

1. J. Chamberlain Papers 7/2/1/5. Wilkinson to J. Chamberlain, March 12, 1898.

Russia was considered the arch enemy and the arch fiend who was intriguing all over the world against Great Britain."¹

At the beginning of the new century it is probable that Crowe would have viewed the Russian and German threats as equally dangerous. The French also had conflicting colonial interests, notably in Egypt, but the Fashoda Crisis had revealed that France did not have sufficient strength to have her way in the face of British firmness. It is unfortunately not possible to say with any exactitude how Crowe reacted to this dual Russian and German threat. In his administration of the African Protectorates he was influenced in his dealings with Germany by "whether we wish or do not wish to be obliging to the German govt" at any given moment.² He would have noticed remarks that were being made by German politicians that "we must keep cool, and until we have a strong fleet it would be a mistake to let ourselves be driven into a hostile policy towards England."³ Yet in 1904, when the Russian fleet fired on some British fishing boats on Dogger Bank during the Russo-Japanese war, Crowe adopted an aggressive line. One of his colleagues wrote to the Ambassador at St Petersburg that "I do hope it is going to turn out all right," and that "except for the truculent Crowe and a few kindred spirits not a soul I meet wants war and the excitement in the press was much overdone."⁴

1. Sir E. Howard: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.51.
2. FO 2/692/p.309. Minute by Crowe, 8/11/01, on Zimmermann, 7/11/01.
3. E.L. Woodward: op. cit., p.51. This particular remark was made by Herr Bassermann, a prominent member of the National Liberal Party, during the party congress at Eisenach in October 1902.
4. Hardinge Papers Vol. 7, p.230. Graham to Hardinge, November 15, 1904.

In October 1902 Eyre Crowe wrote a long letter "late at night after a busy day" to Leo Maxse, in which he put forward his views on both the Russian and the German threats. This letter, which is one of the most revealing documents that Crowe ever wrote, was prompted by an article that Leo Maxse had written for the "National Review." The article had called attention to the German menace, and had advocated an agreement with Russia. Crowe's letter was dated October 15:

"My dear Maxse,

"I have read your article with the greatest interest, and I may say at once that there is very little in it with which I don't agree...

"As regards the references to Russia, I think the statement ... that 'there is not one of them (our secular controversies with Russia) which could not be settled by the exercise of a little good-will and a modicum of common sense' is not reconcilable with facts. You may believe that a settlement by mutual concessions is possible - I myself do not share that belief. But if it is possible, it is quite certain that the difficulties in the way are not such as can be removed by a little good will and a little common sense. The difficulties are very great. For years past I have watched every single negotiation or interchange of views with Russia. Nothing could be more conciliatory or more considerate - not to say abjectly servile - than the way we approach them. The number of times we have in recent years made direct overtures for (sic) them for the purpose of having a friendly understanding is greater than you will think possible. The result has always been the same. The answers are always in the nature of studied insults, and the most transparent lies and frauds are palmed off on us, showing that it is not even thought necessary to make a good pretence. There is not the slightest indication that there is on the part of any Russian party or authority the slightest desire for a good understanding with us. And you do not realize how very seriously our position is weakened by the constant overtures made to Russia by our press, by our parliamentary speakers, and by the govt, begging for a good understanding. The man whose favourite exercise is to kick you is not likely to be much impressed by the kickee protesting at the top of his voice and all day that the wish of his soul is to be on friendly terms with the kicker. You imagine that by our offering a free hand to Russia in Turkey and Persia, we could conciliate them. It has been

tried. The answer is that they dont want to be obliged to us for something which they believe they can in due course of time obtain for themselves. Look at China. Do you really believe Russia cared a fig about Arthur Balfour having offered them an ice free port. When their moment came they took it, asking neither us nor anybody else. If you proclaim loudly that it is only natural that Russia should have or take this that and the other, can you wonder that Russia should ask indignantly: 'Then why the deuce do you try to make a favour of letting me have it?'

"This is in fact doing as regards Russia the very thing we have done so often with Germany with such deplorable results. It is the policy - if it can be dignified by that name - of studying in the first instance what is convenient or least inconvenient to other people, in order to do that. My idea is that whether it is Russia or Germany, we should look after our own interests first and last and assert them: then neither Russia nor Germany will want to quarrel with us.

"But now as regards Germany: As I said before I dont disagree with anything you say - I speak to you as the author of the article, at present - but I am not sure that the way you attack the problem is the most judicious. You begin by disclaiming all animosity against Germany but the whole of the article is a reasoned statement of the grounds why such animosity is necessary, at least that is the impression it makes on me. Now I believe the same things could be said but put forward from a different point of view so as to avoid that imputation. All you have to do is to show how and why it is that Germany placed as she is, must find it in her interest to act as she does and that therefore it is absurd to expect her to act differently pour les beaux yeux de l'Angleterre. For practical politics it is beside the mark to tell us that what Germany does is very wicked - though no doubt it is so. But if you show, as I believe can be shown, that Germany when she asks for our alliance, cannot possibly contemplate a sharing of risks on equal terms, because in a conflict she is the one really exposed to great danger, whilst we are much less so, and that therefore she will always ask for something in addition that we must give, and that there is the great risk of our giving the additional thing demanded slap-off, without our reaping the problematical benefit - then you establish a strong case for our holding aloof from a German alliance. And you probably know that it is historically true that on the several occasions on which we have made agreements and 'understandings' with Germany, we have invariably been asked to throw in something over and above the mere 'give and take' arrangements, on the avowed ground that we should thereby acquire Germany's good will and friendship. How this friendship has manifested itself, you well know. I believe however with you that the whole

situation would be at once radically changed if we were stronger, militarily, navally, and above all politically, or morally, if you like to call it so. Once we establish a name for being a people able and ready to vindicate and enforce its rights, our value as friend and enemy will be immensely increased, and the first consequence will be that we are treated with respect by Germany. Then would come the moment for understandings with other powers, whether Germany and (sic) Russia, but not, in my opinion, before. In the meantime, on the supposition that Germany contemplates an attack on us, as you think, you play her game by proclaiming open hostility. I believe we should leave them severely alone, calmly but courteously refuse all she demands, and meanwhile get our affairs in order. As it is there is a large section of the German people who actually believe that our government are scheming to bring about a war with Germany. This belief is most welcome to the German govt. It enables them to increase their navy, whilst at the same time they come to us with expressions of regret that the popular outcry in England forces their hands. I think it would be prudent not to play their game for them in this way."¹

Crowe did not change these views, except in one respect, for the next twelve years.

By the early months of 1905, shortly after the Dogger Bank Incident, Russia had suffered her collapse both from within and without. This, as has been said, resulted in a temporary interlude during which Germany was left as the most powerful State in Europe. It was not until 1913 that the Russo-German balance began to be restored, and it was in the knowledge of such an inevitable restoration, that Germany determined to seize her opportunity and began to prepare herself politically, militarily and at sea, for the decisive conflict. It was during this interlude, as we have seen, that the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 was signed; it was also during this interlude that Crowe, like

1. Maxse Papers Vol. 450, p.542. Crowe to Maxse, October 15, 1902. For Crowe's account of the Anglo-German negotiations for an alliance from 1899-1901, see BD III, p.383. Minute by Crowe, May 20, 1910.

Spring Rice, saw Germany as a Power that was, consciously or otherwise, making a bid for European hegemony.

It was at the end of March 1905 that the German Emperor landed at Tangier. On the 29th of the same month Crowe wrote the following memorandum for Lord Lansdowne:

"I have obtained the following information from an absolutely reliable German source:

"Germany has, after careful deliberation, come to the conclusion that the moment has come for a complete change of direction in her foreign policy. Russia is no longer considered to be a Power with whom close relations must be cultivated at any price, even at some sacrifice. The military value of the Franco-Russian alliance has been so much impaired that the possibility of a war with France creates no terrors. The two Powers whose goodwill it is now essential to acquire are Japan and the United States. Active steps have for some time past been taken with this object, and the German Emperor has reason to believe that this policy is already making substantial progress in both those countries. In the United States, especially, as the more important factor, he thinks he will be able to 'forestall England' in coming to a friendly understanding. From Japan, assurances are said to have been received justifying the belief that before long she will be ready to turn to Germany, whose determination to assert herself in the world is fully appreciated, rather than to Great Britain whose 'alleged friendship the Japanese have never regarded with any illusions.'

"The principle promoter of this policy has been Prince Henry of Prussia."¹

On April 4 Eric Barrington sent Crowe's memorandum to Lascelles, describing it as "very interesting."² In the correspondence which followed between Lascelles and Lansdowne neither man gave any real evidence of having comprehended the true importance of Crowe's memorandum, concentrating as they did on Germany's overtures to America and Japan. Lascelles wrote on April 7:

1. FO 800/130/p.36. Memorandum by Crowe, March 29, 1905. Cf: Sir C. Spring Rice: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.462. Spring Rice to Hay, March 15, 1905.
2. FO 800/12/p.183. Barrington to Lascelles, April 4, 1905.

"My dear Lansdowne,

"... I am very grateful to you for sending me Crowe's Memorandum about the change in the direction of Germany's Foreign policy. It is I have no doubt perfectly accurate, and I do not think it is at all unnatural that Germany should seek the good will of Japan and the United States. The Triple Alliance is now but a weak reed, and certainly Japan and the United States are the most important factors in the Far East. You will be in a far better position than I can possibly be to judge whether there is anything to justify the Emperor's belief that he will be able to 'forestall England' in coming to a friendly understanding with the United States, but I hope and believe that our relations with both States are of such a satisfactory nature that they are not likely to be disturbed by any attempts which the Emperor may make to sow distrust of England among them."¹

Lansdowne replied on April 9:

"My dear Lascelles,

"... As to the attempts of the German Govt to ingratiate themselves with the United States and Japan I am under the impression that these two Powers, while certainly desiring to be well with Germany, know exactly how much value to place on such overtures and are not likely to be driven by them off their true course. All my information leads me to think that we have never stood better with the President or with the Japanese Govt than we do at this moment."²

But the two men had missed the main point. Germany wished to improve her relations with America and Japan because they were the two Powers she could not harm. The really important point was that the collapse of Russia had left France without an effective ally and completely dependent on England for support. If it were true that Germany had decided that a war with France no longer contained "any terrors," (and the German Emperor's visit to Tangier two days after Crowe wrote his memorandum was evidence of this), then only England could restrain Germany from going to

1. FO 800/18/p.167. Lascelles to Lansdowne, April 7, 1905.
2. FO 800/12/p.186. Lansdowne to Lascelles, April 9, 1905.

war, and only England could effectively support France if Germany would not be restrained. Germany's attempts to protect her exposed colonies were secondary to this. The really important point was the effect of Germany's policy on the new European balance. It was on this that Lascelles and Lansdowne made no comment at all.

(11)

It is well known that King Edward VII was erratic in his approach to foreign affairs, and that he did not always understand the issues involved.¹ He had been in favour of the Anglo-French Entente, and had personally done much to smooth its path. At the same time he disliked his German nephew and the methods of the German Government. In October 1905 he wrote that the Germans were indulging in "political blackmailing and bluffing as usual;"² yet shortly afterwards he began to enquire why the British government pursued a policy that was more friendly towards France than towards Germany. Eyre Crowe recalled many years later:

"In November or December 1905 I was instructed to prepare a short statement, on a few pages, explaining our relations with Germany, for submission to the King, who, I was told, had repeatedly expressed himself perturbed by what he thought was our persistently unfriendly attitude towards Germany contrasted with our eagerness to run after France and do everything the French asked.

"I said I felt unable to make such a statement in a few pages. But I would write in as brief a form as I thought the subject allowed, what my views on the matter

1. G. Brook-Shepherd: "Uncle of Europe," exaggerates both the importance and continuity of King Edward's "diplomacy." It gives him credit for policy and actions that were really the Government's.
2. G. Monger: op. cit., p.227. Minute by King Edward VII, October 23, 1905.

were, for the Secretary of State, who would then be able to make use, if he thought fit, of any part of my paper, to make a submission to H.M.."1

Crowe was unable to carry out this task for the best part of a year, but in the interval he was appointed Senior Clerk in the Western Department and he began to put forward his views in a number of minutes. For example he wrote on January 29:

"There can be no doubt as to the immense popularity of the Pan-German movement and of the agitation carried on by the German Navy League. Both these organisations are inspired by bitter and often scurrilous hostility to Great Britain. It is of course true that the Pan-German aspirations to dominate over the Low Countries and over the Adriatic are openly disavowed by all responsible people in Germany. But it would be foolish to doubt that if and when a favourable opportunity occurred for realising such political aspirations in whole or in part, the opportunity would be seized by the German Government with all its wonted energy.

"It is well to remember that Prince Bismarck and all his officials never tired of assuring Gt. Britain right up to 1884 that the agitation in favour of acquiring German colonies was a movement of a handful of unimportant and misguided faddists. Yet shortly afterwards we had the disagreeable incident of Angra Pequena, the still more offensive proceedings of the German Govt in the Cameroons, at St. Lucia Bay, and in New Guinea, from which period, indeed, dates the present anti-English agitation in Germany."2

An incident had occurred at the beginning of the year to which Crowe attached considerable importance. On January 4, 1906, Lascelles had forwarded to the Foreign Office a letter from Sir William Ward, the Consul-General at Hamburg, dated January 2. Ward had had a conversation on New Year's Day with Tschirschky, the Prussian Minister at Hamburg, in which the latter had said that,

1. FO 371/2939/64992. Minute by Crowe, March 24, 1917.
2. BD III, 413. Minute by Crowe, 29/1/06, on Tower No. 14, 24/1/06.

"if Germany thought that ... France was being supported in her intention now, and would be supported at the Conference by Great Britain ..., she would do everything to thwart and frustrate such a coalition between France and Great Britain, which was entered into in order to force Germany to abandon her position on this or on any other occasion in which Germany might be particularly interested. Germany's policy always has been, and would be, to try and frustrate any Coalition between the two States which might result in damaging Germany's interests or prestige, and Germany would, if she thought that such a Coalition was being formed, even if its practical results had not yet been carried into practical effect, not hesitate to take such steps as she thought proper to break up the Coalition... M. de T. said: 'Oh, you may report this home if you like.'"¹

At the end of the same month Tschirschky was appointed to succeed Richthofen as German Foreign Secretary, and Crowe minuted that "Herr von Tschirschky is the outspoken gentleman who informed our Consul-general at Hamburg that it was a cardinal principle of German policy to break up all coalitions between other powers which might tend to affect German prestige."²

In February Crowe minuted that Germany's aim was to compel "France to become more or less of a satellite of Germany as regards her foreign policy."³ Later the same month he wrote that,

"It would be foolish to expect that, if Germany has deliberately accepted a line of policy which she considers

1. FO 800/19/p.1. Lascelles to Grey, January 4, 1906; enclosing Ward to Lascelles, January 2, 1906.
2. FO 371/76/3439. Minute by Crowe, 29/1/06, on Lascelles No. 37, 26/1/06. Thereafter Tschirschky remained one of Crowe's "bêtes noires." See, e.g., FO 371/1374/14421. Minute by Crowe, 6/4/12, on Cartwright Tel. No. 34, 4/4/12: "Herr von Tschirschky embodies in his person all the worst traditions of the post-Bismarckian Prussian school of diplomacy. He is brutal, false, and devoid of character. It was Herr von Tschirschky who in 1906 solemnly warned Sir W. Ward, and begged him to inform H.M.G. that Germany would not stand any combination between other Powers which she considered might affect her disadvantageously, and would take steps to break up such combinations if necessary."
3. FO 371/172/5311. Minute by Crowe, 13/2/06, on Cartwright No. 29, 10/2/06.

in her best interest, she may be persuaded to abandon it on 'the opinion of the civilized world' being brought to bear upon the emperor. The only consideration that would influence her in the desired direction, would be the apprehension of the other powers taking some action to make the German position difficult. But there is not at present any danger of such a thing happening: Russia is powerless, France is avowedly not prepared to assert her claims by force, Great Britain, even if she desired, could not move without a French initiative; Austria and Italy and Spain do not count; the United States will not interfere. Therefore Germany feels quite secure in pursuing her own path."¹

When the Algeciras conference was over, and Germany's diplomatic defeat had led to the resignation of Holstein, Crowe minuted on April 9:

"Herr von Holstein has not, I think, been a friend of this country. That is of course quite a different thing from saying that he desired to have a war against us. No power wants a war. The great object is to get what is desired, without a war. Germany in particular is not likely to bring about a war with England for some time, or in fact unless and until she feels, that is, humanly speaking, certain, she can beat us decisively. The time for that is not yet, as Herr von Holstein and all responsible Germans now realise. There was however a time not long ago, when the opinion prevailed in Germany that England was played out and done for, not likely to hold her own in the world. That opinion was, I believe, to some extent, shared by Bismarck and by his immediate disciples, of whom Herr von Holstein was one of the most faithful. This opinion was largely based on the success with which Bismarck 'squeezed' England in the interest of German policy. When the process of squeezing at last became less prolific of results and it was found that England still had some life in her, German opinion about England was as it were 'désorientée.' There was a succession of disillusionments. It had not been expected that we should emerge unscathed out of the South African War; the first and the second treaties of alliance with Japan were both great surprises to the German Foreign Office; and lastly the conclusion of the understanding with France quite upset their calculations and falsified their confident expectations. These had been nourished, not the least, by Herr von Holstein, and it is not unjust that he should now pay the penalty for having persistently

1. BD III, 308. Minute by Crowe, 24/2/06, on Spring Rice Tel. No. 42, 24/2/06.

failed to appreciate the position which England really occupies in the world -- (so long as she is strong)."¹

Anglo-German relations underwent the expected improvement after the conference, and Crowe pointed out the reason:

"The fact ... that Prince Bülow now tries to make out how pleased he is with us, may be taken as evidence of Germany's desire to stand well with us. The policy of showing a firm front and asserting British rights has once again been successful in inducing other countries to treat us properly."²

But despite his pleasure at this improvement, Crowe was opposed to any attempt to come to an understanding:

"All this talking about an 'understanding' between the two countries has an air of unreality. We have come to an understanding with France, and there may be one with Russia. But the essential thing in both cases is a common ground of action or negotiation. There were actual differences to be adjusted with France; an understanding with Russia would presumably mean a removal of similar differences.

"But with Germany we have no differences whatever. An understanding which does not consist in the removal of difficulties can only mean a plan of cooperation in political transactions, whether offensive, defensive, or for the maintenance of neutrality. It is difficult to see on what point such cooperation between England and Germany is at this moment appropriate; but it is quite certain that any proposals in such a direction would be impartially considered here from the point of view of British interests.

"Past history has shown us that a friendly Germany has usually been a Germany asking for something, by way of proving our friendship. It will be prudent to be prepared for proposals for an understanding being made to us by Germany on similar lines."³

Two further minutes that Crowe wrote in 1906 may be quoted in this context:

1. BD III, 398. Minute by Crowe, 9/4/06, on Lascelles No. 100, 5/4/06.
2. BD III, 404. Minute by Crowe, 21/5/06, on Lascelles No. 141, 17/5/06.
3. BD III, 416. Minute by Crowe, 28/5/06, on Lascelles No. 151, 24/5/06.

"The view is that Germany requires the assent of Great Britain to certain political plans (of expansion, conquest, acquisition of coaling stations; interference in small neutral states, etc.). That assent Germany strives in vain to get by (friendly) asking! If however Germany is strong enough to make England think twice before interfering between Germany and the objects of her policy, then England will find it worth while to make up to Germany and seek her friendship. In fact, good relations are to be obtained with England only by the establishment of German hegemony.

"The above views are largely held in German naval circles and are constantly placed before the emperor. That is why their appearance in the *Grenzboten* article is significant."¹

The *Grenzboten*² article ended with the words:

"If the Germans build an efficient fleet now that they have the most efficient army and the strongest and best-educated army of workmen, then John Bull will hasten, not to make war on Germany, but to shake hands."³

Crowe wrote alongside this: "I have often heard this view advanced very seriously by highly-placed German officials."⁴

He urged that John Bull should not hasten to shake hands:

"We have it on the authority of Herr von Tschirschky himself that the object of German policy is to prevent or smash an understanding between England and France, and it cannot be doubted that advantage will be taken of any incident likely to prove serviceable for this purpose...

"... The way to maintain good relations with Germany is to be ever courteous and correct, but reserved, and firm in the defence of British interests, and to object and remonstrate invariably when Germany offends. Everyone who knows the mind of German officials will admit that such an attitude wins their respect. Firmness and

1. BD III, 418. Minute by Crowe, 9/6/06, on articles in "The Morning Post" and "The Times," 9/6/06.
2. The "*Grenzboten*" was a periodical whose "political notes ... are directly inspired by the Press-Bureau," the "recognized mouthpiece of the official press-bureau of the Berlin Foreign Office." FO 371/528/9855. Minute by Crowe, 23/3/08, on Lascelles No. 120, 18/3/08; FO 371/676/34134. Minute by Crowe, 13/9/09, on de Salis No. 323, 10/9/09.
3. These are the words in the "Times" translation.
4. FO 371/75/19790. This was not included in BD III, 418.

punctiliousness are their own ideals and they readily recognise them in others. We were never so badly treated by Germany as in the years when we were always making concessions in order to 'gain their real friendship and goodwill.' They are essentially people whom it does not pay to 'run after.'"¹

(12)

Shortly after Eyre Crowe was asked by King Edward to prepare a statement on Anglo-German relations, Lord Lansdowne was succeeded as Foreign Secretary by Sir Edward Grey. Grey had already served at the Foreign Office as Parliamentary Under-Secretary from 1892 to 1895 and had a wide knowledge of foreign affairs. Some of his more extreme critics have sometimes suggested that he was influenced by men like Crowe and Mallet into becoming suspicious of German designs. It may be shown, however, that this was not the case.

When reviewing his term as Parliamentary Under-Secretary Grey wrote that "it was the abrupt and rough peremptoriness of the German action (in Egypt) that gave me an unpleasant impression."² At the end of 1895, following the Jameson Raid, he feared that if England had to intervene in South Africa "Germany will no doubt put on the screw in Egypt and be as nasty as she can everywhere."³ The result of Germany's policy was that Grey wrote in 1899 that

1. BD III, 419. Minute by Crowe, 26/6/06, on article in "Kölnische Zeitung," printed in "The Times."
2. Lord Grey of Fallodon: "Twenty-Five Years, 1892-1916." Vol. 1, p.10. See also F.R. Bridge: "Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, 1906-1914." p.15. Memorandum by C.P. Scott, November 3, 1911. Grey said that in the 1890s "Germany was exacting ... and we were repeatedly on the brink of war with France and Russia. The situation was ... intolerable."
3. K. Robbins: "Sir Edward Grey." p.61-62. Grey to Buxton, December 31, 1895.

"I shall never believe that a Russian understanding about the Far East is impossible till I see it proved in black and white."¹

As the Boer War drew to an end Grey explained to Leo Maxse his view of German foreign policy, and his desire for closer relations with Russia and France. His letter was dated November 24, 1901:

"My dear Maxse,

"... the violent attacks made upon us in Germany... The first practical point is to establish confidence and direct relations with Russia and to eliminate in that quarter the German broker, who keeps England and Russia apart and levies a constant commission upon us, while preventing us from doing any business with Russia. But this will have to be done quietly and cautiously. Our weakest point used to be Egypt. Some years ago Lord Cromer could not have got along there unless the dead weight of the Triple Alliance had been in the side of keeping things quiet. I do not know now what the effect would be, if the German Government turned the screw against us in Egypt; and to provoke them to do so while France and Russia were not firm friends might be very awkward...

"I expect the plea of the German Government is that, although public opinion forces them to be rough and uncivil in the Reichstag and though they drive hard bargains where they have direct interests, yet where we are interested, as in Egypt, they have given us quiet backing or not molested us. There is some truth in this, but it is a position, which was never comfortable for us and is becoming daily less comfortable and secure; the business of the British Govt. is to bring about a better one and the first step is an understanding with Russia."²

Five days later Grey stressed in a public speech that "he was not a friend of 'splendid isolation' and (that) he would like to see us on good terms with every nation, but (that) he did believe that widespread as our interests were, so long as we kept up the strength of the Navy it was in our power to have more free play ...

1. PRO 30/67/4. Grey to Brodrick, March 11, 1899.

2. Maxse Papers Vol. 448, p.450. Grey to Maxse, November 24, 1901.

in our foreign policy than any other nation except the United States."¹

Grey was a consistent opponent of Chamberlain's attempts to bring about an Anglo-German alliance, and was glad when they failed and Chamberlain himself became a critic of Germany.²

Sanderson wrote to Lascelles in March 1902 that "I walked away from dinner with Edward Grey on Monday and found him very sore against Germany." Sanderson commented that "he is naturally quiet and conciliatory, and if he is annoyed it is an indication that the feeling is pretty general."³ Meanwhile Grey became a supporter of a policy of rapprochement with France, writing in July 1902 that "I am glad that Italy has arranged her own affairs with France, because it makes it possible for us to get on good terms with France too, which is much better than clutching at the skirts of the Triple Alliance, considering the feelings of the Germans about us."⁴

Grey remained critical of Germany during the winter of 1902-03. In October 1902, for example, he wrote that "a German alliance seems to me like an investment in something which has unlimited liability, which locks up one's capital and can never pay a dividend."⁵ In November he advocated that England should strive to "better the relations that had existed in the past

1. H.C.G. Matthew: "The Liberal Imperialists." p.206. Speech by Grey in Glasgow, November 28, 1901.
2. Ibid. p.207.
3. FO 800/10/p.307. Sanderson to Lascelles, March 12, 1902.
4. H.C.G. Matthew: op. cit., p.207. Grey to Gladstone, July 2, 1902.
5. Maxse Papers Vol. 450, p.540. Grey to Maxse, October 12, 1902.

between France, Russia and ourselves."¹ On January 5, 1903, he wrote that,

"I have come to think that Germany is our worst enemy and our greatest danger. I do not doubt that there are many Germans well disposed to us, but they are a minority; and the majority dislike us so intensely that the friendship of their Emperor or their Government cannot be really useful to us. As a matter of fact the German Government has behaved very badly to us in China... I believe the policy of Germany to be that of using us without helping us: keeping us isolated, that she may have us to fall back on. Close relations with Germany mean for us worse relations with the rest of the world especially with the U.S., France and Russia."

Grey wanted England "to have closer relations, if possible, with France and Russia" and believed "they are possible."² The Venezuelan Crisis at the beginning of 1903 increased his hostility towards Germany, and consequently his desire for a rapprochement with France and Russia.

Grey welcomed the Anglo-French Agreement of April 1904, on grounds of general European policy rather than because he favoured the colonial concessions involved.³ In June of the same year he wrote a letter to Leo Maxse which shows that he was fully alive to the implications of the new Agreement:

"My dear Maxse,

"... I always thought and still think the Japanese Alliance may have some very awkward consequences in the long run: I do not think it will facilitate a settlement of our outstanding affairs with Russia. But the Alliance is made, and that being so I cordially agree in the policy to be followed as regards Russia.

"... we ought to be able to pursue a European policy without keeping up a great army. The friendship of the

1. H.C.G. Matthew: op. cit., p.208. Speech by Grey in Weymouth, November 25, 1902.
2. K. Robbins: op. cit., p.131. Grey to Newbolt, January 5, 1903.
3. H.C.G. Matthew: op. cit., p.209.

Power with the biggest navy in the world ought to be worth enough to France, Italy and Russia to make them our friends. And the more Germany increases her navy the more value will our navy have in the eyes of France. But let us emphasize the fact that our recent Agreement with France marks a change of policy. I am not sure yet whether the Govt. realize that or intend it. If they show signs of relapsing into German by-ways I shall deplore and resent it."¹

The collapse of Russia and the Moroccan Crisis caused Grey to be solidly on the side of the French. He wrote in August 1905 that "if any government drags us back into the German net I will oppose it openly at all costs."² In October he wrote that "I think we are running a real risk of losing France and not gaining Germany, who wont want us, if she can detach France from us."³ On the following day he stated publicly that better relations with Germany could only come so long as they did nothing "in any way to impair our existing good relations with France."⁴ When Grey was appointed Foreign Secretary less than two months later he did not need Mallet and Crowe to warn him about the German menace.

Grey's handling of the Algeciras Conference, at which England stood by France and forced Germany to back down, was accompanied by secret Anglo-French military conversations. At the same time negotiations were continued towards a rapprochement with Russia. In June 1906 Grey made the significant remark that as far as he could see "the Germans do not realise that England has always

1. Maxse Papers Vol. 452, p.748. Grey to Maxse, June 21, 1904.
2. G.M. Trevelyan; "Grey of Fallodon." p.84. Grey to Ferguson, August 13, 1905.
3. British Museum Add. MS 46389, p.8. Grey to Spender, October 19, 1905.
4. H.C.G. Matthew: op. cit., p.209. Speech by Grey in the City, October 20, 1905.

drifted or deliberately gone into opposition to any Power which establishes a hegemony in Europe."¹

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Shortly after Grey's appointment as Foreign Secretary, Sir Thomas Sanderson was succeeded as Permanent Under-Secretary by Sir Charles Hardinge. The latter was not as persistently critical of Germany as Mallet, Spring Rice and Crowe were; instead Hardinge's particular interest was to bring about an understanding with Russia. He had first developed this view in Tehran in 1897,² and had begun "to preach" it "in 1900 when I was in St. Petersburg."³ He wrote to Leo Maxse on October 16, 1901:

"Dear Maxse,

"I have, as I think you know, spent the last five years in Tehran and St. Petersburg, and although during my stay here I have seen a genuine attempt made by our Govt to come to an all round understanding with Russia whittled down to a miserable and unsatisfactory Railway agreement in China, and although I have also seen an endeavour made by our Govt to work together with Russia to provide financial assistance to Persia thwarted by the secret conclusion of a purely Russian loan while Mouravieff and Lamsdorff were assuring us of their desire for the success of a joint loan etc, all of which profoundly discouraged me, still hope springs eternal etc, and I really think there are indications of a more honest desire for an arrangement with England now than there were some time ago. The problem of a possibility of an Anglo-Russian entente in Persia is one which has therefore been constantly before me and which experience and recent developments have tended to modify considerably.

"The former policy of the separation of spheres of influence by a line running east and west through

1. BD III, 418. Minute by Grey, 9/6/06, on articles in "The Morning Post" and "The Times," 9/6/06.
2. A.D. Kalmykow: "Memoirs of a Russian Diplomat." p.89.
3. Hardinge Papers Vol. 120, p.149, No.45. Hardinge to Crewe, September 10, 1914.

Kermanshah can no longer be thought of as adequately representing Russian aspirations, and it is safe to say that these will never be satisfied until they have a port in the Gulf. Whether that alone will satisfy them is yet another question. I do not think that Russian public opinion is yet crystallised upon what they exactly want...

"As regards the Near East once our hold over Egypt is secured it seems to me that a policy of 'désintéressement' would entail but little sacrifice...

"... the Anglo-German Agreement as explained by Bulow ... has left a nasty taste...

"... in giving my opinion on a few points I ask you to consider that it is my own private opinion, given not as an official."¹

Hardinge's policy of rapprochement with Russia had implied improved relations with France, and he commented shortly before the signature of the Anglo-French Convention: "What an effect it will have in Europe and how the Germans will hate it!"² When the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was renewed and strengthened in 1905 Hardinge wrote: "I am most keen for the friendliest of relations with Russia but I am a staunch adherent of our alliance, the two are not incompatible."³

During the Algeciras Conference, shortly after taking up his new post at the Foreign Office, Hardinge put forward his views as follows:

"If France takes action in Morocco to protect herself which Germany might resent it is not certain that Germany would declare war and attack France in Europe since such action would at once present a 'casus foederis' and bring Russia into line with France. If however it is understood by Germany that England is absolutely 'solidaire' with France as far as the Moroccan question

1. Maxse Papers Vol. 448, p.419. Hardinge to Maxse, October 16, 1901.
2. FO 800/183/p.163. Hardinge to Bertie, March 11, 1904.
3. Nat. Lib. of Scotland MS 8801, p.41. Hardinge to Murray, August 3, 1905.

is concerned, without any limitations as to whether action by France in Morocco is aggressive or not, such knowledge would almost certainly deter Germany from provoking a conflict by which Germany must lose her entire mercantile marine and almost her whole foreign trade.

"If France is left in the lurch an agreement or alliance between France, Germany and Russia in the near future is certain. This has been twice proposed during the last six years and is the Kaiser's ideal, France and Russia becoming satellites within the German system. There are many politicians in Russia in favour of such a scheme amongst them being Count Witte. These are in favour of the French alliance for purely economic reasons and of an entente with Germany from fear of her hostility."¹

Hardinge's policy of supporting France against Germany accorded well enough with the views of Grey, Mallet and Crowe, but it was occasioned by somewhat different premises. In fact Hardinge went out of his way during 1906, after Germany's defeat at Algeciras, to bring about a reconciliation with Berlin, and he found ready support from Lascelles.

In March 1906 Hardinge was still critical of Germany, writing to Lascelles that "I cannot admire German diplomacy which has indisposed the whole of Europe against Germany while the Emperor's amour propre should have been satisfied with the fall of Delcassé and the concessions wrung from France."² Lascelles replied in the same vein on March 9:

"My dear Hardinge,

"... I quite agree with what you say about German diplomacy. It has seemed to be a succession of clumsy blunders ever since Bülow has been in power, and I fancy that it is beginning to dawn upon the German mind that the sympathies of Europe have been alienated from Germany, and that her influence in Europe has greatly diminished."³

In April, however, Hardinge confided to Lascelles that he was

1. FO 800/92/p.30. Notes by Hardinge, February 23, 1906.
2. FO 800/13/p.91. Hardinge to Lascelles, March 6, 1906.
3. FO 800/19/p.31. Lascelles to Hardinge, March 9, 1906.

"really anxious to see an end put to this continual backbiting" between England and Germany.¹ But he was aware of the difficulties, writing again in May 1906 that "I foresee the great difficulty of the future will be when Grey finds himself face to face with the peace at any price section of the Cabinet headed by the Lord Chancellor."²

In August 1906 Hardinge accompanied the King on his visit to Cronberg, where he met the German Emperor and Tschirschky, the German Foreign Secretary. On August 6, before he left England, he wrote to Lascelles that "I doubt if German policy is yet 'bien arrêté' and after their recent check they do not know what to be at."³ Ten days later, however, on his return journey, Hardinge wrote a report of his conversations for Sir Edward Grey, in which he manifested a change of attitude:

"As regards the political attitude of the Emperor and Tchirsky (sic) I was struck by their evident desire to be on friendly terms with us, and by the fact that they now seem at last to realise that friendly relations with us cannot be at the expense of our 'entente' with France, but that if they are to exist at all they must be co-existent with our 'entente.' I took every opportunity of rubbing this in."⁴

He followed this in September by writing that "the German government have apparently renounced the idea of driving a wedge into the 'entente,' finding it useless to do so, and now advocate an 'entente à trois.'"⁵

1. G. Monger: op. cit., p.297. Hardinge to Lascelles, April 22, 1906.
2. FO 800/13/p.146. Hardinge to Lascelles, May 16, 1906.
3. FO 800/13/p.175. Hardinge to Lascelles, August 6, 1906.
4. Hardinge Papers Vol. 8, p.229. Hardinge to Grey, August 16, 1906. See also Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.129.
5. G. Monger: op. cit., p.303. Minute by Hardinge, September 5, 1906.

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It was during 1906, with Grey and Hardinge in the places of Lansdowne and Sanderson, that the Foreign Office finally assumed an attitude of positive distrust towards Germany. It was the collapse of Russia that had made this possible, but it was the Moroccan Crisis and Algeciras Conference that were the most important factors in bringing it about. Despite Hardinge's attempts to effect an Anglo-German reconciliation, it was Sir Frank Lascelles and a handful of others who headed the "pro-German" or Victorian faction in the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service. Their numbers were fast dwindling, Lascelles himself was at the end of his career, the important posts were being filled by the "anti-Germans" or Edwardians, and before the end of the year Hardinge was to give up his attempts at reconciliation. Since 1906 was to see the last real clash of opinion between these opposing schools of thought, it will be as well to take account of the different sides.

In addition to Grey, Hardinge, Mallet and Crowe, William Tyrrell was also deeply critical of German policy. Tyrrell was related to Prince Radolin, the German Ambassador at Paris,¹ but he had been a friend and collaborator of Leo Maxse for some years.² He wrote to Nicolson in April 1906, after the Algeciras Conference: "How stupid the Germans have been in their tactics vis à vis of the entente which is stronger now than a year ago when the Emperor landed at Tangier."³ At the beginning of May 1906

1. See, e.g., N. Rich: "Friedrich von Holstein." Vol. 1, p.138 + 294. See also Sir F. Oppenheimer: "Stranger Within." p.220.
2. See, e.g., Maxse Papers Vol. 448, p.421. Tyrrell to Maxse, October 16, 1901.
3. FO 800/338/p.41. Tyrrell to Nicolson, April 3, 1906.

Tyrrell wrote again, this time to Spring Rice:

"My dear Springy,

"... Our only chance with Germany is to be extremely punctilious in our communications with her so that she may never have cause to say that we are actuated by an(y) 'parti pris' against her, whilst inflexible in sticking to our rights when assailed by her. It is an attitude and the only one which the German understands."¹

Tyrrell's attitude was important because he was Grey's Précis Writer and was being groomed to succeed Mallet as Private Secretary. In the Diplomatic Service, in addition to Bertie and Spring Rice, there were a number of outspoken critics of German policy. These included Sir Nicholas O'Connor, the Ambassador at Constantinople, Sir Edward Goschen, the Ambassador at Vienna, Sir Arthur Nicolson, the Delegate at Algieras and Ambassador at St Petersburg, and Fairfax Cartwright, the Minister at Munich.

We have traced the gradual change of opinion from resentment at German methods to suspicion of German ambitions. Grey himself wrote in his memoirs that,

"German policy seems to have been based upon a deliberate belief that moral scruples and altruistic motives do not count in international affairs. Germany did not believe that they existed in other nations, and she did not assume them for herself. The highest morality, for a German Government, was the national interest; this overrode other considerations."²

What worried the critics of German policy was the belief that German national interest was being equated in Berlin with European hegemony. Lord Onslow summed up the feeling in 1906 as follows:

"Grey undoubtedly mistrusted Germany and the feeling was general throughout the Foreign Office. Crowe ... was the leading antagonist of Germany in the Office... Tyrrell ...

1. FO 800/241/p.46. Tyrrell to Spring Rice, May 1, 1906.
2. Lord Grey of Fallodon: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.217.

was of the same opinion as Crowe. Hardinge shared their views, so did Louis Mallet. Frank Campbell was less occupied with Europe than the Far East, Eric Barrington, though now an under-secretary, was about to retire soon and took little part. Abroad Bertie, Nicolson, O'Connor, Goschen and others shared the Foreign Office view."¹

As against these critics of German foreign policy there were the "pro-Germans." Lord Onslow drew attention to the difference when describing two successive Counsellors at the Berlin Embassy:

"De Salis - or the Count, as he was invariably called - was imbued with the existing feelings for Germany at the Foreign Office. Granville, though not pro-German, was more Victorian than Edwardian in his views."²

The head of the "pro-German" group was, as we have seen, Sir Frank Lascelles, the Ambassador at Berlin. He had lost the valuable support of Lansdowne and Sanderson, but had a friend in Lord Fitzmaurice, Lansdowne's younger brother and Grey's Parliamentary Under-Secretary. Fitzmaurice wrote after the First World War that at the time he had felt "that Hardinge's extreme pro-Russian views, and his influence with Grey, and with the King, whom he accompanied abroad on those mischievous journeys then were sources of public danger."³

At the beginning of June 1906 Lascelles wrote:

"My dear Fitzmaurice,

"Very many thanks for your letter... I am very grateful for its friendly form ... and I am glad to see

1. Lord Onslow: "History of the Onslow Family." Vol. 8, p.1994-1995. See also C. Repington: "The First World War." Vol. 2, p.463. Diary entry by Repington, October 12, 1918: "Crowe, Mallet and Tyrrell ..., with Carnock (i.e. Nicolson) and Bertie, were the head and front of the anti-German party all along, vexed at our surrenders to Germany, and persuaded that Germany planned our ruin. Between them they made the German peril the central feature of our foreign policy."
2. Lord Onslow: "Sixty-Three Years." p.134.
3. British Museum Add. MS 46389, p.200. Fitzmaurice to Spender, March 21, 1923.

that your views as regards our relations with Germany coincide with mine. A good understanding with Russia would certainly be most desirable, but ... it certainly should not exclude good relations with Germany."¹

In August, as we have seen, Hardinge visited Cronberg with the King and returned with similar views. Hardinge's change of attitude was, however, ridiculed by the critics of Germany, and conflict between the two sides came to a head. For example Mallet wrote to Bertie on August 24 that "Tyrrell writes that C.H. reports that he is convinced that the Germans have realized that they can only be friends with us if they accept the Entente and that they are sincerely anxious to be friends!"² Bertie replied the following day that "really I should have thought better of Hardinge's intelligence. Send him to Berlin vice Lascelles promoted to Rome."³ On September 21 Fitzmaurice reported to Lascelles that "things are certainly better than they were - nevertheless the anti-German current in the office still flows, though it has been checked." He wanted Lascelles "to bring about, if possible next year, ... a visit of my chief to Germany."⁴ Lascelles replied on September 28 that "I am sorry to hear that the anti-German current in the Office still flows, and I can only hope that no incident will arise to increase its strength."⁵

In this situation Haldane, whose visit to Berlin in September 1906 was strongly criticised by the Foreign Office, decided to

1. FO 800/19/p.61. Lascelles to Fitzmaurice, June 2, 1906.
2. FO 800/170/p.131. Mallet to Bertie, August 24, 1906.
3. FO 800/170/p.132. Bertie to Mallet, August 25, 1906.
4. FO 800/13/p.229. Fitzmaurice to Lascelles, September 21, 1906.
5. FO 800/19/p.81. Lascelles to Fitzmaurice, September 28, 1906.

complain to Hardinge about the "anti-German" feeling in the Foreign Office. Lascelles wrote to him on September 29 that "I hope ... that your talk with Hardinge about the anti-German feeling in the F.O. may have a good effect."¹ On October 5 Granville wrote to his chief from London that "the anti-German crew in the F.O. are evidently wild with rage against Haldane. They try to make out that Grey himself was running all that fuss about the visit - I wonder very much if that is so!"² In fact Grey had been critical of the visit,³ and even Sanderson, though retired, "co-operated in exposing the danger of these informal 'conversations' with German statesmen."⁴ Hardinge himself, returning to the "anti-German" camp, wrote soon after that "it is generally recognised that Germany is the one disturbing factor owing to her ambitious schemes for a 'weltpolitik' and for a naval as well as a military supremacy in Europe."⁵

It was at this time that Eyre Crowe's health temporarily failed, and obliged him to stay at home and rest. He passed the time in dictating the statement on Anglo-German relations for which the King had asked.

1. FO 800/19/p.83. Lascelles to Haldane, September 29, 1906.
2. FO 800/13/p.239. Granville to Lascelles, October 5, 1906.
3. See G. Monger: op. cit., p.304-307. Also Lord Grey of Fallodon: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.176-177: "The experience of present years led some minds in the Foreign Office to consider that our relations with Germany would now be better than they had been, when German diplomacy was thriving, or at any rate looking with satisfaction, on the quarrels of Britain with France and Russia, and exploiting the situation thereby created. From 1886 up to the making of the Anglo-French Agreement in 1904 we had been through a very disagreeable experience; our diplomatic position had been one of increasing weakness and discomfort, and we were determined not to revert to that position again."
4. FO 800/338/p.220. Chirol to Nicolson, October 2, 1906.
5. FO 371/168/36951. Memorandum by Hardinge, October 25, 1906.

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Crowe's statement on Anglo-German relations is well known to historians as his celebrated "Memorandum on the Present State of British Relations with France and Germany," dated January 1, 1907. In its original impression this memorandum ran to 43 pages with half-margin.¹ It began with a description of the making of the Anglo-French Convention, the German reaction to it, the Moroccan Crisis and consequent Algeciras Conference, and finally the cementing of the Anglo-French Entente. Crowe then posed the question whether the new Anglo-German antagonism was ephemeral or fundamental. He continued with a description of the foundations of British foreign policy, which would be naturally opposed to any German bid for political hegemony, and with an outline of Prussian policy since the rise of Brandenburg. A discussion of the relative positions of England and Germany was followed by a review of Anglo-German relations since 1884. This memorandum then concluded with a discussion of Germany's aims and of the policy that England should pursue to counter them.

There is no need to dwell here on Crowe's description of the then recent Moroccan Crisis and Algeciras Conference. The main part of the memorandum was introduced by Crowe's important question, "whether the antagonism to Germany into which England had on this occasion been led without her wish or intention was but an ephemeral incident, or a symptomatic revelation of some deep-seated natural opposition between the policies and interests of

1. There seem to be only two copies in existence, neither of which are in the Foreign Office archives. Hardinge had his copy bound in leather, and it is now in the Kent County Archives U927/05. The other copy is in CAB 37/86/1.

the two countries." This led into Crowe's classic exposition of British foreign policy, "which was in substance a précis of the view which ... (Spenser Wilkinson) had set forth in 'The Nation's Awakening:'"¹

"The general character of England's foreign policy is determined by the immutable conditions of her geographical situation on the ocean flank of Europe as an island State with vast oversea colonies and dependencies, whose existence and survival as an independent community are inseparably bound up with the possession of preponderant sea power. The tremendous influence of such preponderance has been described in the classical pages of Captain Mahan. No one now disputes it. Sea power is more potent than land power, because it is as pervading as the element in which it moves and has its being. Its formidable character makes itself felt the more directly that a maritime State is, in the literal sense of the word, the neighbour of every country accessible by sea. It would, therefore, be but natural that the power of a State supreme at sea should inspire universal jealousy and fear, and be ever exposed to the danger of being overthrown by a general combination of the world. Against such a combination no single nation could in the long run stand, least of all a small island kingdom not possessed of the military strength of a people trained to arms, and dependent for its food supply on oversea commerce. The danger can in practice only be averted -- and history shows that it has been so averted -- on condition that the national policy of the insular and naval State is so directed as to harmonize with the general desires and ideals common to all mankind, and more particularly that it is closely identified with the primary and vital interests of a majority, or as many as possible, of the other nations. Now, the first interest of all countries is the preservation of national independence. It follows that England, more than any other non-insular Power, has a direct and positive interest in the maintenance of the independence of nations, and therefore must be the natural enemy of any country threatening the independence of others, and the natural protector of the weaker communities.

"Second only to the ideal of independence, nations have always cherished the right of free intercourse and trade in the world's markets, and in proportion as England champions the principle of the largest measure of general freedom of commerce, she undoubtedly strengthens her hold on the interested friendship of other nations, at least to the extent of making them feel less apprehensive of

1. H.S. Wilkinson: op. cit., p.221.

naval supremacy in the hands of a free trade England than they would in the face of a predominant protectionist Power.... It has been well said that every country, if it had the option, would, of course, prefer itself to hold the power of supremacy at sea, but that, this choice being excluded, it would rather see England hold that power than any other State.

"History shows that the danger threatening the independence of this or that nation has generally arisen, at least in part, out of the momentary predominance of a neighbouring State at once militarily powerful, economically efficient, and ambitious to extend its frontiers or spread its influence, the danger being directly proportionate to the degree of its power and efficiency, and to the spontaneity or 'inevitableness' of its ambitions. The only check on the abuse of political predominance derived from such a position has always consisted in the opposition of an equally formidable rival, or of a combination of several countries forming leagues of defence. The equilibrium established by such a grouping of forces is technically known as the balance of power, and it has become almost an historical truism to identify England's secular policy with the maintenance of this balance by throwing her weight now in this scale and now in that, but ever on the side opposed to the political dictatorship of the strongest single State or group at a given time.

"If this view of British policy is correct, the opposition into which England must inevitably be driven to any country aspiring to such a dictatorship assumes almost the form of a law of nature...

"By applying this general law to a particular case, the attempt might be made to ascertain whether, at a given time, some powerful and ambitious State is or is not in a position of natural and necessary enmity towards England; and the present position of Germany might, perhaps, be so tested. Any such investigation must take the shape of an inquiry as to whether Germany is, in fact, aiming at a political hegemony with the object of promoting purely German schemes of expansion, and establishing a German primacy in the world of international politics at the cost and to the detriment of other nations."

Crowe turned his attention to the history and growth of Prussia. He noticed the way she had forced her way, often quite ruthlessly, into the ranks of the European Great Powers, and argued that for the purposes of foreign policy Germany was the heir to Prussia. This new Germany was attempting to force her way into the ranks

of the World Powers. Crowe felt that England should in no way oppose such a legitimate German desire unless "Germany believes that greater relative preponderance of material power, wider extent of territory, inviolable frontiers, and supremacy at sea are the necessary and preliminary possessions without which any aspirations to such leadership must end in failure." In that case "England must expect that Germany will surely seek to diminish the power of any rivals, to enhance her own by extending her dominion, to hinder the co-operation of other States, and ultimately to break up and supplant the British Empire." The recent history of Anglo-German relations was not, according to Crowe, likely to breed much confidence in Germany's intentions. He pointed out that, unlike with France, Russia and the United States, England had never had "any real clashing of material interests" with Germany. Indeed, this had been "so often declared, as to have become almost a diplomatic platitude."

"Yet for the last twenty years, as the archives of our Foreign Office show, German Governments have never ceased reproaching British Cabinets with want of friendliness and with persistent opposition to German political plans... (These) quarrels ... all have in common this feature -- that they were opened by acts of direct and unmistakable hostility to England on the part of the German Government, and that this hostility was displayed with a disregard of the elementary rules of straightforward and honourable dealing, which was deeply resented by successive British Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs. But perhaps even more remarkable is this other feature, also common to all these quarrels, that the British Ministers, in spite of the genuine indignation felt at the treatment to which they were subjected, in each case readily agreed to make concessions or accept compromises which not only appeared to satisfy all German demands, but were by the avowal of both parties calculated and designed to re-establish, if possible, on a firmer basis the fabric of Anglo-German friendship. To all outward appearance absolute harmony was restored on each occasion after these separate settlements, and in the intervals of fresh outbreaks it seemed true, and was persistently

reiterated, that there could be no further occasion for disagreement."

Crowe was, of course, referring to the series of German efforts to bully and blackmail England into joining the Triple Alliance. He wrote later that,

"My memorandum gives a summary, but, I venture to maintain, accurate, statement of the principal instances of Anglo-German political discussions and transactions. My object in making that statement was not at all to portray a record of black deeds, but to show that the line of action followed by England with amiable persistency for 20 years did not in the end secure what she expected and bargained for: Germany's friendship and political support."

Crowe's statement was not intended to present a complete picture of Anglo-German relations since 1884. Its sole purpose was to show that England could not purchase Germany's friendship by regularly giving way to Germany's demands in successive colonial disputes. He wished to expose what had lain beneath the calm surface even when relations had seemed to be friendly, by making a specific point concerning Germany's methods and ultimate ambitions. Although he might perhaps be accused of exaggeration or distortion, he cannot justly be accused of "wilfully misrepresenting the facts."¹ Those rare inaccuracies that he did introduce were both unimportant and the result of his use of the evidence available to him.²

Crowe first recalled the series of events connected with "Germany's first bid for colonies," in 1884-85. He then reviewed the first and second administrations of Lord Salisbury, during which the Mediterranean Agreements were concluded, and which

1. W.L. Langer: "European Alliances and Alignments, 1871-1890." p.296.
2. See Appendix VIII.

experienced disputes with Germany concerning Samoa and East Africa. This period was ended by the agreement of 1890. Crowe then drew attention to the German habit of picking on defenceless officials, moved on to West Africa, and the Anglo-Congolese Agreement, before coming to the events relating to South Africa. These, together with connected events, constituted the bulk of the survey, and led into a review of Far Eastern affairs, Venezuela and, of course, the then recent Anglo-French Agreement and consequent Moroccan Crisis.¹ His conclusion was that,

"It is as true to-day as it has been at any time since 1884, in the intervals of successive incidents and their settlements, that, practically every known German demand having been met, there is not just now any cause troubling the serenity of Anglo-German relations. So much so, that the German Ambassador in London, in reply to repeated inquiries as to what specific points his Government has in mind in constantly referring to its earnest wish to see those relations improved, invariably seeks refuge in the vaguest of generalities, such as the burning desire which consumes the German Chancellor to be on the most intimate of terms of friendship with France, and to obtain the fulfilment of his desire through the good offices of the British Government."

He admitted that "there is no pretence to completeness in the foregoing survey of Anglo-German relations, which, in fact, gives no more than a brief reference to certain salient and typical incidents that have characterized those relations during the last twenty years." This brought Crowe to the general discussion, from which he was to draw his conclusions.

"The more difficult task remains of drawing the logical conclusions. The immediate object of the present inquiry was to ascertain whether there is any real and natural ground for opposition between England and Germany. It has been shown that such opposition has, in fact, existed in an ample measure for a long period, but that it has been caused by an entirely one-sided aggressiveness, and

1. See Appendices IX and X.

that on the part of England the most conciliatory disposition has been coupled with never-failing readiness to purchase the resumption of friendly relations by concession after concession."

First, Crowe discussed the view that Germany was deliberately aiming at the supremacy that England would naturally attempt to prevent:

"It might be deduced that the antagonism is too deeply rooted in the relative position of the two countries to allow of its being bridged over by the kind of temporary expedients to which England has so long and so patiently resorted. On this view of the case it would have to be assumed that Germany is deliberately following a policy which is essentially opposed to vital British interests, and that an armed conflict cannot in the long run be averted, except by England either sacrificing those interests, with the result that she would lose her position as an independent Great Power, or making herself too strong to give Germany the chance of succeeding in a war. This is the opinion of those who see in the whole trend of Germany's policy conclusive evidence that she is consciously aiming at the establishment of a German hegemony, at first in Europe, and eventually in the world.

"After all that has been said in the preceding paragraphs, it would be idle to deny that this may be the correct interpretation of the facts. There is this further seemingly corroborative evidence that such a conception of world-policy offers perhaps the only quite consistent explanation of the tenacity with which Germany pursues the construction of a powerful navy with the avowed object of creating slowly, but surely, a weapon fit to overawe any possible enemy, however formidable at sea."

But Crowe realised there were objections to this:

"There is, however, one obvious flaw in the argument. If the German design were so far-reaching and deeply thought out as this view implies, then it ought to be clear to the meanest German understanding that its success must depend very materially on England's remaining blind to it, and being kept in good humour until the moment arrived for striking the fatal blow to her power. It would be not merely worth Germany's while, it would be her imperative duty, pending the development of her forces, to win and retain England's friendship by every means in her power. No candid critic could say that this

elementary strategical rule had been even remotely followed hitherto by the German Government.¹

"It is not unprofitable in this connection to refer to a remarkable article in one of the recent numbers of the 'Preussische Jahrbücher,' written by Dr. Hans Delbrück, the distinguished editor of that ably conducted and influential magazine.² This article discusses very candidly and dispassionately the question whether Germany could, even if she would, carry out successfully an ambitious policy of expansion which would make her follow in the footsteps of Louis XIV and of Napoleon I. The conclusion arrived at is that, unless Germany wishes to expose herself to the same overwhelming combinations which ruined the French dreams of a universal ascendancy, she must make up her mind definitely and openly to renounce all thoughts of further extending her frontiers, and substitute for the plan of territorial annexations the nobler ambition of spreading German culture by propagating German ideals in the many quarters of the globe where the German language is spoken, or at least taught and understood.

"It would not do to attribute too much importance to the appearance of such an article in a country where the influence of public opinion on the conduct of the affairs of State is notoriously feeble. But this much may probably be rightly gathered from it, that the design attributed by other nations to Germany has been, and perhaps is still being, cherished in some indeterminate way by influential classes, including, perhaps, the Government itself, but that responsible statesmen must be well aware of the practical impossibility of carrying it out."

Crowe then turned his attention to the alternative view:

"There is then, perhaps, another way of looking at the problem: It might be suggested that the great German design is in reality no more than the expression of a vague, confused, and unpractical statesmanship, not fully realizing its own drift. A charitable critic might add, by way of explanation, that the well-known qualities of mind and temperament distinguishing for good or evil the present Ruler of Germany may not improbably be largely responsible for the erratic, domineering, and often frankly aggressive spirit which is recognizable at present in every branch of German public life, not merely in the

1. Even Grey himself admitted that if Germany had pursued a sensible policy it would have resulted in "German predominance and British dependence." See Lord Grey of Fallodon: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.245.
2. See Appendix XI.

region of foreign policy; and that this spirit has called forth those manifestations of discontent and alarm both at home and abroad with which the world is becoming familiar; that, in fact, Germany does not really know what she is driving at, and that all her excursions and alarms, all her underhand intrigues do not contribute to the steady working out of a well conceived and relentlessly followed system of policy, because they do not really form part of any such system. This is an hypothesis not flattering to the German Government, and it must be admitted that much might be urged against its validity. But it remains true that on this hypothesis also most of the facts of the present situation could be explained."

Crowe was well aware that the German government of 1906 had less control over its policies than Bismarck had had, and that this alternative hypothesis would need to take account of this change. He wrote that,

"It is, of course, necessary to except the period of Bismarck's Chancellorship. To assume that so great a statesman was not quite clear as to the objects of his policy would be the reductio ad absurdum of any hypothesis. If, then, the hypothesis is to be held sound, there must be forthcoming a reasonable explanation for Bismarck's conduct towards England after 1884, and a different explanation for the continuance of German hostility after his fall in 1890. This view can be shown to be less absurd than it may at first sight appear."

Bismarck saw the effect that the British occupation of Egypt would have on his own diplomatic position, and was not slow to take advantage of the convenient situation which presented itself to him. Crowe therefore produced the following explanation of the friction between England and Germany between 1884 and 1890:¹

"Bismarck suffered from what Count Schuvaloff called le cauchemar des coalitions. It is beyond doubt that he particularly dreaded the hostile combination against his country of France and Russia, and that, as one certain means of counteracting that danger, he desired to bring England into the Triple Alliance, or at least to force her into independent collision with

1. See Appendix XII.

France and Russia, which would inevitably have placed her by Germany's side. He knew England's aversion to the entanglement of alliances, and to any policy of determined assertion of national rights, such as would have made her a Power to be seriously reckoned with by France and Russia. But Bismarck had also a poor opinion of the power of English Ministers to resist determined pressure. He apparently believed he could compel them to choose between Germany and a universal opposition to England. When the colonial agitation in Germany gave him an opening, he most probably determined to bring it home to England that meekness and want of determination in foreign affairs do not constitute a policy; that it was wisest, and certainly least disagreeable, for her to shape a decided course in a direction which would secure her Germany's friendship; and that in co-operation with Germany lay freedom from international troubles as well as safety, whilst a refusal to co-operate brought inglorious conflicts, and the prospect of finding Germany ranged with France and Russia for the specific purpose of damaging British interests.

"Such an explanation gains plausibility from the fact that, according to Bismarck's own confession, a strictly analogous policy was followed by him before 1866 in his dealings with the minor German States. Prussia deliberately bullied and made herself disagreeable to them all, in the firm expectation that, for the sake of peace and quiet, they would follow Prussia's lead rather than Austria's. When the war of 1866 broke out Bismarck had to realize that, with the exception of a few small principalities which were practically enclaves in the Kingdom of Prussia, the whole of the minor German States sided with Austria. Similarly he must have begun to see towards the end of his career that his policy of browbeating England into friendship had failed, in spite of some fugitive appearance of success."

But the trouble was, according to Crowe, that,

"By that time the habit of bullying and offending England had almost become a tradition in the Berlin Foreign Office, and Bismarck's successors, who, there is other evidence to show, inherited very little of his political capacity and singleness of purpose, seem to have regarded the habit as a policy in itself, instead of as a method of diplomacy calculated to gain an ulterior end. Whilst the great Chancellor made England concede demands objectionable more in the manner of presentation than in themselves, treating her somewhat in the style of Richard III wooing the Lady Ann, Bismarck's successors have apparently come to regard it as their ultimate and self-contained purpose to extract valuable concessions from England by offensive bluster and persistent nagging, Bismarck's experience having shown her

to be amenable to this form of persuasion without any risk of her lasting animosity being excited.

"If, merely by way of analogy and illustration, a comparison not intended to be either literally exact or disrespectful be permitted, the action of Germany towards this country since 1890 might be likened not inappropriately to that of a professional blackmailer, whose extortions are wrung from his victims by the threat of some vague and dreadful consequences in case of a refusal. To give way to the blackmailer's menaces enriches him, but it has long been proved by uniform experience that, although this may secure for the victim temporary peace, it is certain to lead to renewed molestation and higher demands after ever-shortening periods of amicable forbearance. The blackmailer's trade is generally ruined by the first resolute stand made against his exactions and the determination rather to face all risks of a possibly disagreeable situation than to continue in the path of endless concessions. But, failing such determination, it is more than probable that the relations between the two parties will grow steadily worse."

This analogy lay at the centre of Crowe's thought, for his hope was that a further deterioration in Anglo-German relations should be avoided, and his belief was that only a "resolute stand" could prevent such a deterioration.

Crowe was, however, aware of the crisis of authority within the German Government.

"If it be possible, in this perhaps not very flattering way, to account for the German Government's persistently aggressive demeanour towards England, and the resulting state of almost perpetual friction, notwithstanding the pretence of friendship, the generally restless, explosive, and disconcerting activity of Germany in relation to all other States would find its explanation partly in the same attitude towards them and partly in the suggested want of definite political aims and purposes. A wise German statesman would recognise the limits within which any world-policy that is not to provoke a hostile combination of all the nations in arms must confine itself. He would realize that the edifice of Pan-Germanism, with its outlying bastions in the Netherlands, in the Scandinavian countries, in Switzerland, in the German provinces of Austria, and on the Adriatic, could never be built up on any other foundation than the wreckage of the liberties of Europe. A German maritime supremacy must be acknowledged to be incompatible with the existence of the British Empire, and even

if that Empire disappeared, the union of the greatest military with the greatest naval Power in one State would compel the world to combine for the riddance of such an incubus. The acquisition of colonies fit for German settlement in South America cannot be reconciled with the Monroe doctrine, which is a fundamental principle of the political faith of the United States. The creation of a German India in Asia Minor must in the end stand or fall with either a German command of the sea or a German conquest of Constantinople and the countries intervening between Germany's present south-eastern frontiers and the Bosphorous. Whilst each of these grandiose schemes seems incapable of fulfilment under anything like the present conditions of the world, it looks as if Germany were playing with them all together simultaneously, and thereby wilfully concentrating in her own path all the obstacles and oppositions of a world set at defiance. That she should do this helps to prove how little of logical and consistent design and of unrelenting purpose lies behind the impetuous mobility, the bewildering surprises, and the heedless disregard of the susceptibilities of other people that have been so characteristic of recent manifestations of German policy."¹

The significant episodes in the post-Bismarckian period were the Krüger Telegram, (when "for the first time the fact of the hostile character of Germany's official policy was realized by the British public, who up to then, owing to the anxious care of their Government to minimize the results of the perpetual friction with Germany, and to prevent any aggravation of that friction by concealing as far as possible the unpleasant details of Germany's aggressive behaviour, had been practically unaware of the persistently contemptuous treatment of their country by their Teutonic cousins"), the attempts to form an anti-English coalition during

1. Cf: J. Steinberg: "Yesterday's Deterrent." p.56: "It was not surprising that the other powers found Germany's erratic and unpredictable behaviour most alarming and began to look for intricate, machiavellian explanations for what were all too often merely the products of un-coordinated activities of several conflicting departments." See also J. Steinberg: "Germany and the Russo-Japanese War." ("The American Historical Review." December 1970, p.1965-1968) The article calls attention to the lack of co-ordination in Berlin, but makes no reference to the significance of the new European balance.

the Boer War,¹ and the recent Moroccan Crisis.²

Having discussed and analysed German foreign policy at some length, Crowe summed up his alternative interpretations in the following way:

"If it be considered necessary to formulate and accept a theory that will fit all the ascertained facts of German foreign policy, the choice must lie between the two hypotheses here presented:-

"Either Germany is definitely aiming at a general political hegemony and maritime ascendancy, threatening the independence of her neighbours and ultimately the existence of England;

"Or Germany, free from any such clear-cut ambition, and thinking for the present merely of using her legitimate position and influence as one of the leading Powers in the council of nations, is seeking to promote her foreign commerce, spread the benefits of German culture, extend the scope of her national energies, and create fresh German interests all over the world wherever and whenever a peaceful opportunity offers, leaving it to an uncertain future to decide whether the occurrence of great changes in the world may not some day assign to Germany a larger share of direct political action over regions not now a part of her dominions, without that violation of the established rights of other countries which would be involved in any such action under existing political conditions."

A third alternative, and one that Crowe himself probably favoured, was a combination of these two: namely that certain people in the government were consciously aiming for European hegemony, but that responsible politicians realised that this was not yet possible, with the result that Germany was pursuing an impetuous policy with little logical or consistent purpose.

We have seen that the Anglo-German antagonism, according to Crowe, was by no means ephemeral, and that the "deep-seated natural opposition between the policies and interests of the two countries"

1. See Appendix XIII.
2. See Appendix XIV.

could be interpreted in these ways. Either Germany was aiming at "general political hegemony and maritime ascendancy," or else she was unconsciously drifting towards the same goal.

"The above alternatives seem to exhaust the possibilities of explaining the given facts. The choice offered is a narrow one, nor easy to make with any close approach to certainty. It will, however, be seen, on reflection, that there is no actual necessity for a British Government to determine definitely which of the two theories of German policy it will accept. For it is clear that the second scheme (of semi-dependent evolution, not entirely unaided by statecraft) may at any stage merge into the first, or conscious-design scheme. Moreover, if ever the evolution scheme should come to be realized, the position thereby accruing to Germany would obviously constitute as formidable a menace to the rest of the world as would be presented by any deliberate conquest of a similar position by 'malice aforethought.'

"It appears, then, that the element of danger present as a visible factor in one case, also enters, though under some disguise, into the second; and against such a danger, whether actual or contingent, the same general line of conduct seems prescribed. It should not be difficult briefly to indicate that line in such a way as to command the assent of all persons competent to form a judgment in this matter."

What then was this "general line of conduct?" First, England should preserve the balance of power:

"So long as England remains faithful to the general principle of the preservation of the balance of power, her interests would not be served by Germany being reduced to the rank of a weak Power, as this might easily lead to a Franco-Russian predominance equally, if not more, formidable to the British Empire. There are no existing German rights, territorial or other, which this country could wish to see diminished. Therefore, as long as Germany's action does not overstep the line of legitimate protection of existing rights she can always count upon the sympathy and good-will, and even the moral support, of England."

Not only should Germany remain an essential part of the balance of power, but, second, England should put nothing in the way of any legitimate German expansion:

"Further, it would be neither just nor politic to ignore the claims to a healthy expansion which a vigorous

and growing country like Germany has a natural right to assert in the field of legitimate endeavour. The frank recognition of this right has never been grudged or refused by England to any foreign country. It may be recalled that the German Empire owes such expansion as has already taken place in no small measure to England's co-operation or spirit of accommodation, and to the British principle of equal opportunity and no favour. It cannot be good policy for England to thwart such a process of development where it does not directly conflict either with British interests or with those of other nations to which England is bound by solemn treaty obligations. If Germany, within the limits imposed by these two conditions, finds the means peacefully and honourably to increase her trade and shipping, to gain coaling stations or other harbours, to acquire landing rights for cables, or to secure concessions for the employment of German capital or industries, she should never find England in her way."

Third, England should not criticise Germany's naval programme, though she should quietly maintain her own superiority at sea. Fourth, England should make this policy as clear as possible to the German Government:

"It would be of real advantage if the determination not to bar Germany's legitimate and peaceful expansion, nor her schemes of naval development, were made as patent and pronounced as authoritatively as possible, provided care were taken at the same time to make it quite clear that this benevolent attitude will give way to determined opposition at the first sign of British or allied interests being adversely affected. This alone would probably do more to bring about lastingly satisfactory relations with Germany than any other course."

Finally, in the absence of outstanding colonial disputes, as in the case of France before 1904, and of Russia at the time when the memorandum was written, England could come to no special agreement with Germany, but she should always be "as ready as she always has been to weigh and discuss from the point of view of how British interests will be affected" any particular schemes for Anglo-German co-operation. "Germany must be content in this respect to receive exactly the same treatment as every other Power."

"There is no suggestion more untrue or unjust than that England has on any recent occasion shown, or is likely to show in future, a 'parti pris' against Germany or German proposals as such, or displayed any unfairness in dealing strictly on their own merits with any question having a bearing on her relations with Germany. This accusation has been freely made. It is the stock-in-trade of all the inspired tirades against the British Government which emanate directly or indirectly from the Berlin Press Bureau. But no one has ever been able to bring forward a tittle of evidence in its support that will bear examination. The fact, of course, is that, as Mr. Balfour felt impelled to remark to the German Ambassador on a certain occasion, German communications to the British Government have not generally been of a very agreeable character, and, unless that character is a good deal modified, it is more than likely that such communications will in future receive unpalatable answers. For there is one road which, if past experience is any guide to the future, will most certainly not lead to any permanent improvement of relations with any Power, least of all Germany, and which must therefore be abandoned: that is the road paved with graceful British concessions - concessions made without any conviction either of their justice or of their being set off by equivalent counter-services. The vain hopes that in this manner Germany can be 'conciliated' and made more friendly must be definitely given up. It may be that such hopes are still honestly cherished by irresponsible people, ignorant, perhaps necessarily ignorant, of the history of Anglo-German relations during the last twenty years, which cannot be better described than as the history of a systematic policy of gratuitous concessions, a policy which has led to the highly disappointing result disclosed by the almost perpetual state of tension existing between the two countries. Men in responsible positions, whose business it is to inform themselves and to see things as they really are, cannot conscientiously retain any illusions on this subject.

"Here, again, however, it would be wrong to suppose that any discrimination is intended to Germany's disadvantage. On the contrary, the same rule will naturally impose itself in the case of all other Powers."

In fact, relations with France had been as strained as those with Germany, and they had followed the same pattern. But in 1898, during the Fashoda crisis, England had held her ground against France, and once the latter Power had overcome her natural discomfort the way had been opened for the improved relations that had borne fruit in the Anglo-French agreement of 1904.

"Although Germany has not been exposed to such a rebuff as France encountered in 1898, the events connected with the Algeciras Conference appear to have had on the German Government the effect of an unexpected revelation, clearly showing indications of a new spirit in which England proposes to regulate her own conduct towards France on the one hand and to Germany on the other. That the result was a very serious disappointment to Germany has been made abundantly manifest by the turmoil which the signature of the Algeciras Act has created in the country, the official, semi-official, and unofficial classes vying with each other in giving expression to their astonished discontent. The time which has since elapsed has, no doubt, been short. But during that time it may be observed that our relations with Germany, if not exactly cordial, have at least been practically free from all symptoms of direct friction, and there is an impression that Germany will think twice before she now gives rise to any fresh disagreement. In this attitude she will be encouraged if she meets on England's part with unvarying courtesy and consideration in all matters of common concern, but also with a prompt and firm refusal to enter into any one-sided bargains or arrangements, and the most unbending determination to uphold British rights and interests in every part of the globe. There will be no surer nor quicker way to win the respect of the German Government and of the German nation."¹

(16)

In a letter to Sir Francis Villiers of January 14, 1907, Crowe wrote that "I have whilst laid up at home dictated a big memo: on German policy for Sir Edward."² When he returned to the Office on December 27 the memorandum had probably been completed, and it was dated January 1, 1907. At that time Hardinge was absent from the Foreign Office "on holiday,"³ but the memorandum was sent down to him at Wimborne. On January 2 he wrote to Grey that "I had a very heavy pouch this morning which has kept me busy nearly all day with the exception of 1½ hours of golf this

1. BD III, App. A. Memorandum by Crowe, January 1, 1907. The Foreign Office copy, a reprint, is at FO 371/257/8882.
2. FO 800/23/p.276. Crowe to Villiers, January 14, 1907.
3. FO 800/13/p.278. Hardinge to Lascelles, December 31, 1906.

afternoon."¹ Six days later he wrote to Nicolson that "although during my brief holidays I have been backwards and forwards to the F.O. I am returning permanently there on the 11th."² There was some delay in dealing with the memorandum, probably while it was printed, and Grey minuted on January 28:

"This Memorandum by Mr. Crowe is most valuable. The review of the present situation is both interesting and suggestive, and the connected account of the diplomatic incidents of past years is most helpful as a guide to policy. The whole Memorandum contains information and reflections, which should be carefully studied.

"The part of our foreign policy with which it is concerned involves the greatest issues, and requires constant attention."

Grey then marked the memorandum to go to "the Prime Minister, Lord Ripon, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Morley, Mr. Haldane, with my comment upon it."³ On the following day Hardinge wrote to Lascelles that "I am sending you a mem.m which I think you should see on Anglo-German relations during the last few years."⁴ Lascelles replied on February 1 "to thank you for sending me the very interesting Memorandum on Anglo-German relations during the last few years, with the conclusion of which I entirely agree, although on one or two points I think there is something to be said on the other side."⁵

1. FO 800/92/p.178. Hardinge to Grey, January 2, 1907.
2. FO 800/339/p.1. Hardinge to Nicolson, January 8, 1907. See also, FO 800/13/p.288. Hardinge to Lascelles, January 8, 1907.
3. BD III, App. A, p.420. Minute by Grey, January 28, 1907.
4. FO 800/13/p.309. Hardinge to Lascelles, January 29, 1907.
5. FO 800/19/p.107. Lascelles to Hardinge, February 1, 1907. In his Annual Report on Germany for 1906, Lascelles wrote: "Since beginning this report I have had the advantage of studying with attention the interesting memorandum by Mr. Crowe on the present state of relations with France and Germany, dated the 1st January of this year. Although there may be some points in this very able memorandum on which I should hesitate to express my entire agreement, I entirely

On the same day Hardinge sent a copy of Crowe's Memorandum to Cartwright, the Minister at Munich. He wrote that "I enclose to you for your private information a mem.m on our relations with Germany which I think you will find interesting reading," and added that "we have sent it privately to two or three Ambassadors and it has been sent to a few members of the Cabinet."¹

Cartwright replied on February 20:

"My dear Hardinge,

"Many thanks for your letter and the Memo. on Anglo-German relations. It is indeed a remarkable document and I have read it with great care. Its conclusions seem to me to be exceedingly sound, namely that it is a fruitless task to attempt to purchase friendly relations with Germany by repeated concessions. There is no reason why this should in any way imply that we have any desire to initiate an aggressive policy against the Kaiser."²

The remarkable thing is that neither of the two British representatives in the German Empire chose to disagree with the conclusions of Crowe's memorandum. Perhaps it was not surprising that Cartwright should not have disagreed, for he was one of Germany's strongest critics in the British Diplomatic Service, yet it is very significant that Lascelles did not raise his voice in protest. Lascelles, it will be remembered, was the leading member of the now outnumbered "pro-German" camp and had been Ambassador at Berlin since before the Krüger Telegram. It had been he who

1. Cartwright Papers. Hardinge to Cartwright, February 1, 1907.
2. FO 371/257/5980. Cartwright to Hardinge, February 20, 1907.

concur with him in believing that the events connected with the Algéiras conference had the effect of 'an unexpected revelation' on the German Government, and that since then the relations between the two countries, if not exactly cordial, have at least been free from all symptoms of direct friction." FO 371/260/17091. Lascelles to Grey, No. 238, May 24, 1907.

had earlier joined Lansdowne and Sanderson in trying to stem the "anti-German" tide, and who had, with Haldane and Fitzmaurice, but recently crossed swords with the critics of Germany who now dominated the Foreign Office. The fact is that, although he felt that "on one or two points I think there is something to be said on the other side," he could not avoid agreeing with the conclusions. Crowe had deliberately not given his opinion as to whether or not Germany was consciously aiming for hegemony. All he had done was to point to the undeniable fact that she was moving towards a bid for hegemony, whether consciously or unconsciously, and that there was only one sound policy that England could pursue under these circumstances. Once this was accepted, and it clearly was now accepted, there was no longer any practical difference between the "pro-Germans" and the "anti-Germans." The work of the latter group was now complete, and the dominance of their opinions over British foreign policy effectively accomplished. Improved relations with Germany, or perhaps merely relations that did not become worse, were not to be had by vainly searching for an agreement, but by maintaining British naval supremacy and showing a polite yet firm front in the face of German aggression. It is true that the future years were to see a fruitless search for an agreement, but these negotiations were not entered into with any enthusiasm or optimism by the Foreign Office, while their expected failure only underlined the conclusions that Crowe had reached. The rise of "anti-German" feeling in the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service, in so far as it may be said to have reached a conclusion, undoubtedly reached it at the beginning of 1907 with the circulation and acceptance of Crowe's memorandum. From then

on, and until the revival of Russia around 1913, opinion in the Foreign Office towards Germany remained broadly the same. On the one hand domestic political realities forced Sir Edward Grey to continue his fruitless negotiations with Germany; on the other hand developments like the Acceleration, Annexation and Agadir crises made assurance doubly sure. Nevertheless the opinion, once arrived at, did not change so long as the European balance remained what it had become by 1907.

It is perhaps unfortunate that Lascelles did not specify the "one or two points" with which he disagreed. However Sanderson was also given a copy of Crowe's memorandum, and he commented and criticised at some length. It is important to note that Sanderson also accepted the conclusions, and confined himself to criticising points of historical detail.

On February 21, 1907, Sanderson finished some lengthy "Observations," which he gave to Hardinge.¹ The latter minuted on February 25:

"Sir E. Grey,

"Some weeks ago I gave Lord Sanderson a copy of Mr. Crowe's mem.m on our relations with Germany which I thought might interest him.

"Somewhat to my surprise he has taken up the cudgels for Germany and has weighed in with the accompanying mem.m which is of some interest as coming from the pen of an official whose duty it was to carry out for many years the policy of the F.O.

"I submitted it to Mr. Crowe for his observations which he noted in the margin. I do not intend to show them to Lord Lansdowne or to do anything further with this memorandum."²

1. BD III, App. B, p.421. Observations by Sanderson, February 21, 1907.
2. BD III, App. B, p.420. Hardinge to Grey, February 25, 1907.

Hardinge, Fitzmaurice and Grey¹ also made marginal comments, and Mallet added two short memoranda in support of Eyre Crowe.

"Eventually the memorandum was laid before the King as it stood, and," Crowe wrote later, "I believe H.M. expressed satisfaction."²

Before leaving the memorandum it will be instructive to examine Sanderson's more general observations, and also Crowe's marginal notes on them.³ Sanderson wrote that,

"I have written these notes, partly because the circumstances themselves are of considerable interest, partly because they tend to show that the history of German policy towards this Country is not the unchequered record of black deeds which the Memorandum seems to portray. There have been many occasions on which we have worked comfortably in accord with Germany, and not a few cases in which her support has been serviceable to us. ("Lord Sanderson does not quote these cases. (E.A.C.)") There have been others in which she has been extremely aggravating, sometimes unconsciously so, sometimes with intention. The Germans are very tight bargainers, they have earned the nickname of 'les Juifs de la diplomatie.' The German Foreign Office hold to the traditional view of negotiation that one of the most effective methods of gaining your point is to show how intensely disagreeable you can make yourself if you do not. ("This is what I have illustrated by the analogy of the blackmailer. (E.A.C.)") They are surprised that the recollection of these methods should rankle, and speaking generally the North Germans combine intense susceptibility as regards themselves with a singular inability to appreciate the susceptibilities of others.

"On the other hand it is undeniable that we have at times been compelled to maintain an attitude in defence of British interests which has been very inconvenient to German ambitions. ("But surely this is not an offence, but a duty. (E.A.C.)")...

1. In Grey's case it is perhaps well to remember the following remark that he included in his memoirs: "I was ..., when Secretary of State, much too hard pressed by current work to have leisure to look up old papers and read the records in the Foreign Office of what had been done while I was in Opposition." See Lord Grey of Fallodon: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.35.
2. FO 371/2939/64992. Minute by Crowe, March 24, 1917.
3. See also Appendix XV.

"In considering the tendencies and methods of German policy, we have to remember that the Empire took its present place among the Great Powers of Europe only 35 years ago, after some 50 years of helpless longings for united national existence. It was inevitable that a nation flushed with success which had been obtained at the cost of great sacrifices, should be somewhat arrogant and over-eager, impatient to realise various long-suppressed aspirations, and to claim full recognition of its new position. The Government was at the same time suffering from the constant feeling of insecurity caused by the presence on the East and West of two powerful, jealous and discontented neighbours. It is not surprising that with the traditions of the Prussian monarchy behind it, it should have shown itself restless and scheming, and have had frequent recourse to tortuous methods, which have not proved wholly successful.

"It is not, I think, to be expected that Germany will renounce her ambition for oversea possessions, which shall assist and support the development of her commerce, and afford openings for her surplus population. But, as time goes on, her manner of pursuing these objects will probably be less open to exception, and popular opinion, which in Germany is on the whole sound and prudent, will exercise an increasing amount of wholesome restraint. ("This tendency is not observable at present and it would not be prudent to build any plans on its effective emergence in the immediate future. (E.A.C.)") If the mere acquisition of territory were in itself immoral, I conceive that the sins of Germany since 1871 are light in comparison to ours, and it must be remembered that, from an outside point of view, a Country which looks to each change as a possible chance of self aggrandisement is not much more open to criticism than one which sees in every such change a menace to its interests, existing or potential, and founds on this theory continued claims to interference or compensation. It has sometimes seemed to me that to a foreigner reading our press the British Empire must appear in the light of some huge giant sprawling over the globe, with gouty fingers and toes stretching in every direction, which cannot be approached without eliciting a scream...

"The moral which I should draw from the events of recent years is that Germany is a helpful, though somewhat exacting, friend, that she is a tight and tenacious bargainer, and a most disagreeable antagonist. ("I do not quarrel with this characterization. Germany may be helpful as a friend. All I wish to recall is that Germany has not given us her friendship although she has repeatedly pocketed the price demanded for it. (E.A.C.)") She is oversensitive about being consulted on all questions on which she can claim a voice, either as a Great Power or on account of special interests, and it is never prudent

to neglect her on such occasions. Her diplomacy is, to put it mildly, always watchful, and any suspicion of being ignored rouses an amount of wrath disproportionate to the offence. However tiresome such discussions may be, it is, as a general rule, less inconvenient to take her at once into counsel, and to state frankly within what limits you can accept her views, than to have a claim for interference suddenly launched on you at some critical moment. It would of course be absurd to make to her any concessions of importance except as a matter of bargain and in return for value received. ("But this is exactly what we have so often done. (E.A.C.)") Her motto has always been 'Nothing for nothing in this world, and very little for sixpence.' But I do not think it can be justly said that she is ungrateful for friendly support. ("Gratitude among nations had better not be expected. We have for our continuous 'friendly support' not only received from Germany no gratitude, but are undoubtedly the most cordially detested of her neighbours. (E.A.C.)")"

Sanderson finished the present paragraph with what was in effect his "general line of conduct." Crowe wrote that "With the rest of the concluding paragraph I quite agree. I have said practically the same in my memorandum:"

"It is at all events unwise to meet her with an attitude of pure obstruction, such as is advocated by part of our press. A great and growing nation cannot be repressed. It is altogether contrary to reason that Germany should wish to quarrel with us though she may wish to be in a position to face a quarrel with more chances of success, than she can be said now to have. But it would be a misfortune that she should be led to believe that in whatever direction she seeks to expand she will find the British lion in her path. There must be places in which German enterprise can find a field without injury to any important British interests, and it would seem wise that in any policy of development which takes due account of those interests she should be allowed to expect our good will."¹

1. BD III, App. B, p.428-431. Observations by Sanderson, February 21, 1907. See also FO 800/130/p.147. Sanderson to Lansdowne, September 20, 1920: "My feeling has always been that the Kaiser when he was not in one of his tantrums, was not indisposed to an alliance - but that the general trend of German official, military, naval and public opinion was steadily against it. The general feeling towards us was one of jealousy, hostility and a good deal of contempt. I doubt if

We have seen that Lascelles and Sanderson did not quarrel with Crowe's conclusions, and that Sanderson in particular had merely assumed a less critical attitude towards recent German diplomacy. The memorandum was not, as we have also seen, shown to Lord Lansdowne, so we do not know what his reaction would have been. It was, however, shown to Fitzmaurice, who also saw Sanderson's Observations and Crowe's marginal comments. Fitzmaurice was the other opponent of the "anti-Germans" in the Foreign Office, and he might have been expected to have criticised Crowe's memorandum. Yet in fact he found no serious fault with it, and minuted:

"The observations ... on the beneficial results of our free trade policy on our international position are very well put. The only¹ other remark I make on this most able and interesting Memo. is to suggest whether the restless and uncertain personal character of the Emperor William is sufficiently taken into account in the estimate of the present situation. There was at least method in Prince Bismarck's madness; but the Emperor is like a cat in a cupboard. He may jump out anywhere. The whole situation would be changed in a moment if this personal factor were changed, and another Minister like General Caprivi also came into office in consequence."²

With regard to "Mr. Crowe and Lord Sanderson on Prince Bismarck," Fitzmaurice considered that the question was "largely verbal only."³ It was on this note that the discussions provoked by Crowe's memorandum came to an end. When he had read all the papers Grey wrote

1. My emphasis.
2. BD III, App. A, p.420. Minute by Fitzmaurice, February 1907.
3. BD III, App. B, p.420. Marginal comment by Fitzmaurice, February 1907.

feeling here was much more favourable to Germany. The Germans were 'on the make' - and at our expense and we were naturally suspicious and obstructive."

that "it may all come to rest now;"¹ it did so because there was no longer any real argument about the main point at issue.²

(17)

If we look back over the quarter of a century preceding Crowe's Memorandum it is clear that the significant episodes in the deterioration of Anglo-German relations were: England's occupation of Egypt in 1882, and Germany's decision to exploit her lever of blackmail after 1884-85; the sending of the Krüger Telegram in 1896; the inability to arrive at an Anglo-German agreement at the turn of the century; the collapse of Russia in 1905; and the way Germany exploited that collapse to threaten France and the Anglo-French Agreement in 1905 and 1906. These events, coupled with the constitution of the new German High Seas Fleet,

1. BD III, App. B, p.420. Minute by Grey, February 1907.
2. Crowe's memorandum, though dated January 1, did not pass through the Central Registry until March 18, 1907. See M. Roper: "The Records of the Foreign Office, 1782-1939." p.61: "Each paper was then entered in the Central Register in the order of its registry number. Ephemeral papers might be excluded from registration, but if it was subsequently decided to register them, they were not given 'back dates' or 'back numbers' but stamped with the date of actual registration and given the next registry number. Similar treatment was given to papers which escaped registration on first coming into the Office and were registered later. Conversely gaps were not left in the series of registry numbers for the missing numbered despatches." Although the memorandum was not given a "back number," it was given a "back date" in its retention of January 1, 1907. In the following year Crowe added in a footnote to Mallet's Memorandum B (See Appendix XIII, p.526): "See also article in 'National Review' for July 1908 by André Mévil, which bears every evidence of being directly inspired by M. Delcassé." (Unattributed in BD III, App. B, but see FO 800/92/p.192 for Crowe's handwriting). Sanderson's Observations and accompanying marginal comments and memoranda were printed in September 1908.

turned the Anglo-French Agreement into an Entente,¹ and made Anglo-German relations the central feature of British foreign policy. Opinion in the Foreign Office moved gradually from moderate resentment at Germany's methods, to mounting suspicion of Germany's ambitions. When H.M.S. Dreadnought was launched during the Alge-ciras Conference the Anglo-German naval balance was suddenly upset, just as the Russo-German military balance had been upset less than a year earlier. Crowe's Memorandum of January 1907, far from coming as a revelation to his colleagues in the Foreign Office, merely reflected and crystallised the view which had come to be accepted by the majority of them. Its interest lies, not only in the influence that it had in 1907, but also in the information it provides historians about the prevailing Foreign Office opinion

1. See, e.g., BD III, App. A, p.402. Memorandum by Crowe, January 1, 1907: "When the signature of the Algeciras Act brought to a close the first chapter of the conflict respecting Morocco, the Anglo-French 'entente' had acquired a different significance from that which it had at the moment of its inception. Then there had been but a friendly settlement of particular outstanding differences, giving hope for future harmonious relations between two neighbouring countries that had got into the habit of looking at one another askance; now there had emerged an element of common resistance to outside dictation and aggression, a unity of special interests tending to develop into active co-operation against a third Power. It is essential to bear in mind that this new feature of the 'entente' was the direct effect produced by Germany's effort to break it up, and that, failing the active or threatening hostility of Germany, such anti-German bias as the 'entente' must be admitted to have at one time assumed, would certainly not exist at present, nor probably survive in the future." See also C.P. Scott: "Political Diaries, 1911-1928." p.54. Diary entry for November 7, 1911. Scott called on Lascelles: "My principal object was to get his interpretation of the original object of the Entente with France. He said emphatically that its point was not directed against Germany. But he said that was the interpretation they (the Germans) put on it and I (sic) had great difficulty in persuading them to the contrary. But my instructions were that it had no hostile bearing."

more than seven and a half years before the outbreak of the First World War. The weakness of Crowe's Memorandum lies in its failure to make any direct allusion to Anglo-Russian relations, and to the overwhelming effect that the collapse of Russia had had on Anglo-German relations. Its importance lies in its conclusion that, whichever interpretation of German policy was accepted, the line to be pursued by the British government had to be the same. It is noteworthy that the last serious protest from the "pro-Germans" in the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service (though not the Cabinet and the House of Commons) took place in the second half of 1906, that there was no criticism of the conclusions of Crowe's Memorandum, and that there was no real disagreement in the Foreign Office over the broad lines of Anglo-German relations until the revival of Russia in 1913.

C O N C L U S I O N

The transformation of the Foreign Office at the beginning of the twentieth century took place, as we have seen, for three separate reasons. First of all there was a sudden and dramatic emergence of forceful new men with new ideas. This development took place from the winter of 1902-03 to the winter of 1905-06. Second there was a series of reforms, followed by a complete reorganisation of the Office. This development took place from the spring of 1903 to the spring of 1906. Finally there was a decisive change in the attitude of the leading men in the Office towards Germany and the ambitions of German foreign policy. This last development was spread over a longer period, but reached its culmination from 1905 to 1907.

These three changes had entirely separate origins; the first resulting from the personal ambitions of two men, the second from the expansion of the Office and its work, the third being brought about by a succession of political events over a fairly long period. Yet although these three developments were quite separate in their origins, they undoubtedly acted on each other and became interrelated, if only because they took place at exactly the same time. They were also lent added importance by the fact that they coincided with the new course in British foreign policy which brought about the end of isolation. The Anglo-German negotiations were dropped in 1901; the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was signed in 1902; negotiations for an agreement with Russia were opened in 1903; the Anglo-French Agreement was signed in 1904; the Anglo-French Entente was cemented in 1905-06; and the

Anglo-Russian Agreement and consequent Entente were concluded in 1907. Just as the transformation of the Foreign Office can only be understood in the light of all three changes, personal, administrative and political; so also the end of isolation can be more fully understood through an awareness of this important background. England's new foreign policy was influenced and executed by a new body of men, who acquired a new and efficient organisation, and who came to share a common view about the intentions of Germany.

A history of British foreign policy during these years can tell us how the new course came to be adopted, but we are unlikely fully to understand why it was adopted unless we know something of the frame of mind of the men involved and the environment in which they worked. The men who worked in the Foreign Office, from the Foreign Secretary downwards, could have reacted in a number of ways to the general trend of European history. By examining the transformation of the Foreign Office at this time we help to explain why they reacted in the way that they did, and demonstrate that by 1907 they nearly all reacted in practically the same way. To suggest that they had no alternative but to act as they did, because of the logic of events with which they dealt, is an attractive explanation on a superficial level; but it is ultimately a simplification of history.

If then these separate developments came together to transform the Foreign Office, it will be as well to examine the broader reasons for, and causes of, this transformation, before assessing its results and importance.

The most obvious thing about the transformation of the Foreign Office is that it took place at the beginning of a new century, with a new King, a new Prime Minister, and a new Foreign Secretary. It also took place immediately after an important war. The combination of all these circumstances cannot but have had some effect, both positive and negative, however difficult this may be to assess.

There were, first of all, one or two negative reasons for the transformation, of which perhaps the most significant was the disappearance of Lord Salisbury. It has been said that Lord Palmerston was personally responsible for preventing the extension of electoral reform, and that it was not until his death in 1865 that the Reform Act of 1867 became possible. Lord Salisbury had a similar effect on the Foreign Office. He was a strong man, who liked things to be done as they had been in the past, who viewed Anglo-German relations with a remarkable sang-froid, and who did not consider that England needed to make permanent understandings. This is not to say that he would not have altered his opinions if he had lived longer; but so long as he remained Foreign Secretary there was no real chance of any important changes. The death of Queen Victoria in January 1901 was another reason for the developments. She had always taken a personal interest in the affairs of the Foreign Office, and it is unlikely that she would have viewed the transformation with any more favour than Lord Salisbury would have. The relinquishment of the Foreign Office by the latter in October 1900, and the death of Queen Victoria three months later, did not in any sense cause the transformation; but they certainly made it possible.

The personalities of the new Foreign Secretary and the new King undoubtedly had an influence on the way the situation developed. Lord Lansdowne came to the Foreign Office determined to pursue a new foreign policy, and convinced of the need for reform. Similarly King Edward was anxious to extend his influence as far as possible, and was in sympathy with the main lines of the new course. Nevertheless the two men acted as no more than a stimulus. It is true that Lord Lansdowne did not prevent the promotions of Bertie and Hardinge; yet he was not enthusiastic about them. It is true also that he encouraged the reform of the Office; yet he can hardly be given the credit for the reorganisation that followed. Finally it is true that he personally favoured the end of isolation and became increasingly critical of German foreign policy; yet it must be remembered that he did not always realise the full significance of his new policy and certainly tried to stem the tide of "anti-German" feeling. King Edward, through Francis Knollys, played an important role in securing the advancement of Bertie and Hardinge, yet this influence became less important after a while. The King appears to have taken no interest in, and had no influence on, the organisation of the Foreign Office; and although he favoured rapprochement with France he was erratic in his approach to foreign affairs, and suspicious of the growing "anti-German" feeling in the Foreign Office. Once the transformation of the Office had been made possible by the disappearance of Lord Salisbury and Queen Victoria, the new Foreign Secretary and King certainly acted as a stimulus to change, but they can hardly be regarded as responsible for it.

Arthur Balfour, who succeeded Lord Salisbury as Prime Minister in 1902, occupied a similar position. He did not prevent the rise of Bertie and Hardinge, he criticised the efficiency of the Office and thereby encouraged change, and he supported Lansdowne's new foreign policy. Yet he was too remote to have any real influence, and does not seem to have succumbed to the spread of "anti-German" feeling.

What then were the positive influences working towards the transformation of the Office, the influences which were able to exploit the new atmosphere in which change was not discouraged, or at least not always discouraged? It is not possible to assess with any accuracy the effect of the new century on people's thinking. The period before the First World War was certainly one of change and reform, but most of the important developments came later with the change of government, and we cannot say what effect they would have had on an enclosed organisation like the Foreign Office. We are certainly able, however, to point to the Boer War as an important influence. The early defeats sustained by the British Army in South Africa had demonstrated that some changes were badly needed in government, in order to modernise the machinery, and to make it more efficient and more suitable to the needs of a new century. The effects of this lesson were obviously felt first of all by the Army and the War Office, but it is useful to remember that it was Lord Lansdowne himself who was Secretary of State for War before his transfer to the Foreign Office. It is important, when considering the transformation of the Foreign Office, to be aware that the War Office underwent a similarly dramatic change of personnel and organisation in 1903-04,

and that the Admiralty was overhauled a little later. The changes in the Foreign Office must be viewed as part of the far-reaching modernisation of government which resulted from the exposure of inefficiency during the Boer War. There was often a feeling among the members of the Foreign Office that if they did not themselves improve the quality of their senior officials, and the efficiency of their organisation, they would have to suffer the indignity of intervention from outside.

No explanation of the sudden transformation of the Foreign Office during these years can disregard the importance of the personalities involved. It is when we examine the varying roles played by these men that we come to the reason for the interaction of the three developments, and thus for the transformation of the Office as a whole. It was Bertie and Hardinge who sparked off the personal intrigues which led to such a rapid turnover among the senior officials, and they deliberately encouraged the promotion of Louis Mallet and William Tyrrell. It was precisely because they recognised the great efficiency and ability of Eyre Crowe that they took the trouble to prevent his advancement. These men were the most instrumental in pressing for changes in the Office. It was Sanderson and Villiers who officially supervised the reorganisation of the Office, and it was a Committee of senior officials which produced the important Report on which the changes were based. Nevertheless Bertie and Hardinge both raised their voices in favour of reform, in however imprecise a way, and it was Eyre Crowe who actually put the reorganisation into effect. Spring Rice, Mallet and Tyrrell were undoubtedly in wholehearted agreement with the aims of the reorganisation.

Finally Bertie, Hardinge, Mallet, Spring Rice and Crowe were all deeply involved in the new "anti-German" - and thus pro-French and pro-Russian - persuasion. Their roles varied both in importance and in degree, but they were all at the forefront of opinion. The impression one derives from a study of these developments is that the more able of the rising generation of officials were dedicated to the cause of reform in the widest sense, and that they had the patronage and support of Bertie who, although no longer young, was impatient and frustrated. It is impossible to overlook the fact that it was roughly the same body of officials that was involved in each of the revolutionary processes.

We are therefore presented with a picture of a number of men who, for different reasons and in different ways, began to exert a formidable influence over the Foreign Office as a whole. That there were many lesser figures involved in the various aspects of the transformation is certain, but these few strong personalities succeeded in exerting their influence both on their colleagues and on the Office in which they worked. If we look for the difference between the Foreign Office of Sir Edward Grey and that of Lord Salisbury it is the presence of these commanding figures that we shall first notice. There was a new organisation, and there was a new policy, but it was these men who pulled the strings, and it was their influence that was paramount.

What then were the results of this transformation, and how important was it, both in the short term, and the long term? It will be convenient to examine the effects of the personal, administrative and political changes both separately and in combination.

The successful intrigues of Bertie and Hardinge left a legacy of personal rivalry that persisted in the Foreign Office for many years after 1906. This rivalry mainly revolved around the question of the succession to the Permanent Under-Secretaryship, and was complicated by the desire of Hardinge and others to prevent the promotion of Eyre Crowe. First of all Louis Mallet was deliberately promoted over Crowe's head in preparation for his eventual succession. This plan was upset when Hardinge was appointed Viceroy of India in 1910 and Sir Arthur Nicolson recalled from St. Petersburg to take his place. The question of the eventual succession was postponed, but only temporarily, and when Mallet was given an Embassy to get him out of the way, Crowe and Tyrrell were left in the field as the two main contenders. The outbreak of war in 1914 temporarily suspended all appointments, and in the end Hardinge was brought back to the Office to take over once again when Nicolson retired. One of the very first things he did was to get a personal friend transferred from the Diplomatic Service to the Foreign Office, so that that man, and not Crowe, should become his successor. It was not until Hardinge left the Foreign Office, and Crowe finally became Permanent Under-Secretary in 1920, that it was possible to put to an end this legacy of intrigue and rivalry.

The reorganisation of the Foreign Office provided Sir Edward Grey and his senior officials with a modern administration which greatly facilitated the efficient conduct of foreign affairs in the important years before the First World War. When the volume of business expanded in the years after 1906, particularly after the outbreak of the Balkan Wars, the Foreign Office was organised

in such a way that it was prepared and able to cope with the increased load that it had to carry. Yet there were certain aspects of the new system which were eventually to prove a liability. Hardinge's new idea that all papers should reach the Secretary of State via the Permanent Under-Secretary ultimately made his successor appear more and more in the role of a bottleneck. The great increase in the work also resulted in heavy pressure being placed on the single Central Registry, which came near to breaking down. However this only happened in the last years of peace, and was a small price to pay for the considerable increase in efficiency, method, knowledge and expertise which resulted.

The general consensus of opinion that Germany was making a bid for hegemony in Europe, whether deliberately or otherwise, conditioned British foreign policy from 1907 to 1913. After the signature of the Anglo-Russian Convention in 1907 British foreign policy was dominated by Anglo-German relations, with increasing naval rivalry, a series of fruitless negotiations, and a number of dangerous international crises. The striking feature about the period is that, although they might have differed over details, Sir Edward Grey's advisers in and out of the Foreign Office were nearly all united in the advice they gave him about Germany. Some had more extreme views than others, but all shared the basic suppositions. This state of affairs was deliberately encouraged by the promotion of diplomatists who were politically sound, and by the removal of those who were not.

It was not until 1913 with the revival of Russia that the consensus came to an end. Spring Rice warned in 1906 and 1907

that it would be dangerous to make too many concessions to Russia in view of that country's inevitable recovery. Nicolson warned in 1909 that it would be very dangerous to lose Russia's friendship during her hour of need, lest she should turn to Germany in the short run and against England in the long run. But it was not until 1913 that the revival of Russia became a reality and once more faced the Foreign Office with the old tri-partite relationship that had existed before 1905. Just as Mallet, Spring Rice and Crowe had each had a slightly different attitude to Germany and Russia before and during the latter's collapse, so also there developed three different attitudes towards Germany and Russia after 1913, headed by Nicolson, Tyrrell and Crowe. All three were convinced that Germany was making a bid for European hegemony, just as the earlier triumvirate had been, but they were also conscious of the rapid revival and increase of Russian power, and the consequent shift in the European balance of power. Whereas Nicolson felt that it had become more than ever necessary to safeguard good relations with Russia, Tyrrell felt that the restoration of the continental balance would enable England comfortably to revert to her role as "tertius gaudens." Eyre Crowe agreed with neither Nicolson nor Tyrrell. He felt that the balance on the continent was still tilted in Germany's favour, and that the Russian entente ought therefore to be maintained. On the other hand he felt that England could negotiate with Russia from a position of strength and not of weakness. It all depended on when the Franco-Russian Alliance had begun, or would begin, to outweigh the Central Powers. When this point was reached it would be necessary, unless the German government had already

declared war, to formulate a new foreign policy. The transformation of political attitudes within the Foreign Office was partly the cause and partly the result of a situation which was only, and perhaps could only have been, ended by war.

By the summer of 1914 the period inaugurated by the transformation was beginning to play itself out. Strong personal and political rivalry had developed over the succession to the Permanent Under-Secretaryship and over Anglo-German and Anglo-Russian relations. At the same time the new organisation was beginning to show signs of considerable strain. The outbreak of war upset calculations by delaying the climax of the personal rivalries, by settling for a generation the triangular Anglo-Russo-German relationship, and by suddenly increasing the strain on the organisation. But before we examine the longer term results of the transformation of 1900-1907, it will be useful to take a look at the combined effect of these three developments on the Foreign Office of Sir Edward Grey.

Perhaps the most striking thing about the transformation of the Foreign Office is that it turned a nineteenth century office into a twentieth century bureaucracy. This development was accompanied by the rapid increase in the use of typewriters and telephones. It was however chiefly the result of the fact that the Foreign Secretary's senior officials were now expected to advise him as well as support him, that they had positive and strongly held views on foreign affairs which they were not afraid of advancing, and because they had at their disposal an administrative machine which not only devolved responsibility and executive action to the officials themselves, but also encouraged them

to put forward and to record their opinions. It is in this sense that the transformation of the Foreign Office was so important. Sir Edward Grey might not always have followed the advice that was given to him by his officials, but anyone who studies the archives of the Foreign Office in the first decade of the twentieth century is immediately struck by the overwhelming change which came about as a result of the transformation.

It is arguable that the period from 1907 to 1914 was the heyday of the Foreign Office, when its prestige, influence and authority were at their height. Those were the years, particularly until 1910, when Sir Edward Grey guided foreign policy with probably less interference from the Cabinet, from Parliament and from the Press than any other Foreign Secretary before or since. Secure in the knowledge that Grey had the support of Campbell-Bannerman and then Asquith, and basking in the Royal favour which Hardinge had maintained, the Foreign Office was the most prestigious and influential Department of State. It was only at the end of this period, when Grey and Nicolson were growing tired, that this strong position was beginning to break down, and that the authority of the Foreign Office began to be challenged by other members of the Cabinet. The importance of the Foreign Office before the First World War may be judged against its rapid decline after 1914. The pressures of war, the inevitable subservience of diplomacy to military and naval requirements, the hostility of Lloyd George, the creation of the Cabinet Secretariat; these and other factors combined to bring the Foreign Office down to a new and considerably less influential position, symbolised by the removal of high policy from the Foreign Office to the

Cabinet Secretariat from 1916 to 1922. The Foreign Office recovered some of the lost ground from 1922 to the 1930s, when its influence again declined. In the light of these later developments it is easy to see the period from 1907 to 1914 as the golden age of the Foreign Office, when its influence and prestige were undimmed, and when it took advantage of its new authority, confidence and efficiency. This golden age was the result of the transformation which immediately preceded it. It is arguable that without the transformation the period which followed would not have been so memorable; it is also arguable that but for the marked success of the transformation, based as it was on an organisation renowned for its social exclusiveness, the reaction and backlash would not have been so pronounced.

When we come to look back over more than half a century at these developments we are able to see them in their proper perspective and pass a considered judgment on them. The men who were involved have passed away and been forgotten. The policies that they advocated have similarly been overtaken, except in so far as we still live in a situation dominated by the triangular relationship between the English speaking democracies, the Germans and the Russians. What does remain, however, is a modern Department of State, superficially very different from the Foreign Office of 1906, yet fundamentally the same. It is therefore the Foreign Office of the present day that is the real legacy of the transformation at the beginning of the century.

The Report of the Royal Commission on the Civil Service in the autumn of 1914, and the emergencies of the war which immediately followed, resulted in some important reforms in the

Foreign Office during and after the First World War. These included a new system of registration, a decentralisation of the Registry into a number of separate Registries serving the needs of each Department, an increase in the number of Departments, and an increase in the number of staff. There was also an amalgamation of the junior ranks of the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Service. Further reforms followed in the inter-war period, during the early 1940s, and in more recent years, including newer methods of registration and filing, a new system of correspondence between the Departments of the Foreign Office and the Chanceries of the Missions, a number of other amalgamations, and finally an enormous increase in size and sheer bureaucracy. Yet when all these changes have been taken into account they add up to less than the changes which they succeeded; they amount in fact to a series of important reforms, and not a complete reorganisation. The fact is that the Foreign Office of the inter-war period, and the Foreign Office of the 1970s, were and are run on the same lines that served Sir Edward Grey.

The transformation of the Foreign Office during and immediately after the Foreign Secretaryship of Lord Lansdowne was of considerable importance for the immediate future both of the Office itself and of British foreign policy. It was also important as the background to the end of isolation. But it should be remembered most of all as the watershed between the old Foreign Office of the nineteenth century and the new and contemporary Foreign Office of the twentieth century.

A P P E N D I X I (see p.18)

Lord Cromer wrote to Barrington on December 17, 1903:

"My dear Barrington,

"I really must disobey your injunction not to answer your letter about promotions in the diplomatic service.

"You say that the grievance about bringing in outsiders is not a legitimate one, because (1) the Committee of 1868-69 laid down that the Government reserved to itself the right of bringing in anyone it pleased as Ambassador, and (2) that the right has been very sparingly used. You add that you can only think of the following men: Lugard, Dufferin, Pauncefote, Currie, Durand, Bertie, Macdonald and myself. You think that each of these, except Lugard, Durand and perhaps Bertie established a pretty good claim.

"As regards the first point, I should mention that the introduction of outsiders has not been wholly confined to Ambassadors. But I have never heard any reasonable person complain on this score. All recognise that if in respect to any vacant post - whether Ambassadorial or Ministerial - special qualifications are required, it may be not only necessary, but very desirable, to bring in some outsider possessing those qualifications.

"I have never heard a word of criticism on Pauncefote's appointment. It was at once recognised that special local knowledge was required at Washington. Nor about the appointment of Satow - who is not mentioned in your list. It was recognised that his special knowledge of Chinese and Japanese affairs fully justified the treatment his case received. The position and the services of Lord Dufferin were also recognised as a justification in his case. I cannot, for obvious reasons, discuss my own case. I will only say that if, when I go, I am consulted about my successor, I shall certainly recommend some one outside the diplomatic service, unless I think that a thoroughly competent man can be found amongst its members.

"Lugard's appointment was made years ago. I am old enough to remember that it caused a violent outcry, and was, most rightly, denounced as a Parliamentary job.

"I will deal presently with the other cases.

"What the members of the diplomatic service hold, and I think most rightly hold, is not that outsiders should be invariably excluded, but that the preference should be given to their service, and that no outsider should be brought in unless he possesses qualifications for the vacant place

manifestly superior to those of anyone in the service. You may perhaps have heard that someone once said to Lord Melbourne that, if there were several candidates for a post, one of whom was his friend or relation, he would caeteris paribus give the place to that friend or relation, to which Lord Melbourne replied: "So would I, but caeteris paribus be d--d." I do not go so far as to say that Lord Melbourne's principles have survived to any great extent in the distribution of Foreign Office patronage of late years. Many of the appointments to which, as it appears to me, exception may reasonably be taken, were certainly not jobs. On the other hand, I think there is evidence to show that, in some cases, the claims and merits of those inside the service were not sufficiently weighed and appreciated before it was decided to appoint an outsider. Take the cases of Currie, Durand, Macdonald and Bertie. In this latter instance, the grievance was partially mitigated by Hardinge's transfer from the diplomatic service to the F.O. Did each of these four possess qualifications which were not to be found in any members of the diplomatic service? That is, of course, a matter of appreciation. With one exception, I would rather not discuss the merits and demerits of each of the individuals named. That exception is Macdonald.

"I certainly cannot be accused of any personal prejudice in this case. Macdonald served on my staff. He is a great personal friend of my own. I have a high opinion of his character and abilities, but if I am asked whether those abilities are of a nature to justify his appointment as Minister over the heads of a number of members of the diplomatic service, I am constrained to answer the question with a very decided negative. No one had a word to say against Macdonald personally, but a very general, and, in my opinion, very justifiable feeling prevailed that the appointment was unjust to the diplomatic service.

"Further, I have to point out that your list is not complete.

"You have not mentioned the appointment of Walff, who, be it remembered, was, in the first instance, appointed not to be Ambassador, but to be Minister at Teheran. His appointment was, at least, as great a Parliamentary job as that of Lugard, but, for a variety of reasons, - none of which in any degree affect my argument - did not raise a similar outcry.

"Then were (sic) was Wellesley's appointment. This was surely not justifiable. In this case, if I remember rightly, there was an outcry.

"How about Euan Smith? I had known him in India. I was perfectly enraged at his appointment.

"Ridgway did not remain long in the service, but he was at one time appointed to Tangiers, I never quite understood why.

"It may, I know, be said that in some of these cases, the next senior men in the diplomatic service were unsuitable to fill the vacant posts, and that, therefore, outsiders had to be brought in. I acknowledge, to some extent, the premises of this argument, but I demur to the conclusion. If the senior men are incompetent, nominate juniors over their heads. The public service would gain, and the diplomatic service, as a body, would not complain if some confidence were established that the selections were exclusively made on the merits of the different candidates.

"The truth is, however, that confidence in this matter has been somewhat rudely shaken. Appointments outside the diplomatic service have an effect inside the service to this extent, that they are held to indicate the spirit, generally, in which patronage is exercised.

"Take Brookfield's case. Was his appointment justified? I doubt it.

"Charles Hardinge, when I was in London, told me of the special circumstances which attended the appointment of Esmé Howard to Crete, but he did not altogether convince me that that appointment should have been made.

"Then, again, take the appointment of Anstruther, without a single special qualification, to be a Suez Canal Director, and the rejection of Garstin, with all his very high attainments. An appointment of this sort does infinite harm. The facts become pretty generally known; confidence receives a rude shake, and the belief is engendered that a capable man, who does his work well and steadily, without self-advertisement, has but little chance against influence - Parliamentary, royal, etc.

"Excuse my writing at such length. The subject is one on which I entertain a very strong opinion. I have formed that opinion partly from seeing, in my Egyptian work, how infinitely important is the question of how appointments are made, and how promotion is given.*¹

1. FO 633/8/p.384. Cromer to Barrington, December 17, 1903.

A P P E N D I X I I (see p.98)

When Farnall failed to obtain the vacant Assistant Under-Secretaryship in March 1904, he was transferred to Cairo with such rapidity that he failed to secure his pension rights. At that time no provision was made for giving a pension to British officials who undertook service for the Egyptian government, as Egypt was still technically an independent State (or rather an autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire). No Act of Parliament had been passed to provide for British officials who were caught out by this political accident, and service in Cairo for the Egyptian government (as opposed to service with Lord Cromer's staff at the British Agency) was treated exactly like service for any other foreign government. Unfortunately for Farnall it was necessary for him to leave the Foreign Office and take up his new post before he could obtain some promise that his pension rights would be secured. He noted on March 30, 1904:

"Lord Lansdowne sent for me and said that ... he heard I was ready to take the Egyptian Caisse post. I said that I was; but that I could not afford to take it unless I could have secured to me the pension corresponding to my years of service here... Lord Lansdowne said that an arrangement could probably be made with the Treasury."¹

A letter was sent to the Treasury on the subject on April 6,² but the Lords Commissioners replied a week later that "They have no power to award a pension to Mr. Farnall."³

In this situation Farnall was placed in a position of

1. FO 366/754. Minute by Farnall, March 30, 1904.
2. FO 366/754. Foreign Office to Treasury, April 6, 1904.
3. FO 366/754. Treasury to Foreign Office, April 13, 1904.

considerable difficulty: he wanted very much to leave the Foreign Office and take up the new post that Lansdowne had obtained for him, yet he knew that by doing so he would place his future at risk. He wrote on April 13:

"My dear Sanderson,

"The Treasury letter does not seem to me to meet all my case. But as Lord Cromer has telegraphed that I must go out at once to vote at the Caisse on some particular question, I am going out to save him any possible inconvenience...

"I wish of course that these matters could have been settled before I had to go; but in face of Lord Cromer's telegram to Barrington, I think that I am doing right in going out provisionally."¹

Farnall did go out to Egypt and, although he remained there, nothing was done to secure for him a pension. A Bill was at one time introduced in Parliament, but nothing came of it. In these circumstances it became clear that Farnall would have to return to the Foreign Office if nothing were done before his retirement.

By the summer of 1914 Farnall had become seriously worried about his future. He had been away from the Foreign Office for over ten years, knew nothing of the work by then being performed, and was no longer able to fit into the new Office hierarchy. He decided to write to his old friend, Eyre Crowe, and sent the following letter dated June 5:

"My dear Crowe,

"I do not know to whom I should now write so I write to you because I know that I am now writing to a friend. I wonder what is happening to that Bill which was to secure to men in my position the pension corresponding to years' service under the Imperial govt? Men who, with the permission of that Govt took Indian, Colonial and

1. FO 366/754. Farnall to Sanderson, April 13, 1904.

Protectorate service, were successively provided for; but those who, in similar circumstances, took foreign service, were left out and so far lost their pension. A bill was years ago on the stocks for saving them their pension. Has it got through or has it been mislaid in all the excursions and alarums of Home Rule and Civil War, not to mention the Cabinet Crisis in Albania. I cannot in any case afford to lose my pension, could not live without it and unless that Bill is by way of passing I ought to be coming back to the F.O. Now, as we all know, it is, in actual life, not the departure, but the return of the Prodigal son, which is so painful. You don't want me. I should be very useless. When I came here I had every assurance that I should not lose my pension, and I am sure there is now, no more than then, any intention that I should. But till the law is altered, there it stands and binds both F.O. and Treasury."¹

Farnall's pension was finally saved by the outbreak of the First World War, which brought about the establishment of a British Protectorate over Egypt. The changed political situation made an Act of Parliament unnecessary, as Farnall automatically became a British official undertaking Protectorate rather than foreign service. With his pension rights assured, he lived on in Egypt until his death in 1929.

1. FO 366/786. Farnall to Crowe, June 5, 1914.

A P P E N D I X I I I (see p.110)

Another incident which concerned the Diplomatic Service during 1904 is worth mentioning here. Sir Charles Eliot "was a prodigious person who at Balliol in the days of Dr. Jowett had carried off possibly more prizes than the most brilliant of that Oxford generation."¹ He was also extremely ambitious and, after a successful diplomatic career, succeeded Arthur Hardinge as Agent and Consul General at Zanzibar in 1900. Cecil Spring Rice asked a friend at the beginning of 1904: "Did it ever strike you to consider the point as to whether the personal ambition of an energetic man - good as it is, as a spirit of activity - may not be the best thing for the public service? I have my doubts - especially since I have seen A. Hardinge and Eliot at work."²

In 1902 Eliot's ambitious energy produced friction with Sir Clement Hill, the Head of the African Protectorates Department in the Foreign Office, concerning the grants of land to private persons in the East African Protectorate. The trouble came to a head in February 1904, and Eliot offered his resignation in March on discovering that Lansdowne had consulted some Protectorate officials who happened to be in London. Lansdowne, however, telegraphed on March 7 urging Eliot not to resign pending the receipt of a despatch giving the Foreign Office point of view on the question of land grants.³ Hardinge wrote to Bertie on March 11:

1. K. Sansom: "Sir George Sansom and Japan." p.12.
2. Strachey Papers 13/14/5. Spring Rice to Strachey, January 23, 1904.
3. FO 2/841. Lansdowne to Eliot, Tel. No. 52, March 7, 1904.

"My dear Frank,

"... Eliot has been sending rude tels to Lord L. and offering his resignation. If it had not been that it was considered that he might be suffering from the climate I think his resignation would have been accepted, instead of his being called upon for an explanation."¹

On the same day that Hardinge wrote his letter Sir Charles Eliot decided to send a protest to the Prime Minister over the head of the Foreign Secretary. He wrote the following letter from Kisumu, beside Lake Victoria, on March 11:

"Dear Mr. Balfour,

"... I have felt obliged to tender my resignation to Lord Lansdowne. In reply, I have been asked to await the receipt of a despatch. It is possible that I may be able to accept the terms of that despatch, in which case I must apologise for troubling you, but it is doubtful and mails from East Africa to England take so long that, if I write at all, I must write at once...

"My object, which I state with some trepidation for I am not at all sure that it is compatible with established usage, is to ask whether you will be able to satisfy yourself that my resignation ought to be accepted, if I have to persist in it. I shall be sorry to retire for two reasons.

"Firstly, it cannot but make a bad public impression. Of course I would never willingly allow myself to be used as a means of party attacks on the Government. I am a student by nature and have for some time been laying the foundations of a work on oriental religions which will occupy me for many years. You will realize more easily than the F.O. that with such a task in one's head one may contemplate retirement with perfect calm. But still the Foreign Office administration of these Protectorates is so open to criticism - in plain language so bad - that the mere fact of a Commissioner resigning must be unfavourably interpreted.

"Secondly, though I contemplate retirement with calm, I should wish to finish my task here... I am quite willing to devote my life to East Africa and give up all diplomatic promotion but I do require a reasonably free hand under intelligent guidance.

1. FO 800/183/p.163. Hardinge to Bertie, March 11, 1904.

"In closing this letter I feel it my duty to tell you as Prime Minister that the present system of administering these Protectorates from the F.O. ought not to continue. Administration is not their trade and they have made no attempt to learn it... I know nothing of the Colonial Office but I should think they would manage the thing better, because it is their natural business."¹

When this letter was received in London several weeks later it was shown privately by Sandars to Eric Barrington. The latter commented:

"My dear Jack,

"It seems to me quite monstrous and contrary to all discipline that Eliot should address the Prime Minister on the subject...

"Lord Lansdowne thought that Eliot was giving away too much land. Whereupon he consulted Eliot's 2nd and 3rd assistants who were on leave and who agreed with him. Thereupon Eliot resigned. That is the whole story... I hope Mr. B. will tell Lord Lansdowne of this letter and sit upon Eliot."²

Meanwhile Eliot continued to threaten to resign,³ and Hardinge explained the situation to Bertie on May 11:

"My dear Frank,

"... Eliot has written the most impertinent letters to Lansdowne ... and I see no alternative for him but to go. He is very clever but very second rate and I believe unreliable."⁴

In the end Eliot did resign and wrote to Balfour on June 21 demanding a public enquiry. Louis Mallet commented on June 24:

"My dear Bertie,

"... You will have seen Eliot's resignation. He is evidently off his head and they are going to lay the Papers. I am not sorry as though he is a very clever

1. British Museum Add. MS 49747, p.76. Eliot to Balfour, March 11, 1904.
2. British Museum Add. MS 49747, p.92. Barrington to Sandars, April 8, 1904.
3. See, e.g., FO 2/835. Eliot to Lansdowne, April 11, 1904.
4. FO 800/183/p.194. Hardinge to Bertie, May 11, 1904.

man, he is not a gentleman and is not to be trusted. He will come very badly out of this I fancy."¹

Eliot did in fact come out of the episode very badly. He received no support from Balfour, and the public enquiry fell flat. Meanwhile Eyre Crowe, the Assistant Clerk in the African Protectorates Department, who had criticised Eliot in his minutes earlier in the year,² argued against Eliot in a lengthy memorandum of twenty-five typewritten pages.³ When the fuss began to die down, and Eliot's resignation had been accepted, Lord Lansdowne sent him the following letter, dated September 25, 1904:

"Dear Sir Charles Eliot,

"Your letter of the 22nd ... has touched me deeply and I am very grateful to you for your thought of writing it.

1. FO 800/183/p.198. Mallet to Bertie, June 24, 1904. See also India Office Library MS Eur. E/233/23. Brodrick to Amptill, June 24, 1904: "what has just occurred in Zanzibar. An able official there, Sir Charles Eliot, loses his head, probably owing to the irritating nature of the climate, over an absolutely petty question whether certain lands in East Africa should be leased to a syndicate or to individuals. He writes vigorous remonstrances to the Foreign Secretary, and tenders his resignation, and subsequently sends a most insubordinate telegram to the Prime Minister." Also PRO 30/33/9/15. Townley to Satow, June 30, 1904: "Sir Charles Eliot has made a great ass of himself, and had evidently got too big for his boots. The question has been going on for some time as he had already offered his resignation when I was in London but was then told to await a Foreign Office despatch before making a final decision." Also British Museum Add. MS 48682, p.63. Diary entry by E. Hamilton, July 9, 1904: "our Consul General at Zanzibar ... declines to carry out Lansdowne's instructions."
2. See, e.g., FO 2/834. Minute by Crowe, 3/3/04, on Eliot No. 79, 8/2/04: "Sir C. Eliot, as usual, omits all reference to the question of ...;" FO 2/834. Minute by Crowe, 19/3/04, on Eliot No. 100, 13/2/04: "Sir C. Eliot, as usual, omits to make any observations or recommendations of his own;" FO 2/835. Minute by Crowe, 3/5/04, on Eliot No. 242, 12/4/04: "It seems extraordinary that to this request Sir C. Eliot should pay no attention."
3. FO 2/911. Notes by Crowe, 7/10/04, on Eliot's article on the East African Protectorate in the "19th Century Magazine," September 1904.

"To be quite frank, I could not understand the reasons which led you to resign. It seemed to me that it should have been easy for us to compare our views good humouredly and I should have done my best to meet you. When therefore your batteries opened in reply, I certainly thought there must be some personal obstacle in the way of such a coming together as I desired and I confess I was hurt as well as surprised.

"But, as I read your letter now before me, these feelings disappear completely and there only remains one of deep regret that this misunderstanding should have occurred and that it should have resulted in the loss to the service of one whose ability and power to serve the country we all rated so highly."¹

After leaving the Diplomatic Service Eliot became Vice-Chancellor of Sheffield University; but in reality he yearned to return to his former career.² With the change of government in 1905, but particularly after the succession of Asquith as Prime Minister in 1908, he launched a vigorous campaign by correspondence to get himself reinstated,³ but it was to no avail. By the outbreak of the First World War he had become Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong, with no reasonable chance of ever again obtaining diplomatic employment. In fact he was surprisingly recalled by the Foreign Office to undertake a mission to Vladivostok at the end of the First World War, and he ended his working life as Ambassador at Tokyo.

1. FO 794/1. Lansdowne to Eliot, September 25, 1904.
2. See, e.g., India Office Library MS Eur. F/111/180/69. Eliot to Curzon, June 7, 1905: "Certain Ministers talk of giving me Government employment but take a long time about it and I expect that I shall shortly accept some University work. But if you are ever in a position to send me back to East Africa with proper instructions you will win my eternal gratitude by doing so."
3. See, e.g., the correspondence in FO 794/1; and Asquith Papers Vol. 26, p.166. Eliot to Mrs Asquith, September 1, 1908.

A P P E N D I X I V (see p.162)

A number of men who started work in the Foreign Office in the last quarter of the nineteenth century have left a record of their experiences there. The following accounts might usefully be quoted here. For example George Buchanan joined the Diplomatic Service in 1876 and, like other young diplomatists, spent a few months of preliminary training in the Foreign Office. He wrote that his work there was of a "purely clerical kind, such as the copying of despatches and the ciphering and deciphering of telegrams."¹ Charles Hardinge had a similar experience four years later:

"I joined the Foreign Office on the 31st May 1880 and was put in what was then called the German Department..."

"The Foreign Office was a very different place from what it is now. The work was infinitesimal by comparison. There were no second-division clerks, no cypherers, no typewriters and no telephones. All the work was done by the upper-division clerks, and though it may be said that it was absurd to employ highly educated young men to cypher and decypher telegrams, to copy out despatches in their own handwriting and even to seal up and address Foreign Office bags, there is no doubt that these subordinate duties made the clerks very efficient as clerks, though no scope or opportunity was given them for political education and initiative."²

In the same year Thomas Legh, the future Lord Newton, joined the Eastern European Department. He has written:

"The F.O. in 1880 was a different place from what it is now. The staff consisted of only about sixty persons all told, including Queen's Messengers. All the copying was in manuscript, and type-writers did not exist. Neither were there female secretaries. But an inaccurate picture of the old F.O. has been drawn by

1. Sir G. Buchanan: "My Mission to Russia." Vol. 1, p.1-2.
2. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.11.

novelists like Anthony Trollope. In fiction the F.O. clerk was a man of fashion who condescended occasionally to devote a minimum of time to public business. As a matter of fact, the F.O. clerks, as I knew them in 1880, were hard-working, intelligent men, who made a most favourable impression upon me and seemed to compare well with many of the vacuous personages who were to be found in smart society. The work was undoubtedly hard. I used to go down to the office about 10 or 11 and remain on occasions till 8 or 9... But ... I found the work intensely interesting, in spite of the complaints that have been brought against it during recent times. What I particularly liked about the F.O. was the absence of official pomposity, the good feeling which prevailed between the different ranks of officials, and the general level of intelligence. I cannot recollect any fools, except perhaps one or two survivors of political nepotism. The system, such as it was, worked well."

"Not long after my arrival," Newton added, "we were joined by Arthur Hardinge."¹ The latter, a cousin of Charles Hardinge, has also left a record of his impressions:

"The department was divided into three spacious rooms, each opening into each other. The 'lowest room,' in the Biblical sense of the term, was occupied by junior Foreign Office clerks and diplomatic attachés or third secretaries. Their duties were largely mechanical, but at the same time confidential. Their working hours began at about 11.30, and lasted nine hours, or up to about half-past eight, when it closed with the delivery to the Queen's messengers at Charing Cross of the sealed bags, destined ... (for the Embassies and Legations overseas). A large portion of our time was spent in deciphering telegrams.

"In the second room, where ... (the Assistant Clerk) sat, dispatches and other confidential documents were perused and minuted by him, and after approval of his suggestions by ... (the Senior Clerk), were sent up to the Permanent Under-Secretary of State ..., and thence, with the opinion of the latter written on them, to the Foreign Secretary ... himself. At a little before eight, the Foreign Office bags conveying all these instructions and replies were sealed up in our room before being dispatched to Charing Cross. Once the Foreign Office bag had been disposed of at about 8.30, I was free."²

1. Lord Newton: op. cit., p.10-11.
2. Sir A. Hardinge: "A Diplomatist in Europe." p.31-32.

Rennell Rodd started in the Western European Department in 1883:

"The work at the Foreign Office was not particularly thrilling during the period of my employment there, a little under a year...

"Our duties, those of Cecil Spring Rice and myself in the junior room, were confined to ciphering, keeping the current archives and copying out for signature the despatches prepared by our betters. It was also our duty to close and seal the bags carried all over Europe by the Queen's Messengers, as they were then called."¹

Vincent Corbett "joined the Foreign Office in September, 1884, and remained there for some ten months." His account of the use made of the Junior Clerks was still more critical:

"I was exclusively employed in copying despatches, ciphering and deciphering telegrams, and in sealing letters...

"For an attaché, who was soon to go abroad and had to make himself efficient in the use of ciphers, this drudgery, if something of a disillusion, mattered little, and may even have been salutary in so far as it served the purpose of putting him out of conceit with himself; but to the ordinary clerk, who might remain at it for years, it was soul-destroying. As time passed and I occasionally revisited the Foreign Office when home on leave, it was pathetic to see men whom I had known as keen and ambitious youngsters, full of life and zeal, deteriorating into apathetic government clerks, ploughing conscientiously through their work, with one eye on the clock and philosophically awaiting the day when they would be entitled to retire on a pension.

"I came back to work in the office for a few months in 1895, and what I then saw more than confirmed my previous observations...

"... there was no sort of system at the time for teaching a new-comer at the Foreign Office the clerical routine of his job; some tumbled into it naturally, others did not; some were taken in hand by competent and benevolent seniors, others were not."²

In the following year Esmé Howard joined the Foreign Office:

1. Sir R. Rodd: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.40-41.
2. Sir V. Corbett: op. cit., p.41 ff.

"On joining the Foreign Office, (he wrote) I was put into the Western Department, where the work of the younger men at that time consisted of ciphering and deciphering telegrams and copying endless dispatches and memoranda in longhand. This was occasionally enlivened by the strange doings of some of our superiors."¹

In fact John Tilley has written that:

"Certainly the Foreign Office in those days was a pleasant place. We liked to think our work was beneath us; but we were a very happy family; we saw a great deal of what was going on in the world, and we were not too strictly handled."²

John Tilley has in fact left us with the fullest account of the life and work of a Junior Clerk during the closing decades of the nineteenth century. He joined the Eastern European Department in 1893, and wrote much later:

"The duties of the third room were multifarious but simple. We docketed the newly arrived letters (despatches from the Missions were docketed by them), we ciphered and deciphered telegrams; we copied any papers which required copying; we 'put by' in their proper files the papers which had been acted on; we made up, that is, packed and fastened up, the bags for our missions abroad. The only original work which I can remember to have done was a small contribution to the annual departmental memorandum. One of us, 'the early boy,' arrived at eleven to open the presses and docket the letters and telegrams; another came at twelve; the rest between twelve and one. (The Senior Clerk) ... himself came a little before one... To come later than one, at any rate habitually ... was an offence... On the other hand we constantly stayed till eight, and Foreign Office clerks were not expected by their friends to be in time for dinner.

"The main work of the second room was to keep the registers and to manage the 'print;' these were considered quite honourable offices. The 'print boy' entered in a book the papers that were sent to the printers; when they came back, distributed copies among the pigeon holes assigned to the various posts abroad, and on bag days collected these copies and despatched them. Occasionally one or another junior might be asked for a

1. Sir E. Howard: "Theatre of Life." Vol. 1, p.50.
2. Sir J. Tilley and S. Gaselee: op. cit., p.138.

small memorandum, or, if the Assistant were away, might be called upon to write routine drafts, such as 'approvers' or paraphrases of telegrams. Paraphrases were required to conceal the cipher if telegrams had to be included in the series of 'print.' For each important current question such, for instance, as the 'Affairs of South Eastern Europe' there was a print series. All papers of any interest which related to the subject were printed, and eventually included in an annual, or perhaps quarterly, volume, to which the juniors had the odious task of contributing an index. The three men ... (who formed) the second room in March 1893 had respectively fifteen, twelve and eight years' service. I rather think it was the senior who did the print...

"The Assistant in the Department ... usually wrote the commonplace drafts and the paraphrases, and took charge when the Senior Clerk (the proper title of the Head of Department) was away. The Head of Department 'minuted' the papers with which his juniors supplied him, his minutes being usually confined to the routine directions, such as 'Print (South-East Europe), copy to Constantinople,' or 'Queen, Prime Minister, Print (Asiatic Turkey) copy India Office,' and so forth. Sometimes he added some brief explanation, or reminder, of what had gone before, and he saw that the necessary 'previous papers' were duly attached. Sometimes he wrote rather superior drafts, and he corrected, often to their annoyance, the drafts of his subordinates.

"... In ... (one) respect the Office was exceedingly democratic. No 'Misters' or 'Sirs' were allowed. A new boy would not, I suppose, have called the Under Secretaries 'Currie' and 'Sanderson;' he would have avoided the difficulty by a plain 'yes' or 'no;' short of that we were all equal...

"In the humbler branches of the Office the Queen was ... a cause of anxiety. When we had deciphered or ciphered our telegrams we made copies for distribution in what was known as 'blueing ink' on a 'jelly.' The first copy was naturally the best, and this was always destined for the Queen. Even so, the ink was frequently not black enough, and the copy had to be carefully toasted at the fire. That expedient, too, failed at times, and the Queen was not slow to complain. Then Her Majesty altogether declined to read typewritten documents."¹

In another book John Tilley has given us another similar account. To a large extent it repeats information already given, but at

1. Sir J. Tilley and S. Gaselee: op. cit., p.127-136.

this stage a certain amount of repetition will not be inconsistent with the subject under discussion. Bertie, it may be pointed out, was the Senior Clerk in the Eastern (European) Department.

"Our hours were curious. The early boy in the department came at eleven. Someone else was expected to come at twelve and the others about twelve-thirty. After one was definitely late. Bertie himself came at one, having had déjeuner at home at midday. We hoped to get away about seven, but were often kept till eight, or later...

"The work of us juniors was purely routine: we deciphered telegrams and 'blued' on a sort of jelly copies of these telegrams for various people beginning with the Queen. She always had to have the first and blackest copy, as she was annoyed if the telegrams were not easily legible. We became experts in the various codes employed... We copied by hand all the despatches which were being sent to our Missions abroad, and in fact all the letters which emanated from the department as well as numerous other documents, sometimes of portentous length, which were required for one purpose or another... The filling and tying up and sealing of the bags, done at the latest possible moment which enabled the messenger to catch his train, was always the cause of stir in what Fairholme called the hive. Then there was the despatch of the 'pouches' sent to Cabinet Ministers with the latest telegrams and confidential papers... There was also the care of the archives for the current and past year: letters had to be docketed and have p.p. (past papers) attached to them before being sent up to Bertie; the papers done with at the end of the day had to be put by...

"... we were efficient; ... much of our work was doubtless rather rough and ready but it was intelligent. We were not in awe of our superiors; there was no question of saying 'Sir' to an Under-Secretary, or 'Mr.' Bertie, or anything of that sort; we were on equal terms...

"Though the work was routine our days were not dull: news often came of important events; there was a good deal of well-informed talk, much, or at least some, of the correspondence made interesting reading, and there were a good many lighter intervals when there was a lull in the work. Visitors, including diplomats on leave, were by no means infrequent."¹

Lord Onslow recalled as follows the duties which he performed on

1. Sir J. Tilley: op. cit., p.21-23.

first joining the Foreign Office as Lord Cranley:

"Besides pouches there was a certain amount of Office distribution... The other duties of the Third Room were the cyphering and decyphering of telegrams which were pretty numerous. The cypher and decypher were taken down in copying ink, and copies taken from a gelatine 'bluer.' The 'bluers' were kept carefully locked up in case they might yield copies to an unauthorised person. They were nasty dirty things, and one's hands were never clean...

"... Really our only intelligent work was the writing of memoranda which we were encouraged to do when we had time, which was not often. Our last job was the despatch of the bags by the King's Messengers. The Second Room kept the Register and looked after the print: made up the Messenger's Way Bill, and prepared Blue Books and helped if they had time - either in writing the unimportant drafts and filling in the P.L. forms (letters transmitting copies of papers to other Offices), or in the work of the Third Room. The Assistant wrote the drafts and the Head of the Department communicated with the Under-Secretary and exercised a general supervision. He also wrote such departmental minutes as were required, but they were very few, as minuting was discouraged - also as papers were then kept folded in four there was not much room. Files were not introduced for a long time. The Department did not open till 12, but the 'Early Boy' came at 11 and got the papers out, opened and sorted the bags and generally got things ready."¹

Lancelot Oliphant joined the Office in 1903 and wrote the following account in the 1940s:

"In those days the Foreign Office though housed in the same building as now, was a very different place. There were less than fifty members of the Diplomatic Establishment, whereas there are now nearly eighty: and the whole staff numbered 150 and now is about 920. We kept all the papers in the respective Departments, did all the cyphering of telegrams, wrote by hand countless despatches - though typing a few - made up and fastened the 'bags' and did many other chores which a few years later were entrusted to and were done far better by a body of 'Second Division' clerks... The official hours ... were '12-6' but in practice one of the juniors in each Department took his turn as 'early boy' and arrived at 11 a.m. to open the bags and get the papers ready by noon. The early boy usually got away by six o'clock, but the rest of the

1. Lord Onslow: "History of the Onslow Family." Vol. 7, p.1714-1716.

Department remained until the bags had been sent off to the Missions abroad, telegrams had been cyphered and despatched; and all current work had been finished: thus in a busy Department, eight o'clock often found us still hard at it.

"One thing which surprised me as soon as I began to work at the Foreign Office was the democratic spirit of the staff. The Permanent Under Secretary was always addressed as 'Sir Thomas' (Sanderson), but with this exception, one was expected from the first day of joining to call all others - even the white haired and bearded seniors - simply by their surnames; and in a letter, to begin, 'My dear X.' and to end, 'Yours ever.' These were small trifles, but (they) tended to make the 'new boy' feel himself at home among friends instead of a mere cog in some heartless machine."¹

1. Sir L. Oliphant: "An Ambassador in Bands." p.12-13.

A P P E N D I X V (see p.195)

The following is the complete text of Sanderson's instructions of June 20, 1903, to the Heads of Departments, outlining the reforms to be introduced into the Foreign Office:

"Cyphering Room.

"We shall require for this a good sized room on the ground floor or first floor, within easy reach of the Office Keepers.

"The six Second Class Junior Clerks and all Attachés working on probation in the Office should be arranged in shifts of two or more to work in the room for a week at a time.

"Four of the First Class Junior Clerks of some experience and authority should take it in turns to superintend the room for a week at a time.

"The Superintendent for the time being would have power to summon additional men, according to their position on the roster of duty, to assist whenever the pressure of work required it. These men would go back to their Departments when no longer required.

"The men on regular duty for the time being would take with them some work, such as Tables of Contents to Confidential Print, at which they could employ themselves when not occupied in cyphering or decyphering.

"The Cyphering room would manifold copies, both of telegrams received and sent, and take or send the whole set of copies of each telegram to the Department concerned, retaining only one copy on file in the room.

"It will be the business of the Department to decide whether each telegram is or is not of sufficient general political importance to be inserted in the daily telegram sections for the information of the Cabinet, and to send copies of the telegram to all those who should see it.

"Miscellaneous Correspondence.

"All correspondence respecting the appointment and recognition of Foreign Consular Officers in Great Britain and the Colonies (except South Africa) should be dealt with in the Treaty Department, which already takes questions of the issue of Exequaturs to such Consuls as have Commissions.

"For the present at all events I presume that Consular appointments in South Africa and the African Protectorates must be dealt with in the African and Protectorate Department.

"Requests for admission of foreigners to Arsenals or other establishments, and applications from foreign governments or Missions for information on various questions of British Administration etc should be dealt with in the Librarian's Department, which already takes applications for supply or exchange of statistics and publications.

"In order to deal with this addition of work and the increase of that which it has already, the Librarian's Department should have another Staff Officer and one more Second Division Clerk.

"Requests from other Government Offices or from the Agents General of Colonies for information to be obtained from our Missions abroad, or for facilities for visiting educational and other establishments in foreign Countries, should, when the subject matter is not Commercial, or of a confidential political, naval, or military character, be taken by the Consular Department.

"For this increase of work an additional Second Division Clerk might be obtained and an additional junior who is a good draft writer may also be necessary.

"Parliamentary Work and Preparation of Bluebooks.

"The best arrangement I can suggest for this is that the gentleman who is selected to act as Secretary to the Defence Committee of the Cabinet¹ (at present Tyrrell) - and another to be selected for his general aptitude for Parliamentary work (presumably Norton) should be Assistant Clerks not attached to any particular Department, but with certain specific duties which they should divide or share as circumstances required.

"It would be the business of the Secretary of the Defence Committee to keep an eye on all matters connected with, or bearing on, military and naval questions, and to see that the Cabinet, and the Military and Naval Intelligence Divisions were properly informed. He would also deal with all matters connected with Naval and Military Intelligence furnished by our Missions and Consuls abroad,

1. The Committee of Imperial Defence had been established in December 1902 and met in the Foreign Office under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister. See N. D'Ombraïn: op. cit., p.27 and 136.

the correspondence respecting which would be conducted as now, but under his direction by the Western Department.

"The Parliamentary Assistant would devote his attention mainly to the Parliamentary aspect of current questions but would replace the Secretary of the Defence Committee (as Norton is doing now), if the latter were unwell or absent from other reasons.

"Both would exercise a general supervision over the Confidential Print, which they would keep on file, and would be ready, when applied to, to undertake the compilation of Bluebooks, with the assistance of the Departments concerned, and of one or two men from the Librarian's Department when necessary.

"They should also undertake the collection of reports from abroad for the purpose of presentation to Parliament in answer to Parliamentary Questions when the information is not of a Commercial nature. The Circulars would be drafted by them and sent by the Consular Dept which would collect and arrange the replies under their direction.

"Despatch Bags.

"I have already sent round a minute that the Office-keepers may be called in to the Departments to assist in making these up in each Department.¹ I have been consulting the Chief Clerk as to whether some better arrangement cannot be made for storing in locked cupboards letters and packets awaiting for despatch and giving the option of making up the bags in a proper room away from the Departments. But I think it essential that a member of the Department should see the Despatches put into the crossed bags, and be responsible for the bags being properly made up and for the custody of the Departmental seal.

"Cabinet Pouches.

"I think it necessary that these should be made up and locked by one of the Political Clerks, and that on their arrival they shall all be unlocked by him, and the contents taken out and properly dealt with. The Cabinet sometimes leave in them the most secret documents, and sometimes use them for letters.

"It would be a good plan that all this should be done in the Cyphering Room under supervision of the Superintending Clerk. The arrangements should be much more methodical than they now are.

1. See Chapter Two, p.183.

"There should be a locked cupboard with numbered pidgeonholes corresponding to the pouches, in which they should be stored. The directions of the various Cabinet Ministers as to their addresses etc should be filed, and entered regularly in a book under dates of receipt, each direction being struck out when superseded. There should also be a register of the numbers of the pouches out each day to the several Ministers, each number being struck out when the pouch in question is returned.

"An Officekeeper or Second Division Clerk might keep these Registers and write the Address Cards. But the Political Clerk must be responsible."¹

1. Librarian's Department Correspondence and Memoranda Vol. 3a, p.130. Memorandum by Sanderson, June 20, 1903.

Chamberlain's letter to Lansdowne of July 31, 1905, raises the question of the power of the Treasury, and the relations between the Treasury and the Foreign Office. This subject cannot be discussed in any detail here, but a brief reference to it might be useful.

It was in 1884, while Gladstone was Prime Minister, that the principle was first made explicit that any proposal involving an increase in expenditure or any new service, whether or not involving an increase in the total expenditure of the Department concerned, required Treasury sanction.¹ The principle, when taken to its logical conclusion in later years, eventually led to the establishment of a tight Treasury control over the entire Civil Service. In the 1880s, however, it is unlikely that anyone envisaged such an outcome.

It was unfortunate for the Foreign Office that Salisbury had the political power but not the will to bring about a reorganisation, and that Lansdowne had the political will but not the power to bring one about. It is true that Lansdowne was eventually able to persuade Chamberlain with considerable difficulty to sanction his request for additional expenditure, but he was only able to do so at the cost of a six months delay and of certain modifications to his scheme. It is inconceivable, on the other hand, that Salisbury would have encountered such obstruction both from the permanent Treasury officials and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

1. S. Brittan: "Steering the Economy." p.102.

It is most unlikely that he would have been sent a letter as impertinent as the one Chamberlain sent Lansdowne on July 31, 1905.

Few people would, in retrospect, support the Treasury in its attempt to prevent the Foreign Office from putting into effect its scheme for reorganisation. The merits of this particular incident, however, inevitably lead one on to the general principle of whether or not the Treasury should have been permitted to exercise such a general control over the Civil Service. This subject, as has already been pointed out, is one that cannot be discussed in any detail here. However it will perhaps be useful to give here the opinion of Lord Salisbury himself. In October 1899 he wrote to the then Chancellor of the Exchequer:

"I think you do not sufficiently allow for the very peculiar position given by our system to the Treasury, and which is very galling to other departments. That the Treasury should say that any expenditure is excessive or thriftless in regard to the aspects for which it is intended is obviously within its functions. But in practice the Treasury goes much further. It acts as a sort of court of appeal on other departments. Because every policy at every step requires money the Treasury can veto anything; and can do so on proposals which have nothing financial in their nature; and for judgment upon which it has no special qualification... I am bound to say that as a result of my experience during some fifteen years of Cabinet office that I think in small matters the Treasury interferes too much."¹

Three months later Salisbury repeated this criticism publicly, in a speech to the House of Lords:

"At the present time I feel assured that the powers of the Treasury have been administered with the greatest judgment, and the greatest consideration, and do not imagine for a moment that I support the idiotic attacks which have been made on the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. He is a Minister who has filled the office

1. H. Roseveare: "The Treasury." p.184.

with the greatest consideration to the powers of the Treasury; but I say that the exercise of its powers in governing every department of the Government is not for the public benefit. The Treasury has obtained a position in regard to the rest of the departments of the Government that the House of Commons obtained in the time of the Stuart dynasty. It has the power of the purse, and by exercising the power of the purse it claims a voice in all decisions of administrative authority and policy. I think that much delay and many doubtful resolutions have been the result of the peculiar position which, through many generations, the Treasury has occupied."¹

It was unfortunate for the Foreign Office in particular, and for the Civil Service as a whole, that Austen Chamberlain was allowed to take a view diametrically opposed to that of Lord Salisbury, both in 1905 and, more particularly, in 1919.

1. H. Roseveare: *op. cit.*, p. 183.

The following is the letter that Cecil Spring Rice sent to the editor of the "Westminster Gazette" on August 11, 1905, warning him of the threat posed by Germany after the collapse of Russia and the fall of Delcassé:

"Dear Mr Spender,

"... France in making the entente with us did it in the interests of peace and not of war... our duty is plain ... and that is not to sit by and allow France to be eliminated. If I may summarize what I heard from Paris (news dating about 12 days ago) it was this:

"Germany has been held in check twice (1875 and 1887) when she wished to attack France and put an end to the French danger. The main deterrent was Russia, although England also joined, also the conservative influence of the Austrian Emperor. In 1905 suddenly and without warning two of the great powers of Europe are practically eliminated - as military elements in European politics (Russia and Austria¹). The temptation to the military party of the young Emperor is irresistible. France is thus face to face with a terrific danger. She can, if she will, avoid it by the simple expedient of giving a (secret) assurance to Germany that she will allow her foreign policy to be guided from Berlin - that is, to have no friends except at the bidding of Germany. This she refuses to do. The consequence is that Germany is resorting to menaces in the hopes that France will either be cowed into surrender, or irritated into making an attack. Now if France's agreements with foreign countries are of the nature of an aggressive league against Germany, Germany is of course justified in breaking them up. If on the other hand they are of an entirely peaceful nature, Germany has no right to interfere, except on the supposition that she has the hegemony of Europe, which is not yet the case. Under these circumstances the clear duty of the world at large and of France and England in particular is to insist that every country has the right to settle its own differences without reference to Berlin and that if Germany is arrogating to herself the right of dictating the policy of Europe we are face to face with the same state of things which existed in Europe under Charles V, Louis XIV and Napoleon. The only issue is either submission to the dictator or a defensive war.

1. Austria-Hungary had been weakened by dissension between Austria and Hungary.

"My informant seemed to think that the evidence rather pointed to the fact that Germany was meditating at a world policy, the aim of which was the hegemony of Europe to which the main obstacle now remaining was France and England. France is within Germany's reach, England is not until France is either conquered or gained. If this is so, and even if there is a strong probability that it is so, it is the plain duty of France and England to stand together under all circumstances and to consult one another in every possible way... though neither England nor France wish to espouse each other's aggressive quarrels, yet the fact remains that if one of them goes to war and is conquered, the danger to the other is real and near and for this reason we must each warn the other to avoid a struggle, so far as is possible with honour because in the end, each will be ultimately involved in the fate of the other. The fact that Germany is strong in an unexampled degree and that Russia and Austria for the first time for 100 years are practically eliminated from Europe, is a good reason for avoiding a policy of provocation towards Germany. But it is an even better reason for being on our guard because the independence of Europe is menaced and we and France are practically the only safeguards. The more reason we have for avoiding an unnecessary struggle, the more reason there is for being prepared for an eventual struggle - because a man is very strong there is an excellent reason to avoid a row with him: but also for learning to box, in case there is a row: and the smaller boys in the school will also do well to arrange for joint defence if the big boy bullies.

"So (if you have had patience to read) I don't think that our relations with Germany are at all like our relations with France at the time of the Fashoda incident. The danger is a much more serious one. And I don't think we ought to act without the knowledge and consent of France, in making advances to Germany. If we do the Germans would naturally explain to the French the evident fact that of the two nations, France and England, Germany very much prefers the friendship of France.

"... If the French believe this (that England will come to terms with Germany and not stand by France) they will of course hasten to make their own terms and these will include necessarily the subordination of English influences to Germany. We shall then be left quite alone in Europe and find it out too late. I quite see the advantage of assuring the French that we don't wish war, and do wish peace: but this is a different thing to saying we wish peace so much that in order to make our terms with the big boy we are willing to throw over our little friend. The little friend is our best preservative against the big bully, if he attacks either of us: and the first principle of our policy should be that the two smaller boys

must stand together. Please excuse my writing at such length but I have special reasons (for America) to hope that the liberal party will in all things maintain the policy of cordial cooperation with France. We are now being assured that the liberals intend to throw France over in order to secure the good graces of Germany. The argument is being used not only in Germany but in America and France and it seems a pity that anything should be said or done by the liberal leaders to encourage the idea which I sincerely believe to be entirely false...

"Please don't mention my name to anyone as in my profession it might be awkward - I mean that some of my foreign acquaintances might resent what I write."¹

He added shortly afterwards:

"My dear Mr. Spender,

"... No doubt Germany would much rather France than us because with France the continental system would be complete, and Germany could reduce her army and devote herself to her fleet...

"... The annihilation of Austria from a military point of view and the disappearance of Russia from the scene, leave Germany with such a vast military predominance that western continental Europe is practically at her mercy. We can hardly depend on her to be extremely moderate, judging from recent developments, and we must be able to defend ourselves. One of the arms is the moral arm - a clean record in the matter of aggression - but it is not quite enough, taken alone."²

1. British Museum Add. MS 46391, p.142. Spring Rice to Spender, August 11, 1905.
2. British Museum Add. MS 46391, p.150. Spring Rice to Spender, August 14, 1905.

A P P E N D I X V I I I (see p.399)

When Crowe's memorandum was published in 1926, in the third volume of "British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914," it provoked an attack from the German historian Friedrich Thimme,¹ who argued that the memorandum anticipated the War Guilt Clause in the Treaty of Versailles, and that it incriminated Crowe as one of that Clause's spiritual fathers.² It is no longer necessary to pay serious attention to allegations of this sort. However Thimme followed up this attack with another in which he accused Crowe of deliberately distorting his account of Anglo-German relations in 1884-85.³

Crowe wrote in his memorandum of "the deliberate deception practised on the Reichstag and the German public by the publication of pretended communications to Lord Granville, which were never made."⁴ In a marginal comment on Sanderson's Observations on the memorandum Crowe also wrote that "the despatch in which Bismarck afterwards alleged he had fully explained his views to the British Government is the famous bogey document which, although

1. See G.P. Gooch: "History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century." 2nd edition, introduction: "The main burden of 'Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette, 1871-1914,' was borne by Friedrich Thimme, who carried through his task with amazing energy and enriched his fifty volumes with controversial annotations."
2. F. Thimme: "Das Memorandum E.A. Crowes vom 1 Januar 1907. Seine Bedeutung für die Kriegsschuldfrage." ("Berliner Monatshefte," August 1929, p.732-768). See p.739: "Aber schon das Memorandum von 1907, das sich geradezu als eine Antizipation des Versailler Schuldspruchs darstellt, stempelt ihn als einen der geistigen Väter der Schuldthese ab."
3. F. Thimme: "Das 'berühmte Schwindeldokument' E.A. Crowes." ("Berliner Monatshefte," September 1929, p.874-879).
4. BD III, App. A, p.408. Memorandum by Crowe, January 1, 1907.

published in the German White Book, was in fact never delivered. It is difficult to find a better word than 'deception' for these proceedings."¹ Crowe was referring to Bismarck's despatch of May 5, 1884, to Count Münster, the German Ambassador in London,² the contents of which were not communicated to Lord Granville, despite Bismarck's assertion to the contrary.

In his article "Das 'berühmte Schwindeldokument' E.A. Crowes," Thimme tried to refute Crowe's accusation and explain away the evidence, and it was this article that Langer had in mind when he wrote that "it is hard, in fact, to exonerate Crowe from the charge of wilfully misrepresenting the facts."³ Thimme published his article in 1929; Langer published his book in 1931. Seven years later, in 1938, A.J.P. Taylor noted that "Thimme's elaborate exculpation does not succeed in explaining ... away" the despatch.⁴ It was not until 1942, however, that it was demonstrated that it was Thimme who had wilfully misrepresented the facts. In her "The Berlin West Africa Conference, 1884-1885," Miss Sibyl E. Crowe wrote that "after the receipt of Malet's report of his conversation of January 24th (1885) with Bismarck," in which the German Chancellor referred to his alleged communication to Granville of the previous May,

"Gladstone wrote to Granville on January 29th, 'Unless memory fails me wholly, which is not impossible, this remarkable dispatch of May 5th is to me a perfect mystery.

1. BD III, App. B, p.422. Marginal comment by Crowe, 25/2/07, on Observations by Sanderson, 21/2/07.
2. See GP IV, 738. Bismarck to Münster, May 5, 1884.
3. W.L. Langer: "European Alliances and Alignments, 1871-1890." p.296.
4. A.J.P. Taylor: "Germany's First Bid for Colonies, 1884-1885." p.33, note 1.

I suppose that if Münster's fate is yet trembling in the balance you would not (supposing me to be right) like me to show him up. But when he is gone you might think the case ought to be cleared.' Speaking in the House of Commons on March 12th, 1885, Gladstone said, 'I remember that upon hearing of that dispatch I immediately said to Earl Granville I could not believe my memory had so entirely and absolutely gone that I should not recollect such a dispatch. Earl Granville said, "I am in the same position; I have no recollection of it." It is no wonder, because we have been in communication with the representative of Germany on the subject, and it appears that it had never been communicated.'

"In spite of this ... evidence the German historian, Herr Thimme, whose views are supported by Professor Langer, maintains that the fault was entirely on the English side in not understanding Münster's representations. He bases his case on an unpublished dispatch written on June 6th by Münster to Bismarck, in answer to Bismarck's note of June 1st expressing the latter's doubt as to whether Münster had carried out his instructions of May 5th and May 11th in their entirety. 'Count Münster,' Thimme declares, 'replied not with the pretext that the dispatch had been withdrawn: on the contrary he maintained that in accordance with the instructions imparted to him, he had emphatically demonstrated the seriousness of the case to Lord Granville.' Thimme adduces this as evidence that Münster had from the beginning understood his instructions, and that the British Government were au fait as regarded the general situation. It was sheer blindness and perversity on their part therefore that they did not foresee the consequences. He ignores not only the rest of the evidence, which is all against such a supposition, but also the date of the dispatch. Even if Münster had (though again the evidence is against this) made some representation in the sense desired by Bismarck between June 1st and June 6th, after his receipt of Bismarck's strongly worded dispatch of June 1st, this would be no proof that he had done so earlier. He had also declared at the end of May that he had made clear the contents of the telegram of April 24th, though it was evident that he had not done so. More serious still Herr Thimme appears deliberately to have repressed those parts of the dispatch of June 6th which invalidate his own argument. This is clear from the extracts published by Mr. Aydelotte.¹ Mr. Aydelotte does not concern himself with Herr Thimme's article, but his extracts are so damning to the latter's arguments that it seems worth while relating the two. It appears that

1. W.O. Aydelotte: "Bismarck and British Colonial Policy. The Problem of South West Africa, 1883-1885." p.80-81.

Münster opened the dispatch of June 6th by quoting the instructions to Count Herbert Bismarck of February 4th, 1883. 'The explanation,' he wrote, 'which Count Herbert Bismarck gave, at the beginning, of the negotiations over Angra Pequena has not been without influence on the policy and views of the British Government... Lord Granville and Lord Derby are still under the impression that the Imperial Government wishes to found a German colony at Angra Pequena. Our right to found colonies has been disputed so far as I know, by neither of them.' A little later he added, 'As far as concerns my personal attitude towards the German colonial attempts ... I have always believed that I stood in the same position as Your Serene Highness. The above quoted passage from the instructions of February 4th last year, "that now as formerly we have no thought of oversea projects," had strengthened me in this belief.' It seems impossible in these circumstances to take Herr Thimme's argument seriously."¹

There is, in addition, no reference to the despatch in the Foreign Office archives, while Bismarck himself actually admitted that it had not been delivered.²

Although Crowe was right in this respect he was wrong in asserting that the despatch had been published in the German White Book. Miss Crowe has also explained how this error came about. "Several false statements," she wrote, "have actually been made on the English side concerning" the public use of the despatch by Bismarck:

"These can all be traced to Fitzmaurice, who, in his 'Life of Granville,' states that Bismarck in a speech to the Reichstag on March 2nd, 1885, (1) referred to the May dispatch; (2) 'brandished it before the eyes of the German parliament.' Neither of these statements is true. The latter, in view of the fact that Bismarck did refer in his speech to dispatches in the German White Book on Angra Pequena, which he had with him, has further been taken to imply that a full text of the dispatch was published in the German White Book. Actually Bismarck did not produce the May 5th dispatch in the Reichstag, nor did he refer to it directly, though he

1. S.E. Crowe: "The Berlin West Africa Conference, 1884-1885." p.214-216.
2. Ibid. Malet to Granville, No. 148a, January 24, 1885.

did refer to it indirectly in a protest which he made against the publication in English Blue Books of his confidential conversation of January 24th with Malet, a protest which incidentally would seem to reflect his guilty conscience. The dispatch was not published at the time and appears in no German White Book. It was published for the first time in 1922 in the 'Grosse Politik,' Vol. IV, no.738.

"Much has been made of these mistakes by German writers since the war, and particularly by Herr Thimme, whose long and tendacious arguments have done much to obscure the important issue of the non-delivery of the dispatch. Thimme, followed by Langer, goes so far as to accuse subsequent writers on the subject of wilful misrepresentation of the facts, whereas a glance at Fitzmaurice's book is sufficient to indicate where the source of the error lies. Fitzmaurice gives chapter and verse for his statements. As his book is an authoritative work to which anyone interested in the history of the dispatch is bound to refer, it was not only natural but inevitable that subsequent discussions of it should at first have accepted his statements as they stood.

"The question arises what the source of Fitzmaurice's error was. There has been some conjecture about this. It has remained for Miss Adams, in her unpublished study of 'The British Attitude to German Colonial Development, 1880-1885,' to produce an entirely plausible and convincing explanation. Though Bismarck did not refer specifically to the May dispatch in his Reichstag speech of March 2nd she has discovered that articles were published in the 'Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung' on March 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1885, enlarging on Germany's grievances against England. These articles were not signed by the Chancellor, but were generally accepted as officially inspired. One of them referred to the communication of May 5th, and stated that it had been left unanswered. It seems clear therefore that Fitzmaurice confused this article with the reported text of Bismarck's speech. His mistake was not such a big one after all.

"It seems impossible in conclusion to exonerate Bismarck, in this as in other matters connected with his colonial policy in 1884 and 1885, from a charge of deliberate - and provocative - duplicity."¹

1. S.E. Crowe: op. cit., p.217-218.

A P P E N D I X I X (see p.400)

The following is Crowe's summary of Anglo-German relations from 1884 to 1904:

"The peculiar diplomatic methods employed by Bismarck in connection with the first German annexation in South-West Africa, the persistent way in which he deceived Lord Ampthill up to the last moment as to Germany's colonial ambitions, and then turned round to complain of the want of sympathy shown for Germany's 'well-known' policy; the sudden seizure of the Cameroons by a German doctor armed with officially-obtained British letters of recommendation to the local people, at a time when the intention of England to grant the natives' petition for a British Protectorate had been proclaimed; the deliberate deception practised on the Reichstag and the German public by the publication of pretended communications to Lord Granville, which were never made, a mystification of which Germans to this day are probably ignorant; the arousing of a profound outburst of anti-English feeling throughout Germany by Bismarck's warlike and threatening speeches in Parliament; the abortive German raid on St. Lucia Bay, only just frustrated by the vigilance of Mr. Rhodes; the dubious proceedings by which German claims were established over a large portion of the Sultan of Zanzibar's dominions; the hoisting of the German flag over vast parts of New Guinea, immediately after inducing England to postpone her already announced intention to occupy some of those very parts by representing that a friendly settlement might first determine the dividing line of rival territorial claims; the German pretensions to oust British settlers from Fiji and Samoa; these incidents constitute the first experience by a British Cabinet of German hostility disguised as injured friendship and innocence. It was only England's precarious position resulting from the recent occupation of Egypt (carefully encouraged by Bismarck), the danger of troubles with Russia in Central Asia (directly fomented by a German special mission to St. Petersburg), and the comparative weakness of the British navy at the time, which prevented Mr. Gladstone's Government from contemplating a determined resistance to these German proceedings.¹ It was, however, felt rightly that, apart from the offensiveness of the methods employed, the desires entertained by Germany, and so bluntly translated into practice, were not seriously antagonistic to British policy. Most of the territory ultimately acquired by Bismarck had at some previous time

1. Cf: FO 371/7502/C.9846. Minute by Crowe, 13/7/22, on Russell No. 189, 2/7/22: "In 1885 Bismarck was so hostile that the question of war was talked of!"

been refused by England, and in the cases where British occupation had lately been contemplated, the object had been not so much to acquire fresh provinces, as to prevent their falling into the hands of protectionist France, who would inevitably have killed all British trade. It seems almost certain that had Germany from the outset sought to gain by friendly overtures to England what she eventually secured after a display of unprovoked aggressiveness, there would have been no difficulty in the way of an amicable arrangement satisfactory to both parties.

"As it was, the British Cabinet was determined to avoid a continuance of the quarrel, and having loyally accepted the situation created by Germany's violent action, it promptly assured her of England's honest desire to live with her on terms of absolute neighbourliness, and to maintain the former cordial relations. The whole chapter of these incidents was typical of many of the fresh complications of a similar nature which arose in the following years. With the advent of Lord Salisbury's administration in 1885, Bismarck thought the moment come for inviting England to take sides with the Triple Alliance. Repeated and pressing proposals appear to have been made thenceforward for some considerable time with this end. Whilst the British Government was too prudent to abandon altogether the traditional policy of holding the balance between the continental Powers, it decided eventually, in view of the then threateningly hostile attitude of France and Russia, to go so far in the direction of co-operation with the Triple Alliance as to conclude the two secret Mediterranean Agreements of 1887. At the same time Lord Salisbury intimated his readiness to acquiesce in the German annexation of Samoa, the consummation of which was only shipwrecked owing to the refusal of the United States on their part to abandon their treaty rights in that group of islands in Germany's favour. These fresh manifestations of close relations with Germany were, however, shortly followed by the serious disagreements caused by the proceedings of the notorious Dr. Carl Peters and other German agents in East Africa. Dr. Peters' design, in defiance of existing treaties, to establish German power in Uganda, athwart the line of communication running from Egypt to the head-waters of the Nile, failed, but England, having previously abandoned the Sultan of Zanzibar to Germany's territorial ambitions, now recognised the German annexation of extensive portions of the mainland dominions, saving the rest by the belated declaration of a British protectorate. The cession of Heligoland sealed the reassertion of Anglo-German brotherhood, and was accompanied by the customary assurance of general German support to British policy, notably in Egypt.

"On this and on other occasions England's spirit of accommodation went so far as to sacrifice the career of

subordinate British officials, who had done no more than carry out the policy of their Government in as dignified a manner as circumstances allowed, and to whose conduct that Government attached no blame, to the relentless vindictiveness of Germany, by agreeing to their withdrawal as one of the conditions of a settlement. In several instances the German Government admitted that no fault attached to the British official, whilst the German officer alone was acknowledged to be at fault, but asked that the latter's inevitable removal should be facilitated, and the outside world misled, by the simultaneous withdrawal of his British colleagues. In one such case, indeed, a German Consul, after being transferred with promotion to another post, was only a few years afterwards reinstated on the scene of his original blunders with the higher rank of Consul-General without any British protest being made.

"The number of British officials innocently branded in this manner in the course of some years is not inconsiderable, and it is instructive to observe how readily and con amore the German Government, imitating in this one of the great Bismarck's worst and least respectable foibles, habitually descend to attacking the personal character and position of any agents of a foreign State, often regardless of their humble rank, whose knowledge, honesty, and efficient performance of their duties are thought to be in the way of the realization of some particular, probably not very straightforward, piece of business. Some machinations were conspicuous in connection with the fall of M. Delcassé, but tales could be told of similar efforts directed against men in the service of the Spanish, Italian, and Austrian, as well as of the British Government.

"It seems unnecessary to go at length into the disputes about the frontiers of the German Colonies in West Africa and the hinterland spheres of influence in 1903-1904, except to record the ready sacrifice of undoubted British treaty rights to the desire to conciliate Germany, notwithstanding the provocative and insulting proceedings of her agents and officials; nor into the agreement entered into between Germany and France for giving the latter access to the Niger, a transaction which, as the German Government blandly informed the British Embassy at Berlin, was intended to show how unpleasant it could make itself to England if she did not manifest greater alacrity in meeting German wishes.

"It was perhaps partly the same feeling that inspired Germany in offering determined resistance to the scheme negotiated by Lord Rosebery's Government with the Congo Free State for connecting the British Protectorate of Uganda by a railway with Lake Tanganyika. No cession of territory was involved, the whole object being to allow of an all-British through communication by rail and lake steamers from

the Cape to Cairo. It was to this that Germany objected, although it was not explained in what way her interests would be injuriously affected. She adopted on this occasion a most minatory tone towards England, and also joined France, who objected to other portions of the Anglo-Congolese Agreement, in putting pressure on King Leopold. In the end the British Government consented to the cancellation of the clauses respecting the lease of the strip of land required for the construction of the railway, and Germany declared herself satisfied.

"More extraordinary still was the behaviour of the German Government in respect to the Transvaal. The special treaty arrangements, which placed the foreign relations of that country under the control of England, were, of course, well known and understood. Nevertheless, it is certain that Germany believed she might by some fortuitous circumstances hope some day to establish her political dominion over the Boers, and realize her dream of occupying a belt of territory running from east to west right across Africa. She might have thought that England could be brought amicably to cede her rights in those regions as she had done before in other quarters, but, meanwhile, a good deal of intriguing went on which cannot be called otherwise than actively hostile. Opposition to British interests was deliberately encouraged in the most demonstrative fashion at Pretoria, which went so far in 1895 that the British Ambassador at Berlin had to make a protest. German financial assistance was promised to the Transvaal for the purpose of buying the Delagoa Bay Railway, a British concern which had been illegally confiscated by the Portuguese Government, and was then the subject of an international arbitration. When this offer failed, Germany approached the Lisbon Cabinet direct with the demand that, immediately on the arbitration being concluded, Germany and Portugal should deal with the railway by common agreement. It was also significant that at the time of the British annexation of Amatongaland (1895), just south of the Portuguese frontier on the East Coast, Germany thought it necessary to warn England that this annexation was not recognised by the Transvaal, and that she encouraged the feverish activity of German traders to buy up all available land round Delagoa Bay. In the same year, following up an intimation that England's 'opposition to German interests at Delagoa Bay' - interests of which no British Government had ever previously been informed - was considered by Germany as one of the legitimate causes of her ill-will towards England, the German Government went out of its way to declare the maintenance of the independence of the Transvaal to be a German national interest. Then followed the chapter of the Jameson raid and the Emperor's famous telegram to President Krüger. The hostile character of that demonstration was thoroughly understood by the Emperor's Government, because we know that preparations were made for safeguarding the German fleet in the contingency of a British attack. But in a way the most important aspect of

the incident was that for the first time the fact of the hostile character of Germany's official policy was realized by the British public, who up to then, owing to the anxious care of their Government to minimize the results of the perpetual friction with Germany, and to prevent any aggravation of that friction by concealing as far as possible the unpleasant details of Germany's aggressive behaviour, had been practically unaware of the persistently contemptuous treatment of their country by their Teutonic cousins. The very decided view taken by British public opinion of the nature of any possible German intervention in South Africa led the German Government, though not the German public, to abandon the design of supplanting England at Pretoria. But for this 'sacrifice' Germany, in accordance with her wont, demanded a price - namely, British acquiescence in the reversion to her of certain Portuguese Colonies in the event of their eventual division and appropriation by other Powers. The price was paid. But the manner in which Germany first bullied the Portuguese Government and then practically drove an indignant British Cabinet into agreeing in anticipation to this particular scheme of spoliation of England's most ancient ally, was deeply resented by Lord Salisbury, all the more, no doubt, as by this time he was fully aware that this new 'friendly' settlement of misunderstandings with Germany would be no more lasting than its many predecessors. When, barely twelve months later, the Emperor, unabashed by his recent formal 'abandonment of the Boers,' threatened that unless the question of the final ownership of Samoa, then under negotiation, was promptly settled in Germany's favour, he would have to reconsider his attitude in the British conflict with the Transvaal which was then on the point of being submitted to the arbitrament of war, it cannot be wondered at that the British Government began to despair of ever reaching a state of satisfactory relations with Germany by continuing in the path of friendly concessions and compromises. Yet no attempt was even then made to seek a new way. The Agreement by which Samoa definitely became German was duly signed, despite the serious protests of our Australian Colonies, whose feelings had been incensed by the cynical disregard with which the German agents in the group, with the open support of their Government, had for a long time violated the distinct stipulations of the Samoan Act agreed to at Berlin by the three interested Powers in 1889. And when shortly after the outbreak of the South African war, Germany threatened the most determined hostility unless England waived the exercise of one of the most ancient and most firmly-established belligerent rights of naval warfare, namely, the search and citation before a Prize Court of neutral mercantile vessels suspected of carrying contraband, England once more preferred an amicable arrangement under which her undoubted rights were practically waived, to embarking on a fresh quarrel with Germany. The spirit in which this more than conciliatory attitude was appreciated at Berlin became clear when immediately afterwards

the German Chancellor openly boasted in the Reichstag that he had compelled England by the display of German firmness to abandon her absolutely unjust claim to interference with the unquestioned rights of neutrals, and when the Emperor subsequently appealed to his nation to hasten on the building of an overwhelming German fleet, since the want of superior naval strength alone had on this occasion prevented Germany from a still more drastic vindication of Germany's interests.

"A bare allusion must here suffice to the way in which the German Government at the time of the South African war abetted the campaign of odious calumny carried on throughout the length and breadth of Germany against the character of the British army, without any Government official once opening his mouth in contradiction; and this in the face of the faithful reports known to have been addressed to their Government by the German military officers attached to the British forces in the field. When the Reichstag proceeded in an unprecedented fashion to impugn the conduct of a British Cabinet Minister, it was open to Prince Bülow to enlighten his hearers as to the real facts, which had been grossly misrepresented. We know that he was aware of the truth. We have the report of his long interview with a distinguished and representative English gentleman, a fortnight after Mr. Chamberlain's famous speech, which was alleged to be the cause of offence, but of which a correct version revealing the groundlessness of the accusation had been reported in a widely-read German paper. The Prince then stated that his Government had at that moment no cause to complain of anything in the attitude of British Ministers, yet he descended a few days afterwards to expressing in the Reichstag his sympathy with the violent German outcry against Mr. Chamberlain's supposed statements and the alleged atrocities of the British army, which he knew to be based on falsehoods. Mr. Chamberlain's dignified reply led to extraordinarily persistent efforts on the Chancellor's part to obtain from the British Government an apology for the offence of resenting his dishonouring insinuations, and, after all these efforts had failed, he nevertheless intimated to the Reichstag that the British Government had given an explanation repudiating any intention on its part to imply any insult to Germany by what had been said.

"As if none of these things had happened, fresh German demands in another field, accompanied by all the same manifestations of hostility, were again met, though with perhaps increasing reluctance, by the old willingness to oblige. The action of Germany in China has long been distinctly unfriendly to England. In 1895 she tried to obtain from the Chinese Government a coaling station in the Chusan Islands, at the mouth of the Yang-tsze, without any previous communication with the British Government, whose preferential rights over the group, as established by Treaty, were

of course well known. The manner in which Kiao-chau was obtained, however unjustifiable it may be considered by any recognized standard of political conduct, did not concern England more than the other Powers who professed in their Treaties to respect China's integrity and independence. But Germany was not content with the seizure of the harbour, she also planned the absorption of the whole of the large and fertile province of Shantung. The concession of the privileged rights which she wrung from the Chinese Government was obtained owing in no small degree to her official assurance that her claims had the support of England who, needless to say, had never been informed or consulted, and who was, of course, known to be absolutely opposed to stipulations by which, contrary to solemn British treaty rights, it was intended to close a valuable province to British trade and enterprise.

"About this time Germany secretly approached Russia with a view to the conclusion of an Agreement, by which Germany would have also obtained the much desired foothold on the Yang-tsze, then considered to be practically a British preserve. These overtures being rejected, Germany wished at least to prevent England from obtaining what she herself had failed to secure. She proposed to the British Cabinet a self-denying Agreement stipulating that neither Power should endeavour to obtain any territorial advantages in Chinese dominions, and that if any third Power attempted to do so both should take common action.

"The British Government did not conceal their great reluctance to this arrangement, rightly foreseeing that Germany would tacitly exempt from its operation her own designs on Shantung, and also any Russian aggression in Manchuria, whilst England would solemnly give up any chances she might have of establishing on a firm basis her well-won position on the Yang-tsze. That is, of course, exactly what subsequently did happen. There was no obvious reason why England should lend herself to this gratuitous tying of her own hands. No counter-advantage was offered or even suggested, and the British taste for these one-sided transactions had not been stimulated by past experience. Nevertheless, the policy of conciliating Germany by meeting her expressed wishes once more triumphed, and the Agreement was signed - with the foreseen consequences: Russian aggression in Manchuria was declared to be altogether outside the scope of the stipulations of what the German Chancellor took care to style the 'Yang-tsze' Agreement, as if its terms had referred specially to that restricted area of China, and the German designs on Shantung continue to this day to be tenaciously pursued.

"But Germany was not content with the British renunciation of any territorial claims. The underhand and disloyal manoeuvres by which, on the strength of purely fictitious stories of British plans for the seizure of various

Chinese places of strategical importance (stories also sedulously communicated to the French Government), Germany wrung out of the Peking Court further separate and secret guarantees against alleged British designs, on the occasion of the termination of the joint Anglo-Franco-German occupation of Shanghai, betrayed such an obliquity of mind in dealing with her ostensible friends that Lord Lansdowne characterized it in the most severe terms, which did not prevent him from presenting the incident to Parliament in the form of papers from which almost every trace of the offensive attitude of Germany had been carefully removed, so as not to embitter our German relations. And this was after the reports from our officers had shown that the proceeding of the German troops in Northern China, and the extraordinary treatment meted out by the German General Staff to the British and Indian contingents serving, with a loyalty not approached by any of the other international forces, under the supreme command of Count Waldersee, had created the deepest possible resentment among all ranks, from the British General Commanding to the lowest Indian follower.

"Nor was any difficulty made by the British Government in shortly afterwards cordially co-operating with Germany in the dispute with Venezuela, and it was only the pressure of public opinion, which had gradually come to look upon such co-operation for any political purpose whatsoever as not in accord with either British interests or British dignity, that brought this joint venture to a very sudden and somewhat lame end."¹

1. BD III, App. A, p.408-413. Memorandum by Crowe, January 1, 1907. Cf: Sir R. Rodd: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.68 + 70: "To this episode (of 1884-85) and the experience thereby gained that Great Britain could swallow such an unqualifiable proceeding without expostulation, may be perhaps traced back the long series of discourteous and ungracious acts which the German Government permitted themselves towards Great Britain. Experience had shown that we could be confronted with a fait accompli which, if no vital interest was involved, would be accepted without a protest... each successive settlement appeared to be only the prelude to a new issue."

A P P E N D I X X (see p.400)

Lord Salisbury, the Records of the Foreign Office, and
the Practice of sending Private letters

(1)

Harold Nicolson has written that when Lord Salisbury retired he "took all his private letters with him down to Hatfield and considerable confusion was thereafter occasioned by gaps in correspondence."¹ Lady Gwendolen Cecil referred to this fact in her biography of her father. Nine years separated the publication of volumes two and three of this biography. In the former, published in 1922, she wrote that "it has often been said that he conducted his diplomacy largely through 'his private correspondence with ambassadors.' An inspection of the letters hardly bears this out. Except in one or two instances they comment upon instructions rather than convey them and are of more interest biographically than historically."² In the latter volume, published in 1931, she qualified this view.

"One by-product of these methods had its inconveniences for those who came after him. Not infrequently he would conduct the opening and most crucial phase of a negotiation exclusively in personal interviews or private letters, and it would have achieved effective completion before the office had cognisance of it at all. If it failed to lead up to any formal or binding conclusion, there was no reason why they should ever have cognisance of it. In fact, it happened - certainly in one or two instances, very possibly in others - that important proposals were made to or by him of which, since they did not prove finally acceptable, no record remains at the British Foreign Office. Had this outcome of his detached methods been pointed out to him, he would have denied its importance, probably its disadvantages. Such

1. H. Nicolson: "Diplomacy." p.107.
2. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 2, p.232-233.

still-born efforts would be binding on neither side, and his successors, working under changed conditions, would be less trammelled by knowing nothing about them. On the other hand, in the present, it was vital for the continuance of good relations that the rejection of a friendly offer should be forgotten as quickly as possible, and of that, the absence of record was the safest insurance. Against such an immediate and practical advantage the vexation caused to curious historians or international controversialists in the future would have weighed very little with him."¹

The reason why Lady Gwendolen Cecil changed her view was not solely that she had researched further into her father's papers. Rather it was the publication in 1926 of Crowe's memorandum of January 1, 1907, in the third volume of Gooch and Temperley's "British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914." In this memorandum Crowe wrote that,

"For the whole of Lord Salisbury's two Administrations (sic) our official records are sadly incomplete, all the most important business having been transacted under the cover of 'private' correspondence. It is not known even to what extent that correspondence may have been integrally preserved. A methodical study of our relations with Germany during that interesting period is likely to remain for ever impossible."²

In his "Observations" on Crowe's memorandum, also published by Gooch and Temperley, Lord Sanderson wrote:

"I dissent from the statement ... that during the two administrations of Lord Salisbury all the most important business was transacted under the cover of private correspondence.

"The most important business is on record in the Foreign Office. But it is probable that several overtures which came to nothing were made in some verbal form for the express purpose of avoiding a record if the matter were dropped. I have quite recently heard that a proposal was made by Germany for an alliance with England in 1879. The overture was made verbally by the German Ambassador, with the express condition

1. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 3, p.207-208.
2. BD III, App. A, p.409. Memorandum by Crowe, January 1, 1907.

that, unless accepted, it was not to be officially recorded, and having been civilly declined the matter was not put on record."

But Crowe replied that,

"There is however much evidence to support the statement. The present paragraph itself furnishes some, and seeks to justify the practice, which of course was not confined to the period of Lord Salisbury's administration. Lord Fitzmaurice's Life of Lord Granville gives numerous instances. I could quote several more myself."

Fitzmaurice wrote of the overture of 1879:

"This is the negotiation referred to in Vol. II, p.211, of my 'Life of Lord Granville.' I ascertained, when writing this chapter, that there was no trace of the negotiation in the Foreign Office."

Hardinge lent his support to Crowe with:

"The Italian agreement of 1887 was certainly made privately, as I know from the text having fallen into my hands by mistake!"¹

When Sanderson continued that "so far as I am aware there is no foundation for the statement that repeated and pressing proposals were made after 1885 for inviting England to take sides with the Triple Alliance. We have never known positively the conditions of that compact," Crowe replied:

"Lord Sanderson's memory is at fault. In 1895 Count Hatzfeldt informed Lord Rosebery that he had for 8 years made 'strenuous efforts to induce the govt. of Great Britain to come to a close understanding with the Triple Alliance.' Presumably these are the instances referred to above ... which were not recorded. If so this would further confirm my statement on that point.

"In 1901, however, the most important of these negotiations for the entry of England into the Triple Alliance were recorded. The papers were kept private. One or two only were nominally made official by being

1. BD III, App. B, p.422. Observations by Sanderson, February 21, 1907; with marginal comments by Crowe, 25/2/07, Fitzmaurice and Hardinge.

numbered in the political series. But these were not placed in the archives nor properly entered in the registers and indices. The originals have mostly disappeared, but private copies were fortunately allowed by Lord Lansdowne just before he left office to be removed from his private papers and left in the hands of the Private Secretary, who allowed me to peruse them. Among these papers is a draft treaty prepared by Lord Sanderson (and in H.L.'s own handwriting) as an alternative to the German proposal for our joining the Triple Alliance."

In further marginal comments on Sanderson's Observations, Crowe pressed his point still further. When Sanderson wrote that "my recollection of the Samoan negotiations is not very precise but my impression is that we have not an absolutely clear record, and that Lord Salisbury while conceding any claims on our part did his best to rouse the opposition of the United States," Crowe minuted:

"I have been unable to find anything to confirm this statement. Perhaps it is another instance of Lord Salisbury's action by private letter?"

When Sanderson wrote that "in 1895 Count Hatzfeldt initiated some secret discussions with Lord Kimberley as to the eventual disposal of the Portuguese African possessions," Crowe replied that "I cannot find any record of these discussions."¹

These remarks in, and in defence of, his memorandum were not the only references made by Crowe to the alleged incompleteness of the Foreign Office records.² Already, on June 23, 1906, Crowe had written of the Portuguese wish to know how much help they could expect in the event of their being attacked:

1. BD III, App. B, p.423-425. Observations by Sanderson, February 21, 1907; with marginal comments by Crowe, 25/2/07.
2. It is perhaps worth emphasising that Crowe's own father had indulged in the practice of private letters on official subjects as much as anyone else, so he had first hand experience. See, e.g., Salisbury Papers A/60/p.223. J.A. Crowe to Salisbury, July 10, 1890: "You will see from my public despatches ..."

"... That we are bound, by our treaty engagements, to defend Portugal against external aggression, has been distinctly recognized. I am under the impression that some confidential communications passed on this subject with the Portuguese government on the occasion of King Edward's first visit to Lisbon after his accession. But if so, it is one of the embarrassing cases, where no official records have been kept for the use of this office."

On this occasion Hardinge minuted that "as I accompanied the King on his first visit to Lisbon after the accession in 1903 I am able to state that no confidential communications passed on that occasion with the Portuguese Govt. on this or any other question."¹

On November 23, 1911, Crowe minuted that,

"Mr. Joseph Chamberlain is now officially declared to have proposed a partition of Morocco to Germany. There is no record of any such proposal in our archives, but unfortunately that is not a reason for questioning the accuracy of the statement. It is notorious that in the past the F.O. records have never been complete, but that on the contrary many of the most important questions of foreign affairs were treated as the private concern of the Secretary of State."²

Shortly after the outbreak of the war in 1914 Professor Holland Rose asked if he could have access to the Foreign Office archives to study Germany's aims with regard to the Bagdad Railway, Salonica, and the Boer Republics. Crowe minuted that,

"I am, generally speaking, in favour of encouraging responsible historians to write good historical books by the help of the information in our official archives. But as regards the particular subjects ... I do not believe there is any valuable information in our archives..."

"As for German schemes regarding the former Boer republics, I have frequently called attention to the fact that so far as our official archives are concerned,

1. BD VIII, p.52-53. Minute by Crowe, 23/6/06, on Villiers No. 42, 27/5/06.
2. BD VII, 712. Minute by Crowe, 23/11/11, on Herr von Kiderlen's statement before the Budget Committee of the Reichstag.

our relations with Germany in those years are an almost completely unwritten page."

The Librarian added:

"I am in entire accord with the statement that the actual despatches contain probably not much that would add to the Professor's knowledge. If I disagree in any one point of Sir E. Crowe's minute, it is on the value of his own memorandum on Anglo-German relations. This would, I conceive, be of the greatest service to the Professor, though it may not be desirable that he should see it."¹

Crowe believed that the practice of putting official information in private letters was "universal," and that "it has flourished in our own service at all times."²

The view that the Foreign Office archives were incomplete was clearly held by the Office as a whole, and not merely by Crowe. For example de Soveral, the Portuguese Minister in London who had formerly been Portuguese Foreign Minister, saw Grey in 1908 about a letter that he had been given by Sir Hugh MacDonell, formerly Minister at Lisbon. Tyrrell wrote to Hardinge on March 11, 1908:

"The accompanying extract from a letter from Lord Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell was left to day by M. de Soveral with Sir E. Grey.

"M. de Soveral said it was given to him by Sir Hugh when he was in office as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

"Sir Edward wishes to know whether there is anything in our Archives which bears out Lord Salisbury's statement."

Hardinge replied on the following day:

"Sir E. Grey,

"No trace can be found of this letter in the Library. If there should be a copy anywhere it is probably

1. FO 371/2189/58522. Minutes by Crowe, 14/10/14, and Blech, on H. Rose, 11/10/14.
2. FO 371/7502/C.8824. Minute by Crowe, 24/6/22, on Addison, No. 462, 16/6/22.

at Hatfield."¹

Later the same year, after the beginning of the Annexation Crisis, Tcharykoff, a Russian diplomatist, made a "mysterious allusion" to "an understanding supposed to have been given to Austria respecting Bosnia and Herzegovina" in 1878. Hardinge commented on November 11, 1908:

"My dear Nicolson,

"... so much was at that time carried on by Lord Salisbury and Lord Beaconsfield in private letters, that it may happen that something was said or done at Berlin of which we have no official record, I am going to ask the young Lord Salisbury whether there are any traces amongst his father's papers of any undertaking such as has been suggested."²

(2)

What justification was there for these allegations against Lord Salisbury? We must at the outset make a distinction between the absence of an official record and the absence of any record at all, in Salisbury's private papers. We may then ask, first to what extent the Foreign Office archives are complete, and second to what extent Salisbury's private papers are able to fill in the gaps or to what extent the British records are permanently incomplete. From the start Salisbury appears to have kept things from the knowledge of the Foreign Office. It has been written that when he entered the Foreign Office in 1878 "he immediately formed an inner secretariat to carry out a policy of which even the Under-Secretaries were kept in ignorance. His 'secret department,' as

1. FO 371/509/8907. Tyrrell to Hardinge, March 11, 1908; and Hardinge to Grey, March 12, 1908. For an explanation of this episode see G. Brook-Shepherd: op. cit., p.317.
2. FO 800/341/p.173. Hardinge to Nicolson, November 11, 1908.

it was called, was composed of his private secretary and one or two specially selected members of the Office who copied out and deciphered despatches for him."¹ The Marvin scandal, which threatened to ruin his diplomacy at the Congress of Berlin, may have added to Salisbury's secretiveness, but he was soon out of office when the Liberals won the election of 1880. This, however, was to have important repercussions.

"He was probably strengthened in his secretiveness by the fact that his successors made some political capital out of the records he left behind him in the Foreign Office. Granville and Gladstone in 1881 made public his informal promise of allowing France to go to Tunis, and in 1884 they revealed his conversations over Egypt with the French statesman Waddington. This action of political opponents increased Salisbury's desire to withhold information not only from the public but from the Foreign Office itself, and from subsequent Foreign Secretaries. He was successful."²

In 1896 George Curzon, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, asked Salisbury if he could see copies of the Foreign Secretary's private letters and telegrams. The latter replied on March 23, 1896:

"My dear Curzon,

"I did not know that you did not see the private telegrams and letters: I will desire Eric (Barrington) to let you see them.

"The letters ... go in the first instance to the Queen. They are therefore somewhat belated when they come to other people here. The private telegrams are very few. You get the printed telegrams now. As to the records of conversations you often do not get them because they do not exist. When I held my present office in 1878-1880 I used to record freely. But when I went out of office after 1880 I resolved I would never do so again: for the only result of my doing so was that Dilke made an abominable use of the knowledge of which he became provided. Since that time I have on principle recorded very little. The knowledge that I abstain

1. A.L. Kennedy: op. cit., p.137.
2. H.W.V. Temperley: "British Secret Diplomacy from Canning to Grey." p.14. ("The Cambridge Historical Journal." 1938)

from it makes both Hatzfeldt and de Courcel speak more freely than they otherwise would do... Whatever reports I send are of course accessible to you."¹

When Curzon left the Foreign Office two years later he emphasised to his successor the importance of establishing friendly relations with the Private Secretary in order to be sure of seeing the Secretary of State's private letters.²

"The most remarkable examples of his secrecy are the two Mediterranean Agreements of the year 1887. Their texts were concealed from the public and it appears that the Foreign Office only learned of their existence 'by accident.'³ This accident probably took place because, although Salisbury kept the correspondence secret from the Foreign Office staff, he nevertheless kept it in the Foreign Office itself.

"With regard to two important negotiations correspondence both private and official remained in Foreign Office custody, although it was not bound in the regular series. The papers relating to the Mediterranean Agreements of 1887, marked by Salisbury to be kept 'very secret,' were filed separately and left under the personal guardianship of the Permanent Under-Secretary. There was one exception: Bismarck's letter of 22 November, which Salisbury had promised should not fall into the hands of his successor in office."⁴

Salisbury's methods are demonstrated by a letter that he wrote to Queen Victoria on February 2, 1887:

"... Lord Salisbury prays Your Majesty to let him have this letter back to copy, as it is the sole record he has kept of these conversations. At present he is

1. India Office Library MS Eur. F/112/1/p.74. Salisbury to Curzon, March 23, 1896.
2. British Museum Add. MS 50073, p.209. Curzon to Brodrick, October 4, 1898.
3. H.W.V. Temperley: op. cit., p.14.
4. L.M. Penson: "The Principles and Methods of Lord Salisbury's Foreign Policy." p.90. ("The Cambridge Historical Journal." 1935).

keeping the matter secret even from the Foreign Office, and he has told no soul except his colleagues."¹

The Mediterranean Agreements were the first of these two important negotiations. "Much the same treatment was given to the papers relating to the Anglo-German negotiations for an alliance in 1901."² In addition, "records of the parallel negotiations of 1889 do not exist at all."²

One reason why Salisbury did not always keep an official record of his conversations with foreign ambassadors was that he hoped this would encourage them to speak more freely. There was also the question of Blue Books:

"Lord Lyons and Sir Edward Malet frequently suggested omissions, and the latter shortly after Salisbury's return to office (in 1885) wrote a letter to warn him of the need to be particularly cautious with records of conversations with Bismarck, lest he should 'rake up old grievances and make the Chancellor feel that he can trust this Government as little as he did the last.'"³

In a footnote, L.M. Penson gave her own opinion on the alleged incompleteness of the official archives of the Foreign Office:

"Special precautions of secrecy were taken throughout in connection with Germany, and it is to be noted that it was with reference to Anglo-German relations that Sir Dyre Crowe commented on the deficiency of the Foreign Office archives. My own view is that it is true on this subject but not on others."³

When Gooch and Temperley were commissioned to edit the official publication of the "British Documents on the Origins of the War," they "decided to begin with the year 1898 in view of the fact that

1. Lady G. Cecil: op. cit., Vol. 4, p.21. Salisbury to Queen Victoria, February 2, 1887.
2. L.M. Penson: "The Principles and Methods of Lord Salisbury's Foreign Policy." p.90. ("The Cambridge Historical Journal." 1935).
3. Ibid., p.93. See also C.J. Lowe: op. cit., p.13-14: "All Salisbury's important negotiations with Bismarck were kept from the official correspondence."

certain influential members of the British Cabinet, alarmed by the hostility of France and Russia, then desired to substitute a policy of alliances for the traditional principle of 'splendid isolation.'" They also "felt ... that the years covered in the first two volumes could be treated in a more summary fashion than would be desirable after 1904;"¹ they were therefore not concerned with the bulk of Salisbury's last tenure of the Foreign Office. However they did consider Crowe's allegations, and wrote that "it would appear that the documents are fuller after the fall of Bismarck," and that "from 1901 onwards it would in fact appear that the archives are reasonably complete."¹

If the official archives for Lord Salisbury's Foreign Secretaryship are incomplete, we must determine to what extent Salisbury's private papers contain additional information. Temperley wrote that "even the publication of Lord Salisbury's private papers by no means fills the gaps or affords adequate explanations of many diplomatic transactions."² When Temperley and Penson were writing, however, the records of the Foreign Office were not open to public inspection for the years of Salisbury's last administration, and Salisbury's private papers were available only so far as they had been included in his daughter's unfinished biography. In more recent years all the archives of the Foreign Office have been opened for inspection, to a date well after the final retirement of Lord Salisbury. In addition the Salisbury Papers are available to scholars at Oxford. We may therefore attempt to decide the question once and for all. J.A.S. Grenville, in his

1. BD I, Ed. note, p.vii.

2. H.W.V. Temperley: op. cit., p.14.

history of British foreign policy from 1895 to 1902, made a number of comments which, though inconsistent, contain the answer. He wrote that,

"The Prime Minister did not deliberately set out to circumvent the Foreign Office nor did his private letters in any sense take the place of official despatches. The Foreign Office records are far more complete for this period than historians have surmised - except for those occasions when Chamberlain was carrying on negotiations behind the Prime Minister's back.

"Salisbury's private correspondence with the British ambassadors abroad was in fact not personal in the usual sense. The correspondence was kept under lock and key in the Foreign Office and bound in the usual brown leather Foreign Office binding.¹ Important letters were not infrequently circulated to the Cabinet and to ministers, and the under secretaries of the office also had access to them. They form a kind of supplementary official correspondence. In later times these records would have been classified and their circulation limited accordingly. The notion of 'private letter' thus gives a quite false impression of these documents. But Victorian foreign secretaries customarily took such letters and Cabinet memoranda home when they gave up office. How long this habit continued has never been satisfactorily established. For as long as it did a complete understanding of the policies of a previous administration depended on the continuity of the senior Foreign Office personnel rather than on the records which were assigned to the Foreign Office Library. Thus it is not surprising that Sir Eyre Crowe found serious gaps - but his deduction that therefore negotiations were frequently not recorded officially is not warranted by the facts."²

In this passage Grenville began by regarding the correspondence as "not official in the usual sense," then referred to it as "a kind of supplementary official correspondence," and finally stated that the information contained in it was "recorded officially." It is not our concern here to argue which of these descriptions is the most accurate. What is surely clear, however, is that these

1. I have been unable to find any Foreign Office volumes with the same binding as that used for the Salisbury Papers.
2. J.A.S. Grenville: op. cit., p.13.

letters were deliberately "off the record," and that if Salisbury had wished them to be made official he could easily have turned the letters he sent into official despatches, and entered those he received in the political Departments of the Foreign Office. It is true that these private letters often repeated instructions or information in official despatches, or else commented on and explained those instructions and that information.¹ Nevertheless, both sides of the correspondence understood that the Office as a whole would not see their letters, that no record of them would be kept at the Office, and that they would be taken away by the outgoing Foreign Secretary. The documents in the Salisbury Papers are records made by officials, but not made officially, and made with every intention and understanding that they would be removed to Hatfield when the time would come for Lord Salisbury to vacate the Foreign Office. Certain negotiations were privately recorded, and privately shown to a few of the higher officials and leading Cabinet Ministers, but these records remained unofficial and outside the Foreign Office archives - in Crowe's words, "Lord Salisbury's action by private letter." Other negotiations and conversations were simply not recorded at all.

1. See, e.g., Z. Steiner: op. cit., p.69 note: "I have found that contrary to what Lord Salisbury's daughter has written about his earlier administrations, the Foreign Secretary kept his officials fully informed of his proceedings in his last years. Though he continued his copious correspondence with diplomats abroad, there is little in these letters which cannot be found in the official archives. They are only an additional source of information for understanding Salisbury's diplomacy."

(3)

In the passage quoted above Grenville commented that "how long this habit continued has never been satisfactorily established." It is, however, possible to establish the general facts fairly easily. We know that Lord Salisbury took his papers away from the Foreign Office, and that they have never been returned there. Lansdowne, in accordance with the custom, also took his papers away with him, although he did allow certain of his papers that covered an important gap to be left behind at the last moment.¹ The change began during the Foreign Secretaryship of Sir Edward Grey. Shortly after Grey took office a circular was sent to all the heads of missions calling for Annual Reports.² This circular also referred to the question of private letters:

"I would take this opportunity to point out that the system of making matters of obvious public importance, but of a confidential nature, the subject of private communications to the Secretary of State, while omitting all reference to them from the official correspondence, is open to grave objections. Such private communications are not included in the official archives, and, being regarded as the private property of the correspondents, are eventually removed from this Department, so that no permanent record remains of the information they contained. This practice has, I understand, caused serious inconvenience on several occasions in the past. It is clear that a correct appreciation of the relations that have existed between Great Britain and another country at some critical period becomes practically impossible to future Secretaries of State if important information respecting the events and persons concerned is in this manner withdrawn from their knowledge.

1. See above, p.482. The last instalment of Lansdowne's private papers did not finally leave the Foreign Office until June 1907, when six tin boxes of confidential print were sent to him. He wrote that "I am already swamped by papers, and this fresh invasion is fearful to contemplate." See FO 370/11/21750. Lansdowne to Verney, June 3, 1907. Also Dawkins to Verney, June 19, 1907.
2. See Chapter Two, p.267-268.

"I shall, of course, be glad at all times to receive from heads of Missions, in the shape of private letters, information and expressions of opinion of a personal nature. But, in the interest of the public service, it is desirable that all matters which are not of such a strictly personal nature as only to admit of their being suitably discussed in private correspondence should be dealt with in official despatches, marked confidential or secret, if necessary."¹

This circular was drafted by Crowe, but it was also accepted by both Sanderson and Hardinge before it received Grey's signature. In the years that followed Hardinge and Crowe went out of their way to see that it was enforced. Only two days before Crowe drew attention to the subject once more in his memorandum of January 1, 1907, Hardinge wrote to Bertie:

"My dear Frank,

"We have just received your four desps. marked 'A'² of about two months ago, and although your intentions in sending them were most laudable you have, I fear, mistaken the spirit of the F.O. circular and have only created a complication for our Registries. If you will kindly refer to the circular you will find that it dictated that, in future, political matters should not be dealt with in private letters simply because their subject was secret or confidential. Now there is nothing private in these A. desps. what they report being simply confidential. In reporting privately these conversations you were, unthinkingly, I know, committing a breach of the F.O. circular, since they should evidently have been reported officially, as you have done now. I am only pointing this out to you privately so that the present procedure may not be repeated, since our present system does not admit of back-dating and back-numbering of entries in the registers.

"It is possible that for Bluebook purposes it may be necessary sometimes to compose and back-date desps

1. FO 371/166/12375. Foreign Office Circular A, April 9, 1906.
2. FO 366/1136. Minute by Hardinge, May 24, 1906. "Any despatches marked 'Print A' will in future, in order to save time, not be circulated to the Under Secretaries but will be available to them in the print distributed by the Registry."

but such occasions are very rare. If for any reason it may be inconvenient to you for the moment to record your conversations at once, numbers can always be taken in your register and the desps. sent at your convenience."¹

A few months later, Bertie himself wrote:

"My dear Mallet,

"In order to comply with recent F.O. instructions I have converted into a despatch the private communications April 11 to 17 concerning Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman's observations to Clemenceau. I send the despatch herewith for you to hand over to Crowe if the matter is to be kept on official record."²

Private letters certainly continued to be written by the Ambassadors to Sir Edward Grey. O'Connor commented to Tilley on receiving the circular that "there are many things which I can say in private letters which I should not be such a fool as to say in despatches."³ Nevertheless the old problem of gaps in the correspondence was considerably minimised, and the official archives are liberally sprinkled after 1906 with private letters that have been entered and "made official."

When Lord Grey of Fallodon resigned in 1916 he left all his papers behind, with two exceptions "which were not with my papers at the Foreign Office."⁴ Both these exceptions were published in Grey's "Twenty-Five Years, 1892-1916." The habit of previous Foreign Secretaries was thus changed by Grey, as a result of universal criticism of the practice within the Office, and particularly from Eyre Crowe. Grey did not only leave his papers behind; he also took the attitude that "it would be very unfair to the

1. FO 800/184/p.304. Hardinge to Bertie, December 30, 1906.
2. BD VI, 13. Bertie to Mallet, April 17, 1907.
3. Sir J. Tilley and S. Gaselee: op. cit., p.162.
4. Lord Grey of Fallodon: op. cit., Vol. 1, p.xx.

Foreign Office to transact important matters through private channels. If the staff of an Office is to serve the State well they must know what is being done, and the record must be accessible to them in official documents."¹ Grey attempted to ensure that there were no gaps, and covered himself by leaving his papers in the Office in case there were any. In the 1920s Lord Lansdowne returned his papers to the Foreign Office, thus leaving the Foreign Secretaryship of Lord Salisbury as the last for which the official archives are now incomplete.

Since Grey's retirement in 1916 it has become common practice for the Foreign Secretary to leave behind his private correspondence on official subjects in the Office. These papers have been kept by the Private Secretaries, who have since then come to occupy what is now called the Private Office. Foreign Secretaries have continued to conduct a personal correspondence with the more important diplomatists, and this correspondence has in theory been divided into two parts: those letters containing official information have been retained by the Foreign Office; those letters of a purely private nature have been removed by the Foreign Secretary on his departure. Thus the correspondence of Arthur Balfour and Lord Robert Cecil is divided between the Public Record Office and the British Museum, while that of Lord Curzon is divided between the Public Record Office and the India Office Library.²

1. Lord Grey of Fallodon: *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p.xx.
2. To continue the story: MacDonal's papers are all in the Public Record Office, some in the Foreign Office archives, the rest among the "Gifts and Deposits;" Austen Chamberlain's, in addition to the Public Record Office, are also in the Birmingham University Library; Arthur Henderson's in Transport House; Lord Reading's in the India Office Library;

However this system has not always worked very well in practice, and the result has been somewhat paradoxical. Although the official archives since 1916 are generally complete (with the important qualification that foreign policy has sometimes passed out of the hands of the Foreign Office anyway), the private collections outside the Foreign Office archives have remained an invaluable source for a profound understanding of the factors influencing British foreign policy. The archives can be relied upon as a rule to reveal what happened; the private collections among the Foreign Office archives generally fill any gaps. But the correspondence that was removed from the Office is often necessary if we are to understand why things happened.

A further source for understanding why things happened, rather than what happened, is to be found in the private correspondence of the Permanent Under-Secretaries. Sanderson clearly had a large correspondence with some of the senior diplomatists, but these letters seem to have been generally of a personal nature. Hardinge and Nicolson, on the other hand, developed the practice of private letters to a considerable degree and frequently wrote and received long letters on official subjects. These letters were generally seen by the Secretary of State; indeed Hardinge wrote in 1915:

"when head of the Foreign Office, ... I always showed Sir Edward Grey every letter in which any reference to foreign politics was made by any person in a responsible

Sir John Simon's in the hands of his family; Sir Samuel Hoare's in the Cambridge University Library; and Lord Halifax's also in the hands of his family. The exception has been Sir Anthony Eden who removed all his papers, but they are now available in the Birmingham University Library. It remains to be seen how the system has developed since the Second World War.

position. I regarded it as my duty to do so, since the only reason why I received such letters was due to the position I held as Under Secretary."¹

This "volume of private correspondence" with the Permanent Under-Secretary was however, as Vansittart later complained of Nicolson, "hidden from underlings, who are helped by knowing the master's mind."² In addition to the Permanent Under-Secretaries, another volume of private correspondence was carried on by the Private Secretaries. When Tyrrell was Private Secretary to Sir Edward Grey he certainly corresponded fairly frequently with a number of diplomatists; Theo Russell, one of Balfour's Private Secretaries, wrote in 1919 that "both Eric Drummond and I used to have pretty considerable correspondence with our representatives abroad."³ It is not easy to say exactly how important all this correspondence is. Hardinge's papers are now in the Cambridge University Library and shed considerable light on British foreign policy during his years at the Foreign Office, but I doubt if they add much to the record in the official archives of what actually happened. The same may be said of most of the papers of Nicolson, who wrote in 1926 that "I handed over recently all my private papers to the F.O., to deal with as they might think fit."⁴ Tyrrell's papers have not survived. I do not know of the whereabouts of any papers formerly belonging to Eric Barrington, Eric Drummond, Theo Russell or the other Private Secretaries of this period. By the end of the First World War, however, the official private papers

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 121, p.248, no.61. Hardinge to Holderness, October 22, 1915.
2. Lord Vansittart: "The Mist Procession." p.99.
3. FO 800/157/p.154. Russell to Campbell, November 3, 1919.
4. Cartwright Papers. Carnock to Cartwright, April 15, 1926.

of the Private Secretaries began to be retained in the Private Office, and have now been turned over to the Public Record Office. They add nothing to our knowledge, and little to our understanding, of British foreign policy.

This private correspondence of both the Secretary of State and his senior officials began to decline at the end of the First World War for two reasons. First there was a great increase in the official correspondence being handled by the Foreign Office. For example when Curzon was Secretary of State he wrote in 1921 to the Ambassador in Washington:

"My dear Geddes,

"... I wish that I could write to my Ambassadors. But with the volume of work that lies upon me, it is impossible; and I only hope they comprehend and forgive."¹

Hardinge, his Permanent Under-Secretary, wrote in January 1920 to one correspondent that "I have been intending for some little time to write to you, but you can well understand that private correspondence gets perpetually put off when there is a general rush in a Government Office. The rush is, I may say, continual."²

The other reason why the number of private letters declined was because the system was officially discouraged by Crowe, when the latter succeeded Hardinge as Permanent Under-Secretary in 1920.³ Crowe had "a strong objection to private letters on official subjects,"⁴ and once instructed a Minister: "Please whenever

1. FO 800/158/p.320. Curzon to Geddes, September 25, 1921.
2. Hardinge Papers Vol. 42, p.119. Hardinge to Butler, January 15, 1920.
3. See, e.g., FO 371/6021/C.6562. Clerk to Crowe, April 12, 1921; FO 800/253/p.143. Oliphant to Rumbold, October 23, 1922; FO 371/7785/E.14289. Forbes Adam to Weakley, December 22, 1922; H. Nicolson: "Diplomacy." p.107.
4. FO 371/8272/W.5592. Sarell to Crowe, June 28, 1922.

possible avoid marking telegrams personal or private unless they really deal with private affairs."¹ In 1920 Lord Lansdowne was informed that,

"The Librarian ... rather dislikes the practice of ... papers ... being carried off by Secretaries of State unless copies are left with him. Lord Salisbury, in particular, is said to have transacted a great deal of business by means of private correspondence with representatives abroad, and the result is that the history of some important matters is entirely lost to the Department. The Librarian is at this moment endeavouring to secure copies of some of this correspondence, from the late Lord Salisbury's representatives."²

In 1923 Theo Russell wrote to Vansittart that "the private letter so much in vogue in the days of Lord Salisbury and Lord Rosebery is now much deprecated in the Office."³ Vansittart recalled that when he himself became Permanent Under-Secretary in 1930 he deliberately "set my face" against the practice of sending private letters.⁴ Lord Strang explained in the 1950s that "the modern tendency is to restrict its use progressively while not abandoning it altogether."⁵

1. FO 800/252/p.163. Crowe to Loraine, Tel., December 28, 1921.
2. FO 800/130/p.148a. Dawkins to Lansdowne, September 21, 1920.
3. FO 800/155/p.254. Russell to Vansittart, March 1, 1923.
4. Lord Vansittart: "The Mist Procession." p.99.
5. Lord Strang: "The Foreign Office." p.158. "Semi-official correspondence ... has its legitimate scope, but can easily be indulged in too much. For the average head of a mission, indeed, such over-indulgence is a standing temptation. If he expresses what he has to say in a semi-official letter, he knows that this letter will go straight to the man whose concurrence or enlightenment he is chiefly concerned to secure. No clerky hands will delay its passage for filing, docketing and the other laborious processes of the official mill. No junior secretary in the department concerned will relegate it to his 'Pending' tray, or take the edge off its persuasiveness in the effort to produce an impressively judicious commentary. Above all, a more colloquial and perhaps more pungent style can be used than would be fitting in an official despatch. But most of such letters will have to

Although the general trend away from private letters is clear, there were certainly exceptions to this. For example Anglo-American relations during the First World War were very largely conducted through private letters and telegrams, often of a highly secret nature. In the early 1920s Lord Curzon wrote to the new Ambassador at Paris that his two predecessors "used to write to me regularly from Paris - at least once a week, sometimes oftener." "That," he pointed out, "is the real way in which Anglo-French relations are managed."¹ In particular the Foreign Secretary tended to write more private letters to "political" as opposed to "career" Ambassadors. He wrote to Lord Crewe in 1922 that "it is essential for you to hear the under currents at home and what I may describe as the Cabinet attitude. I write these when I can - but of course cannot pretend to answer every letter that you are good enough to send."¹ And again in 1923:

"My dear Bob,

"I dont think there is anything particular to say from this end. But in these critical times I am always very glad to hear from you in a private letter what is going on in the background ...: and I very frequently pass on the letter to the Prime Minister.

"It keeps us in touch. Derby in particular was very active and very useful in this respect."²

1. Crewe Papers C/12. Curzon to Crewe, December 25, 1922.
2. Crewe Papers C/12. Curzon to Crewe, March 5, 1923.

be officially entered at some stage... Moreover to the extent to which semi-official letters are personal in style and aimed ad hominem, to that same extent will they tend to be awkward to handle... There is a long tradition behind the present use of semi-official correspondence in the Foreign Service. From the late eighteenth century till well into the twentieth the method was certainly employed to excess." (Ibid. p.157-158).

More generally, however, as the Foreign Secretaries and Ambassadors began to be drawn from a wider social background, they tended no longer to know each other to the extent that their Victorian and Edwardian predecessors had done. When this happened there was no longer the same incentive to overcome the pressure of work and prevailing disapproval to find time for private letters. For example Sir John Tilley wrote that "I had every reason to be grateful to Lord Curzon ... for I had a number of quite personal letters from him," but that "I cannot recollect anything in the nature of a personal letter, and very few private letters of any sort," from Chamberlain and Henderson.¹

(4)

Before we leave the subject of private letters it may be as well to make a few additional comments on the advantages and disadvantages of the system. In 1861 Lord Clarendon defended the practice of sending private letters on the grounds that,

"it is totally impossible to carry on the business of the Foreign Office with our foreign ministers unless by writing private letters; those private letters never superseding the public instructions, or taking the place of them, or being in any respect a substitute for them... my private letters always were, in fact, either commentaries or explanations of the public despatches, and giving (Ministers) all the information that I thought might be useful to them at their posts; ... if a Foreign Minister came into my room as Secretary of State, he could tell me, and I could tell him, a variety of things, both about countries and about persons also, which would be neither useful nor perhaps proper to make matter of instruction or the subject of a public despatch, and yet which it would be extremely useful, reciprocally, to know; and it was my object, in my private letters, to always keep the Foreign Ministers as much in England as I could, to

1. Sir J. Tilley: op. cit., p.127 + 136.

give them English views and English ideas of all matters that were going on, and to keep them au fait as to public opinion, and to let them know everything that I thought was passing in this country and likely to be conducive to the efficient conduct of the business they had to transact."¹

Lord Wodehouse, who later became Foreign Secretary as Lord Kimberley, added further:

"all matters of public importance should be recorded in despatches, and a private letter should only be supplemental to a public despatch; for instance, in recounting an interview with a minister, there may be some small personal details which it might not be altogether proper to put in a public document, but which might be contained in a private letter, but everything that is of public importance should be recorded. Then, a private letter may contain a good deal of gossip, and many stories which may be more or less worth recounting, but for the precise accuracy of which a minister could not vouch."²

It is quite clear that the practice of private letters tended to develop into something rather more than Clarendon and Wodehouse advocated, and that, particularly during the Foreign Secretaryship of Lord Salisbury, private letters generally did include more than a mere supplement to the official despatches. But private letters were, as Sir Maurice de Bunsen once said, "an extremely useful and necessary way of communicating sometimes;"³ or, as Harold Nicolson once wrote, "there are many things which can be said in a private letter which could scarcely be said in the formality of an official despatch, and the practice, when not exaggerated or abused, is a useful one."⁴ Hardinge once wrote to Lord Curzon in 1920 that "I feel that I cannot well put anything of so secret a nature as

1. M. Roper: op. cit., p.86.

2. Ibid. p.87.

3. FO 366/819B/part 6. Minutes of Court of Inquiry into the case of W.A. Stewart, October 22, 1924.

4. H. Nicolson: "Diplomacy." p.107.

this in a despatch, so I send it to you in a private letter."¹

It was perhaps a little absurd to consider that there could be anything too secret to be put in an official despatch, particularly since there were facilities in the Foreign Office for restricting the circulation of the most secret despatches. Nevertheless it seemed that many diplomatists required the reassurance that private letters supposedly offered before they would confide certain things to paper. Sir John Tilley discussed the question in his chapters on the Foreign Office:

"When I was at Constantinople in 1906 and 1907 the Ambassador received some kind of intimation that private letters were discouraged. 'There are many things,' was his comment to me, 'which I can say in private letters which I should not be such a fool as to say in despatches, and I shall continue to write private letters.' Ambassadors have perhaps, at times, shown an affection for private letters which is, or was, unreasonable; because after all there is no essential difference between a despatch and a letter, seeing that despatches are not necessarily printed, even when a Blue Book is published. Moreover, it is as easy to qualify one's statements, when their accuracy is doubtful, in a despatch as in a private letter. For really private matters, or gossip, especially now that gossip about Courts is of no great interest, there is scarcely any place in correspondence between the Secretary of State and Ambassadors. On the other hand, private letters bring the Secretary of State into personal contact with our representatives abroad and make them feel, as they ought to feel, that he is the Chief to whom their loyalty is due, rather than to the Institution over which that Chief temporarily presides. Further, the writer feels that his private letters will go straight to his Chief without the commentaries which might, he fears, obscure his meaning or defeat his purpose.

"Again, if an Ambassador is to maintain contact he ought at decent intervals to hear from the Office as well as write to it. The absence of letters from the Office has been a frequent source of unhappiness to our representatives abroad. It is true that, if no

1. Hardinge Papers Vol. 44, p.7. Hardinge to Curzon, December 5, 1920.

negotiation is on hand for which instructions are requisite, a whole series of interesting despatches may call for no official comment: the matter which they contain is swallowed and digested, but they require no special reply and the despatches seem to the writer to have been cast into the sea. Here a few words in the shape of a private letter might be invaluable. Sir Francis Villiers, when Assistant Under Secretary, used by each mail to write a few lines, of the sort that I have indicated, to some of our representatives in Central and South America, for which he was responsible, because 'he knew that they liked it.' No doubt they did. There is no absolute reason why, if the matter of which private letters used to consist is put into despatches, friendly despatches should not be written in reply; but that, it seems, goes against the grain of human nature. Of course the private letter, like all practices, was sometimes carried to excess. Palmerston carried on negotiations by private letter, ignorance of which was a serious difficulty to his successors. Naturally it was the preliminaries which were thus conducted, and any actual arrangement was eventually recorded, but it was obviously wrong that any Secretary of State should be unaware of proposals made to a foreign Government by his predecessor.

"... The real point at issue is that private letters, although possibly of great help to the Secretary of State, make things rather more difficult for the Office and eventually for the historian, and the attempt to suppress them was part of the theory, unavowed no doubt, that it is the Institution and not the Minister which is of real importance. Moreover, human nature being what it is, people simply will not put into despatches, or even minutes, their innermost thoughts, if there is a possibility, as according to the latest practice there now is, of seeing them all published within a very few years."¹

1. Sir J. Tilley and S. Gaselee: op. cit., p.162-164. See also Sir J. Tilley: op. cit., p.23 + 64: (Private letters) "were a considerable source of difficulty to the Office, since we often did not see them, and they were taken away by the Secretary of State when he left office; consequently the official knowledge of what was going on was incomplete." "As I have earlier in this book mentioned the constant exchange of private letters between Ambassadors and the Secretary of State in former days, I may say that O'Connor was much addicted to the habit of writing private letters, which I generally copied for him. He would often say: 'Of course I should not think of saying this in a despatch.' Seldom, if ever, could I understand why; but human nature tends to prevent people from committing themselves, and it is as well to remember that if they are restricted to official despatches they may, foolishly or not, keep valuable information to themselves."

A P P E N D I X X I (see p.402)

The "Preussische Jahrbücher" was a monthly publication which, according to Crowe, played an "important part in the political life" of Germany.¹ In a "Memorandum respecting the German Press" of October 27, 1909, Sir Francis Oppenheimer wrote that "'Preussische Jahrbücher' are looked upon as a leading publication. It is often cited to construe a conflict between the views of the Conservative party and Professor Delbrück, the latter now a professor of independent views, rather vain, and not disinclined to self-advertisement."² Crowe wrote in 1908 that "Delbruch (sic) is a slim fellow. It was he who some time ago wrote an article imploring Germany to discontinue the constant attacks on England and to keep quiet until Germany was sufficiently strong to make good her words."³ By 1912 Crowe had come to consider Delbrück to be one "of the two most notoriously violent and mendacious anti-English writers of standing in Germany."⁴ In June 1914 Delbrück announced his conversion to the view that hostility to Germany did not exist in Russia. This was too much for Crowe, who minuted that "Professor Delbrück is made up of conceit and pomposity."⁵

1. FO 371/166/21411. Minute by Crowe, 28/6/06, on Whitehead, No.180, 21/6/06. Cf: F. Fischer: "War of Illusions: German Policies from 1911 to 1914." p.39: "the Preussische Jahrbücher, the most important historical and political monthly in Prussia-Germany."
2. FO 371/676/41691. Memorandum by Oppenheimer, October 27, 1909.
3. FO 371/462/35236. Minute by Crowe, 12/10/08, on Lascelles No.440, 3/10/08. See also FO 371/463/37537. Minute by Crowe, 28/10/08, on article in "The Daily Telegraph."
4. FO 371/1372/2802. Minute by Crowe, 23/1/12, on F.W. Fox, 9/1/12. The other writer was Professor Schiemann.
5. FO 371/1988/24913. Minute by Crowe, 4/6/14, on Goschen No. 225, 2/6/14.

In the summer of 1917 Crowe minuted:

"It is really too absurd to ascribe to Delbrück the ambition of forming a 'democratic' government, if 'democratic' is to mean anything like what it stands for in the English language.

"Mr. Delbrück's 'democratic' leanings do not go so far as that (sic) of the most old-fashioned 'Whig' in this country - if such still exist. He is a strong German 'nationalist,' (whilst opposed to pan-Germanism) a protagonist of German 'Kultur' and has a deep-seated feeling against this country, ill-disguised by a professed Machiavellism. He is an old man, he has no personal following whatever in Germany."¹

1. FO 371/3081/135378. Minute by Crowe, 12/7/17, on Townley No. 161, 6/7/17.

Crowe's attitude towards Bismarck's foreign policy may be pieced together from a number of minutes that he wrote from 1906 to 1912, in addition to the memorandum of January 1907 itself. He wrote that "the maintenance of a state of tension and antagonism between third Powers had avowedly been one of the principal elements in Bismarck's political combinations by which he first secured and then endeavoured to preserve the predominant position of Germany on the continent."¹ Crowe believed that Bismarck had supported the occupation of Egypt by England² and the occupation of Tunis by France in order to sow discord between those two Powers. Wanting to create a Franco-German coalition against England, Bismarck attempted to woo Ferry,³ and he did so by supporting France on the Niger and the Congo,⁴ in addition to Egypt. Meanwhile he continued his policy of attempting to provoke hostility between England and Russia, in particular with regard to the Russian advance to Penjdeh.⁵ Once the European situation had been altered as a

1. BD III, App. A, p.399. Memorandum by Crowe, January 1, 1907.
2. Ibid: "It is now no longer denied that he urged England to occupy Egypt and to continue in occupation, because he rightly foresaw that this would perpetuate the antagonism between England and France."
3. BD VII, 383. Minute by Crowe, 15/7/11, on Goschen Tel. No.48, 14/7/11: "This would be a return to the policy of Bismarck at the time of Jules Ferry, and would signify a determined bid for a Franco-German coalition against England."
4. FO 371/74/38956. Minute by Crowe, 20/11/06, on Bertie No. 453, 19/11/06: "This naturally recalls the policy of Mons. Ferry who was warmly supported by Prince Bismarck in his colonial enterprizes, in the hope that friction with England would naturally ensue. That was the time when Bismarck favoured the British occupation of Egypt and the expansion of France in Tunis, on the Niger and on the Congo. The desired friction did ensue."
5. BD III, App. A, p.399. Memorandum by Crowe, January 1, 1907:

result of the increased vitality of the revanche and as a result of the Bulgarian Crisis, Bismarck tried to drive England into the Triple Alliance,¹ and he did this by a policy of blackmail.² In 1887 he tried to provoke a war with France,³ and attempted to arouse public opinion for the purpose. This was something that the German Chancellor had already done in 1875,⁴ and this time he

1. BD VI, 174. Minute by Crowe, 19/4/09, on Goschen No.141, 16/4/09: "The German government's desire for an 'understanding' with England is of old standing. In the pursuit of the object Germany has steadfastly endeavoured to involve us in one difficulty after another ever since 1884. Formerly the 'understanding' was to be of the nature of an expansion of the triple alliance."
2. FO 371/1371/38804. Minute by Crowe, 17/9/12, on Granville No.407, 12/9/12: "Bismarck's plan invariably was to seize an opportunity when England, for one reason or another, was not in a position to quarrel with Germany, and present his demands in the guise of a friendly understanding with England. - We all remember these understandings, based on the principle of political blackmail."
3. BD VII, 126. Minute by Crowe, 6/11/08, on article in "All-deutscher Blätter," 30/10/08, and on a conv. with Schwabach, 5/11/08: "the feeling in Germany ... in 1875 and 1886 (sic) when Bismarck tried to provoke a war with France, and took care to rouse public opinion for the purpose."
4. FO 371/1374/6431. Minute by Crowe, 14/2/12, on Storar, 12/2/12: "This was the attitude which Prince Bismarck declared he had adopted in 1875 when, according to his own account, he deliberately set about rumours of German military preparations against France in order to make the French government desist from their plans for strengthening their army. The German military preparations, it should be remembered, were not merely rumoured; they were actually taken."

"Similarly, he consistently impressed upon Russia that it would be to her interest to divert her expansionist ambitions from the Balkan countries to Central Asia, where he hoped both Russia and England would, owing to the inevitable conflict of interests, keep one another fully occupied. The Penjdeh incident, which nearly brought about a war, was the outcome of his direct suggestion that the moment was favourable for Russia to act." FO 371/167/22196. Minute by Crowe, 2/7/06, on Whitehead No.184, 26/6/06: "the theory of its being to Germany's interest to create difficulties between England and Russia, which Bismarck ever acted upon - we remember, notably, Penjdeh."

was prevented from doing so by Russia.¹ He attempted to keep Russia and France apart by signing the Reinsurance Treaty,² and although Crowe considered this particular move to have been defensible,³ he thought that Bismarck had had no scruples and no standards of right and wrong.⁴ Indeed Crowe felt that Bismarck's policy had been one of attempted dictation to all the other Powers,⁵ though the Chancellor's methods at the end of his rule might partly have been due to the increasing influence of Count Herbert Bismarck.⁶

1. FO 371/901/46585. Marginal comment by Crowe, 30/12/10, on de Salis No.359, 22/12/10: Beside "Fortunately the German-Austrian combination sufficed to prevent the war that seemed imminent in 1887" Crowe wrote: "Germany tried to provoke it but was restrained by Russia."
2. BD III, App. A, p.399. Memorandum by Crowe, January 1, 1907: "Prince Bismarck had also succeeded in all sorts of devices - including the famous reinsurance Treaty with Russia - in keeping France and Russia apart so long as he remained in office."
3. FO 371/267/5107. Minute by Crowe, 16/2/07, on Egerton No.21, 12/2/07: "It seems to constitute a 'reinsurance treaty' very much like that which Bismarck concluded with Russia, assuring German neutrality in case of an Austrian attack on Russia. Whatever may be said about the ethics of such transactions - I personally think they can be defended."
4. BD VI, 564. Minute by Crowe, 6/4/12, on Bertie No. 158, 6/4/12: "Nor has Germany any scruples of any sort whatever as to the methods to be employed for political ends. Bismarck.... recognized no standard of right or wrong in questions of foreign policy, or indeed in questions of internal policy either."
5. BD VI, 169. Minute by Crowe, 5/4/09, on Goschen No.121, 2/4/09: "We know that this was Bismarck's idea of foreign policy: 'make yourself very strong; then show to those Powers which are not willing to submit to you, how disagreeable it is to be opposed by Germany, this will induce such Powers to come to terms and accept German leadership.' Bismarck's policy on these lines invariably failed. His successes were due to crushing victories won in war."
6. FO 371/905/23875. Minute by Crowe, 4/7/10, on Goschen No. 190, 30/6/10: "The foreign policy of the empire is directed by the Chancellor himself... It might happen that a masterly subordinate in the office of Secretary of State wielded a good deal of authority in foreign affairs. As a matter of fact, however, there has been, so far, no instance of this, with the possible exception of Count Herbert Bismarck during the last years of his father's chancellorship."

Shortly after the outbreak of the Boer War the Russian Foreign Minister, Count Mouravieff, paid a visit to Western Europe. For over a year there had been suggestions put forward in St Petersburg, Berlin and Paris in favour of the creation of an anti-British Continental League, and the outbreak of the war in South Africa was seen by Mouravieff as an opportune moment to bring the idea to fruition. The French were eager to avenge Fashoda and eject the British from Egypt, the Germans had become increasingly hostile to England since the Krüger Telegram, while the Russians saw the British as their enemies throughout Central Asia and the Far East. Count Mouravieff visited France and Germany with the specific intention of forging a League between the three Great Powers.

There is no doubt whatever that Delcassé was strongly in favour of Mouravieff's scheme when the two men met at Paris in October 1899. He had himself already supported making unofficial overtures to Germany with the same object in mind, and he now welcomed the Russian initiative. Nevertheless he pointed out the practical difficulties in the way of Franco-German co-operation, and emphasised that Germany's reaction was important. Mouravieff then saw the German Emperor and Bülow at Potsdam on November 8, and intended to put forward the same suggestion. The Germans, however, ridiculed the idea that the British navy was unprepared, and Mouravieff decided to postpone his plan.

By the beginning of 1900 British military unpreparedness had been exposed, while her series of defeats had instilled new courage into the Germans. On January 1 and January 9, 1900, the German

Emperor spoke to Count Osten-Sacken, the Russian Ambassador at Berlin, and promised that Germany would hold the ring and prevent anyone stirring in Europe if Russia decided to make an advance in Asia. Osten-Sacken, however, warned Mouravieff that Germany was hoping to benefit from a quarrel between England and Russia. Mouravieff then informed Nelidoff, the Russian Ambassador at Paris, and the latter informed Delcassé. Delcassé, who had remained as enthusiastic about the Continental League as before, then made unofficial overtures towards Germany. When the Germans failed to respond Russia approached Germany formally at the end of February on behalf of both members of the Dual Alliance. The proposal was that the three Powers should "mediate" between England and the Boers. This was in fact a thinly disguised invitation to Germany to join with Russia and France in threatening military intervention. The success or failure of the scheme was totally dependent on the German reaction.

The Germans actually reacted in two different ways. On the one hand they made their acquiescence in the scheme dependent on the acceptance of the European territorial status quo. This was totally unacceptable to France because it implied a renewed renunciation of Alsace-Lorraine. On the other hand the German Emperor wrote letters to Sir Frank Lascelles and the Prince of Wales informing them of the Russian overtures. Both these reactions were decisive. First of all they put an end to all possibility of a Continental League; second, and perhaps more important, they instilled in Delcassé an implacable distrust of the Germans which later matured into a desire for an Anglo-French agreement. At the beginning of 1900 Anglo-German relations had become so

strained that the Germans did not even get the credit for their action in London. When Lord Salisbury heard of the Emperor's letters to Lascelles and the Prince of Wales he wrote that he was doubtful "whether a proposal for a combination against England was ever really made by France and Russia towards Germany."¹

Salisbury's reaction was understandable and indicative of the altered attitude of the British Foreign Office. At the time, however, it was not shared by the British Embassies at Paris and St Petersburg. In fact the news of Count Mouravieff's scheme had already leaked out to those Embassies the previous October, even before Mouravieff saw Bülow, and the Paris and St Petersburg Embassies had no doubts about its authenticity. This is how the revelation came about.

Count Mouravieff decided that it would be desirable to include Spain in his proposed Continental League, and he therefore arranged to see Silvela, the Spanish Prime Minister, at San Sebastian. The meeting took place in October 1899, the Russian interrupting his visit to Paris to make the necessary journey. Mouravieff put forward his proposal, and Silvela said that he would await the German reaction. After this meeting, however, Silvela saw Koziebrodski, the Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires at Madrid, and revealed to him the details of his conversation with Mouravieff. Koziebrodski then transmitted the information to Vienna.

Count Goluchowski, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, was naturally most anxious to know more about Mouravieff's scheme, and he therefore sent a copy of Koziebrodski's despatch to the Austro-

1. BD III, p.431. Salisbury to Queen Victoria, April 10, 1900.

Hungarian Embassies at Paris and St Petersburg. Count Dumba, the Chargé d'Affaires at Paris, and Baron Aehrenthal, the Ambassador at St Petersburg, were instructed to find out what they could about the success of the scheme and to report back to Vienna as soon as possible.

Count Dumba, who was strongly pro-British, decided that the best thing he could do was to speak to Sir Edmund Monson, the British Ambassador at Paris. The latter sent the following despatch to Lord Salisbury on October 27, 1899:

"My Lord,

"... Your Lordship must be so well informed of the general tendency of the utterances of all the Continental newspapers in the direction of the formation of a general league against England, that I need make no further reference to their attitude. The object of my present despatch is to draw your attention to a communication made to me this morning by the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, the nature of which may be already known to you from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna, or her Chargé d'Affaires at Madrid.

"M. Dumba came to ask me if I had succeeded in finding out anything about the proceedings of Count Mouravieff during his stay in Paris. He said that Count Goluchowski was most anxious to know what His Excellency had succeeded (sic) in doing with the French Government; and in order to show what he anticipated would be found to be the lines on which the Count had proceeded, he forwarded to M. Dumba a copy of a secret despatch from the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires at Madrid, reporting a most confidential communication made to him by Senor Silvela himself.

"It appears from this despatch that Señor Silvela had had a conversation with Count Mouravieff at San Sebastian in the course of which the latter had stated that the time had arrived when it became necessary for the Powers of Europe to take common action against the ever-increasing aggressions and expansion of England. That there was every prospect of the conclusion of an understanding between Russia, France and Germany for this purpose. That Count Mouravieff felt almost secure of the adhesion of Germany to this scheme; but not quite so sure that the French Government would consent to engage themselves very positively, partly because they are not by

any means sure of the extent to which they would be supported by the Public opinion of the country, and partly because the brunt of a rupture would fall chiefly upon France. Nevertheless, Count Mouravieff felt pretty confident of an ultimate agreement between the three powers, and from that agreement Spain should certainly not stand aloof. The three powers would undoubtedly desire and value her cooperation; and she would be adequately rewarded for it.

"Count Mouravieff expatiated upon the many reasons for which Spain had cause to be England's enemy, of course laying great stress upon Gibraltar, and upon England's intention to keep Morocco in her own hands; a booty which, if Spain agreed with France, Russia and Germany, should be her reward; France contenting herself with all the rest of North Africa.

"His Excellency appealed to the friendly conduct of France towards Spain during the recent war, as well as to the loyal manner in which she had supported the existing dynasty against the Carlists and the Republicans; and argued that Spain's only admissable policy is to cultivate the closest intimacy with France.

"M. Dumba in giving me this information begged that it should be looked upon as most confidential, and only reported in a 'secret' despatch. He went on to say that although he had not as yet been able to learn from any one what Count Mouravieff had been up to during his stay, he could not after receiving this information, doubt that he had been discussing the project of a coalition against England. He had been reproached by Count Goluchowski already on account of his inability to obtain details of Count Mouravieff's dealings with the French Government; but although after four years residence in Paris he numbered among his acquaintance many well informed persons, he had so far utterly failed to pick up any trustworthy information.

"In thanking M. Dumba for his confidences, I said that as far as I was aware no member of the Corps Diplomatique had been able to learn anything upon a subject upon which they were all acutely alert. I promised that I would communicate his intelligence to Your Lordship in the most confidential form, and I expressed my hope that he would not fail to let me know if he succeeded in obtaining any trustworthy information respecting Count Mouravieff's proceedings here.

"As Monsieur Dumba has passed many years at the Austro-Hungarian Embassy in London it is probably unnecessary for me to say anything about his character and sentiments. Speaking for myself alone, I may say that I have every confidence in his discretion and truthfulness; and I believe

him to be, as the most enlightened of his countrymen almost invariably are, a very sincere friend of England."¹

Shortly afterwards, on November 7, Monson supplemented this information with another despatch which, however, gave an incorrect account of Delcassé's reaction:

"My Lord,

"At a late hour this afternoon I have received from a source which I regard as most trustworthy,² some information as to the proceedings of Count Mouravieff during his visit to Paris. My informant was in a position to acquire this information at first hand, and it seems to coincide very sufficiently with the deductions which follow from the reports sent to Vienna from Madrid.

"My informant states that Count Mouravieff devoted himself to the task of persuading the French Government (chiefly of course M. Delcassé) to pursue a line of policy hostile to England. He appears to have set that object before him as the one aim of his own conduct, but shows his hand very openly in regard to the expediency of putting France in the foreground. In this, it appears however, that he decidedly failed, at any rate for the moment. M. Delcassé, according to my informant, maintained in opposition to Count Mouravieff that France's true policy is to keep on a friendly footing with England, and in this view he has been supported by his colleagues and by the President. The Count has gone away greatly disappointed at the non-success of all the arguments he employed."³

The news of Mouravieff's proceedings had meanwhile leaked out in St Petersburg. On October 27, the same day that Monson saw Dumba, Charles Hardinge had a conversation with Count Kinsky, a member of the Austro-Hungarian Embassy at St Petersburg, during which the latter actually showed him his copy of Koziembrodski's despatch. Hardinge immediately sent the following telegram to Lord Salisbury:

1. FO 27/3459. Monson to Salisbury, No. 450, October 27, 1899.
2. The informant was Jeanne de Montebello. See J.A.S. Grenville: op. cit., p.270-271.
3. FO 27/3460. Monson to Salisbury, No. 467, November 7, 1899.

"I learn on good authority that during Count Mouravieff's recent visit to Spain the question of a hostile coalition of Russia, France, Germany and Spain was discussed by him with Señor Silvela. Count Mouravieff told Señor Silvela that he had already ascertained in Paris the views held by the French Govt and that although in favour of the idea they were afraid of public opinion on the point of joint action with Germany. He thought however that any extraordinary successes of British arms in South Africa would inevitably remove this feeling and permit joint action by France and Germany. An assurance was given to Señor Silvela that, in the event of the coalition of the three Great Powers against England, Spain would also be included in the combination. In the meantime Count Mouravieff urged the Spanish Govt to lean on France, and promised that in event of any difficulties arising between French and Spanish Govts the Emperor, who had a great admiration for the Queen Regent, would use his influence with the allied Govt to smooth them. Count Mouravieff alluded to the attitude of the United States as 'equivoque.'"¹

Three days later Hardinge, who was Chargé d'Affaires at that time, sent a despatch in which he enlarged on this information:

"My Lord,

"There have recently been several articles in the Russian Press relating to Count Mouravieff's visits to Spain and to Paris in which frequent allusions have been made to a possible combination of certain Great Powers with a hostile intention towards England. At the same time the entry of Germany, as an additional factor, into this combination has been repeatedly urged in the Press and at one moment was discussed as an almost certain fact in the near future when the moment should have arrived for the final settlement of the status of the two Republics in South Africa, a moment which in the opinion of the Press would be propitious for the intervention of some of the Great Powers. The similarity in the language and views of the various organs of the Russian Press forced me to the conclusion that they were not the spontaneous expression of the editors' opinions but rather of an agency directing a certain line of policy to which it was desired to give publicity with a view to promoting action in that sense.

"Secret information which I have since obtained from a reliable source has proved that the views held by the Press scarcely differed from the views held

1. FO 65/1582. Hardinge to Salisbury, Tel. No. 104, October 27, 1899.

by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, as shown by an official report to which I have had access of Count Mouravieff's conversation with Monsieur Silvela respecting the possibility of creating a hostile combination of certain European Powers against England.

"Immediately after his arrival in Madrid (sic) Count Mouravieff together with his private Secretary were received in private audience by Signor Silvela. The question of the coalition of Russia, France, Germany and Spain against England was a subject of discussion between the two Statesmen. Monsieur Silvela told Count Mouravieff that, with a view to preparing public opinion in Spain for such an attitude on the part of the Spanish Government, he had already given a hint to the Spanish Press to comment favourably upon such a possible eventuality.

"Count Mouravieff informed Monsieur Silvela that during his stay in Paris before proceeding to Spain he had already discussed the question and that the French Government although in favour of the idea, were afraid that public opinion in France would be opposed to any proposal for united action with Germany. He was however of opinion that, in the event of England securing overwhelming victories in South Africa, this feeling on the part of French public opinion would inevitably disappear and the coalition of the four Powers would become an accomplished fact. Count Mouravieff at the same time gave Signor Silvela a verbal assurance that, in the event of the coalition of the three Northern (sic) Powers against England, Spain would also be included.

"Count Mouravieff further strongly recommended the Spanish Government to lean as much as possible towards France, and promised Signor Silvela that in the event of any difficulties arising between the Governments of France and Spain, the Emperor of Russia, who entertained a sincere admiration for the Queen Regent, would use his influence with the allied Republic to obtain their satisfactory solution. His Excellency also alluded to the attitude of the United States Government in such a contingency, which he described as 'équivoque.'

"From a perusal of the report of this conversation which was laid before me it was difficult to gather definitely by whom the discussion had been initiated, but the impression left on my mind by the contents was that it was Signor Silvela who had first broached the subject. I also gathered from the report that Count Mouravieff had not so far made any overture to the German Government.

"It is difficult to know how far Count Mouravieff reflected the views of the Emperor and of the Russian Government in seriously discussing with the Spanish Minister President the possibility of a hostile coalition

against a friendly State, or whether he may not have been moved by his vanity to endeavour to obtain off his own bat a diplomatic success, which, if proved to be a failure, could be ignored and so bring him no discredit.

"In any case there has been a very significant change in the tone of the Russian Press within the last few days, and their hopes for the realisation of a hostile combination against England have evidently been very much damaged by the announcement of the German Emperor's visit to England next month which the Press has hitherto persistently declared to have been indefinitely postponed, and also by certain articles reproduced from the German Press disclaiming any intention on the part of Germany to interfere in the affairs of the Transvaal.

"From these indications the report of Count Mouravieff's recent conversation with Signor Silvela appears to be happily of historic rather than of practical interest."¹

In November 1899 Hardinge read Monson's two despatches quoted above, when they were circulated to St Petersburg. He had since learnt that Silvela had also told Count Radowitz, the German Ambassador at Madrid, of his conversation with Mouravieff, and he wrote to Sanderson on November 16:

"My dear Sir Thomas,

"... Sir E. Monson's desps. about Mouravieff's doings in Paris and Madrid are very interesting reading. Dumba's account of the secret Austrian desp. was a good deal coloured. For instance there was no mention in it of Gibraltar or Morocco, or of certain other points, although the general pith of it was fairly correct. I am certain of this as I had plenty of time to study well the desp. which was short. However the important point is that Mouravieff's hostility now stands unmasked and is a factor to be reckoned with.

"It is intelligible that Silvela should have told the Austrian, since the Austrian Govt take such an interest in the personal welfare of the Queen Regent, but why he should have told the German has puzzled me a good deal. That he did so I have been able to corroborate indirectly through the German Embassy here. My only

1. FO 65/1580. Hardinge to Salisbury, No. 323, October 30, 1899.

explanation is that Silvela may have been made to believe by Mouravieff that German cooperation was absolutely decided upon, and that such a project would be received with sympathy by Radowitz whom, from long acquaintance at Conâstple, I know to be very Russian, being a disciple of Bismarck, and having a Russian wife.

"I am almost sure that Kinsky had not permission to tell me as he only did so when I asked him if he thought there was anything in the newspaper reports of a coalition against us."¹

Although these disclosures took place before Mouravieff saw Bülow in November, they revealed the true nature of the Russian Foreign Minister's plan before he was even able to carry it out fully. The information reported to the Foreign Office was understandably incomplete, and the British were premature in thinking that the danger had passed. Nevertheless Salisbury's government had been placed on the alert. The threat of a Continental League was probably not a very real one since, aside from the awkward political difference between the Continental Powers themselves, the Royal Navy was perfectly capable of maintaining the command of the seas and striking home at its enemies. It would however have created an uncomfortable diplomatic situation for England while she was fighting the Boer War, and it is therefore as well that it came to nothing.

It is very important, in the light of future events, that Hardinge's part in this episode is so well documented. It will be useful to quote here a passage from his memoirs, which were written in the 1920s and published after his death, and which reveal that he did not forget the salient facts relating to this incident:

1. FO 65/1580. Hardinge to Sanderson, November 16, 1899.

"It was only a few days after the declaration of war that Count Mouravieff, who was abroad on a holiday, went to Madrid and endeavoured to commence the creation of a hostile combination of the Powers against Great Britain. He had a long conversation with Señor Silvela, the Prime Minister of Spain, in which, by implying that Germany would also cooperate, he pressed Spain to adopt a hostile attitude towards Great Britain and to join with Russia and Germany against us. Bait was held out to Spain of Gibraltar and Morocco in the event of Great Britain being crushed, but without success. Unfortunately for Count Mouravieff, M. Silvela informed the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires of all that had passed, and a record of the conversation was sent to the Austrian Embassy in St. Petersburg and was shown to me by Prince Kinsky, the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, one of my oldest and greatest friends."¹

This passage, it is important to recall, was written after the First World War.

But let us return to the situation in St Petersburg at the end of 1899. After Mouravieff's return from Potsdam it became clear that his scheme for a Continental League had met with no success. On December 8, 1899, Hardinge wrote to Salisbury that, "in spite of all this 'fanfaronnade'" against England in the Russian Press, "it is recognised here in Diplomatic Circles that Count Mouravieff has returned to St. Petersburg humbled by the failure of his projects in Western Europe, and it is considered that, in view of the more friendly attitude of Germany towards England, and of the preoccupation of France with her own internal affairs and with the coming exhibition of next year, it is not at all probable that the Russian Government will embark upon a policy of adventure or of open hostility towards England, more especially since the state of the Russian Navy and the Russian financial situation are not such as to justify the risk which would be entailed by any enterprise

1. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst: "Old Diplomacy." p.72.

of this kind."¹ The actual danger had not yet passed, and it was reported that there had been Russian troop movements in Central Asia, but the confidence of the British Embassy at St Petersburg was increased by an Imperial rescript issued in January 1900 emphasising the need for peace.² Shortly afterwards Count Kinsky told Charles Hardinge that he had noticed a change in the language used by one of the senior officials at the Russian Foreign Office. Sir Charles Scott, the British Ambassador, reported on January 24, 1900:

"My Lord,

"The eminently pacific tone which marked the Emperor's recent rescript to Count Mouravieff appears to be already having the effect which Monsieur de Witte in the first paragraph of his financial report regarded as necessary to restore public confidence.

"I learn privately that Monsieur Basily, Director of the Eastern Department of the Russian Foreign Office, had a recent conversation with a foreign diplomatist in which he assured him that the Russian Government had no desire nor intention to take advantage of England's present embarrassments in South Africa to create difficulties for her in other parts of the world or to pursue any aggressive aim which might bring our two countries into conflict.

"As this language struck my informant as very different from that held to him by Monsieur Basily in conversation some time ago, he reminded that official of his former conversation, when Monsieur Basily at once replied that since then His Imperial Majesty had been pleased to give a distinct indication of His wishes as to the foreign policy of the Empire, and that it had been impressed upon all the Departments of the Government, who would faithfully follow the direction given them by their Sovereign.

"Referring to the telegram purporting to come from Tiflis explaining the motive for a recent tactical experiment in the despatch of troops to Central Asia and Kushk, Monsieur Basily appears to have admitted that

1. FO 65/1580. Hardinge to Salisbury, No. 361, December 8, 1899.
2. FO 65/1598. Scott to Salisbury, No. 18, January 13, 1900.

this telegram was concocted in St. Petersburg (I presume by the General Staff), that it had been submitted to the Censorship at the Foreign Office before it was despatched and that it had been slightly modified...

"My informant seems to have gathered from some of Monsieur Basily's remarks that the Russian Foreign Office was not altogether pleased by the capital which the German Press had made of this telegram, in describing it as a designed provocation and warning to England.

"This seemed to indicate a desire on the part of Germany to paralyze any effort to bring about a permanent understanding between England and Russia, and to have given the Russian Foreign Office occasion to consider seriously whether Germany might not perhaps gain more than Russia from any diminution of England's influence and prestige."¹

Scott supplemented this despatch with the following private letter:

"My dear Sanderson,

"... The diplomatist who had the conversation with M. Basili reported in my official despatch ... is Count Charlie Kinsky of the Austrian Embassy who had his Chief's permission to relate it to Hardinge, saying that he wd mention it to me himself when he saw me. But as B.n d'Aehrenthal did not do so when I gave him an opening the other day, but confined himself to assuring me that he had satisfied himself that the Emperor's pacific views were now impressed on all his Govt, I have concealed the name of the Embassy in my² Desp ... that its source may be treated as private."

In March Mouravieff's plan finally came to an end and was revealed to Lascelles and the Prince of Wales by the German Emperor. Mouravieff himself died in June 1900 and was succeeded by Count Lamsdorff. It is important to note, however, that the facts of the episode remained obscure and that Salisbury at any rate doubted that the proposal had ever really been made.

By the autumn of 1905 the international situation had

1. FO 65/1598. Scott to Salisbury, No. 29, January 24, 1900.
2. British Museum Add. MS 52298, p.178. Scott to Sanderson, January 25, 1900.

completely changed. England and France had reconciled their differences, Russia had collapsed from within and without, Germany had provoked the first Moroccan Crisis in what some people regarded as an initial bid for European hegemony, and Delcassé had been forced to resign. As the Powers lined themselves up for the Algeiras Conference it became important that England and France should stand firm against Germany. It was also important that England and Russia should be able to forget their differences, both during the Conference itself to defeat Germany, and after it to bring about a colonial agreement. In this situation the memory of Mouravieff's attempts to form a Continental League, and of Delcassé's enthusiastic support for it, were embarrassing and best forgotten. It became much more convenient to exploit the natural suspicion of Germany, in order to lay the blame for the attempts to form a Continental League squarely on German shoulders.

On December 20, 1905, shortly after Sir Edward Grey had become Foreign Secretary and had chosen Mallet as his Private Secretary, the latter wrote a memorandum for his new Chief in which he tried to do precisely this. He wrote that "the following are some notes of a conversation which I had with Mr. Delcassé in Paris about a month ago." In his memorandum Mallet wrote that "from the moment M. Delcassé came into office the Emperor of Germany (sic) never missed an opportunity of trying to make bad blood between France and England, impressing upon France that England was the enemy." Delcassé had told Mallet that both the Emperor and Bülow had hinted to both the French and Russian Ambassadors at Berlin that their countries should join Germany "pour mettre une fin à l'arrogance et aux empiètements de l'Angleterre," once that

country had become embroiled in the Boer War. When Delcassé had asked Bülow for a positive suggestion, however, the German government had dropped the subject. Mallet continued that "at the beginning of March 1900, at the time of our greatest disasters," the German Emperor had apparently become "still more violent" in his tirades against England. "He repeatedly said that the moment had now come to 'step in.'" Bülow had used the same language, but the German government had again drawn back once the French Ambassador had asked for definite proposals. Delcassé had concluded, in agreement with the Russian Foreign Minister, Count Mouravieff, that Germany "wished to push France and Russia into action which would be most unfriendly to Great Britain, and then, when they had the proof of the intention of the two Powers to take such action, to make use of it in London and claim a reward for their noble action."¹

It is not clear whether Mallet realised that this was not the whole truth, or whether he had simply been misled by Delcassé. At any rate some time during the next three weeks Hardinge deliberately set about propagating a false account of what had happened at the end of 1899. A few days before the opening of the Algiers Conference Louis Mallet, who may or may not have been Hardinge's dupe, wrote to Lascelles that "we have information in the F.O., which shows" that the German Emperor "did all he could to promote a coalition" against England during the Boer War.² Lascelles was naturally surprised by this statement and replied on January 18, 1906, that "I do not know what this information may be."

1. BD III, App. B, p.432. Memorandum by Mallet, December 20, 1905.
2. FO 800/13/p.32. Mallet to Lascelles, January 10, 1906.

He pointed out that the Emperor had told him that he had been approached by France and Russia, but that these overtures had been rejected. "All the correspondence, telegraphic and by letter, was carried on privately," Lascelles added, so "it is possible that there is now no record of it in the F.O." Nevertheless he asserted that it did exist and that "it is scarcely conceivable that ... the Emperor ... would have written and signed a letter which contains a statement of fact, and which, if untrue, could be disproved."¹ Mallet replied to this letter on February 6. He wrote that "the evidence that he attempted to get up a coalition ag.st us and failed is at least as good as his word to the effect that he stopped one and if we are to choose whose story to believe, we must to a certain extent be influenced by the antecedents of either party." He then added, and the details of the following passage are very significant:

"Charles Hardinge was in charge in St. Petersburg at the time and was shown a despatch from Koziebrodski, Austrian Chargé d'Affaires at Madrid to Ct. Goluchowski stating that the German Ambassador at Madrid had proposed to the Spanish Govt. that they should join in a coalition against Grt. Britain, consisting of Germany, Russia and France. This was telegraphed officially by Hardinge at the time; he has since told me the name of the man - a very well known name, who showed him the despatch but I am not at liberty to divulge it. I also enclose my notes of a conversation which I had with Delcassé in Paris last autumn, which corroborate Hardinge's account and are of some interest."²

Lascelles concluded this correspondence on February 9, when he thanked Mallet for his "intensely interesting" letter. He admitted that the remarks that Delcassé had made "certainly furnish pretty

1. FO 800 19/p.10. Lascelles to Mallet, January 18, 1906.
2. FO 800/13/p.52. Mallet to Lascelles, February 6, 1906.
My emphasis.

strong evidence of the Emperor's attempts to get up a Coalition against us during the Boer War," but he asked Mallet to remember that there was "something to be said on the other side." In conclusion he added that "it is a very pretty bit of conflicting evidence."¹ It certainly was.

In his "Observations" on Crowe's memorandum of January 1907 Sanderson wrote that "I see no reason to doubt that Germany declined Mouravieff's invitation to join a European League for the purpose of offering and pressing mediation." Eyre Crowe, in whom it is unlikely that Hardinge would have confided, minuted alongside this:

"There is however the strongest doubt as to the correctness of this story. All the available evidence points to Germany having sounded the Russian and French governments as to the possibility of falling upon England. M. Delcassé has furnished information which cannot be explained in any other way. (See Mr. Mallet's memo. B annexed hereto)."²

In this memorandum Mallet wrote, and again the details are important:

"Charles Kinsky, of the Austrian Embassy at Petersburg showed Sir Charles Hardinge, who was then Secretary of Embassy there, a despatch from M. Koziebrodski, Austrian Chargé d'Affaires at Madrid, to Count Goluchowski stating that the German Ambassador at Madrid had proposed to the Spanish Government that they should join in a coalition against Great Britain, consisting of Russia, Germany and France.

"This was corroborated from Paris.

"I have notes of a conversation which I recently had with M. Delcassé in Paris upon this subject.

"He was astonished that we were not aware of Germany's action, and said it was known to every Chancery in Europe.

1. FO 800/19/p.19. Lascelles to Mallet, February 9, 1906.
2. BD III, App. B, p.426. Observations by Sanderson, February 21, 1907; with comment by Crowe.

"I will bring down a note of Deleassé's remarks tomorrow."

On the following day Mallet annexed the memorandum of December 20, 1905; meanwhile Hardinge made two comments beside the memorandum of Mallet quoted above. At the end of the first paragraph, which mentioned the German Ambassador at Madrid rather than the Russian Foreign Minister, Hardinge wrote: "Absolutely correct." Beside Delcassé's reported astonishment Hardinge also commented: "This is quite true. It was well known at St. Petersburg at the time."¹ It seems quite clear that Hardinge was lying when he furnished Mallet with this information and wrote the above comments. Mallet's own role in this falsification of history is uncertain, but there seems no reason to doubt that Crowe genuinely believed Hardinge's story.

In May 1907 Sir Frank Lascelles sent to the Foreign Office his Annual Report on Germany for 1906. In it he wrote that,

"I understand that documentary evidence exists at the Foreign Office which has given rise to the belief that the Emperor had himself instigated intervention on behalf of the Boers, but, however this may be, I cannot believe, after making every allowance for his usual exaggeration of expression, that His Majesty would have put his hand in writing to two deliberate misstatements of fact, and I think that therefore he is entitled to the claim which has been put forward on his behalf that, at all events on two occasions, he declined to take part in intervention."

Crowe, however, noted in the margin that "our evidence is however too substantial to admit of doubt."² Later that year the Anglo-Russian Convention was signed and Mouravieff's démarche became a

1. BD III, App. B, p.432. Memorandum by Mallet, February 25, 1907; with comments by Hardinge. Gooch and Temperley did not publish the last sentence; but see FO 800/92/p.192.
2. BD III, App. C, p.437. Marginal comment by Crowe, 8/6/07, on Lascelles No. 238, 24/5/07. For the date of Crowe's comment, see FO 371/260/17091.

potential source of still greater embarrassment. Count Lamsdorff had meanwhile followed Delcassé and Hardinge in specifically accusing the Germans of having tried to create a Continental League, and he had been supported by Hartwig, a senior official in the Russian Foreign Office.

At the end of October 1908 the German Emperor's famous "Daily Telegraph Interview" was published, referring, amongst other things, to the question of intervention during the Boer War. Eyre Crowe commented that "the Emperor refers to his refusal ... to join ... in a war against England proposed by Russia and France:"

"To refrain from this was hardly an act of conspicuous virtue; it was the duty of a neutral Sovereign ... not to attack England - without any cause - at a time when she was seriously embarrassed, and when, moreover, she had a short time previously paid a price for Germany's 'abandonment' of the Boers... But the matter is made infinitely worse by the fact that the German Emperor, far from refusing an invitation to attack England, actually did try to bring about such an attack. We have, for this statement, the evidence of M. Delcassé, who has given us full details of those attempts. We have further the definite statements of Count Lamsdorff and of M. Hartwig (then a high official in the Russian Foreign Office) respecting the overtures made by the Emperor to Russia. In addition, Sir C. Hardinge has himself read the despatch - shown to him by a member of the Austrian Embassy at St. Petersburg (sic) - which was sent by the Austrian Ambassador at Madrid to his Government, and which reported that the Spanish Government had received from the German Ambassador a proposal for combined action against England."

The "Daily Telegraph Interview" was published during the Annexation Crisis when Russia was particularly anxious to obtain diplomatic support from England. A few days later the Emperor of Russia saw Sir Arthur Nicolson, then British Ambassador at St Petersburg, and Crowe was able to add what he clearly considered to be the final and conclusive piece of evidence:

"There is, lastly, the statement just made, personally and in all confidence, by the Emperor of Russia

to Sir A. Nicolson (see his despatch No. 498 of November 3) that he had in his possession a letter from the German Emperor, written about the time when England was most pressed in the Boer War, suggesting that Russia should seize the opportunity of 'making a diversion against England in Central Asia' - in other words, attack India."¹

Crowe concluded his minute on the "Daily Telegraph Interview:"

"Both the French and Russian Governments, it is only fair to say, did not apparently believe that Germany's real intention was to go to war herself; they suspected that, having succeeded in compromising France and Russia, Germany would go to England to betray her would-be allies and gain some political advantage in this way. We had not hitherto had sufficient information to test the accuracy of this surmise; but, according to the Emperor's present interview, this is exactly what Germany did do."

Langley, the Assistant Under-Secretary, commented that "it is as well to put upon paper as Mr. Crowe has done what we know of the truth of the statements made on the Emperor's authority and no doubt with his consent." Hardinge added that "these notes are both interesting and useful," and Grey agreed: "Yes: I am very glad that Mr. Crowe has put it on record."²

Crowe's minute remained the official Foreign Office attitude towards the question of intervention thenceforth. Stemming from Salisbury's original scepticism, and founded on Hardinge's deliberate lie, the interested evidence of Delcassé, Lamsdorff,

1. For this incident, see H. Nicolson: "Lord Carnock." p.287-289. The Emperor of Russia deliberately misled Nicolson by reading him a letter which he said he had received from the German Emperor "during the worst days of the war." The letter did indeed urge that Russia should make an attack upon the frontier of India, but it was actually sent on November 17, 1904, during the Russo-Japanese War. By deliberately concealing the date of this letter the Emperor of Russia hoped to be able to refute the allegations against his country made in the "Daily Telegraph Interview," a copy of which, "heavily scored with a blue pencil," lay upon his writing table as he spoke.
2. FO 371/463/37537. Minutes by Crowe, 28/10/08 and 9/11/08, Langley, Hardinge and Grey on the "Daily Telegraph Interview," 28/10/08.

Hartwig and the Emperor of Russia was believed; the repeated arguments of the German Emperor, supported as they were by Lascelles and Sanderson, were rejected. Ten years later, when the Foreign Office was asked towards the end of the First World War if it was true that Germany had been approached during the Boer War by Russia and France to attack England, Hardinge minuted:

"The German Emperor frequently made the statement. He did so to me on more than one occasion, but the information I received when in Petersburg at the time of the Boer War was to the opposite effect viz: that he was constantly urging the Russians to attack us on the Indian frontier."¹

There is no longer any real doubt that it was the Russians (supported by the French) and not the Germans who tried to bring about a Continental League to intervene in the Boer War.² It is true that the Germans also made a series of anti-British remarks, and that German public opinion was strongly pro-Boer, but there is no evidence whatsoever to support the allegations of Delcassé, Lamsdorff, Hartwig and the Emperor of Russia, still less the deliberate falsification by Hardinge. The fact is that the Russians put forward the positive proposals for intervention, and that the Germans confined themselves to their usual Anglophobe outbursts both in public and private.

The actual facts of the case are only of secondary importance,

1. FO 371/3443/80096. Minute by Hardinge, (? 8/5/18), on Scottish Unionist Association, 3/5/18.
2. See C. Andrew: op. cit., p.158-179; and J.A.S. Grenville: op. cit., p.270-274 + 285-290. A.J.P. Taylor: "The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918." p.401-402 tries to argue the opposite way, but his case is not very plausible and contains within itself one obvious inconsistency. The case against Germany is perhaps most forcefully put in Sir S. Lee: "King Edward VII." Vol. 1, p.761-771, but Lee was unaware of Mouravieff's overtures in October 1899.

however, within the present context. What is of primary importance to us is the evidence which this example affords of the extent of anti-German feeling. By 1900 it was sufficient to make Salisbury disbelieve what now seems to have been a genuinely friendly, even if self-interested, gesture on the part of the German Emperor. By the winter of 1905-06 it had become so pronounced that Hardinge, with or without Mallet's connivance, was actually prepared to propagate a deliberate lie. It is true that there were important political issues at stake, that the new Foreign Secretary might have been influenced by the true story, and that the lie, once told, had to be stuck to; nevertheless it remains a fact that this episode gives a very useful reflection on the extent of anti-German feeling in the Foreign Office by 1906 and 1907. The reflection lies not just in the fact that the lie was put forward, but also in the equally remarkable fact that the lie was so readily believed. These points require some explanation.

It will surely be asked why this false account was advanced. The answer seems fairly obvious. Delcassé and the Russian witnesses clearly hoped in general to avoid political embarrassment and in particular to curry British diplomatic support. It will be remembered that Delcassé spoke to Mallet just before the Algeciras Conference, while the Emperor of Russia spoke to Nicolson during the Annexation Crisis. On the other hand Hardinge, and any collaborators that he may have had, can only be supposed to have been trying to influence Sir Edward Grey against Germany and in favour of Russia. Hardinge wanted Grey to stand by France at Algeciras; he also wanted Grey to conclude an Anglo-Russian agreement.

While this much seems fairly obvious, a further question nevertheless remains: How was it that Hardinge was able to get away with his deliberate lie? It is true that the Foreign Office had become extremely suspicious of German designs and ambitions by the end of 1905, and that their revelation had been disbelieved by Lord Salisbury even in 1900. It is true also that Hardinge's story was corroborated by four Continental sources, of which at least two were held in high regard by the British Foreign Office. It is probably also true that no one would have supposed that Hardinge would have deliberately deceived the Foreign Secretary on so important a matter. Yet it remains the case: first that the documentary evidence was still available in the Foreign Office, in the St Petersburg Embassy, and elsewhere; and second that a story of this nature ought to have been remembered by the people who had known about it in 1899. I can only offer partial and unsatisfactory explanations of these two points.

I think the most important factor must be, not that few people knew what had really happened in 1899, but rather that few people knew the story that Hardinge put forward in 1906 and 1907. The despatches of Monson and Hardinge were printed and circulated to the major diplomatic missions in Europe; they would also have been widely read in the Foreign Office. In 1906 and 1907, on the other hand, it is possible that only Grey, Fitzmaurice, Lascelles, Hardinge, Mallet, Crowe and Tyrrell were privy to the story that Hardinge put forward. Grey and Fitzmaurice were politicians and would presumably have had no reason to doubt what they read. There is no evidence that Sanderson ever saw the comments by Crowe, and the memoranda and comments by Hardinge and Mallet, that his

Observations provoked. Indeed Hardinge specifically wrote that he did not intend to do anything further with the papers.¹ It is most unlikely that Lascelles ever saw Sanderson's Observations or Mallet's memorandum; what he saw was Mallet's letter of February 1906, and although he disagreed with its contents he clearly did not attempt to falsify them from the Berlin Embassy archives or elsewhere (even assuming that that would have been possible). There remain Mallet, Crowe and Tyrrell. Hardinge's relations with Mallet were close, and it seems strange that the latter should have written on two occasions the story that Hardinge had related to him without looking at the original papers. He had also worked in the Eastern Department from 1900 to 1903, and it seems unlikely that he would not have known the truth. It is of course true that Mallet had been at Cairo at the end of 1899 and that it is perfectly possible that he might have simply accepted Hardinge's story. But this seems to me very unlikely, and I suspect that Mallet did know the truth. It is unfortunately not possible to arrive at even a tentative conclusion with regard to Crowe and Tyrrell. Hardinge and Mallet's relations with the two men would suggest that Crowe did not know, and that Tyrrell did know, particularly since the latter had worked in the Eastern Department, but there is not the slightest evidence for this. Finally it is significant that all the papers of 1906 and 1907 which referred to the details of Hardinge's story were kept strictly private. It is extremely unlikely that Mallet's letter would have been seen by anyone but Lascelles himself; Sanderson's Observations and Mallet's memorandum were meanwhile kept by Mallet himself, and then by Tyrrell,

1. See above, p.415.

among Grey's own private papers. The only reference to the details of Hardinge's story that is to be found in the official archives of the Foreign Office is Crowe's minute of October 1908 on the "Daily Telegraph Interview." By then it was put forward with such authority, and it was so obviously accepted by Hardinge and Grey, that it is unlikely that any of the juniors in the Western Department bothered to check the facts. It is impossible to know what may have passed between some of the men involved in private conversations, but if anyone ever did discover the truth of what Hardinge had done they have left no record that has survived. Perhaps after all that is not very surprising.

In his memorandum Eyre Crowe argued that the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904 had not been directed against Germany, but rather that it had been,

"the outcome of the honest and ardent desire, freely expressed among all classes and parties of the two countries, that an earnest effort should be made to compose, as far as possible, the many differences which had been a source of perpetual friction between them. In England, the wish for improved relations with France was primarily but a fresh manifestation of the general tendency of British Governments to take advantage of every opportunity to approach more closely to the ideal condition of living in honourable peace with all other States.

"... The French nation having come to look upon the King as personally attached to their country, saw in His Majesty's words and actions a guarantee that the adjustment of political differences might well prepare the way for bringing about a genuine and lasting friendship, to be built up on community of interests and aspirations."

In addition to the general benefit of improved relations, Crowe argued that the settlement of outstanding colonial disputes had also had the advantage of removing Germany's lever in Egypt, of depriving,

"suspicious and unfriendly neighbours (of) a welcome opportunity for aggression or hostile and humiliating interference. If both France and England were acutely conscious that, in the contingency of either of them being involved in a quarrel with this or that Power, an Anglo-French understanding would at least remove one serious danger inherent in such a situation, patriotic self-interest would, on this ground alone, justify and encourage any attempt to settle outstanding differences, if and so far as they were found capable of settlement without jeopardising vital interests."

On the French side, Crowe considered that the agreement was due to "M. Delcassé's sagacity and public spirit." The fact that negotiations were started before the Russo-Japanese war, and that Delcassé believed in Russia's ultimate victory until after the

signing of the agreement, showed that the French Foreign Minister was not worried by the possible loss of his ally in the face of Germany,

"but even if the weakening of the Franco-Russian alliance had been the principal and avowed reason why France sought an understanding with England, this would not justify the charge that the conclusion of such understanding constituted a provocation and deliberate menace to Germany. No one has ever seriously ascribed to the Franco-Russian alliance the character of a combination conceived in a spirit of bellicose aggression. That the association of so peace-loving a nation as England with France and Russia, or still less that the substitution of England for Russia in the association with France, would have the effect of turning an admittedly defensive organisation into an offensive alliance aimed directly at Germany cannot have been the honest belief of any competent student of contemporary history. Yet this accusation was actually made against M. Delcassé and, incidentally, against Lord Lansdowne in 1905. That, however, was at the time when the position of France appeared sufficiently weakened to expect that she could be insulted with impunity, when the battle of Mukden had made manifest the final defeat of France's ally, when internal disorders began to undermine Russia's whole position as a Power that must be reckoned with, and when the Anglo-French 'Entente' was not credited with having as yet taken root in the popular imaginations of the two peoples so long politically estranged. No sound of alarm was heard, no such vindictive criticism of M. Delcassé's policy was even whispered, in 1904, at the moment when the Agreement was published, immediately after its signature. Then, although the world was somewhat taken by surprise, the Agreement was received by all foreign Governments without apparent misgiving, and even with signs of relief and satisfaction. At Berlin the Imperial Chancellor, in the course of an important debate in the Reichstag, formally declared that Germany could have no objection to the policy embodied in the 'Entente,' and that, in regard more particularly to the stipulations respecting Morocco, she had no reason to fear that her interests would be ignored."¹

Unfortunately, and contrary to Bülow's declaration, Germany really did take objection to the agreement, and she began to look

1. BD III, App. A, p.399. Memorandum by Crowe, January 1, 1907. See FO 800/243/p.11, for a copy of a translation of Bülow's speech, written by Crowe probably at this time.

out for a time and a place to bring about its destruction once Russia had been seriously weakened. "An entente," as Crowe once pointed out, "is not an alliance. For purposes of ultimate emergencies it may be found to have no substance at all. For an Entente is nothing more than a frame of mind, a view of general policy which is shared by the governments of two countries, but which may be, or become, so vague as to lose all content."¹ Germany's reason for putting the new rapprochement to the test was not because she felt manaced by the new combination, but because

"the maintenance of a state of tension and antagonism between third Powers had avowedly been one of the principal elements in Bismarck's political combinations by which he first secured and then endeavoured to preserve the predominant position of Germany on the continent;"²

and because, in the words of Tschirschky, German policy was, "always had been, and would be,"

"to try to frustrate any coalition between two States which might result in damaging Germany's interests and prestige; and ... if she thought that such a coalition was being formed, even if its actual results had not yet been carried into practical effect, not (to) hesitate to take such steps as she thought proper to break up the coalition."²

The conclusion of the Franco-Russian alliance was obviously a blow to this policy, and Germany

"never ceased in her efforts at least to neutralise it by establishing the closest possible relations with Russia for herself. From this point of view the weakening of Russia's general position presented simultaneously two advantages. It promised to free Germany for some time to come from any danger of aggression on her eastern frontier, and it deprived France of the powerful support which alone had hitherto enabled her to stand up to Germany in the political arena on terms of equality."

1. FO 371/1117/3884. Minute by Crowe, 2/2/11, on Bertie No. 58, 31/1/11.
2. BD III, App. A, p.399-400. Memorandum by Crowe, January 1, 1907.

This German policy, "whatever its merits or demerits, is certainly quite intelligible," and it was therefore "only natural that the feeling of satisfaction derived from the relative accession of strength due to these two causes should have been somewhat rudely checked by the unexpected intelligence that France had come to an understanding with England." In fact, the German Government saw the agreement as "another stumbling-block in the way of German supremacy, as the Franco-Russian alliance had previously been regarded."

"The object of nipping in the bud the young friendship between France and England was to be attained by using as a stalking-horse those very interests in Morocco which the Imperial Chancellor had, barely a year before, publicly declared to be in no way imperilled."

On March 6, 1906, an article by Lucien Wolf, signed "Diplomaticus," appeared in the "Pall Mall Gazette," under the title "The German Grievance." William Tyrrell wrote:

"In his paper which has now appeared in the 'Pall Mall Gazette' on Count Bernstorff's recommendation, M. Wolff (sic) tries to prove (1) that, if the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904 had been communicated to the German Government, all difficulties would have been amicably settled by a few strokes of the pen; (2) that 'the whole of the alleged grievance of the German Government on this point,' i.e., the non-communication of the Agreement, 'is a myth.' These two propositions contradict each other and are somewhat difficult to reconcile. The weight of evidence inclines to support the latter view, and we cannot do better than quote Prince Bülow on the subject.

"... the attitude of the German Government was that the Agreement did not affect in any way German interests, furnishing as it did an additional pledge of peace."

The German Emperor's "now historical visit to Tangier" in the spring of 1905 implied a "reversal of the policy which Count Bülow announced ... Germany intended to pursue with regard to this Agreement." The German Government, Tyrrell continued, claimed to be safeguarding

their commercial interests in the face of an attempt at "the 'Tunisification' of Morocco," but "her economic future in Morocco" was not "endangered by the recognition on the part of England and Spain of France's special position in Morocco, to which she was historically and geographically entitled," at any rate in the opinion of Count Bülow "when he made his statement in the Reichstag of April 12, 1904."

"Inside and outside the (Algeciras) Conference, Germany has strongly disclaimed any desire for political or territorial compensation in connection with the Morocco question. Her delegate at Algeciras has offered to state this assurance in writing, and we are justified in asking what were her reasons for raising the Moorish question in the somewhat acute form in which she raised it last Spring. What was the object of obtaining the dismissal of M. Delcassé, the acceptance by France of the Conference, and of the long drawn out negotiations of last summer which ended in the preliminary Agreement of October 1905 (sic), and enabled Prince Bülow to announce that at the forthcoming Conference there would be neither 'vainqueurs' nor 'vaincus.' If Germany's object is not commercial, it is but fair to assume that it is political and, in view of her repeated declarations on the subject, it is also but fair to assume that her political aims are not to be realised in Morocco. All the information at present in our possession points to the conclusion stated that the Germans were completely taken by surprise when they discovered that France and England had been able to settle their outstanding differences without extravagant concessions on either side, that they then jumped to the opposite conclusion and read more into the Agreement than it contained, that they finally determined to probe the extent and vitality of the Agreement. How far the Germans think that they have succeeded in this policy remains to be seen. These speculations are submitted with a view to showing that no amount of communications with or to Berlin would have succeeded in dissipating the suspicions or apprehensions of the Germans that the Anglo-French Agreement contained a 'point' against Germany except by their own investigations. It is to be hoped and expected that when they have satisfied themselves that the Agreement is as innocent as it looks - and the severe examination to which they have submitted it ought by now to have convinced them of their previous errors - they will revert to Prince

Bülow's original view of it, as stated on April 12, 1904."¹

When Lord Sanderson observed that "I do not think that Count Bülow's statement in the Reichstag at the announcement of the Anglo-French Agreement can be regarded otherwise than as an invitation to Great Britain and France to discuss in due course its bearings on German interests whenever these interests were likely to be effected,"² Crowe wrote at the top of Tyrrell's memorandum, "Note by Mr. Tyrrell on German Policy in Morocco, 1906," and annexed it to Sanderson's "Observations."³ He also annexed a further memorandum by Mallet, who had made some marginal comments on Crowe's memorandum. In one of these comments Mallet had written that "the charge that the understanding with France was in any sense directed against Germany for there were very few statesmen in Grt Britain who realized that any danger was to be apprehended from that quarter is refuted by the character of the agreement which merely aimed at eliminating sooner a quarrel wh. had nearly brought about a Franco-British war."⁴ Mallet had begun a further marginal comment, but he cut it short and wrote a separate memorandum instead. It was this memorandum that Crowe now annexed

1. BD III, ed. note, p.347. Notes by Tyrrell, March 1906. See also FO 371/3417/200343. Minute by Crowe, 13/12/18, on L. Wolf, 4/12/18: "Mr. Lucien Wolff's (sic) record, so far as dealings with this office are concerned, is not good." Also FO 371/3417/189591. Minute by Crowe, 23/11/18, on L. Wolf, 15/11/18.
2. BD III, App. B, p.421. Observations by Sanderson, February 21, 1907.
3. Gooch and Temperley printed Tyrrell's "Note" apart from the other papers.
4. CAB 37/86/1. Marginal comments by Mallet on memorandum by Crowe, January 1, 1907. Gooch and Temperley do not appear to have seen this copy of the memorandum, and did not print Mallet's marginal comments.

along with Tyrrell's "Notes," in refutation of Sanderson's observation. Mallet's memorandum was as follows:

"I do not think the Bülow speech can be regarded as an invitation to negotiate.

"His words were that Germany had 'no cause to apprehend that the Agreement was levelled against any individual Power. It seemed to be an attempt to eliminate the points between France and England by an amicable understanding. From the point of view of German interests, they had nothing to complain of... As regards Morocco, they had a substantial economic interest there, but had no cause to fear that their economic interests would be disregarded or injured.'

"A year later, after Mukden, Bülow changed his tone, and in reply to Bebel's taunts about the Emperor's visit to Tangier and the alteration of German policy towards Morocco, admitted that 'the language and attitude of a politician are governed by circumstances.'

"Moreover, the French Government were always willing to discuss the question with Germany.

"Rouvier admitted in the Chamber that Delcassé had taken the initiative in this matter. He spoke to Radolin himself, and instructed Bihourd to make explanations in Berlin.

"Rouvier came in prejudiced against Delcassé, and with the avowed object of arranging matters with Germany, but left Office convinced that Germany did not want to discuss the question.

"The charge that Delcassé was trying to isolate Germany is often made by Germans, but it was certainly not Lord Lansdowne's view, and is only true in so far as the establishment of good relations between France, England, and Italy must naturally neutralise Germany's success as an 'agent provocateur.' But that Delcassé aimed especially at the isolation of Germany in these agreements is, I think, disproved by the whole trend of modern French foreign policy."¹

1. BD III, App. B, p.431. Memorandum by Mallet, February 25, 1907.

In addition to the general observations quoted in the main part of the chapter, the following exchanges between Sanderson and Crowe may be of some interest. Sanderson wrote of the Moroccan Crisis that the German government were,

"determined on inflicting on France a severe humiliation. That they also wished to separate us from France, to prevent the Agreement developing into an alliance ... is no doubt also true. The methods adopted were characteristic of German policy, and as on some other occasions they failed."

Crowe added that "this is exactly what I have said in my memorandum." A little later, Sanderson wrote of Bismarck's colonial policy that,

"The methods adopted were not always scrupulous, and his attitude was unreasonable. But we were by no means the only Country who had to complain on that score in those years."

Crowe's reply to this was: "Just so. I have endeavoured to supply an explanation of the ideas which probably inspired Bismarck's actions." Again, Sanderson wrote of German policy in Zanzibar that,

"The procedure of Germany was no doubt annoying to us, but we have no claim to a monopoly of acquisitions in Africa, and it can scarcely be contended that we have not obtained our full share."

Crowe observed that,

"A reference to my memorandum will show that this is also my view. I pointed out that it was the German method of proceeding which was so offensive and that had she approached us in a friendly way, she could probably have obtained all she desired, without any friction."

Beside Sanderson's account of the events relating to south Africa, Crowe minuted that "Lord Sanderson confirms my theory of political blackmail. We bought off German hostility in the Transvaal by

conceding a reversion to certain Portuguese Colonies." "Exactly. German hostility had been bought off. Germany's friendship had not been obtained." When Sanderson turned to German policy in China, Crowe replied that "the facts as here stated by Lord Sanderson ... do not conflict with anything I have said." Sanderson wrote of this German policy:

"It was rather typical of the German Foreign Office, which seems to me often to overreach itself by trying to be more subtle than is consistent with the Teutonic disposition, and to be constantly suspecting others of trickery, of which I am afraid that it feels it would itself, under temptation, be capable. But the incident was more annoying than serious, and although Lord Lansdowne's strictures were justified and I think called for, it would have served no useful purpose to inflame the existing antipathy to Germany in this country by publishing them."

Crowe could again assert that "my memorandum appears to have stated the case quite correctly. It is not contradicted by anything said in the present paragraph."¹

1. BD III, App. B, p.421-428. Observations by Sanderson, February 21, 1907; with marginal comments by Crowe.

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