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Who Was to Blame?

THE fighting powers beyond the sea are still disputing as to which one was to blame for starting the great war. They had better stop that. They were all to blame, at least all but Turkey and Belgium.

Bismarck worked three years to bring on something which would cause Napoleon III to declare war against Prussia, while all that time Von Moltke was making a perfect fighting machine of the Prussian armies and it was all that both he and Bismarck could do, to prevent the old Emperor William from going on the war-path against France. The Great Napoleon had subjected Prussia's beautiful Queen Louise—old Emperor William's mother—to many humiliations and the old emperor when a boy of eleven had promised his mother that if he lived he would make France pay the principal and interest of that debt in French lives and property and humiliation.

As he grew old he became more and more impatient to fulfill his promise. There came to his aid perhaps the most scientific of modern soldiers and one of the most subtle of modern statesmen.

When in preparation, the war was made on Schlesweg-Holstein to test the efficacy of Von Moltke's preparations; then the war upon Austria to so cripple that power that she could not go to the assistance of France, and then, being all ready, nothing more was lacking except to provoke France into declaring war upon Prussia. This was finally accomplished, and the cry in France was "On to Berlin." The blinded French papers advertised that the French army would be on Prussian territory on the way to Berlin within thirty days. When Von Moltke read that he with a grim smile remarked: "They will have to do better than that or they will never reach Prussian territory."

The world knows what followed. The declaration of war united the German states. Just such a rush was made on France as was started last summer and checked in Belgium. France was beaten at Worth and Gravelotte and crushed at Sedan; her capitol captured and in settlement she was forced to give up Alsace and Lorraine and a thousand millions of dollars.

France at once began to reorganize and put in order her army and her defenses, and more than once she was on the point of again declaring war upon Germany.

Austria-Hungary wanted the smaller states in southeastern Europe and actually absorbed one of them. Russia has never relinquished her determination to obtain an open outlet through the Hellespont and as much territory in that region as she desired.

Germany has been busy in training the most

perfect army ever seen and during the past few years has crowded the building of a navy, knowing all the time that when it became formidable enough she would have to fight Great Britain to determine to whom the supremacy of the sea belonged. That is they all have been straining every nerve to get ready for an inevitable war. Why then split hairs about who was to blame for the firing of the signal gun which precipitated what had been so long expected, and which all were preparing for? When the war burst upon them last August they might all have appropriately said:

"And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty deaths."

It is with nations as with men—it requires very little to start a fight when all are expecting it and eager for it.

The war is a reminder of "Dooley's" story of the leaning of the corpse on the bar of an Irishman's saloon, then ordering three drinks and then the two live ones going out and the saloon keeper knocking the dead man down because he did not pay for the drinks. Then the two live ones returned and told the saloon man he had killed their friend. He came round from behind his bar and when he saw that the man was really dead, he cried out, "It was in self defense, he drew a knife on me."

And then who knows? Who knows why by unseen hands the stage was set for the awful tragedy and who is calling the tremendous acts?

An Old Storm Center

SPECIAL interest attaches to the news of the allied fleets bombarding their way through the Hellespont because that has been a storm center for the nations for twenty-four centuries that we know of, while it is quite possible that it was the same way for as many more centuries before the myths became legends and the legends crystalized into history. When all northern and western Europe was peopled only by savage tribes, around the Hellespont civilization had advanced so far that nations had been created, art and architecture had well-nigh reached perfection and the science of organizing and handling great armies had been mastered.

The Hellespont first assumed form in history when the army of Xerxes crossed that strait in the attempt to subdue Greece and when after Salamis the remnant of that army returning was hurrying to hide itself from Grecian valor and vengeance in the depths of Asia. That was 480 years before the coming of the Messiah. What storms of war have swept over it since! Persia, Egypt, Greece and Turkey, and a dozen lesser nations whose identity is now well-nigh lost took part in those wars! Constantine captured the great city there, that Byzantium that had fought back the fleet of Phillip of Macedon, that city which chiefs and kings had for centuries dreamed of making the world's capital; then the Turks took it and swept westward; not even the crusaders could stop their march; for a thousand years they were a terror, until the half-barbarous

tribes of the west and north subdued themselves and in turn learned the art of war. Now they are there with engines of destruction more terrible than were ever dreamed of in the ancient days; they discount Jove's thunders that were so dreaded of old.

About the only lesson that can be learned from it all is that there is no power in mere civilization to quell the wild beast instinct in men and nations.

Wretched Mexico

ONCE more the aid of Brazil, Argentine and Chile should be invoked to help out things in Mexico.

The theory of Mr. Secretary Bryan is that no man is good enough to rule over his fellow man; that it is better to let the people of a rebellious state fight out their own differences than to intervene. We presume the president entertains the same view, but children of the very best stock have to be disciplined, and when children grow up, if they are still children in thought and action, the discipline is still necessary.

That principle was recognized when the United States went down and redeemed Cuba.

The need is quite as great in Mexico, but while the war across the sea continues, we would prefer to see the Spanish states of the south work with Mexico. There is danger in permitting matters to drift any longer in that region.

If either Great Britain or Germany, both of which have immense interests in Mexico, should decide to make a diversion in that direction, it might precipitate a vast amount of trouble upon us.

Japan would welcome such a movement on the part of either country, as an ally of Great Britain she would at once be ready to help, for she has long looked with covetous eyes upon that west coast of Mexico, both for the lands and the superb harbors there.

The man who was czar of Russia when Napoleon was emperor of France said: "While Napoleon lives, he is my wakefulness."

Mexico is becoming "my wakefulness" to a great host of people in the United States.

American Shipping

IT is said that the president is much disappointed over the failure to pass the shipping bill. He may be as a politician, he should not be as a statesman, for, consciously or unconsciously, the impelling motive behind it was that of politics, not statesmanship. The bill was wrong in principle, deceptive in its promises and altogether inadequate if the purpose was really to begin the restoration of the country's merchant marine. Both the president and the chiefs of his party have established the fact that they do not wish the restoration of our shipping except on terms which are simply impossible.

Could the bill have passed, a few foreign ships have been bought and kept running until after next year's campaign, it would have been a good