March 20th, Thursday

Road to War

I. Diplomatic Background
   Failure of Bismarkian System
   Naval Race
   Cultural Issues

II. The status of the great powers.

III. The Balkan Cauldron

Creation of Germany upset the balance of power in Europe. Bismark understood that x created a complex diplomacy to deal with problems. Unnatural alignment of

three emporers. Competition between 3 - Germany, Austria + Russia, hastened collapse. 1880s - Russia starts to drift. 1890s - William II moves away from Russia. Russia needs capital + technical assistance - went to France. France could outflank Germans + gain investment opportunities in Russia. Nichlas II tsar - liked France which overrode his relation to Kaiser. Bridge over Seine in 1890 is named after Alexander III.

Russia also looked to Britian. They, Britian, liked to remain alone. Eventually Britian teamed up with France. Germany became the new threat.

Italy joined triple alliance in 1882. Shored up southern Front. Northern Italy is a bone of contention - high mountains. South Tyroll. Worked against triple alliance. 1915 - turns against Germany + Austria.

Splendid Isolation of Britian - ended when Germany pursued a naval strategy. William II wanted Germany to be a world power. Anti-British position. Personal animus against British.

Admiral Tirpitz - understood propaganda + how to win over German public. Brilliant lobbying campaign. Talked to students, bankers, newspapers, etc to win ~~over~~ public support. Battleships became measure of status. Race ensues. Essential ingredient to growth of hostilities. Sub program came later.

Germans + British are ethically related. By early 20th century animosity reigned.

British press portrays Germans as Huns, uncivilized. German press portrays British w/o soul, materialistic, ~~hypercritical~~. Popular animosity essential to stirring up a Fight. Opponents are Demonized. Riddle of the Sand - 1913 best seller in England warns of German invasion.

Complete realignment of Diplomatic structure of Europe. Entente Cordiale - agreement between France & Britian resolving colonial difficulties. William II saw Germany being encircled & tried to drive a wedge between them. Morrocan Crisis - 1905 Gunboat at capitol. William II thought British would side with him. Instead Britian drew closer to French via Fear of German aggression. Also increased land army development by Britian.

Russia joins Entente Cordiale - now triple Cordiale. Germany now is fully encircled. Only Austria-Hungary & Italy are Friends. Bismark warned against this. Alliance system were entangling - partners obliged to defend each other.

Germans start to panic. 1911 - 2nd Morrocan Crisis. Gunboat Diplomacy. French & British drew closer to stand against Kaiser.

Balkans - 2 wars. Austria & Russia wanted to move into vacuum left by Disintigrating Ottoman Empire. Austria did not want Russian control of the Balkans. 1908 - Austrians annex Bosnia. Provocative act towards Russia. Humiliation for Russia.

Great Powers - France - 3rd Republic. Weaknesses - Army humiliated in Franco-Prussian war. Racked by divisions. Huge issues of dissent. Politicians →

wanted to build domestic infrastructure including Panama Canal. Dreyfus affair. Jewish officer. Was a loner, not well liked by fellow officers. Cleaning lady finds lists in trash can. Dreyfus - from Alsace, German part of France, & was Jewish. Case dragged on. File was forged to insure his guilt. Dreyfus was convicted & sent to Devils Island. Supporters conducted their own investigation. Split France & the army. Convicted in 2nd trial. Conviction is finally annuled. Army is discredited - seen as a corrupt institution. Leaves France in peril. Still a great power. Wanted territory back. Had strong allies.

Russia - largest pop. & landmass in Europe. Terrible domestic problems. Weak tsar. Debacle of Russo-Japanese war. Case of Rasputin - holy man, monk. Wandering holy man, big, strong, bear like individual. Best way for women to know Christ is through him. Ended up in court of tsar. Son was hemophiliac. Rasputin calmed child - but seen as loose cannon by others. Accused of spying for Germans. ~~Cant~~ Count wants to kill Rasp. Drinks & cake laced with rat poison. Finally shoot Rasputin. Finally they drown him. Monarchy was discredited. Tsar was German. Wife seen as possible spy. Acted like Maria Antoinette. A further problem for Tsar. Army large but poorly equipped. Tsar was looking for a great adventure to rally people around

Germany- potent land army, great universities, building a great navy. Kaiser was a loose canon. Kruger affair in Boer War. Rhodes Scholars- Cecil Rhodes- Developer of Rhodesia. Kaiser picked Dummies for Oxbridge. One blew away all the Dees that were pets. Kaiser Frequented all male parties- homosexual. Not true but made Kaiser was livid. Yearned for a fight to prove himself.

British are skittish & worried - losing industry + possible military might to Germany.

Next Week- War Sparked in Balkans.