

The *Arbeiter Zeitung* draws the conclusion that the Count deliberately deceived the Emperor in order to get his declaration of war. The episode is already compared with the famous case of the Ems dispatch. It resembles even more closely the deception practised, at the same moment, for the same purpose, by General Sukhomlinoff, when in his own words he 'lied to the Tsar' about the Russian general mobilization.

War with Serbia, however, did not necessarily mean a European war. There was still Sir Edward Grey's proposal in the way — that Belgrade should be occupied *pro forma* and mediation invoked. Down to July 27, Berlin is still backing Austria, and a dispatch of that date forwards the earlier British proposals, but 'is emphatically against regard being paid to them.' There is much evidence, however, that Berlin changed its mind at the eleventh hour and suddenly reversed the engines — the clearest evidence being the Kaiser's recently published letter to the Chancellor, to the effect that the Serbian answer wholly changed the position, and that at the most there should be a formal occupation on the Grey lines. The *Red Book* does apparently contain at least one dispatch from Berlin in this sense, the well-known (but hitherto uncertainly authentic) dispatch of July 29, which insisted very urgently on the acceptance of the British proposals in their later form. Here the revelations as telegraphed end. The next chapter is, of course, the even more controversial tale of the Russian mobilization. The guilt for the provocative handling of Serbia is, of course, as clear as day: there could have been nothing more deliberate. But the transition from punitive measures against Serbia to world war was certainly less deliberate, and there, to gross bungling and worse on the German side, must be added the deeds and the lies of the Russian war party also. One further detail is instructive. It appears that King Nicholas of Montenegro really was in Austrian pay both before and after the war.

THE *Saturday Review* has recently suggested that the distinguished novelist 'of the good, the beautiful, and the true' (who can forget Bret Harte's *George de*

*Barnwell*?) was an unmitigated blackguard. An answer has come to hand, which is certainly not lacking in either what the cant of the day calls 'human interest' or unconscious humor.

To the Editor of the *Saturday Review*:

Sir: I was sorry to see the attack on Bulwer Lytton in your issue for August 30, and as no comments on it from any other correspondent have appeared, I trust that you will allow me to say something on the subject. I cannot imagine that anyone who reads the biography of the novelist by his grandson, the present Earl of Lytton, published in 1913 (in the preparation of which work I was of some assistance to the author, as he cordially acknowledges in his preface), or who even reads only my own little work published three months earlier, entitled *Bulwer Lytton: An Exposure of the Errors of His Biographers*, can doubt that although in the unhappy quarrels between husband and wife, there were faults on both sides, the chief blame rests upon the lady. As to the novelist being worse than Parnell, I am not aware that there is any trustworthy evidence that he ever seduced his neighbor's wife, nor even that he was unfaithful to his own wife, until, at Naples in 1833 (six years after the marriage), she told him that she did not love him any more, and that she was in love with a Neapolitan prince who, I have no doubt, was the original of the hero in the novel she afterwards wrote, entitled, *Cheveley, or the Man of Honor*. Bulwer then took a mistress, and although this was immoral, I suppose that men of the world of that time would have said that he was quite justified in what he did.

That he ever kicked his wife I do not believe, for there is abundant evidence that at the very time — 1828 — when the incident is said to have taken place, they were living together in the warmest affection. About ten years later, after the separation, the lady said to Dr. Maginn, 'My husband never beat me, but he bit me,' and there is no doubt that in 1834 she had a wound in her cheek, though there is more than one story concerning its cause. Assuming, however, the lady's version to be correct, I can understand how it was that when she had irritated him

almost to madness, his rage found vent in the way described; for in the days of their courtship they had called one another Pups and Poodle, and in his love letters he often sent her not merely a large number of kisses, but also many bites. I can quite believe, therefore, that in their philandering he often pretended to bite her, and perhaps even took some of her flesh between his teeth, taking care not to hurt her. And so, when she had thoroughly roused his temper, he may suddenly have been tempted to show her that he could bite in earnest; but he afterwards bitterly repented it, and wrote a letter of contrition from Richmond, though without mentioning the exact nature of the wrong he had done. He testified that for the first six years of their married life she had been an incomparable wife, and offered to arrange that they should live separately. The final separation, however, did not take place till 1836, after another quarrel, but I think it very unjust to charge the husband with wife-desertion.

The visit to the Hertford hustings on June 8, 1858, was only for the purpose of annoyance, as there was no contested election. On June 23, Lytton succeeded for a time in having his wife placed under restraint. He believed he had ample medical evidence to justify this, and he had been urged to do it by some of his friends. His grandson says, 'A favorite practice of hers was to address letters to her husband, the envelopes of which were covered with scurrilous and obscene inscriptions, and she sometimes dispatched as many as twenty of these in one day, all duplicates, and addressed to the House of Commons, to his clubs, to town and country addresses, to hotels — anywhere, in fact, where they were likely to be seen by others. She did not even confine this particular form of attack to her husband, but sent similar letters to all his friends. Lord Lyndhurst, Sir Francis Doyle, Dickens, Forster, Disraeli, and others all received these scandalous documents, with the result that they appealed to Sir Edward to place his wife under restraint.

The impression created upon me by the sight of some of the letters, which it has been my painful task to read through, is

that of opening a drawer full of dead wasps. Their venom is now powerless to hurt, but they still produce a shudder and feeling of disgust.

It was in 1866 that Lytton was made a peer, and the Prime Minister at the time was not Disraeli but Lord Derby. It must have been after this that his wife wrote what she called a report of her speech at Hertford in 1858; for though she dated it June 11 — only three days after the election, she refers to herself in it as a peeress!

In his later years Lytton led a blameless, and it might even be said a religious life. His mistress had long since married somebody else, and he was alone. When he was buried in Westminster Abbey, on January 25, 1873, I had the honor of singing at this funeral, and the prayers in the service were impressively recited by Dean Stanley.

Lytton's novels are of unequal merit, but I am inclined to agree with the opinion expressed some years ago by the late Canon Benham in the *Church Times*, that *My Novel*, or *Varieties in English Life*, is the finest novel in the English language.

Yours faithfully,

W. A. Frost.

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DAY after day, the papers which reach this office from Ireland, bring ghastly accounts of the assassination of members of the Royal Irish Constabulary. What visitor to Ireland does not recall the genial *peeler* with his amiable and human methods, a true policeman for an Irish fairy land. In the *Irish Statesman*, the shrewd realist MacNamara thus pictures a group of police discussing the Ireland of to-day.

They would often sit there upon the old stone seat by the barrack door at the close of the day, quite passive and silent, although the world could see from the uniform they wore that they were government men. Almost a part of three things that were soundless would they become — the falling of anxious looks into their eyes, the blue smoke from their pipes, the rising dust of the quiet road. The distress of