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Sommario/riassunto	<p>THE catastrophe which overwhelmed Europe in July, 1914, the effects of which made themselves felt more or less over the whole world, cannot yet be made the subject of scientific historical investigation. So immense a task is beyond the powers of those who witnessed and still more of those who were directly concerned in it. It must be left to the rising generation, in the hope that their remoteness from these events will ensure for their labours the necessary freedom from prejudice and that they will have access to historical material more complete than that already available, important as that is. Those who read these short recollections must not expect to find in them a consecutive and full exposition of the course of the historic events of which I was a witness, or in which I participated, but only my personal estimate of them in the light of the information which I possessed. They will find these occurrences set out objectively in the official compilations of diplomatic documents published, both at the beginning of the European War and later by the Governments of the belligerent Powers, and also in the endless literature published in every language during recent years, and referring, not only to the actual war period, but also to the period that preceded it.</p>