OUR CHANCELLOR;

SKETCHES FOR A HISTORICAL PICTURE.

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

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OUR CHANCELLOR.

VOL. I.

PREFACE.

When a portrait painter intends to take the likeness of any particular person, he endeavours to make that person's acquaintance, to study his characteristic features at moments and in situations calculated to reveal their true expression, and to sketch them, more or less elaborately, on paper. I may compare the following studies to an artist's observations and drawings, executed as a preliminary to the painting of his picture. From 1876 to the present time, I have enjoyed many opportunities of contemplating their subject closely and with observant eyes. What these latter have not actually seen, has been derived from trustworthy sources. I have also utilized a former work of my own, dealing with a special episode in the Chancellor's life, the material of which—extracted from a diary, and therefore published in a fragmentary form—will be found here, combined with cognate matter, in its proper place.

My studies and sketches have been made with all the old affection I bear to him whom they attempt to portray and render intelligible; but also with the earnest endeavour to reproduce the truth to the best of my ability. They

have no collective pretension to be a portrait; but are intended to supply the materials for a characteristic presentment of the Chancellor, with which, doubtless, the Future will enrich us. I myself, am too little of an artist to paint such a picture; but perhaps a glance at these sketches will suggest its execution to some of my readers.

THE AUTHOR.

LEIPZIG, *February*, 1884.

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OUR CHANCELLOR.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHANCELLOR'S PROFESSION OF FAITH AND MORAL CODE OF STATESMANSHIP.

THE genius of statesmanship, like poetical, religious, and artistic genius—indeed, like genius of every description—is undefinable. We feel its power; we apprehend and admire its propounded ideas and accomplished feats; but we are unable to analyse it with anything like completeness. In our attempts to do so we find that something invariably remains unachieved; and if, from the utterances and actions of a political genius, we deduce a set of principles and rules which appear to represent collectively his views of the world and methods of proceeding, within an hour events may convince us that our judgment has been faulty. We then discover that we have only realised to ourselves the manner in which genius has comprehended circumstances, relations and events of the Past, and has utilised or overcome them for the fulfilment of its tasks or for the carrying out of its projects—inferring therefrom that it would deal similarly with like circumstances, relations, and events of the Future. Time and life, however, necessarily give birth to new situations, new requirements, new tendencies to satisfy these latter, and new obstacles, barely surmised by

a small minority of thinking men, and sometimes scarcely to be foreseen by the most ingenious statesman. The gifts that enable a man to meet novel emergencies—the art of encountering unhesitatingly every unexpected turn of affairs with suitable measures, and of rendering it serviceable to one's own ends—this inexhaustible strategy of a great statesman's genius is no less incomprehensible than the Divine Agency, which, in its continuous work of creation, causes those new objects of the political strategist's activity to emerge from the boundless realm of possibilities into the actual living world. Genius, in its unity, is as inconceivable as the elements, or as original force; it cannot be resolved into its component parts, and cannot, therefore, be described. No man—not even one himself inspired by genius—can say with anything like certainty what the hero of the day would have done had the situation at such or such a moment assumed an aspect different to that which it actually presented. But everyone feels that the great man would have conquered under any circumstances, although no one can conjecture how or by what means. It is, however, natural to suppose that his method would have been a very simple one, such as must have subsequently appeared no less self-suggestive than the egg of Columbus. But a great politician cannot be artificially produced, or educated up to that potency which renders his very existence an epoch in history, any more than the innermost germ of his being can be defined; like the poet, he must be born, not made. No one can learn how to do as he does in all, or even in many circumstances, by watching, however carefully, his methods of action. Those who imitate him will only do so with approximative exactitude in cases nearly reproducing in the Present the constellations of the Past; and such cases occur but rarely.

The above remarks apply to our Chancellor. Prince Bismarck is—and will be, doubtless, in a much higher degree to our descendants—one of those mighty historical geniuses which make their appearance among us, now and anon, to guide the world into new paths, and to transform floating ideas and aspirations, theretofore inanimate, into living realities by absolutely original procedures of their own. What Bismarck has achieved had previously been imagined and desired unquestionably and demonstrably by his contemporaries or predecessors; but that was all. That he hit upon the right way of carrying out such notions and yearnings was the effect of genius. We essayed to understand him and his marvellous successes, and thought we had discovered that the essence of his genius consisted in keen political intelligence and heroic force of will. We saw before us a perfectly correct calculation upon distinctly laid down premisses, uninfluenced by party dogmas or prejudices; a sober process of addition and subtraction, by no means, however, devoid of captivating warmth and poetical lustre in the expression of its results and in the actions consequent thereupon. Moreover, amidst manifold changes of method, as well as of subordinate and incidental aims, we encountered a consistency which kept its main object in view, firmly and sternly; a comprehensive perception of the means to that object's attainment; a hand extremely light and steady in the manipulation of the persons having influence upon the enterprise undertaken; the gift of knowing exactly when to act and when to postpone action; an almost unexampled dexterity in luring an adversary into such a situation that he is compelled to put himself in the wrong before the whole world; a prodigious energy of will, recoiling at nothing, combined with a moderation and fairness which, having only demanded what was indispensable

is ever ready to meet opponents half-way in coming to terms with respect to matters of secondary importance. A cool head controlling a warm heart—the maximum of ingenuity and audacity—Ulysses and Achilles in one; such will, to many besides ourselves, have appeared to be the solution of the enigma of Prince Bismarck's unprecedented successes.

But all these attributes—this piercing insight, luxuriant imaginative faculty, determination, persistence, circumspection—are only symptoms of that which we designate as his genius, and which (as an unknown something, an elementary cause of actions invariably pressing onwards towards the correct goal by the most practical means) constitutes the basis of his every transaction. That it is, which conjoins those attributes: that, from which they radiate—the white, monochromatic light in him, which contains the seven colours of the spectrum. His bright eye casts its glances afar into the misty and shadowy realm of possibilities; it is manifest that he is guided by some general method; but the deed, to the achievement of which he applies that method, is apparent to his mind in outline, not in detail. His letters may assume a variety of forms, to the construction of which manifold means may suggest themselves. Forms and means alike, however, depend upon the conjuncture of the hour in which they must be invented or put in practice. It is precisely his instinctive genius that prompts him to recognise such conjunctures and to utilise them successfully. In so doing he frequently appears as inconsistent and changeful as Proteus; but in reality he is acting under the compulsion of expediency; thus he must, and no other wise; he has no choice in view of the situation for the time being, although his best ideas and achievements are inspirations and improvisations.

Admitting the impossibility of demonstrating, more accurately than has been above attempted, the essence and core of Bismarck's entity as a political phenomenon; it is to a certain degree otherwise with what may be designated as the articles of his political creed and the statutes of his moral code of statesmanship. In these time an l experience have wrought many modifications, and it may be that the future will still further transform them. But the fundamental ideas and convictions which he owns to at the present day, and with regard to which he admits of no compromise, were irradicably fixed in his mind, some of them at the very commencement of his political career, others decades ago; and it is with these ideas and convictions that the present chapter proposes to deal. Two, in particular, make themselves conspicuously manifest in his speeches, writings, and actions. In the United Diet, in the Lower House of 1849, and in the Erfurt Parliament we observe him to have been guided, as though by a predominant axiom, by faith in the necessity and wholesomeness of Monarchy, as constituted in Prussia, and, combined therewith, by a deep feeling that it was his duty to defend that Monarchy against the attacks of a democracy, which later on (as the party of Progress) pursued its old purpose—that of restricting and volatilizing Royal authority—under the guise of unconstitutional parliamentary interference and control. On the other hand, during the opening months of his active employment as envoy to the German Confederation, he identified himself with the idea that the welfare of the German nation was only to be attained by the founding of a German Federal State under the direction of Prussia. In promulgating this idea he displayed surprising restlessness and unbounded energy.

The first-named article of faith, openly avowed by him in

many of his public speeches, has so far undergone modification since the Crown consented to grant a Constitution to Prussia, that thereafter he declared the King to be restricted in his independence and omnipotence to the extent ordained and prescribed by the fundamental State-laws agreed upon between him (the King) and the representatives of the people. The second chief article of his political creed has compulsorily suffered an even more thorough-going metamorphosis through the force of circumstances. It first expressed itself as the wish and effort to establish a Prussia, which—in virtue of a policy at the Bund, at once firm and confident of its advantageousness—should by degrees group around herself the medium and smaller States of Germany, connected with her by the ties of a Customs' Union as well as by others of common interest; it passed, later on, through several phases of dualistic combination; and finally, these latter having from first to last turned out utterly impracticable, it found its full expression in the German Empire, the strengthening and securing of which ever since its foundation may be traced, running like a red thread through all the Chancellor's projects of internal reform, as well as through the totality of the leading actions of his foreign policy. Both articles of faith—that of the necessity of a free and animate Monarchy, and that of a Germany federally united and gathered round Prussia—stand immediately side by side, in about the same relation to one another as the means to the end. Only such a kingdom as Prussia could have undertaken to achieve German unity, to render it fruitful and ensure its permanence.

Subjoined are a few authentic proofs of the statements advanced in the foregoing paragraphs. On the 10th of April, 1849, Bismarck, at that time a Deputy, said in the

Lower House of the Diet: "I am unable to derive the conviction from Article V. of the Prussian Constitution (dealing with the rights of the Chamber) that it is our vocation to govern this country by addresses and declarations of our opinions and feelings—that we are called upon, whenever the Government of His Majesty the King avails itself of rights reserved to the Crown which do not happen to please a certain section of this Assembly, to open an enduring fire of addresses, votes of want of confidence, &c., upon the Government, until the Ministry hauls down its colours. Should the Ministry give way to such a method of proceeding on our part, it would thereby admit that the executive power had been transferred to the Lower House. It would acknowledge that Ministers are not servants of the King, but of the Lower House, and that, as a matter of fact, nothing whatever is left to the King except the outer symbols of power. This may be considered constitutional by a good many people; for my part, I only regard that as constitutional which is in conformity with the Constitution. Anything you please may be constitutional in Belgium or France, in Anhalt-Dessau or in that realm which is illumined by the dawning splendour of the Mecklenburghian Constitution: here, only that is constitutional which is laid down in the Prussian Constitution." On the 24th of September he replied to Deputy von Beckerath, who proposed that the Diet should be invested with the right to refuse its sanction to the imposition of taxes; "According to our Constitution there exists in this country an independent Monarchy, which, indeed, has in the course of time (and particularly of late years) transferred a considerable part of its rights to the representatives of the people, but voluntarily, not for lack of resisting force . . . The equality of rights of the Crown, the Upper and the Lower Chamber in the matter of

legislation is the very basis of our Constitution. If you meddle with this equality of rights, to the prejudice of the Crown—if you except from this common rule legislation dealing with taxation, its collection and outlay, you destroy the independence of the Crown in favour of parliamentary majorities, whose value is dependent upon the bold presumption that each and every Prussian Deputy of the future will be in a position to form an independent and unprejudiced judgment upon all possible questions of policy and legislation."

During the debate on the address, which occupied the Lower House from the 27th to the 29th January, 1863, Minister-President von Bismarck, in reply to the complaint of the majority that the Government had infringed Article 99 of the Constitution of January, 1850, observed: "That would certainly be the case if the ordinance set forth in that Article (estimating beforehand all the State revenues and expenditure for each year, and inscribing them upon the State Budget) had been followed by a sentence decreeing that the Budget should be settled yearly by the Lower House. But it is only stated in Article 99 that 'the Budget shall be fixed by a law,' and, according to Article 62, such a law can only be passed by accordance of the Crown and both Chambers. Each of these three concurring rights," he continued, "is theoretically unlimited—one as much so as another. If no agreement can be arrived at by these three forces, the Constitution utterly fails to point out which one of them must give way to the others. In previous discussions it was assumed, by analogy with other countries, whose Constitutions and laws are not published or valid in Prussia, that this difficulty might be surmounted by the submission to the Lower House of the other two factors—that, if an understanding could not be achieved, with respect

to the Budget, by the Crown and Lower House, the Crown should not only give way to the Lower House, dismissing the Ministers lacking the confidence of the latter, but should, by creating peers *en masse*, compel the Upper House (if at odds with the Lower House) to harmonise with its legislative fellow-factor. This arrangement would undoubtedly establish the sole and sovereign sway of the Lower House; but that description of rule is not as yet constitutionally correct in Prussia." * In conclusion he remarked that the Constitution distinctly maintained the equilibrium of the three legislative forces, and was incompetent to constrain any one of them to yield to another. With respect to the necessity of coming to an understanding by the aid of compromises, he described the whole constitutional system of government as "a series of compromises, which would be transformed into conflicts if any one of the participating forces should dogmatically insist upon the carrying out of its own views;" and wound up the exponence of his theory in the following words: "He who is in a position to enforce his opinions must go on doing so; for the existence of a State cannot remain stationary for a moment."

Similarly, during the so-called "Period of Conflict," in the course of the debate upon Schleswig-Holstein that took place on the 21st and 22nd January, 1864, in the Lower House, Bismarck replied to the leader of the Opposition: "Whether or not Ministers possess the King's confidence is all the same to you. From your point of view the King would be a personage possessing less influence upon

* Bismarck expressed himself in a similar sense, during the Address Debate, which took place in the Upper House, on the 24th of January, 1865, and in the speech delivered by him on the 1st of June, of that year, upon the occasion of the discussion of the Navy Estimates, in the Lower House.

Prussian affairs than any chief of a parliamentary fraction, with whom, in order to gain his support, one is obliged to make terms; one would, indeed, be enabled to simply pass over the King's rights to the 'order of the day.' And yet the prescriptions of the Constitution are perfectly clear, viz., that it is the King's prerogative to make war or peace, and to choose his Ministers. In behaving as you do, you gainsay not only the Constitution, but the traditions, history, and even the popular feeling of Prussia, which is, and will remain, thoroughly monarchical. The *rocher de bronze* of Frederick William the First still stands firm. It constitutes the foundation of Prussian history, of Prussian renown, of Prussia's rank as a great power, and of her constitutional Monarchy. You will not succeed in shaking this brazen rock by your National Association, your 'resolutions,' and your *liberum veto.*"

On the 4th February, 1866, whilst contending in the Lower House against Virchow's motion to the effect that "the House would pronounce the union of the Duchy of Lauenburg to the Prussian Crown illegal," Bismarck remarked: "In this case also you are mixing up the Belgian and Prussian Constitutions. The latter has copied the former pretty faithfully, I admit; but it has not adopted Article 78. That Article (of the Belgian Constitution) is worded as follows: 'The King possesses no other powers but those which are accorded to him by this Constitution, or by a law enacted on the basis of this Constitution.' This Article is lacking to the Prussian Constitution; and upon that account His Majesty the King of this country is in possession of all those ancient rights of the Crown which have not been transferred to other factors by express prescriptions of the Constitution, or of laws enacted upon the basis of the Constitution."

Finally, the Imperial Chancellor spoke his mind upon the position of the Crown in Prussia, and the German Empire, very vigorously and plainly in the oration delivered by him (on the 24th January, 1882, in the Reichstag) upon the significance of the Royal Decree dated January 4, 1882. The decree in question had undoubtedly been drawn up by the Chancellor himself, but took the form of a personal manifesto of the Emperor-King, and was, in fact, a *pendant* to the Imperial Message with which the Reichstag had been opened some months previously. In the speech referred to —one of the most important theretofore addressed by him to the Imperial Parliament—we encounter the following declarations bearing upon State rights: "The Decree is in no way intended to create new rights, but to guard against the undermining of established rights, and to combat the Constitutional catchwords which attach themselves, like usurious parasites, to the perfectly lucid text of the Constitution—as if we recognised any other fountain of justice than the Prussian statute laws; as if traditions or Constitutions haply obtaining in other countries could have the least pretension to validity here in Prussia! The outcome of this collection of catchwords, carried out to its extreme consequence, is that the King may rule in Prussia in the sense of the French word *regner*, but not in that of the French word *gouverner;* that is to say, that the active exercise of governmental power should lie in the hands of a Ministry standing near the King and kept up (if quite correct and orderly in its conduct) by the majority of one or both Houses of the Prussian diet. What sort of a Government this would be, from a French point of view, I find stated in Taine's admirable work 'L'origine de la France contemporaine,' according to which the King of the Girondins 'serait une espéce de président honoraire de la république,

anquel ils donneraient un conseil executif nommé par l'Assemblée, c'est-à-dire par eux-mêmes.' Such is about the constitutional ideal of a ministerial government, which might be set up in contrast to the personal rule of a Prussian King, and which then, to be sure, supported by a trustworthy and well-trained majority, would be eminently calculated to realise the ideal described by Deputy Mommsen in his electioneering speeches as 'a picture of horror' —that is to say, ministerial absolutism, by the side of which our monarchy would dwindle down to playing the part of a shadowy hereditary king who, whenever a new Minister should be required, would be summoned from the side-scenes to sign his name, and then vanish again, having in this wise supplied the Opposition in the Diet with a new target to shoot at, a new fortress to besiege—in other words, a new Cabinet to contend against. This constitutional majordomoship, therefore, of which Deputy Mommsen—with a degree of hostility quite unusual in that distinguished historian—accuses me; this Chancellor-Dictatorship is precisely the form of government which will become feasible if you substitute the Ministerial *régime* for the royal *régime.* But you will not succeed in doing so, for you have no ground to stand upon; the Prussian Constitutional Charter says nothing about any such *régime.* . . . But little mention is made of Ministers in the Constitution, which only pronounces them to be responsible, and indicates how they may be dealt with, if they happen to incur the displeasure of parliamentary majorities. In paragraph 3, Article 45, it is stated that 'The King's person is inviolable.' So, thank God! it has always been in Prussia; and no one, with the exception of a few miscreants who have been handed over to Justice, has dared to touch or molest the person of the Monarch, or even to disregard his inviolability, to the observance of which, in

my opinion, belongs verbal expression of respect for the Royal credit, dignity and honour, whenever allusion is made to the King. As I read it, this paragraph means: In all discussions in which the King is concerned you shall speak of him with reverence, not in such a disrespectful manner as has been the case here this year. The King's Ministers are responsible. Without doubt they are, and I do not in the least shrink from this responsibility. My name is subscribed to this Decree; and because it is so subscribed I have put in an appearance here to-day, waiving a sick man's privilege. I can make myself responsible for my own actions, and I may have made myself responsible for those of other people through having undertaken to guarantee them; I have certainly rendered myself responsible for all the acts of my King, which I have countersigned, and I will also joyfully incur responsibility to the last for those which I have not countersigned. But all this makes no difference whatsoever in Royal rights; the governmental acts which require counter-signature in order to obtain validity, remain none the less governmental acts of the King. They are, indeed, specially described as such in the Constitution, viz., 'Governmental acts *of the King*, to be valid, must be counter-signed.' When they are counter-signed, do they thereby become Ministerial acts? Does the fulfilment of that formality make the King a secondary, and Ministers a primary agent? That Ministerial signature, affixed low down in a corner of the document! Well, gentlemen, I do not understand how you reconcile that assumption with the comprehensive reverence for the Royal position expressed by the previous speaker; or how, in appraising the several signatures subscribed to this Decree, you can attach the greater importance to that of the Ministers. At all events, this is the way to develop a Constitutional Majordomoship,

even more powerful than that which existed in the time of the shadowy Carlovingian kings. With us, however, it is the King himself who reigns. Ministers set down upon papers what the King has commanded; but they do not govern. 'The power of consummating the laws,' says the Constitution, 'is the King's alone'—Ministers are not even mentioned—'the King fills up every post in all the branches of the State service'—again no allusion to Ministers. 'The legislative power is exercised in common by the King and the two Chambers.' The King has yielded two-thirds of legislative faculty to the Chamber—so prescribes our written law. But if his last remaining third is to be handed over to a Ministry, to be appointed by the King (much in the same manner as, in former times I was able to appoint a justiciary, and can, even now, nominate a parson under certain circumstances—who, once appointed, can defy me to dismiss him) which, according to Progressist doctrine and foreign praxis, is irremovable—to a Minister, I say, who may command a powerful majority in one Chamber or both, or haply in the Reichstag itself, keeping such majority in a good humour by feeding it with privileges and concessions which he filches from the King—that, I contend, is equivalent to the setting up of the Majordomoship above alluded to. The Constitution says: 'Unanimity of the Sovereign and both Chambers is requisite for each and every law. The right of proposing laws appertains equally to the King and to either Chamber. Laws once rejected by the Sovereign cannot be again put forward.' In the Constitution, therefore, a Minister is a mere stop-gap, scarcely even mentioned. Whether or not that fact be in harmony with the Constitutional theory is perfectly indifferent to me; it stands thus in the Prussian Constitution, and I know of no other fundamental law by which Prussia is to be governed."

"Moreover, Prussian traditions correspond accurately to the prescriptions of the Constitution. The Kings of Prussia have never regarded their position from the primary point of view of their rights, but from that of their duties. Our sovereigns—going back even to the Electors—never believed that they were *fruges comsumere nati*, set up at the head of the State for their amusement; on the contrary, they were animated by a strictly subservient feeling of their duties as regents, so aptly expressed in Frederick the Great's declaration, that he considered himself the first servant of the Prussian State. This tradition is still so quick in our sovereigns that, here in Prussia, as a matter of fact, the King commands in the Ministry itself, and Ministers obey as long as they feel themselves equal to bearing responsibility. When that ceases to be the case, there is no great difficulty in changing a Ministry. The King, unless he should wish to bring about something altogether eccentric, would readily find other Ministers fully prepared to become responsible for all the enactments which his actual ministers might refuse to countersign. Nothing eccentric, however, is sought to be imposed upon us; on principle His Majesty the King ordains steadfast adherence to the firm beaten tracks which alone can conduct Prussian policy into the German Empire. Ministers may possibly differ from him in opinion, in which case a compromise may be effected; for a King who does not desire to dismiss his Minister peremptorily, will probably yield something to him, however little he may wish to do so. But it happens much more frequently that Ministers cannot obtain the Royal sanction to a document which, in their opinion, is at once correct and complete; they are then compelled to ask themselves—'Shall we let the whole matter fall, or make a Cabinet-question of it, or resign; or, finally, shall we make up our

minds that it will be more advantageous to our country and the State-service if we make certain concessions to the Royal will?' That Royal will, when all is said and done, is the decisive one. The real, actual Minister-President of Prussia is, and will continue to be, His Majesty the King."

"It is indeed lucky for Prussia that such is the case. Just reflect that, were it not so, we should not be here at all —I should not enjoy the advantage of talking to you in this room—the German Parliament itself would not be in existence. Just assume that, from the year 1860 down to the present time, His Majesty, our Constitutional King had seen fit to interpret the Constitution by the light of Deputy Haenel's principles, and had carried out the ministerial—let us say the foreign—policy of my two predecessors, Schleinitz and Bernstorff; that he had submitted his judgment to theirs, or even chosen his Ministers in accordance with the views then entertained by the majority of the Chambers constituting the Diet; that, in a word, His Majesty had subordinated his policy to the policy of the majority, and had put the Haenel legends in practice. Had he done all this we should, first of all, not have had a reorganised army —for the gentlemen in Parliament understood so little about political possibilities in Europe as to be unable to make it clear to themselves that, if they wanted to achieve German unity, the first things requisite were a powerful Prussian army, and the signature of the King of Prussia. That monarch, however, was resisted to the utmost in his efforts to make the army sufficiently strong, not only to achieve German unity, but to sustain it in subsequent inevitable wars; and, had Parliament had its way, we should have kept up the army-organization which prompted its bravest soldier—our Minister of War in the Olmuetz days—to tell

me, when I found myself called upon to wait upon him in the characters of a Deputy and a Landwehr-officer: 'We cannot fight at all—it is impossible for us to prevent the Austrians from occupying Berlin. I must therefore entreat you, if you have any influence upon your colleagues, to exert it to the utmost in quieting them down.' That is the military condition in which we should have remained to the present day, if the will of Parliament had been complied with. If, again, the King had not been in a position to carry out his own policy, but had been compelled to follow the parliamentary, ministerial, legendary policy, the second consequence of that course would have been that—in the year 1863, and under the guidance of Deputy Behrend from Danzig, at that time Vice-President of the Lower House—we should have encouraged the Polish insurrection, and taken its part against Russia. Briefly stated, the Royal policy was to exhibit forbearance to Russia, with a view to future wars and great times coming; the Parliamentary policy was, 'Great Heavens, here is a row, a rising, an insurrection—a Government is being assailed—this arouses our sympathy!' and without further reflection the Prussian Parliament began to sing, 'Jeszcze Polska.'* That was

* With respect to the Polish outbreak, when the Prussian Government had concluded a treaty with Russia to check that movement, the Progressist Deputy, von Carlowitz, accused the Ministry of short-sightedness, complained that Prussia was rendering friendly services to Russia gratis, and closed his oration by expressing the following highly patriotic hope: "If the Prussian Government acts precipitately, mixes itself up in foreign complications under unfavourable circumstances, and practises an aggressive policy, I feel confident that this House—or at least its great majority—in accordance with the country at large, will not grant the present Ministry a single thaler wherewith to carry on such a policy" (the aggressiveness of which, be it remarked, was aimed at enemies of Russia, who were also Prussia's deadliest foes). Similarly, and amidst the applause of the majority, Deputy von Unruh declared

the policy which the King would have been compelled to adopt, had he not chosen to carry out his own instead. Still further, in the year 1864 (with respect to the Elbe Duchies), Prussia, had she gone with the majority of her Parliament, would have placed herself at the disposal of the Frankfurt majority. Such was at that time the popular policy in the Lower House. At the instance of the Frankfurt majority we should therefore probably have levied a Federal execution, with Prussian means, on the basis of Federal Protocols. Read the negotiations of that period;

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that, should foreign complications accrue from the measures taken by the Government to protect the frontiers and interests of Prussia, Parliament would refuse to supply the king with the means of defending the country. Waldeck compared the calling-out of the Prussian reserves—one of the measures in question—to the sale of Hessian troops to England when that power was fighting the North-American insurgents. Simson, in the same debate, drew a tasteful and opportune parallel between the Ministry and Don Quixote, and used the expression "rope-dancers." Sybel protested against a policy, "which burdened Prussia with complicity in a colossal man-hunt, regarded by the whole of Europe with moral indignation." The following sentences, with which this orator played out all his trumps in his closing speech, are really splendid. "If I could see," he exclaimed, "sitting opposite to me at the Ministerial table, one man who had hitherto proved himself possessed of far-seeing penetration, or of a heart susceptible of justice, I would ask him whether this Convention of his reminds him of the 1815 treaty, of the therein documented (recorded) right of the Poles to exist under their own independent Constitution, of the therein recorded decision of Prussia and Europe, viz.: that the King of Poland, not the Czar of Russia, should reign in Warsaw? If our Ministry had itself taken this Polish matter in hand, with the honest resolve to finally extract the thorn from Europe's heel—at last to heal this old European wound—what a position it might have risen to in its own country! But unfortunately the heart of our Ministry seems to delight only in ideas of slavery and subjugation; thus its statemanship and military capacity, as well as its constitutional being, collapse in order that police machinations may be glorified."

how was I abused because, in connection with the Federal execution, I had contrived to induce Austria to act in common with us! * We ought, therefore, to have renounced

* Upon that occasion Deputy Virchow, with the infallibility peculiar to him, asserted that "The whole European situation would be a safer one had the Government adopted the correct line of action, proposed to the German Federation by a number of medium and small German States. Only two powers, Austria and Russia, could possibly be disposed to take exception thereto. And why, gentlemen? Chiefly because, by so doing, Austria and Russia would keep Prussia down and make her look small; because they would undermine our influence in Northern Europe. But the Minister-President, for a long time past, has enjoyed the reputation of at least steadily defending the Russian Alliance, and of upholding the belief that our welfare lies in that direction. If it be so materially the interest of Prussia to support the Russian succession in the Duchies—to resign the only great harbour possessed by Germany in the North, to the hands of Russia, and to drive such a foreign wedge into our country just at the spot where it is least protected and most vulnerable, then, gentlemen, we shall certainly not be justified in expecting that he (Bismarck) will adopt any other course." The orator concluded with the following prophecy. "The people will not fail to punish this treachery." When the war with Denmark was breaking out, and Bismarck upon that account solicited the sanction of the Lower House to a loan, his request was refused. Upon that occasion the Progressist Deputy, Assmann, delivered a speech full of pompous absurdities. With respect to the Austro-Prussian action across the Eider, he assumed that "it would guard Schleswig against German troops (the Saxon and Hanoverian 'execution' soldiers in Holstein) and against the claims of its legitimate ruler (the Hereditary Prince of Augustenburg), so that the Duchies might be securely preserved to Denmark." Further on, this clear-sighted politician remarked: "We hold it to be an established fact, that Herr von Bismarck is endeavouring to counteract the German-patriotic endeavour of the medium States" (whose sole object was to utilise the situation for the creation of another medium State, hostile to Prussia, and thereby to strengthen their own position in the Federation); "and our estimate of his views, as well as of his capacities, does not encourage us to look forward with confidence to the further development of a course of action, the ruinous character of which we have been compelled to recognise in all the steps taken in it up to the present time. If we are standing upon the threshold of events teeming with everything of the saddest and most shameful that can

our bargain with Austria, to have foregone the conjoint campaign, and to have levied the Federal execution by ourselves, in order to obtain a certificate of good conduct from the Presidency of the Federation, and to perpetuate the Federation itself, after having done everything in our power on its behalf. Without Austria, however, we should have in all probability been put under restraint by an European Coalition, and have had to submit in accordance with Federal protocols; in other words, we should have suffered a second Olmuetz. Such would have been the results had we then practised a parliamentary instead of a Royal policy. We should probably to-day be still sitting in the Eschenheimer Gasse, and if I, perchance, were no longer Envoy to the Federation, somebody else would be there in my stead, and would, in conformity with my instructions, be decreeing executions and concluding protocols; and you, gentlemen, would not be to the fore in this place at all. Therefore, gentlemen, in my opinion we should not meddle with the Royal action, with the animate interchangeable relations between King and people, as these have always existed in Prussia without ever having harmed the Monarchy. The

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happen to a State or a nation; if, through the policy of Bismarck, the great German power, Prussia, can be converted into the foe of Germany —if the valiant Prussian Army is to be used to fight against its German brethren, who have taken the field to protect Germany's rights, then let Germany know that, upon this question, we stand by her and not by our Ministry. . . We have long been aware that, with every step it takes, whether in home or foreign policy, this Ministry tramples upon a morsel of Prussian territory; that, in the hands of this Ministry, Prussia is foredoomed to impotence or suicide. Penetrated by this conviction, our choice cannot be doubtful; we prefer impotence to self-destruction." At that time the entire Prussian House of Commons beamed with wisdom of the above description. Of all the members barely a dozen remained insensible to its brilliancy.

better our Kings are known—the more prominently they put themselves forward, and the more intimate their relations with the people—the better they are liked, as was the case, without any ministerial intermediation, when our King in 1847—during the deliberations of the United Diet—directly and without the assistance of responsible Ministers, but in a constitutional sense, opposed Parliamentary discussion, then sometimes characterised by *parvenu* rudeness. That did no harm to Monarchy in this country; on the contrary, Kingship acquired such strength and grandeur upon that basis of interchangeable relations between the Sovereign and his people, that you, gentlemen" (here the Chancellor turned towards the benches of the Progressist party) "wish not to come into immediate contact with it, but desire that the Monarchy should be hidden behind a curtain. But when we observe what the Monarchy has done for us, we should make every effort to support, foster, and vivify it—not to deal with it in such sort that it may to a certain extent become obsolete through lack of utilisation. Whatever you put away in a cupboard, and make no use of, loses in applicability and usefulness; and thus it is with the monarchical element—quite indispensable to Prussia—which predominates over our people, whose predilections are eminently monarchical. Take that away from us, and what will you gentlemen put in its stead? If you resolve to disintegrate, corrupt, or banish to an imaginary realm (*Wolkenkukuksheim*) this vigorous King, so deeply rooted in our glorious secular history, you will plunge us into chaos; and I do not believe that you are in possession of anything wherewith to replace it, if you deprive Prussia of her ample, homely, direct personal relation to the Monarchy. Because I know, through my own personal experiences, through Prussian history, and through the traditions of my ancestors and

kinsmen, that there is absolutely nothing capable of replacing it, I combat and stand forward with my signature for the living King, who is determined to vindicate his rights, and who says: 'These rights are mine, and I will not permit that they be filched from me by speeches and false interpretations of the Constitution, or by legends that hang on to the Constitution, but do not abide within it.'"

If we combine these declarations and apply them in concert with other of the Chancellor's utterances, to the German Empire, we shall arrive at the following truths:—The King of Prussia, the German Emperor, does not only reign—he governs as well. The irresponsibility and inviolability of his person do not in any respect deprive his utterances and actions as King and Emperor of their character as independent acts of volition. Prussia and the German Empire are governed constitutionally—not by Parliament, as in England—by Ministers at the command of the King, not of the majority for the time being in the Assembly representing the people. According to the Constitutions of those realms the supreme wielder of power in the State is no mere abstract conception, no mere representative of Monarchy, no mere sanctioning apparatus set up for the purpose of consecrating laws that have been carried by the votes of parliamentary majorities; but a living personage with an opinion and will of his own, in the exercise of which he holds a position, not subordinate to, but on a level with the National Representative body, and in some very material respects—as exclusive possessor of the prerogative to make war or peace, and of the collective executive powers—above it. Parliament is a co-operative factor in legislation, which cannot by means of the opinions entertained by its majority (any more than it can compel him to nominate Ministers emanating from that majority)

hinder him from giving public and solemn expression to his convictions at critical moments, and from thus casting those convictions into the wavering scales. The Constitutions of Prussia and Germany have the effect, on the one hand, of connecting a certain class of governmental actions with laws which result, in Prussia, from agreements between the Parliament and the Government, in the Empire from the confirmation of such agreements by the German Governments represented in the Federal Council; and, on the other, of surrounding the Sovereign with responsible Councillors, who are chosen by him and can only be removed from their posts by him. If party spirit—which agitates in favour of foreign parliamentarism, i.e. the rule of the people's representatives, and still further, consciously or unconsciously, for the realisation of popular sovereignty—refuses to recognize this constitutional arrangement, which has taken root in the spirit of the Prussian nation, and has been repeatedly demonstrated by Prussian and German history to be wholesome and necessary; if liberalism proposes to convert the Emperor-King into a mute principle, or to regard him as politically dumb and merely ornamental, it commits itself to an entirely erroneous standpoint, falsely believing that its wishes have become facts, and sojourning, not upon plainly legal or historical ground, but in the foggy atmosphere of its own delusions. We, however, will thank Heaven that the parliamentary system of the English, Belgians, French and Italians does not reign over us; that our Constitutions do not from day to day hand over our well-being and prosperity to the mercy of majorities; for no burden is heavier to bear than the rule of these latter; nothing (in constitutionally governed states) more effectually protects the interests of the weak than a strong and solid monarchical power controlling the people's representatives,

with their fanaticism for doctrines *à la mode;* never is true freedom so cruelly trampled upon as by the impatience, injustice and tyranny of democrats, who inscribe freedom-worship on their banner; nothing, finally, is better adapted to preserve and strengthen national unity than a vigorous will in its very centre, whilst naught is more damaging to it, and to the liberty of Germans, *vis-à-vis* of foreign countries, than the debilitating, vacillating, disintegrating element of democracy, represented more or less consciously and energetically in every Liberal camp, influencing its tactics and strategy, and dictating its tone.

The projection into strong relief of Monarchy's importance which is manifested in Bismarck's above-quoted utterances might lead to erroneous interpretations of their meaning. In spite of assurances to the contrary, it might be deemed that in reality a reasonable, benevolent and unrestricted sovereign stands higher in his estimation and liking than a Monarch of the constitutional pattern. As a matter of fact, this has been alleged, and the apprehension has been entertained that he is even now bestirring himself towards the achievement of the former desideratum. To demonstrate the fallacy of these assumptions, let us recall a declaration pronounced by him (July 9, 1879) on the occasion of a debate upon financial reform, in the course of which he observed: "When we came back from the war in 1866, it would have been easy enough for me, in the position I then held—more influential, though within narrower limits, than my present one—to say (indeed, I had great trouble at the time to keep myself from doing so) 'Prussia is now grown bigger than she was; her Constitution is no longer suited to her; let us rearrange it,' in short, to have started under full sail with the boldest and most incisive of conceivable reactionary policies, backed by the

success which had stuck to us ever since Koeniggraetz. You know, gentlemen, that I did just the contrary, thereby incurring the aversion of a large section of my oldest political friends. It cost me many a hard fight to carry through the indemnity and the maintenance of our Constitutional system. Do you think I did so out of sheer love for Constitutional systems? Gentlemen, I do not wish to make myself out better than I am, and therefore I must distinctly answer that question in the negative. I am no opponent of the Constitutional system; on the contrary, I regard it as the only possible form of government. If I had believed that a dictatorship—that Absolutism in Prussia would have been still more useful in advancing the work of German Unity, I should most unquestionably have counselled the adoption of Absolutism. But, after careful reflection—and I had to contend against influences, not only powerful, but near and dear to me—I came to the conclusion: No; we must continue in the path of Constitutional Law—a decision which, moreover, corresponded with my inner sentiments and with my convictions concerning the collective potentialities of our policy. I was then encountered by the conflict respecting ecclesiastical matters, which really grew out of the connection existing between the Church and Polish questions. This struggle robbed me of my natural supporter, the Conservative party, upon which I might otherwise have reckoned; and the methods I was compelled to adopt, in order to build up and give reality to the Constitution of the German Empire, and, by practically vitalizing it, to invest it with some guarantee of durability, would probably have been very different ones, had the Conservative party not then left me in the lurch. . . I fought throughout that conflict with the vivacity which I hope will continue to be my especial characteristic as long

as I live in all questions that I believe concern the welfare of my country and the rights of my King; but I must say (as I did once before, with respect to the conflict that took place during the years of the budgetless *régime*) that I look upon conflicts as episodes to be gallantly fought out under certain circumstances, but not as an institution to be upheld for any length of time; and when ways and means of moderating the acrimony of antagonism accrue without trending upon the principles of the contended question—when adversaries learn to know one another and acquire mutual respect through efforts made in common to attain a high purpose—it does not manifestly lie within my province as a Minister to close such ways or to reject such means."

Therefore, no Parliamentarism after the English or French pattern, nor any Absolutism either; but Constitutionalism; a strictly constitutional *régime;* an equally careful maintenance of the Crown's rights and the Parliament's competence; a King who stands within the very heart of political life, personally taking part therein; and administration of the State by Royal officials, who hold their posts with the concurrence of the people's mandatories in Parliament and Diet, but not exclusively through the influence of those bodies—such, briefly, are the contents of the first article of the political creed avowed by our Chancellor in connection with the internal affairs of the Empire and of Prussia—the creed which, in the course of his Ministerial career, he has been at great pains to promulgate and to carry out. This article has regulated his attitude towards every accruing question of our internal policy.

Bismarck is convinced that party-ministries are impossible in Prussia. During the session of the Lower House held on the 25th January, 1873, he remarked upon this subject:

"The Ministry must be of a predominantly governmental—allow me, in conformity with the innermost dictates of my heart to use the expression—*Royal* character. Were we to take to party-ministries, our antagonisms would at once acquire a more acute character. The King alone, and the inspiration emanating from himself and his political apprehensions, are impartial and above party considerations. In my opinion, therefore, the government in Prussia must stand upon this high level—that of the Crown. It may be necessary to go with one party or with another, according to the governmental feeling of the Crown and the administration. In England, such a vicissitude is generally characterised by a change of Ministry: if reactionary measures have to be met, the Liberal party takes the helm, under the reasonable presumption that it will not overstep the requisite limits; and *vice versâ* in the case of Liberal measures and the Conservative party. Our party antagonisms are as yet too bitter, and public feeling—the feeling that every individual, outside and independently of his own party, is responsible for the government and good administration of the State—is not yet developed here in the same degree as in England, although I do not deny that we have made immense progress during the past few years. Everyone now is beginning to bear in mind the necessity of the continuous existence of a well-ordered State Government—except those who belong to a party which denies the State itself on principle, because in their opinion it ought not to exist at all." The views above expressed are still firmly adhered to by Bismarck, as may be gathered from a passage in his already quoted great speech of January 24th, 1882, as follows: "A great State is not governed according to party-views; one must take into consideration the totality of parties existing in the country, and from it deduce a line

of action which a government can pursue." In further evidence we may quote some remarks from the Chancellor's speech (June 14, 1882) in the Reichstag. Upon that occasion he stated that a party government in Germany is impossible, "because each party is continuously labouring under the progressive development of its special party-tendency. This progressive development necessarily takes place in the direction of its extreme, and further advancement ensues according to the tendency animating the party itself. A Conservative party is always exposed to the danger of reaction, if it govern for any length of time; somebody will always be found belonging to it who will put forward Conservative theories still more comprehensive or far-going than those of his party, to which theories (because of their extremeness) he will readily gain over the mass of electors. The same is the case in the Liberal party; in the matter of Liberalism one man is always ready to outbid another; it has been so in France since 1789, and in England since the reforms of 1832. He who is outbidden is always in the wrong, and the new elections do not require to be worked by a Caucus, as here and in England—they gravitate of themselves towards him who abuses the government more than his predecessor; thus each party in turn is finally forced into the deplorable position, through the intemperance of its more immoderate members' doctrinal demands, of coercing the dynasty, in the interest of its own sustention, into seeking the support of other parties or elements. I would ask you, gentlemen, to take to heart the example of the Herbst party in Austria, and to observe the result of tactics prompting the leader of to-morrow to outbid the leader of to-day, he of to-day having already ruined him of yesterday. On this account, I say, party government is quite impossible in this country;

and if it has made a start here it will soon come to grief through the doctrinal intemperance that is peculiar to the German people, and through the suffocating effect of the electoral vapours that will be artificially stirred up and made to ascend from depths below." Finally, we may quote the Chancellor's reply, in the autumn of 1881, to a deputy who had taken exception to the assumption that the Party of Progress, and other fractions pursuing that party's slippery political path, must eventually arrive at the Republic. Prince Bismarck called the Assembly's attention to history —in particular, to that of the Girondists, who had wished to bring about universal order in a Liberal and humane sense of the word (as might be the visionary aspiration of the Party of Progress) and who had in every respect shot beyond their mark. "And so it went on," continued the Chancellor, "in France. There had existed in that country a hereditary, solidly constructed monarchy with extremely intelligent constitutional institutions, with all imaginable monarchical forms, with a Restoration and with an Empire. All this has been swept, by Parliamentarism, into the Republican orbit. These foregone conclusions have not developed themselves in practice to the same extent in other countries, because these latter have not held positions as substantial as that of France. For instance, were Holland and Belgium as great and independent as France, it may be doubted (taking into consideration all their political tendencies and agitations) that they would at the present time still belong to the monarchical order of States. Let us take Italy. There they have already had the Republic, locally and transitorily. Even now it haunts many Italian brains as the future government of all mankind. In Italy they are a long way ahead of our German 'Progress.' Should God not preserve their dynasty, which

is dependent upon but few lives, nobody can answer for the attainment of the goal aimed at by Italian development throughout the last twenty years. Anyhow, the centre of gravity of political life in Italy has shifted, under Government after Government, more and more Leftwards, so that the country cannot lapse any further in that direction without becoming Republican. Through the parliamentary system contemplated by the Party of Progress, Spain, too, has for a time possessed the Republic; aye, several varieties thereof, which have fought one against another. And in Germany—when things were left to themselves here, before Prussian 'Militarism' interfered with them, did not Baden exhibit a similar readiness to heave Monarchy overboard and to introduce the Republic? The foregoing prophecies concerning the end towards which the Party of Progress, with its 'views and tendencies,' is gliding on, are therefore by no means frivolous or indefensible. History speaks for me," concluded the Chancellor in a confident tone; "scientific doctrinaires have delivered themselves against me; I stick to history. I am in a position enabling me to observe; and for twenty years past —at least as far as our foreign policy has been concerned— I have given proof that my eyes are not totally blind to eventualities with which history may bring us into contact. It is, therefore, with all the weight of my experience and position that I bear witness to the fact that the policy of the Party of Progress would conduct us, slowly but surely, to the Republic. I can only say that the temper and attitude which Monarchy requires in its Ministers are not those which the Progressists fancy. I do not in the least doubt their sincere desire to realise Constitutional Monarchy, to its extremest limits; but I believe they do not take to heart the lessons taught by History; they shut their eyes to

them; they are not capable of bringing the machine to a standstill when it shall arrive at the point to which they want to make it go. The road is too precipitous; they cannot stay the avalanche of 45,000,000 Germans in its fall; it will overwhelm them."

The complement of this Article of Faith may be found in a prediction of the Chancellor, founded upon the strength of the Government, and his own firm will, which he gave utterance to on December 2, 1881, in conversation with the writer: "Should the Opposition long persist in its present method and style of negation, allowing no reforms to come to pass through us, and incapable of bringing any about itself, it will attain the category of the Impossible—of that which cannot be endured or put up with. Even the 'Luck of Edenhall'—you know Uhland's poem—could be destroyed when, through an exaggerated belief in its solidity, it was too roughly handled. So can the German Constitution."

Article 44 of the Prussian Constitution states: "The King's Ministers are responsible;" and Article 61: "In virtue of a resolution passed by both Houses of the Diet, Ministers may be prosecuted for the crimes of breach of the Constitution, bribery, and treason." This, however, is a theory that can only be put into practice whenever the "Ministerial-Responsibility Bill" (hinted at in the concluding sentence of Article 61, i.e., "Further disposition, anent cases of responsibility, proceedings and penalties therein, &c., are reserved for definition in a special law)," shall be agreed upon between the three legislative factors, and shall be put in force, which is not yet the case, as the Government appears to consider the objections still existent that were raised against the draught measure brought forward by the Party of Progress in 1863, when (April 22), Bismarck

declared in the Lower House that the Government did not deem the moment suitable for the introduction of such a measure, inasmuch as the Charter of the Constitution did not offer any distinct and complete foundation for dealing with it, and, moreover, important differences of opinion with respect to the true significance of essential portions of the Constitution had arisen between the Crown and the country, as well as between both Houses of the Diet. "Those very actions of the Government," he continued, "which are contested by you as unconstitutional, have conspicuously taken place on the field of this question: 'What is legal when, through lack of unanimity in the three legislative factors, a law regulating the administration of the State household has not been brought into existence?' The Constitution contains no answer to this question. . . . If, in the present state of affairs, a tribunal were constituted by a special law in order to settle the question of Ministerial responsibility; whether or not the Constitution were thereby violated, the functions of a legislator would certainly be imparted to the judge, who would be called upon either to interpret the Constitution or to materially complete it. However highly I may rank Prussian judges as juristic authorities, the Government has not deemed it desirable to make the political future of this country—the division of power between the Crown and the Diet (as well as between the two Houses of the Diet)—dependent upon the single sentence of a tribunal, pronounced in conformity with the subjective opinion of the majority of judges. The Government believes that this question of State rights can only be settled by the Legislature, through an understanding arrived at between that Legislature's several factors; and therefore, under existing circumstances, cannot accord its sanction to the draught measure you have brought forward."

The Chancellor does not approve of the collective Ministerial arrangements existing in Prussia. At a session of the Reichstag (16 April, 1869), he spoke of them as "a political mistake, of which every State should rid itself as soon as possible," and observed that "it would be an immense improvement if Prussia, for the future, could have only one responsible minister." "In what," he asked, "consists this responsibility? It has been here stated that (for the North German Confederation), it should come to pass by means of solidarity; I say that it is incompatible with solidarity. The individual may be invested with it, for he may be made answerable for his errors; but, as a member of a corporation, he may ask, 'How do you know that I was not outvoted? that the difficulties and frictions I encountered were not insurmountable—that laws did not remain in abeyance for seven years, because seven honest men could not agree together upon the interpretation of their text?' In a corporation—when some matter has to be definitely settled—it often becomes inevitable that a desperate resolve should be adopted, so imperative is the necessity that a decision should be arrived at—that somebody should be in a position to say, 'Thus it shall be, and no otherwise!'" On the 25th of January, 1873, he further remarked in the Lower House: "Strange to say, it is here the case that the President of the Ministry of State, although a greater weight of moral responsibility undoubtedly falls to his share than to that of any other member of the Cabinet, exercises no greater influence upon the collective direction of affairs than any one of his colleagues, unless he can achieve it by his own personal exertions. Our State laws invest him with no such influence; if he desire to obtain it, he must do so by entreaties, arguments, correspondence, expostulations, addressed to the assembled Cabinet—in a

word, by struggles which cannot but subject the capacities of any individual to a heavy strain. The means are weak; the task is great; and the weight that has to be lifted when it becomes necessary to convince a colleague who differs in opinion from you, is not amenable to entreaties and persuasions." The moral deduced from the above is the following: "Either collective responsibility must be established beyond dispute, without reference to the personality of the Minister-President—to whom no greater responsibility must therefore be ascribed than to any other Minister of State—or the Premier must be provided with extra powers, placing him, so to speak, in a higher position than that occupied by departmental Ministers, if he is to be held in a greater degree responsible than they;" that is, he must be invested with the right of deciding questions, according to his views and judgment, in cases where opinions differ. In the Reichstag session of March 13, 1877, he expressed himself upon this point much as he had done in 1869: "I look upon responsibility, imposed upon Ministers who outvote one another by a majority of voices, as one altogether incomprehensible. Who, then, bears the responsibility for the decisions of the Reichstag, or of any other Parliamentary assembly? Can you hold the individual answerable for those decisions? Can you charge him with that responsibility, for instance, when the Reichstag's decisions do not amount to anything for which he can be answerable? He will very possibly say, 'I was outvoted; or, even if I was not outvoted on any one particular question, I was compelled by the majority to adopt a general course which, had I carried out my own personal views, I should not have adhered to.' . . . I do not understand how you can exact a higher measure of responsibility from a Ministry which arrives at its decisions by vote, than from a Parliamentary

Assembly, as long as this latter is in a position to invariably hold the leading Minister (against whose will nothing can at least come to pass), responsible for whatsoever takes place. . . . It appears to me that political responsibility really means whether or not a man, in the judgment of his fellow-citizens, has made a fool of himself, politically speaking—whether he has conducted the State affairs in such sort as may be expected from a person fitted for the tenure of ministerial office, or has managed them frivolously, inequitably, and at the dictates of party passions. Even this view of the matter may frequently be unfair to the individual who belongs to a Ministry in which he has been outvoted. Only if he has been able to exercise an absolute veto in the Cabinet can he be justly held answerable for what the Cabinet has done."

Hence the Chancellor draws the conclusion that the Prime Minister should be invested with decisive power in the Empire as well as in Prussia. On March 5, 1878, he observed in the Reichstag: "It has been previously mentioned that certain departments stand in need of financial comptrol. This comptrol cannot, however, be carried so far as to make the Minister of Finance chief of any one of these departments. At any moment may make itself manifest the need of a decision which cannot be legally pronounced upon any such dispute in Prussia by the Ministry, but must either be the result of a compromise or be settled by his Majesty the King. But to appeal to the King in all trifling cases of divergence of opinion between the Minister of Finance and a departmental chief would be carrying such matters too far; and in this respect the Imperial Constitution possesses an advantage over that of Prussia, inasmuch as it vests the decisive power in one of the Ministers—the Chancellor, or Premier. In Prussia this

official must tell his colleague with whom he cannot agree, 'One of us must go;' and this is productive of tiresome discussions often enduring throughout years at a stretch. Not so in the Empire; for there a Minister is to the fore who has the right to command."

Bismarck chiefly indicated his attitude towards the Upper House of the Prussian Diet by certain declarations which he made to that Legislative body on the 15th and 24th of January, 1865. On the former date he remarked: "The Royal Government, from the standpoint of constitutional convictions, will defend the existence and organic development of the Upper House against any and every attack; it looks upon those Constitutional Statesmen as extremely shortsighted who believe they can assail any one factor of the Constitution without calling into question the whole of our constitutional system. A ruling force (executive power) which should allow itself to be induced to wilfully suppress, or even ignore, one factor of the legislature would scarcely be prompted by constitutional scruples to hesitate at dealing similarly with another." On the second occasion he observed: "I regard as illegal—because contradictory to the spirit of the Constitution—the easy expedient for obviating conflicts between the two Houses of the Diet, viz., that the Government undertake to make the Upper House agree with the Lower House, whenever it fails to do so, by a creation of peers. This leads to the "one chamber system," which demands upon principle an Upper House absolutely incapable of disagreeing with the Lower House, and entirely undermines the institution known as a House of Lords, First Chamber, or Upper House—call it what you please—which should in reality be the representative of a policy that does not lightly yield to popular opinion for the time being, but serves at once to control and ballast the Diet. The

very same experiment that might be practised by a Liberal Ministry in order to coerce a recalcitrant Upper House into concord with a Liberal Lower House—by creating peers—would necessarily be repeated, later on, by a Conservative Ministry to oblige a Conservative Lower House (it is not an utter impossibility that we may have a Conservative Lower House some of these days): and if we then had a Liberal majority in the Upper House, it would be necessary to recruit that body in a contrary direction, so that in time the number of its members would become an extravagant one, and the House of Peers would be a mere shadow of the House of Commons—a condition of things which would gainsay the spirit of the Constitution." In the Reichstag later on (28th of March, 1867), he characterised the institution of a First Chamber, Upper House, or Senate, more exactly still—as follows: "It is a drag, fitted to the wheels of the state-coach, in order to prevent the latter from running too rapidly down precipitous intervals of the road; it is the influential participation in public affairs of those who have something to lose thereby, and who are not disposed to play too rashly, at the cost and risk of the State, because their own stake is a high one; it is the transfer to our conditions of being of one of the most material advantages of English institutions—an advantage which I perceive in the fact that so many almost Royal entities exist in England. I will explain more clearly what I mean by this—absolutely disinterested entities which have nothing to wish for in this world of sufficient importance to tempt them to act otherwise than in accordance with their calm, conscientious conviction of what is best for the welfare of the State. That I consider to be an extraordinary advantage of English conditions of being. It is not so easy to make experiments in that country, because those who are called upon to experi-

mentalise have by far too heavy a stake of property and well-being to lose."

Finally (in February, 1881), the Chancellor expressed himself in private with respect to the Prussian Legislative Body above alluded to in something like the following terms: "The practical participation of the Upper House in our politics has been defective of late; but we must not regard it (the House of Peers) as the exclusive source of that evil, although this latter may to a considerable extent be attributed to a certain lack of interest in State affairs which is manifest in a great number of our Peers. But the chief blame, in my opinion, must be borne by the Government, and that because it submits, not only all its financial propositions, but every other important motion and draught-measure, to the Lower House in the first place. The former course of action is prescribed by the Constitution; the latter is not. For example, the collective statutes of organisation—as well those applying to the entire monarchy as those concerning single provinces—were regularly and exclusively laid, in the first place, before the Lower House, which either left them lying about the committee-rooms, or, at the most, sent them up to the House of Peers in the very last week of the Session. This will probably suggest to a good many people one of Schiller's lines, slightly varied so as to run thus: "When vice shall have eaten its fill, virtue may sit down to table." In other words: "Humble folk are thrust back and ill-used because of their humility." To my mind this policy is neither estimable nor practical. I cannot help fearing that future Governments will have to pay dearly for the mistake committed by the present one in consenting to a practice which is nearly equivalent to the nullification of the Prussian Upper House. The lack of interest, above alluded to, in public affairs which character-

ises the greater number of our Peers is unquestionably the result of unsuitable arrangements, for which that body has to thank its creation and development. It is owing to these that most of our Peers have no animate connection with public life, the hot pulsation of which never reaches them. There may still be some politicians amongst us who remember the lively and efficient activity with which the whilom "First Chamber," superseded by the Upper House, made its mark in the existence of the State—and the corresponding interest exhibited by the public at that time in the transactions of that Chamber, because they were in reality fuller of matter and exhibited more intellectual capacity than the debates of the Second Chamber. To any one able to recall this to his mind, as I am, it will be impossible to contemplate without regret the significance and utility of the present House, as compared with those of the Chamber of which it is the transmogrified successor. The error we here encounter does not, however, lie exclusively at the insufficiency of the root which the Upper House, since its development, has taken in this country; for, even as Prussia's Senate exists and is constituted, it would possess more importance did the Government attach more importance to it, instead of limiting its share in the labour of legislation by assigning to it its present modicum of participation in the business of the Diet, and by choosing from a certain class the persons it nominates to peerages. The manner in which our Upper House is constrained to take part in legislation has for its result that preparatory work in committee, and current business to boot, chiefly falls into the hands of members who reside in the capital—generally retired officials, more or less dissatisfied with the loss of their posts . . . Ci-devant Ministers who, like Bernuth, Count Lippe, Friedenthal, and Camphausen—have

resigned office of their own free will, are either inclined to continue, as members of Parliament, their old accustomed Ministerial activity, or experience a feeling of resentment at not having been again entrusted with a portfolio or with any other sort of employment since their resignation. They would indeed be endowed with uncommonly exalted dispositions of mind if—free from anything like ill-will—they could contemplate or aid to bring about the successes of those now holding the offices they formerly held; and it is only human—only natural and usual—that mere average natures should be unable to oppose lofty patriotic considerations to the temptation, assailing them at every turn, to suggest the impression that their retirement from office has left a chasm in the State mechanism which cannot possibly be filled up. I do not think I am beyond the mark in stating that these Berlinese, supplemented by a few representatives of large towns, amount to sixty—the number of members required by law to "make a House." The remaining members of the House, i.e., the representatives of great landed property in the provinces (who were originally intended to exercise predominant influence in that Assembly) only put in an appearance upon rare occasions, when the voting apparatus is called upon to sanction the legislative results of the whole Session within a few days; and this is a most decided disadvantage. With many of the persons who arrive in Berlin for this purpose, the first question that generally suggests itself is "When we shall be able to go home again?" When the discussion upon the Field-and-Forest Police Bill—a measure of the highest importance to landed proprietors, threatening them, in fact, with intolerable annoyances—took place, only about eighty members of the Upper House, if I mistake not, came forward to vote; and of those barely twenty belonged to the class of provincial

land-owners especially molested by the law in question . . . If, therefore, the Government wishes to transact political business in earnest, and not merely to administer individual departments, it will have to recognise the necessity of trying whether it be not possible, by treating the Upper House somewhat better—by putting it more on an equal footing with the Lower House—to induce its members to participate more vivaciously and regularly in the transactions of the Diet. Public business cannot any longer be carried on as heretofore, if the regeneration of the Upper House, so desirable in every respect, is to be effected. For who could at present advance any pregnant and convincing rejoinder to the questions with which the majority of the 133 Peers (present, out of 300, at the last division) might reply to the reproach that they had only appeared in their places in the House during the last fortnight of the Session, i.e., 'What should we have done here, had we come sooner? Waited at the door of the Lower House till the Deputies should condescend to send out to us the offal resulting from their deliberations? Or danced attendance on Ministers, till they should find time to attend to us? We could do as much as that by stopping at home.'"

We have several of the Chancellor's utterances, besides the above, to indicate to us his view of the real import of the Lower House. In the Second Chamber (21 March, 1849) he said: "Do not let us yield to the illusion that our majorities or minorities represent proportionate fractions of popular will. Which of you gentlemen is exactly acquainted with the sentiments and feelings of the people; who amongst us can adduce any credible proof that that which he sets forth as such really is the collective will of the Prussian people? We are elected by the majority of secondary electors, themselves elected by the majority of

primary electors. We all, therefore, only represent the majority of a majority, perhaps something over a quarter of the primary electors who really registered their votes; and yet certain fractions of this Assembly come forward and endeavour to foist upon us their views and their will as the views and will of the great Prussian people!" During a session of the Lower House (14 February, 1850) he further remarked: "The report of the Committee, with a certain amount of complacency, applies the expression 'Representation of the People' to both Prussian Chambers, whose privileges it does not wish to see curtailed. We do not constitute a 'Representation of the People.' Let us descend from that pedestal of self-created greatness. The Prussian people, as it lives and has its being in its eight provinces, with all its beliefs and hopes, its animate organisation and practical requirements, is by no means reflected or reproduced in this Assembly. The Prussian Chamber is still only an imperfect representative of the taxed elements —that is, of about half the tax-paying primary electors in each of the three assessed classes. I cannot call that a 'Representation of the People.'" (The President referred Herr von Bismarck to article 83 of the Constitution; which says: "The members of both Chambers are representatives of the whole people"). "According to the Constitution, just quoted to us, this Assembly is equipped with distinctly defined attributes. . . Let us content ourselves with those attributes and not go beyond them in order to advance pretensions to the title of popular representatives, which is officially accorded to us, truly, by the Constitution; but titles *in partibus* are also official. Let us be satisfied with what we have got; above all, let us not overstep our constitutional competence." Finally (29 January, 1863) he declared in the Lower House: "The Constitution makes

no difference between the two Houses of the Diet. The circumstance that the Lower House is the outcome of elections does not, according to the Constitution, invest it with any rights superior to those of the Upper House."

Bismarck has often expressed his disapprobation of the electoral system to which the Prussian Lower House owes its being; he did so with unprecedented severity in the Reichstag (28 March, 1867) when he designated the system in question as incomparably senseless and pitiful, and characterised the statute embodying it as a measure calculated to "rend asunder everything that should cohere, to muddle up together people who have nothing whatever to do with one another, and to measure each Commune with a different scale. Had the inventor of this Electoral Law realised to himself its practical effect, he would never have called it into being. Capriciousness and oppression alike inspire every census—oppression most palpable of all exactly where the census breaks off and exclusion from it commences. We can hardly explain to the persons excluded that they are Helots, politically dead as far as State-existence is concerned, because they do not pay exactly the same amount of taxes as their next-door neighbours." Bismarck, however, beyond this expression of his predilection for fair-play, did not throw into the scale of argument any weights borrowed from the practical working of other electoral laws; and, in the same sitting of the Reichstag, he remarked (after agreeing with a previous speaker that "on the whole all Electoral Laws, enforced under similar conditions and influences, produced identical results"): "I believe that if to-day we were to conduct our elections on the basis of the 'United Diet and a ten-years' landed proprietorship,' we should be represented much as we are actually at this time; since I began my parliamentary career in 1847 the elements

of German legislative representation have not suffered any change; I have always seen the same faces opposite me, some friendly, some combative." Further on in this speech he availed himself of the arguments he had put forward against indirect elections in 1849, i.e.:—"If it be assumed that the majority in every electoral stage, only requires to consist of *one* over the moiety of votes, the secondary elector only represents one primary elector more than half the total of primary electors, and the Deputy only represents one man more than half the secondary electors, whose totality only represents the least thing more than the moiety of the primary electors—therefore, the Deputy (unless large majorities happen to have accrued in the electoral districts; I am however, taking the extreme case of a very small majority) indirectly elected represents with mathematical accuracy something minutely trifling over one fourth of the primary electors; and the majority of the House, therefore, only represents one eighth of the whole electoral element. Direct elections enable us to entirely omit one of these stages of dimidiation." After his assumption, quoted above, that all Electoral Laws yield nearly identical results, the Chancellor's further remarks will probably appear to have been dictated by courtesy, ever so slightly flavoured with irony: "For I have ever found more intelligence in the collective feeling of the people than in the meditations of the elector; and I appeal to the impression—a pretty general one—(I do not know whether or not you, gentlemen share my perceptions in the matter, but I certainly do experience the impression in question) that more remarkable capacities are brought into this House by direct than by indirect elections, because the weight of local cliques is not so directly brought to bear upon the elector in the larger districts in which the system of direct election obtains. I

hope the House will prove sensible to the indirect flattery conveyed in these remarks."

Another of Bismarck's Articles of Faith concerning Parliamentary elections exacts the exclusion therefrom of Government officials, upon the ground (one of many) that, with respect to the Reichstag, "such officials may be too strongly disposed to give expression to the Particularist impulses of the Federal Government which they may happen to serve." His other reasons apply to the Prussian Lower House; and the most weighty of these is the laxity of official discipline resulting from the participation of State *employés* in Parliamentary proceedings. "In Prussia," he observed, "we have at present, in a certain sense, two Constitutions simultaneously in force; i.e. the ancient Constitution of absolutism, guaranteed by the irremovability of officials, and the modern Constitution with which, in almost every other country, that irremovability is held to be incompatible. . . The Government feels itself cramped in every direction. It cannot dismiss an employé who renders formal obedience to its orders, but does not enter into their spirit. This has its advantages. I would not upon any account renounce the integrity of the Prussian official, his prestige, his sense of dignity which raises him above temptation despite his slender and often insufficient remuneration, and would rather henceforth put up with the inconveniences of a cramped and embarrassed government than meddle inconsiderately with these difficulties. But, just because we cannot get rid of them at our pleasure we must avail ourselves of every means at our disposal to maintain strict discipline, and must shrink from everything calculated to relax that discipline. I cannot say that it makes a good impression throughout the country—I cannot doubt that it suggests the feeling that there is something rotten in the

State—when we find a subordinate official opposing his paramount chief in public and using language towards him which, beyond doubt, that same official is far too well-bred to use towards his own servants at home. . . As a Minister I am quite prepared to put up with the strongest representations submitted to me in a written form by any official, at the promptings of a feeling of duty; but I could hardly bear to remain a Minister if I were compelled to continuously employ in my department an official who refused to pay me that respect in public to which, in my position, I persistently make claim."

Towards the close of this speech Bismarck declared it to be at least desirable that ecclesiastical and judicial *employés* should be excluded from election to Parliament, pointing out, with regard to judges in particular, that participation in party-struggles reacted injuriously upon their impartiality. "It has often happened to me," he said, "especially in the earlier years of my official career, that sentences delivered in cases of libel against the Prussian Prime Minister, quite unknown to me and unprovoked by me, have been submitted to my inspection with the enquiry 'whether I would cause them to be published.' Upon the average I found that insults such as, if addressed by one respectable handicraftsman to another in public, would be punished by a heavy fine or by imprisonment, cost about ten thalers (thirty shillings) when aimed at the Prime Minister. At that price any one was free to hurl the vilest abuse at me in public, either by word of mouth or in print. It was certainly not my impression that, in this particular matter, the appraisement of the offence committed was altogether emancipate from the influence of political feeling; the less so because I noticed, amongst the attenuating circumstances recorded in some of these sentences that

'as a matter of fact, the present Ministry is utterly worthless.'"

In the same connection the Chancellor declared (3rd March, 1881) in the Reichstag: "I believe that it is not consistent with the dignity of judges that they should directly take part in electioneering agitations. I am extremely doubtful that, taking into consideration the vivacity of our party-manœuvres, it is possible for a judge to display perfect impartiality towards his political opponents; and I should regard it as a blessing for the Prussian Bench and for the reputation of our judges, if they were legally excluded from participation in party-action. The judge should be characterised by a higher degree of impartiality than the administrative government official called upon to serve one or another Cabinet. An official of this latter class cannot be absolutely devoid of party-feeling, and it always strikes me as a painful and undignified spectacle, when I perceive some person, holding an exalted post under Government, who is in diametrical opposition to that Government's policy and yet continues to retain office. A position in the Administration exacts from its occupant a certain measure of partisanship for the Government; but the position of a judge prescribes absolute, intact and spotless impartiality. I require from the judge that, as a matter of honour, he should belong to no party; whereas the honour of a Government official does not suffer if, under certain circumstances, he manifests party-spirit a little more conspicuously than is consistent with good taste. Through not taking a prominent part in elections the judge is saved from making statements to the Electoral Committee which, proved against him by witnesses, may render him liable to attack; though he may be called upon, as an administrator of oaths, to accompany the candidate to the

poll." The Royal Decree of January 4, 1882, gave the Chancellor occasion to deliver himself still further upon this theme. The Decree set forth that "it is the sworn duty of officials entrusted with the execution of the King's governmental acts to refrain from taking part in any electioneering agitation hostile to the Government, and to protect the Constitutional rights of the Crown by guarding them against doubt and obscuration." The Chancellor briefly interpreted this prescription as meaning "That an official should recall to mind his oath with respect to his own election, is by no means required of him; in the exercise of his voting rights he is perfectly free. . . The Decree is expressly addressed to that class of officials whose habit it is to busy themselves with elections other than their own, and thus draws a distinction between two categories of officials—the political and non-political." Only with respect to the former, observed the Chancellor, did the Decree assume that their oath binds them to support the policy of their Government, "by which," as he expressed it, "I mean that a political official, notwithstanding his indisputable right to elect whom he pleases—let us, for instance, suppose his choice to have fallen upon a Progressist candidate—is not thereby exempted from his obligation to contest lies (which I have already stigmatised as political well-poisoning) in accordance with the dictates of his conscience; if he be a man of honour, he will surely do so, saying 'I do not belong to the Government party; but this is untrue, and that is an exaggeration.' He may—in his heart and with his secret voting-ticket as well—vote for whom he will; how he votes nobody will ask him. and we cannot possibly find out; it will therefore never be the cause of proceedings being instituted against him, and I would never be instrumental in making it so. But it is expected of these political officials that they should,

as far as in them lies, represent truth as against falsehood. Is that too much? Are they to become accomplices in lying, by holding their tongues when they know better? Are they to look on calmly in certain electoral districts, whilst the inhabitants of the Royal Forests are told: The King has made a compact with the Liberal Deputies to the effect that you shall enjoy the right of hunting in the forest if you vote for the Liberal candidate . . . From the non-political officials His Majesty requires next to nothing. The Decree expects that they will refrain from agitating against the Government during the elections. That, gentlemen, I venture to say, is a claim exercised upon them by common decency. Nothing, I repeat, is expected of them but to refrain from agitation—for instance, that they shall not perform any official act under the influence of a third person's vote or manner of voting, or which implies any compulsion with respect to voting. Gentlemen, an official acting thus would be punishable, and, in my opinion, not only in a disciplinary sense of the word."

This view of a State employé's position, in relation to the King and Government, is so natural and incontestable, that even the Radical fraction of the Liberal party—at a time, to be sure, when it hoped to assume the reins of office—adhered to it quite unreservedly, and even went a good deal farther. When the Party of Progress was formed in 1861 it embodied the following declaration in its programme, having regard to the circumstance that the Liberal Ministry of that day tolerated many adversaries amongst its employés; "For our internal institutions we require a firm Liberal Government, which shall demonstrate its strength by respecting the constitutional rights of all citizens, *shall know how to inexorably obtain currency for its principles throughout all classes of its employés*, and shall, by these means, obtain

and maintain for us the respect of every other German race." According to this manifesto—to which the party boasts of still literally adhering—the Government has the indubitable right to inexorably exact recognition of its political principles from all its officials; and one would suppose this right to be equally vested in Liberal and Conservative Governments, whichsoever might happen to be in power. Or do the gentlemen of Progress, in this as in other questions, recognise the distinction drawn by Squire Alexander between the peasant's cow and his own?

Our Chancellor's other chief Article of Faith—the other mainspring of his political dealings in home as well as foreign questions—the German Idea—the belief that the Federal States of Germany must be transformed into one Federal State under Prussian leadership, that the German nation must, as far as is necessary and possible, be politically unified, and that this achievement must be maintained and perfected by all righteous means and measures, in order that the forces and gifts of our nation may obtain full development, that its true interests may be protected and advanced, and that serious perils may be averted from it—has been expounded in many of his writings, and in verbal avowals made by him to the Legislative Bodies. Extracts from the more ancient of the documents alluded to will be given in the fifth chapter of this book. . . . Of the avowals we must, first and foremost, call attention to that pronounced by Prince Bismarck (9 July, 1869), at the close of the debate in the Reichstag upon Economic Reform. On that occasion he said: "Since I first became a Minister I have never belonged, nor could I ever belong, to any particular fraction. I have been hated by all in turn, and liked by only a few. When, in 1862, I accepted the Prussian Premiership, you must all remember to what, I will venture

to say, an unpatriotic height public hatred against me rose I did not allow it to lead me astray, nor have I ever attempted to take vengeance for it. From the very commencement of my career my sole guiding-star has been, how to unify Germany, and, that being achieved, how to strengthen, complete, and so constitute her unification that it may be preserved enduringly, and with the good will of all concerned in it." The Chancellor spoke in a similar strain to the Reichstag during the sitting of February 24th, 1881. Reproached with having frequently and abruptly changed his views with respect to different questions, he replied: "Well, I am certainly not one of those who have ever believed, or now believe, that they have nothing to learn; and if anybody says to me, 'Twenty years ago you and I were of one mind; to-day I hold the same opinions as I did then, and you exactly the opposite,' I shall answer him, 'Aye; twenty years ago I was as wise as you are to-day; now I am wiser, for I have learnt something in the meantime.' But I will not attempt to excuse myself thus. For me only one compass, one polar star, has ever existed, by which I have steered my course; and that is, *salus publica.* From the very beginning of my participation in the conduct of State affairs I have often acted rashly and inconsiderately; but whenever I had time for reflection, I always subordinated myself to the question, 'What is the best thing for my native country—what (so long as I was only a Prussian), is most useful to my dynasty—and, nowadays, what is most suitable to the German nation. All my life long I have never been a *doctrinaire;* all systems by which political parties feel themselves separated or bound together are to me secondary considerations; the first of all is the nation, its standing abroad, its independence, our organization, so contrived that we may be enabled to

breathe freely in the world as a great people. Everything after that—Liberal, Reactionary, Conservative Constitutions—gentlemen, I confess quite openly, that all these matters are to me of secondary importance; they constitute a luxury in the furnishing line, which may be indulged in after the building of the house shall have been solidly completed. In these questions of party, I may tend towards one or another, as the case may require in the interest of the country; the doctrines themselves I hold amazingly cheap. Let us first bring to pass a durable edifice, outwardly secured, inwardly supported, and held together by national ties; and then you may ask me my opinion how the house is to be fitted up, with more or less Liberal-constitutional furniture; perhaps you will find that I shall answer, 'Well, I entertain no preconceived opinion upon the subject; make your offers, and if they prove acceptable to the Sovereign, whom I serve, you will not encounter any very serious obstacles on my part. Things may be managed this way or that; many roads lead to Rome. There are times in which it is necessary to govern on Liberal principles, and times in which a dictatorial Government is requisite; everything changes; here ther is no eternity. But I demand that the edifice of the German Empire, and the unity of the German nation, shall be established solidly and inexpugnably—not merely protected on one side or another by flying field-works. To the creation and consolidation of that edifice I have subordinated my entire course of political action, from its very inception; and if you can indicate to me a single moment of my public life during which I have not steered towards that point of the compass, you will perhaps be able to show me that I have been mistaken, but not that I have lost sight of the national goal."

Clear recognition of the situation's requirements, and the "categorical imperative" of his sense of duty, prompted the

Chancellor to do everything in his power to fortify the Empire's position with relation to foreign countries, and on the other hand to bring about the completion of its internal arrangements with all possible swiftness. In the former direction, he apprehended (until 1879), the possibility of a Russo-Franco-Austrian Alliance, like that obtaining in the days of Kaunitz; and history will not count it a smaller service to his country that he preserved New Germany from that Alliance, than that he created the policy which enabled him to construct the German Empire. His negotiations with the Cabinet of Vienna, his efforts, indefatigably prosecuted and finally crowned with success, to effect a *rapprochement* with Germany's mighty south-eastern neighbour, as well as his scientific diplomatic dealings with other Powers, were not the only means he employed to this end. It was above all requisite, as an effective backing to these diplomatic endeavours, to keep up the impression in those Powers that the new Empire was in itself united and solid. With this object it was necessary to avoid exhibiting the Government in a minority, constantly and upon important issues, in Parliament. If the German Empire was to maintain its prestige (the outcome of successful wars), in foreign countries but imperfectly acquainted with its internal conditions, the Powers in question must be enduringly persuaded that the Federate Governments were at one amongst themselves and with the majority of the Representative Assembly; and that both these elements were inspired and governed by the national spirit. Although this really was the case during the earlier years of national exhilaration, inasmuch as Liberals and Conservatives then combined to form a national majority, things assumed a totally different aspect from the moment at which the Central Party came into existence, and the Conservative Party (from which the

Chancellor himself emanated), not only withdrew its support from him, but attacked him with passionate personal animosity under the leadership of the *Kreuz Zeitung*, at that time belonging to Herr Nathusius. Thenceforth the majority in the Reichstag unquestionably belonged to the Liberal party; the impression of our Unity could only be kept up abroad by effecting compromises with that majority; and the completion of the Empire's internal organization was bound to take place by means of the Liberal majority's support and influence. By its aid the Empire's defensive forces were settled upon a firm foundation, and the dangers arising from particularistic and anti-national agitations at home were timely averted. The first steps were also successfully taken towards placing the Empire upon a self-supporting footing in financial respects. On the other hand, the Chancellor had to protect himself against the Liberal majority's efforts to transfer the Imperial Government to a number of Ministers independent of himself and of one another, and thereby to get rid of homogeneous direction and responsibility. He also subsequently found that he received less support from Parliament than from the Federate Governments in his further endeavours to bring about the financial self-dependence of the Empire, to introduce into it a homogeneous Customs and commercial system, to put the working classes upon an equal footing with the other social classes with respect to life-insurance, and to weaken the hold obtained upon them by Social-Democracy. Indeed, the Federate Governments at the present time offer much more substantial guarantees for the preservation and development of German Unity than does the Reichstag, split up as it is into parties and fractions.

The principles guiding the Chancellor with respect to the Constitution of the Empire have been indicated, and to some

extent definitely propounded in several of his speeches. On March 11, 1867, in the Parliament convoked to construct a Constitution for the North German Confederation, he said, "It cannot have been our purpose to set up a theoretical ideal of a Federal Constitution, in which German Unity is to be eternally guaranteed on the one hand, and free elbow-room is to be ensured to every sort of particularistic movement on the other. We must leave it to the future to discover such a talisman of wisdom, if any such exist; to approach the squaring of the circle by a few decimals is not our present mission. Prompted by memories of the past, and by a just appraisement of actualities, we have made a point of challenging as little as possible those resisting forces which shattered our previous attempts (at Frankfurt and Erfurt) to bring about German Unity. We have deemed it our duty to be contented with a minimum of those concessions which particular entities in Germany are bound to make to the one common entity, if the latter is to become really animate. We may bestow or not the name of a Constitution upon the scheme that has resulted from our labours; that has nothing to do with the question. We believe that if it be distinctly understood that we have cleared the way for the German people, and have proved our confidence in the genius of that people, Germany will be able to attain its ends by following the path we have traced for it." Highly characteristic of Prince Bismarck was the following statement, to which he gave utterance in the Reichstag on March 10, 1877. "I believe our Constitution possesses a self-constructive faculty resembling that to which the English Constitution owes its formation—not through the setting-up of a theoretical ideal, the realisation of which is sought to be effected regardless of obstacles, but through the organic development of that which already

exists, always in the direction of progress, although by feasible and inoffensive means, avoiding the incurrence of serious risks. Although it is a speciality of our national character to invariably aim at what is the very best, and thereby to frequently miss that which is fairly good, I regard it as disastrous that we cannot deliver ourselves from the occupation of manufacturing Constitutions—that we do not give our Constitution (which is and cannot be otherwise than imperfect) time to breathe, and take a brief natural rest at one of its stations, also necessarily incomplete."

Here speaks the genuine practical politician—the man of piercing insight, who thoroughly understands the political existence of peoples and states—who is aware that great things are born, not made, and that, consequently, the best Constitutions are to a great extent products of nature.

Expressing his astonishment at the criticisms to which Opposition Deputiés thought fit to subject the existing Constitution, the Chancellor observed in a Parliamentary speech (5 March, 1878) "Is the Constitution under which we live really, then, so impracticable and unwarrantable? From a theoretical point of view there is a good deal to be said about it, in that sense: but practically it is the expression of what actually existed and was possible at the time of its formation, elaborated and regulated as well as it then could be. At any rate, we have got on farther with it than with all our theoretical experiments; I refer you back to the vast number of enactments passed, to the progressive consolidation of this formerly very shaky Constitution, to the prestige enjoyed throughout Europe by our new organization, which it would certainly not have earned had foreigners deemed it to be as ignominious and intolerable as the public press says it is. What dreadful deeds have been done to my countrymen, that they all of a sudden find

themselves so much worse off than they were a year ago? Is it, peradventure, our comparative tranquillity, or the steadfast advancement that we exhibit, as contrasted with other countries, or the fact that we are at peace, at home and abroad? That must certainly be the case; for highly-wrought spirits, forlorn of any occupation more exciting and engrossing than that of "representing the people" during the winter, inevitably fall a prey about summertide to the restless feeling that 'something must be done;' their craving for emotion becomes so vehement that it can only be assuaged by foreign wars, or internal conflicts, or criticism—employing the whole intellectual force of profound thinkers—of the very undermost foundations of our institutions. I rejoice that the notion of giving practical expression to this tendency (in the shape of Parliamentary motions) has not found utterance in any part of this House. I do not mean amendments, but motions having for their object the revision of the Constitution. For it would indeed be deplorable if so youthful a Constitution—one brought into the world with such difficulty—should require revision in its new-born state. The recollection of our fruitless attempts in Frankfurt on Main a generation ago, to settle the matter theoretically—the reflection 'How absolutely new these institutions are; how strange the events that preceded their birth; how violent, in a greater or less degree, the means by which they have been brought about'—should, in my opinion, restrain every one from too often disturbing the basis upon which they repose, and from arousing, at home or abroad, the hope or the fear that this Constitution, which at present confers upon the German Realm an amount of unity it has not possessed for centuries past, may at any moment be attacked in its very foundations, and suggest the inquiry: 'Is any government under the same moral obligation, when

subjected to the pressure of temptation and opportunity, to adhere to a modified Constitution, forced upon its acceptance, as that which bound it to uphold the Constitution originally sanctioned by it?'"

Another Article of Faith which guided Prince Bismarck throughout his labours in building up the New Germany, runs as follows: The autonomy of the German States bound up in the Empire should only be restricted to the extent absolutely exerted by national requirements—firstly, because those States will only continue to participate cheerfully and trustfully in the Federation as long as they are equitably treated, and secondly, because a certain degree of decentralisation is wholesome. The Chancellor, therefore, is no Unitarian; in proof of which a speech of his in the Reichstag (11 March, 1867) may here be quoted. He contested therein the demand for the nomination of a constitutional, responsible Ministry for the North German Confederation—a demand which, he observed, could only be complied with if, at the same time, a chief of monarchical character could be appointed to lead the Confederation. This he considered impossible: "for," he continued, "it would be necessary to mediatise those Sovereigns to whom that supreme monarchical power could not be confided. Such a mediatisation has neither been authorised by our fellow-confederates nor demanded by ourselves. It has been hinted here by some that this mediatisation could be effected by force; and by others that it would come to pass spontaneously. . . We do not anticipate anything of the sort, or that any considerable number of German Princes will exhibit conspicuous readiness to exchange their present position for that held by British Peers. We have never expected this of them, nor do we propose to do so; still less can I regard it as our duty to appeal to brute force—to

Prussia's predominant influence in the confederation—in order to extort concessions that are not freely offered to us. Least of all can we employ that force against allies, who stood to us faithfully in the hour of danger, or against those states with which we have just concluded an international peace, as we hope, for all time to come. The basis of our relations with them must not be violence, employed towards princes or towards peoples; but confidence in Prussia's fidelity to treaties—a confidence which shall not be disturbed as long as others remain faithful to their part in such compacts." Here we must also refer to a speech (Reichstag, 16 April 1869) in which the Chancellor rejected a motion brought forward by Deputy Twesten and Count Muenster for the creation of responsible Federal Ministries. "Is Unitarism the best and most useful political configuration? Is it so in Germany even? Is it historical in Germany? That it is not, is clearly demonstrated by the particularistic organisations that obtain amongst us in every direction. We not only possess village-patriotism and city-patriotism, developed to an extent unknown to Romans and Slavs, but fraction-patriotism and departmental-patriotism, the latter of which regards everything outside its own department as utterly alien to it and susceptible of being justifiably damaged to any extent, as long as "the department" derives some benefit from injuring it. . . A Post-office official, whose intellectual standing is not sufficiently elevated to enable him to form a statesmanlike judgment, will look upon every measure that does not exclusively serve the interests of the Postal Administration as the act of an enemy, and carry away, with conscientious satisfaction, any booty he may have secured by fighting against it, to the prejudice of other departments of the State. . . To this is attributable the fact

that a German is only at his ease when confined within a small space; and it is by no means fair to deprive him of any greater modicum of his homely comfort than is absolutely requisite to keep the whole State fabric together and give it authority abroad. This Particularism is the source of Germany's weakness; but also, in one direction at least, of her prosperity. From small centres have radiated to all parts of Germany common endowments of culture and well-being, vainly to be looked for in great countries organised upon the principle of centralisation. . . The faults of Particularism—its external weaknesses, internal dissensions, restrictions upon commerce and communications—have been attacked at their very roots by the Confederation, whose mission it is to extirpate them altogether. Give it time to do so. It is still young, but it will fulfil its purpose; and we, by backing it up, shall harmoniously cooperate towards the attainment of a positive end, for which achievement, when completed, the whole nation will be grateful to us. If you contemplate the State-structures, which have acquired a development that appears extensive, compared with their physical resources, without incurring any loss of internal freedom, you will find that those structures have sprung from the evil of German history, and that they are more or less, I will not say of a federalistic, but of a decentralising character. As a conspicuous example let me point to England, where Particularism is so carefully hidden away in the shade of the village or the county, that it is nowhere visible upon the geographical outlines of the map. England is a decentralised country, which we Prussians are eagerly endeavouring to imitate in that respect. Look at that grand, wealthy and potent phenomenon, the Free States of North America; do its citizens regard an Unified State as the Palladium of Liberty, or as the foundation of healthy

development? Look at Switzerland, with her Cantonal-Constitution. Look at a structure, which, unless I am much mistaken, is most of all analogous to our own—the old Constitution of the United Netherlands, the States-General, in which the self-dependence of each Province was maintained in a very high degree. It may, I fancy, be found instructive, by any person here who takes an interest in these matters, to carry out this comparison still further, and to keep in mind, as well as the admirable political achievements recorded in the history of the United Netherlands, the bounteous measure of personal liberty that was dispensed to all those who enjoyed the protection of that *régime.* Centralisation is always more or less the result of violent measures, and is not to be enforced without violating at least the spirit of the Constitution. Every such violation even if it appear excusable or justifiable in form, inflicts wounds that bleed inwardly; and no man knows or can predict how long they will continue to bleed. If you want to make things comfortable for the populations of German States, I believe that you must not ask them, 'What can we all have in common? How deep can the vast man of the Commonwealth bite into the apple?' but, 'How much must we absolutely and indispensably have in common?' and that you should leave everything else to the agency of special development. In this manner you will do good service to liberty and well being. . . . I would remind you of the endeavours to which we are now devoting ourselves in Prussia. There we are trying to decentralise and to create provincial and local self-reliance. Why should we do exactly the contrary here, in the Confederation? here, where we already possess local, if not provincial self-reliance, which has, moreover, been of the greatest utility to Germany? For instance, in the matter of administration we have learnt

much from Saxony, and from Hanover to boot; and therein I rejoice at the progress achieved by Prussia, i.e., that the curse of excessive self-appreciation, through which men deceive themselves, has been gradually removed from us through the acquaintance we have made with the administration of the lesser States; I hope that, in time, we shall be freed from it altogether. These, however, are advantages emanating from the self-sufficing existence of small States; they afford us no justification whatsoever for endeavouring to curtail, in defiance of justice, and contrary to our own interests, the influence of those independent States upon Germany at large—an influence, too, that is constitutionally secured to them." On the 19th April, 1871, Prince Bismarck spoke in a similar sense (though slightly ironically) about the utility of small States and the significance of the "Senate, State-House, and Upper House of the German Empire" by them constituted in concord with Prussia. "I believe," he observed, "that the Federal Council has a great future before it, because it has for the first time made an attempt to set a Federative Board at the head of the State, there to exercise sovereignty over the whole Empire, without robbing individual States of the benefits of monarchical power, or of their own proper authorities; for sovereignty does not lie with the Emperor, but with the totality of the Confederate Governments. This institution is the more useful, in that it imparts directly into these deliberations the wisdom or stupidity of five-and-twenty Governments—a plurality of views such as we have never before been favoured with in any single realm. There are five-and-twenty Ministries, or high authorities, in this Board, each of which is in a position to absorb all the intelligence and wisdom gushing up within the limits of its own particular sphere, and is justified in imparting to the Federal

Council, upon its own account, the products of its absorption; whilst the single State is embarrassed by all sorts of local obstacles, which plug up its springs at their very sources. In a word, I may tell you from personal experience, that I believe I have made considerable progress in my political education, and have, generally speaking, learnt a good deal through my participation in the sessions of the Federal Council—through watching the vivifying friction of five-and-twenty German centres. Therefore I would beg of you not to meddle with the Federal Council. In that very structure I recognise a sort of Palladium for our future, and a powerful guarantee for the future of Germany." A few days previously, on the 1st of April, the Chancellor, addressing the Reichstag, had thus characterised the Federal Council: "It is not in reality an Imperial Board; as a Board, it does not represent the Empire. The Empire is externally represented by His Majesty the Emperor, the people by the Reichstag. To our apprehension the Federal Council is, so to speak, a corporation in which the respective States of Germany obtain representation—a corporation which I would not describe as a centrifugal element, but as one entitled to represent special interests." With this extract may be compared the following passage in Prince Bismarck's speech in Parliament (28 March, 1867), pronounced in opposition to a motion in favour of creating an Upper House upon the pattern of the British House of Peers. "As far as the proposition to constitute an Upper House is concerned, it can only be welcome (in itself and on principle), to every Conservative. Nevertheless, we do not deem it expedient to still further hamper the already complicated machinery of the Constitution by introducing into it a third—or, if you will, a fourth factor. I cannot without difficulty picture to myself a German Upper House thrust in

between the Federal Council (which is indispensable as the entity through which the sovereignty of individual States finds its expression), and the Imperial Parliament; an interloping factor which, from a social point of view, would rank somewhat higher than the Reichstag and stand much lower than the Federal Council, so as to justify its classification. In such an Assembly we should have peers—non-reigning princes—strongly disposed to rivalise, socially speaking, with the less-powerful sovereigns. To a certain extent the Federal Council represents an Upper House, in which His Majesty the King of Prussia is *primus inter pares*, and in which, moreover, that remainder of the great German nobility which has preserved its rights of sovereignty finds its proper place. To complete this Upper House by adding to it non-reigning members I consider too practically difficult an enterprise to be attempted. But to degrade this Sovereign Upper House in all its elements, except the actual presidency, to such an extent that it shall resemble a Chamber of Peers, recruitable from below, I deem impossible; I should never dare to hint at it, for instance, to such a personage as the King of Saxony. Our chief reason, however, for not having recommended the division of the Reichstag into two Houses is the inconvenience of excessively complicated mechanism. As it is, the Confederation's legislation may be brought to a stand-still at any moment by a protracted difference between the Federal Council and the Reichstag."

In connection with the Reichstag, Prince Bismarck's views with respect to the question of "allowances" deserve especial mention. On more than one occasion he contested motions brought forward by Liberal members in favour of making money-allowances to members of Parliament; during the debate of April 19, 1871, for example, in the

following terms: "If the Assemblies representing the people are for the future to be regarded as epitomes, or living images of our populations, it is indispensable that our Parliamentary Sessions should be short; otherwise all those persons who have something to do in this world besides law-making will fail to come forward, willingly and self-sacrificingly, as candidates for election. Short Parliaments alone render it possible that persons belonging to all sorts of professions and callings—precisely the most intelligent and honest class of citizens—should contrive to spare the time which they devote to serving their country in this place. Well, gentlemen, it results from experience that unallowanced Sessions are invariably shorter than those to which allowances are granted. This is quite unquestionable. We may take the Prussian Diet as an example; the Upper House always exhibits a disposition to abbreviate the Session, whilst the Lower House manifests a precisely contrary tendency. I am far from recognising allowances as the "one thing needful;" it seems to me, indeed, that their agency is exactly of the sort which I have already referred to as objectionable. There are several Deputies in the Prussian Lower House who have specially made it the business of their lives to serve their country in this particular direction, allowing their other occupations to lapse into the background. There exists, moreover, a certain nucleus of Deputies who—considering the activity they display in fulfilling their mandate; the preliminary studies they pursue in preparation for each sitting of the House, and the thoroughgoingness with which they examine everything they have to deal with—cannot possibly do aught else of any real moment, be their capacity for work never so great. I have the greatest respect for such devotion to Parliamentary activity, and should esteem it

highly regrettable were this element wanting to us; but that it should predominate in our Legislative Assemblies—that the Deputy who makes representing the people his sole business in life should prevail over us—I do not consider at all desirable. Were that the case you would not have an Assembly really representing the people, but one of a bureaucratic character, consisting of a special sort of officials, useful enough for the mere labours of legislation, but not always so in the sense or momentary temper of the people —not always genuinely representative of the various professional and working classes."

It is self-evident that anyone who allows himself to be elected a Deputy of the Empire should appear in the Reichstag as frequently as possible, in order to take part in its labours. People entrust him with a mandate, not in order to pay him a compliment, but to secure a representative for their rights and interests. A good many Deputies do not seem to understand this; they absent themselves from the House more frequently than is justifiable, in consequence of which that Assembly has often been compelled to declare itself incomplete and incapable of bringing any business whatsoever to a conclusion. This unsatisfactory state of things prompted the Chancellor (June 13, 1873), to propose a reduction in the number of members whose presence is requisite to the completion of any legislative act, with a view to coercing the Deputies into exercising their prerogatives somewhat more assiduously. He referred to the example offered by England, "where valid decisions may be arrived at by forty members, and where, consequently, each individual member feels bound to put in an appearance, lest forty of his colleagues, with whose political tendencies he is unacquainted, should pass laws behind his back, the legality of which laws would subse-

quently be incontestable." Upon this subject he further remarked (5 May, 1881), in the Reichstag: "I believe that Parliament would be a gainer if no limits were imposed upon its numerical capacity to pass resolutions, so that those members who take pleasure in listening to speeches might attend when they liked, without being counted out; but that greater scope should be given to that capacity when resolutions are before the House, the adoption of which concerns the future of the Empire. It is the Empire's right to insist that more than half the total number of Deputies elected throughout the realm shall be present whenever a decision is arrived at which may exercise upon the destinies of the nation an influence at once material, enduring, and not easily to be set aside. Half the Reichstag is not Parliament, as recognised by the Constitution, nor does it rank as highly in public consideration as the entirety of the Reichstag. . . . How can you expect the population to take an eager interest in the Reichstag's transactions, if its chosen representatives set it such an example?"

Germany came into the possession of Constitutional institutions much later than other countries; when she did so, however, her long privation in that respect was succeeded by excesses, the effect of which was to fatigue—well-nigh to suffocate her. Her parliamentary apparatus was too polypterous and complicated, whereby it used up a vast amount of working power. The Deputy, by reason of the over-exertion inflicted upon him in virtue of his mandate, was bound to become a mere *routinier;* the Ministers were overburdened with work to an intolerable degree; the people, in presence of the interminable length of parliamentary debates in the provincial and particularist Diets as well as in the Reichstag, subsided more and more profoundly into a chronic condition of lethargic indifference—contributed

to, doubtless, in great measure by the circumstance that it is not vouchsafed to many to take delight in Opposition, no matter upon what question, in straw-splitting special pleading, obtrusive and wearisome deliverances of sickly flavour, self-sufficient rhetoric and false pathos, and such-like abominations; at least, not to find all these as recreative as do certain Deputies, who play the leading parts on our parliamentary stage, and take up by far the greater part of our time. It was really found unbearable that a number of men should be powerless to extricate themselves from the meshes of law-making for from eight to nine months of the year at a stretch. They exhausted their own strength and that of the Ministers; they surfeited the public with the oratorical pabulum cooked by themselves and incessantly served up by the newspapers, until the said public ceased to pay any attention to their speeches, unless these latter happened to deal with questions of vital interest, or to be highly spiced with offensive remarks and scandal. Finally, the Deputies, during their long sojourn together in the different German capitals, saw little or nothing of the districts they represented or of actual life, listened only to the voice of party-spirit, and became ossified with doctrines and theories, like professors in their studies and councillors at their green tables. In order to remedy these evils it was necessary that the representatives of the people should be enabled, during a period of time far more protracted than theretofore, to rest from their parliamentary labours, to breathe physically and intellectually wholesome air in the outer world, and to recover touch with the people of whose interests it was their duty to be cognizant, so as to be *en rapport* with them when again subjected to the influence of party-leadership. To this end (in July, 1879) the Chancellor submitted to the Federal Council a proposal involving the alteration of

certain Articles of the Constitution, consisting in the substitution of a two years' Budget for the arrangement theretofore obtaining (that of voting the Budget every year), in the abolition of the obligation to convoke Parliament annually, (the necessity of voting the Budget once a year being revoked as above) and in quadrennial elections, instead of triennial ones. The Federal Council approved of this proposal; the majority of the Reichstag, when it was brought before them in 1880, abstained from dealing with it. When, however, the Chancellor put it forward again, a year later, the Committee met him with a counter-proposal, in which Prince Bismarck at once recognized "a lack of consideration for the Ministerial class of human beings, and an attack upon the Emperor's prerogatives." In his speech of May 5th, 1881, he explained the immediate purpose of the Federal Council's proposal in the following terms: "We desire to modify the haste and excess of business, of which the last speaker complained, by rendering it possible for you to give more time to your sittings in Parliament, i.e., by emancipating you from the restraint put upon you by the simultaneous functioning every year of two bodies, the Reichstag and Diet, which compels you to waste the time that should be devoted to one of those assemblies, in favour of the other. The work, moreover, would only be half done, should you limit to the Empire the application of the system recommended in this proposal. It must be enforced in all the Diets; the Imperial Legislature must prohibit Parliament and Diet from sitting at the same time; the Diets must transact their business during one year, and Parliament during the next. The chief business to be transacted is the Budget, and the hurry complained of is principally caused by time-pressure in the preparation of the Budget, which has to be made up anew every year. We

(Deputies and Ministers alike) shall both have plenty of time at our disposal, as soon as the Reichstag or Landtag, in the year of its meeting, shall be enabled to indulge in the hope that the prolongation of its session to the extent of three, or even five months will be no great mishap; and when the working time of Ministers shall be allotted in such sort that they will be able to prepare their measures beforehand." Farther on the Chancellor pointed out another object of his Draught Bill as follows: "In again bringing forward this proposal I do so in the interest of those who exercise in private life productive callings, which they are compelled to renounce during the period of their participation in parliamentary debates, and with the object of lightening that participation by ceasing to compel them to function in two Parliaments at one and the same time. If we do not do this, we shall render it almost impossible for people holding practical positions in life—I mean those who produce something material, as handicraftsmen, tradesmen, lawyers and practising physicians, farmers, manufacturers, industrials of all kinds, persons whose practical experiences are most valuable to us, who have every right to represent their interests here, and who consequently are sent hither by the electors—to take part in the proceedings of Parliament, for any length of time to come. As matters stand, we are exclusively provided with two categories of Deputies, differing essentially from one another; the one composed of those who cannot possibly await the end of the session to resume the transaction of their own private affairs, with relation to which they have been grievously missed; the other, of legislators who moan and sigh when compelled to renounce the practice they love so well of public speaking within these walls, and the habit of attending "fraction-meetings" and Committees, because they have nothing else

to do in God's wide world—at least, nothing that they care about. When I picture to myself an official, well or badly off, who, at the close of a long and parliamentary debate on a hot summer's day, is obliged to return to his dusty office, there to perform his duties vigorously, and to pay anew some slight deference to the very same official chief whom he has all day long been looking down upon with a certain amount of contempt from the heights of his Curulian seat, I can well conceive that a certain home-longing creeps over him as he recalls the past delights of parliamentary life, and that he should apply for a furlough on account of the fatigue superinduced by his legislatorial labours. But in so doing, a Deputy of this class, who has not kept up that contact with his country which is maintained by working, striving, and producing in common with his electors, runs the risk of becoming utterly incapable of justly appraising the interests and wishes of the district that has elected him. I look upon it as highly perilous to the interests of the Empire that the parliamentary majority should fall into the hands of those Deputies whose sole occupation is politics, who are representatives of the people by profession, and who have laboured at the questions on hand for weeks and months before they come to be discussed; for they deal with them in the public press as well, and endeavour to excite interest in them. They have time enough to do this; as a matter of fact it is their only business. Of course they come to the front very conspicuously, as far as dexterity and rhetorical skill of fence are concerned; they have so much practice in that sort of exercise! If, by the exaggerated frequency and length of Parliamentary Sessions, you make participation in the Reichstag difficult for persons who are not *fruges consumere nati*, and who do not derive their means of existence exclusively from salaries, fees and capital, the

time will come when the Representative Assembly will only be a branch of the bureaucracy—when we shall have hereditary parliamentary families (as we now have hereditary official families) which will make the legislative career their exclusive study, saying to themselves: 'I will learn the Deputy trade;' especially when they discover that this trade not only keeps a man comfortably, but sometimes brings him great advancement. My own career is an exclusively parliamentary one; nobody would ever have heard anything about me, living as I did in rural retirement, if I had not by chance become a member of the United Diet in 1847, and so I always count myself in, when I talk of Parliamentarians. But to extend our bureaucracy even into parliamentary life, and to let it become a branch of the Imperial and national official administration, having few points of contact and no interests or ideas in common with the *misera contribuens plebs*, which digs and delves, toils and sweats, earns, gains and loses, I deem pernicious; for the best of *employés*, whose father and grandfather were *employés* before him, and whose whole education has been directed towards fitting him for office, certainly can know nothing about the domestic life, the endeavours and the inner being of his elector, who has himself never been an *employé*, or had such a thing in his family."

The majority of the Reichstag, which at that time was under the thraldom of the professional politicians above described, remained unconvinced. It maintained a distrustful attitude; it regarded the Government proposal as unnecessary and even dangerous, detecting in it a design to circumscribe the rights of the Representative Assembly, and treated it as a confirmation of the apprehension entertained then as now by the Liberal party, that an era of reaction was imminent. Contrasted with the weighty arguments of the

Chancellor, the rejoinders of his opponents (e.g. that all the great Constitutional States, and even most of the smaller ones, convoke their Parliaments annually) must be reckoned as mere strings of sonorous but empty phrases—such as, again, "It would be degrading Germany, in a measure, were we to annul its equality of position with the States in question—were we to decree that the great German people, raised to the highest rank amongst nations by the vigorous policy of Emperor William and his great Chancellor, should be mute for a whole year at a stretch, whilst other nations, in the interim, would be making their voices heard . . . To a great, powerful and free people (and such is the German people, since 1871) the yearly convocation of its collective representatives is as natural, self-suggestive and necessary an action as regular breathing is to the individual human being." These, as has been already observed, are idle words and halting comparisons to boot. If, by the alterations of the Constitution suggested by Prince Bismarck, our political life may become more healthy, genuine and vigorous—if our Deputies can learn to think and vote more practically and materially by spending more of their time outside the limits of party-doctrine or the atmosphere of cliques, and inside the realm of popular interests—if, consequently thereupon, the nation can be induced once more to take interest in the performances and shortcomings of the gentlemen in the Leipziger Strasse, we shall certainly not be degraded, but promoted. Other people, like the French, English, Belgians, Dutch and Italians, cannot be compared with us in this matter, for they know no duplex Legislations, no small Parliament side by side with a great one. There can really be no question of "shutting the nation's mouth" by adopting Bismarck's notion; at the most it may be said that political parties would be con-

strained to hold their tongues for a year, and even that would only be partially the case; for meanwhile the freedom of the press places journalism at their disposal. Finally, supposing the Government stood in need of support on the part of public opinion (to a certain extent concentrated in the Reichstag) it could at any time have recourse to the expedient of convoking the people's representatives in session extraordinary. Therefore neither the nation's honour nor its rights are prejudiced by the proposal in question, whilst the objections by which it was encountered emanate simply from the fears of conceited and restless party-leaders, lest something natural should be introduced into the unnatural conditions of party-life—lest reality should gain ground against the theories cherished in political "fractions"—lest the domineering influence of the Berlin *doctrinaires* should suffer abatement—lest the greater number of Deputies should move about, take observations, become practically useful and form independent judgments throughout sixteen or seventeen months (instead of four of five, as heretofore) not in their own *entourage* of political fogginess, but in the fresh air, amongst practical men—in a word, in the sphere of the real people, not in that described as such by tribune orators and by the press. But another argument in favour of the contemplated reform deserves attention. The ever-varying connection existing between the Imperial Budget and the Budgets of the German States belonging to the Federation render it urgently desirable that this connection should be simplified and facilitated by making the Imperial Budget biennial, instead of annual. In days gone by the Diets of the respective States were dependent upon the decision of the Reichstag, as far as the matricular contributions were concerned; and this is more than ever the case now that the Customs' Tariff has

materially altered the conditions of the Budget. The Empire has to allot incomes to its component States, and to take back a portion of those incomes as contributions to the Imperial Budget. It is therefore impossible to establish the debit and credit of each individual State unless the Imperial Budget be settled and brought out a good while previously. In other words: since it has been determined to divide the surplus of the Customs' Dues and Tobacco Duty amongst the Federal German States, after deducting 130 millions of marks for the Empire, it is in the highest degree desirable to settle the Imperial Budgets for a longer period than one year, in order that the individual States may be enabled to make a correct estimate of the sums which are to be placed at their disposal out of the surplus. It is in the interest of a well-managed financial administration that the individual States should not detain in their Exchequers sums of money, confided to their keeping, but which they are hindered from using because they do not know what part of the funds in question may be claimed by the Empire. Were the Imperial Budget fixed for two years, it would be possible to keep the Imperial finances and those of the individual States distinct, as they should be, and, by means of these latter, to put the population of Germany at large in possession of the benefits which should have accrued to it from Financial Reform. The prolongation of Parliament's legislative period bears close relation to that of the Budget period. It will be pretty generally admitted, in principle, that it is by no means agreeable to be compelled to dance attendance upon the ballot-box every three years; and all those who wish for a vigorous Parliament could scarcely fail to be delighted if the Deputies of the Realm were elected for a longer period than they are at present. As for the people, it is heartily weary of so

much electioneering, as is sufficiently demonstrated by its slender participation in the elections, and would be thankful were the sacrifices of time and money exacted from it by a General Parliamentary Election inflicted upon it at longer intervals. There is really only one point upon which it is possible to differ. In England, a new parliament is only elected in every seven years; in Austria, the elective element in the Reichsrath is renewed once in six years; in Germany, the Chancellor asked for fresh elections every four years, instead of every three. Why not every six or seven, whilst he was about it?

From Bismarck's point of view, Parliamentary freedom of speech ought not to be unrestricted. On one occasion he declared to the Prussian Chamber of Deputies, "You can speak out your opinions as you please; but calumnies, insults, and offences are acts, not opinions; acts of the class for which punishments are provided by the Penal Code; and, in my judgment, the Prussian law does not protect you against the consequences of such acts. If your motion (in favour of unlimited liberty of speech) had any legal foundation, the members of both Houses of the Diet would have the advantage over all their fellow-countrymen of possessing such a prerogative as was never conceived in any civilised realm by the most Quixotic fancy of an arrogant patrician. Article 2 of the Constitution would have to be written anew and in the following terms: 'All Prussians are equal in the eyes of the law; but the members of both Houses of the Diet have the right to insult and caluminate their fellow-countrymen without being held responsible for so doing by any authority other than that embodied in the ordinary Rules of the House.'" In 1868 he still adhered firmly to the conviction expressed above, but refrained from giving utterance to "the theoretical sentiment of wounded

consciousness of justice" which had previously inspired him, in order to avoid troubling the understanding arrived at between the Government and the Liberal majority of the Lower House and Reichstag, as well as retarding the completion of the North-German Federal Constitution. In 1879, however, he laid before the Reichstag a draught measure according to that Assembly the power to inflict punishment upon its members in addition to the disciplinary privileges with which it had theretofore been invested. In the preamble of this Bill it was observed that "the arrangements obtaining up to that time had resulted in a practical guarantee of impunity—that the grossest excesses remained unpunished in the House itself, and were disseminated outside the House by the press without incurring penalty or hindrance. The present Regulations of the House," continues this preamble, "are inefficient to prevent the injurious and even dangerous effects produced outside the walls of the Chamber by the violent utterances of the Deputies. For the publicity of our Parliamentary proceedings and the constitutionally guaranteed irresponsibility of the speakers, as well as of the published reports of their speeches, results in the dissemination throughout all classes of society in Germany of remarks and orations (pronounced by Members of Parliament), which—were they not uttered under the ægis of the irresponsibility accorded to the oratorical tribune and to the press, would expose orators and press alike to criminal proceedings, in conformity with the prescriptions of the Common Law. . . . The evil in question has become more conspicuously apparent since the elections brought into this House certain Deputies who deem themselves justified in availing themselves of the freedom of speech, guaranteed to them by the Constitution, to set forth theories respecting the State and society at large, which are eminently

calculated to interfere with the stability of both." The preamble concludes as follows: "The measure submitted to you seeks to remedy a condition of the laws repugnant to the dictates of justice, by investing the Reichstag itself with disciplinary powers providing it with the means of vigorously repressing these excesses. But it must not be ignored that even this remedy appears by no means adequate to deal with such serious violations of justice, which are only expiable by the infliction of criminal punishments at the hands of ordinary judges." The Reichstag did not acquiesce in the above proposal, which, moreover, stirred the Liberal newspapers up to fiery outbursts of moral indignation. And yet it was justified by experience.

Our Deputies seem unable to forget the habits of their student-days. Just as Parliamentary cliquedom—in which absolute fidelity to party traditions and rules is an elementary condition of being, and new members are subordinate to their older colleagues as the "Fuchs" is to the "Altes Haus" in the University—is to a certain extent a reproduction of the goings-on practised by the students' *corps* and associations, so the skill of fence, for the display of which such ample opportunity is afforded by the Parliamentary institution known as "personal observations," is a lingering reminiscence of university life. In exercising this skill the Deputies are too frequently "personal" in the worst sense of the word, sometimes even malignant and spiteful—now and then insolent, brutally insolent. Men assail their adversaries (altogether forgetting that they are colleagues as well) with cutting phrases, which are swiftly returned, like sword-flashes in a duel; members speak on purpose to demonstrate their combativeness, to prove that their wit is at once brilliant and incisive, and, if possible, to enjoy the satisfaction of having copiously bled their opponents. The

real matter at issue is only a slight and passing consideration. Were these word-encounters always carried through with harmless good-humour, in a graceful style, and with subtle ingenuity, little could be said against them, although they are generally the outcome of mere vanity; indeed, they might be welcome from time to time as a sort of relief to the interminable, dry and vacuous juridical word-sifting into which our debates not seldom degenerate. But what shall be said of a Deputy who, when one of his fellow-legislators does not happen to have caught his meaning, shouts out to him, "I am sorry that your intelligence is so limited?" Why not at once call him a "stupid fellow?" One is as bad as the other. And is it possible to blame any man thus attacked if he reply to such a Parliamentary monster, "You cannot insult me?" Such episodes have frequently occurred. But all this is in bad taste—these are manners which may suit a House of Representatives or Senate, in Washington or elsewhere, but not our Parliaments, which should the more carefully refrain from them because called upon to set shining examples of morality, polite behaviour, and humane consideration for the feelings of others, to manifold institutions of public life—to Municipal Councils, popular gatherings and the Press. But neither should it be permissible to our Deputies to wound the feelings and hurt the honour of persons who have no connection with the Legislative Bodies. It is well known, however, that they have frequently done so. Does this hold good in common justice? Should those very men who make our laws, and who, precisely upon that account, should be the first to observe them with conscientious exactitude, retain the prerogative of behaving as if they did not exist? Shall he who finds the protection of the law withheld from him when he is insulted and calumniated in Parliament, and sees his name befouled in news-

paper reports of the debates, seek his remedy in the columns of the press, and endeavour to pay out his calumniator in kind? Is he to adopt other means of obtaining satisfaction —the pistol or the horsewhip? Or, like the Deputy already referred to, is he to say, "Herr X—— cannot insult me in Parliament or in the Diet, because—well, because I cannot legally call him to account; because the principle of equality before the law does not apply to him; because, in a word, he is an exempt?" How if the offended person should not think fit to put forward these reasonings? What, in any case, becomes of the dignity of Parliamentary Assemblies, which the Liberals talk so much about and are so anxious to see preserved? If the oratorical style cultivated by champions of the Progressist party and their neighbours on the Social-Democratic benches be further promulgated, shall we not by-and-bye be compelled to interpret the expression "Parliamentary"—hitherto synonymous with well-bred, considerate or forbearing—as meaning the exact converse of gentlemanly qualities? But, it will be said, the question is surrounded by grave difficulties. The representatives of the people are constitutionally entitled to say what they please; Parliamentary debates are public, and the Press has the right to put them in circulation as long as it reproduces them with complete exactitude. No "Regulations of the House" can alter or interfere with these privileges. The only means afforded by those Regulations, either in the Reichstag or Landtag, of checking oratorical misconduct, are in the first place, a call to order, and secondly, prohibition of further speech upon the subject under discussion. With respect to the latter measure the President, before enforcing it, is obliged to consult the House; whereas he may be guided by his own judgment in enforcing the former. It might be of some use were the President invested with

power to reduce to silence (immediately after having pronounced the first "call to order" and without asking permission of the House) any member who has been guilty of insulting his colleagues or persons without the House, or has committed any excess of speech which, had he not been a Deputy, would have rendered him liable to prosecution. Thus many disagreeable episodes might be averted: but the remedy would not be a sufficient one. For the insult, the objurgation that would be punishable by law, if pronounced outside the Legislature, would have obtained world-wide publicity, unhindered and exempt from penalty, through the press. During subsequent discussions and debates upon other subjects it might be repeated and travel anew through the columns of the newspapers, thus doubling and tripling its pernicious effect. As, therefore, in 1879, and even up to the present day, no other means within the internal regulations of the House have been found available to remedy this manifest evil, it becomes necessary to recur to special legislation; and in that direction the Chancellor's motion offered facilities for an arrangement which might have been readily adopted, had Parliament displayed more good will, less self-sufficiency and less aversion to self-imposed but salutary restrictions.

Our Parliaments suffer from another shortcoming, strongly condemned by the Chancellor's political creed, and against which no inconsiderable measure of activity on his part has been directly or indirectly exercised. German Legislative Bodies appear to be governed, or at least powerfully influenced, by the belief that all political questions—especially those connected with the Constitution—may be solved by applying formal rules to them. Not only the Progressists, but leaders of less "advanced" groups as well, are guided by a desire to incorporate the multiplicities of our national

life in a lifeless written code of laws. In other words, we observe that jurisprudence occupies by far too prominent a position in the ranks of our Liberal parties, and consequently in the proceedings of our Parliament and Diets, making itself felt throughout the debates in the shape of special-pleading. The *Rechtstaat*, or Realm of Justice—more or less clearly and intelligently comprehended by those Deputies, many in number, belonging to the attorney or judge class—were it purely a juridical commonwealth representing the exclusive rule of jurists, would be the exact contrary of that which its advocates in Parliament and the Press are bent upon bringing to pass. Its establishment would entail the enthralment and paralyzation of those forces and classes existing in the State side by side with the legal profession, and having just as good a right as this latter to insist upon the development and recognition of their interests. This endeavour to constitute a Realm of Justice, or rather a Realm of Law, is in no way more wholesome or righteous than that of the theologian to establish a State the Government of which shall be administered in conformity with theological views—or than the efforts of Rome to invest the Church with political sovereignty—or than any scheme for the creation of a civil Commonwealth, in which the feudal lord, the wholesale merchant, or the wealthy financier shall exclusively decide what is or is not to be done.

Looking back at the last two decades, we perceive that the views and action of the juridical element in our Parliaments has not only directed the course of legislation too absolutely, but that it has exercised a cramping and obstructive influence upon the conduct of State affairs externally, through its habit of judging and dealing with public questions and relations from a pettifogging point of view. Let us recall to memory, for instance, the Schleswig-

Holstein affair, in which (in the opinion of Ducal lawyers then acting as Ministers) the Dueppel entrenchments were not taken by Prussian troops, but by the Augustenburg Charter of Rights—i.e. by a mouldy old parchment, not respected even by the worms—and in which that Charter was held in higher esteem by the Prussian Party of Progress than Germany's right to collect her forces and Prussia's duty to exert them. Let us remember how, when it became necessary to take measures for withstanding Rome, even National-Liberal politicians—Deputy Bamberger, for instance,—protested against "shattering the foundations of the German Realm of Justice with the second paragraph of the Jesuit-Law." Let us not forget the pedantry that opposed the prolongation of the provisional *régime* in the Imperial Provinces (Elsass and Lothringen) merely because it desired to subject them to the "legal form of compulsion." Think of the last debates of the Committee appointed to consider the Bill prepared by the Government with a view to checking the misdeeds of Social-Democracy. It was unanimously admitted by the members of that Committee that the misdeeds in question constituted a real danger to the State, and that it was imperatively necessary to furnish the Government—as the guardians of the nation's paramount interests—with implements and weapons for the obviation of that danger; but the legal element in the Committee shook its head, fumbled amongst the pages of its musty old law-books, and finally fought with all its might against the Chancellor's proposals and demands, on the ground that it could not possibly approve of an "exceptional law" being set up over the prescriptions of the "common law." And when the speeches expounding this view came to an end, other grave scruples arose. The whole world knew perfectly well, thanks to history and to the utterances of the Revolutionists

themselves, what Socialism and Communism meant. But our jurisprudents could not find a place for them in their herbarium of dried-up notions, until they should be "accurately defined." As if there were not thousands upon thousands of things here below that are not susceptible of being as clearly and perfectly expressed by definitions and formula as they are felt in the depths of human sentiment and consciousness; as if a Government which had identified itself with freedom and order could not have been credited beforehand with a high degree of penetration; as if the Parliamentary jurists would not be compelled to borrow all that might really be worthy of attention in their definitions and logical deductions from the feelings and convictions resulting from practical experience! It was when the right of appeal against the action of the Repressive Statutes came to be discussed that parliamentary pettifoggery most vehemently showed what it was made of. Federal Law, Particular Law, Penal Law and Civil Law were marched across the stage in long procession, and the Party of Progress worked itself up to a state of excitement that prompted it to skip over some of its fundamental principles in a highly comic manner; for instance, the Progressists, who theretofore had demanded that all political offences should be tried by juries—that is to say, by persons forlorn of juridical training—insisted that the Court of Appeal should be exclusively composed of legal officials.

The correctness of the axiom "*Justitia est fundamentum regnorum*" is beyond a doubt. Justice is the basis of the State. But that which is animate and creative in the latter is quite another thing, and mere legal erudition has no business to regard itself as the basis of a political community. The creative element is the outcome of the nation's collective entity; statesmanship shapes its products,

registers the result of its manipulation, and groups them in orderly succession, conformable to law. The circumstance that an exaggerated importance is attached in our Parliaments to legislative and judicial activity does not result alone from the predominance of the juridical element amongst our Deputies. It is, as Held remarks in his "Staat und Gesellschaft," a characteristic of our age, having its *point de départ* in France—in the French Revolution—and its offspring are the theories of "the sovereignty of the law and the judicial bench," the punctilious distinction drawn between the administration of justice and governmental administration, between the legislative and executive, the accumulation of codes, the passion for making laws (against which Bismarck took his stand in his above quoted speech of March 10, 1877) and the extravagant weight attributed to mere legal formalities. Plato himself pointed out that laws did not constitute the entire existence of a State, and more recent writers—among them *doctrinaires* of the purest water, such as Constant—have given utterance, perhaps unconsciously, to the same conviction. If they were in the right, it cannot be a necessary peculiarity of modern States that they should pass their whole lives in devising and maintaining laws. According to Held, the differences existing between the laws and views of justice obtaining amongst all civilised peoples are but slight ones. This may also be said of their public rights; for, with the solitary exception of Russia, every country in Europe is constitutionally governed. But that fact does not annul the individuality of any one of the States in question; wherefore "the peculiarities of race-individualities must not be inferred from the expression of their convictions with respect to justice, as put forth formally in their laws, but rather from their inward comprehension of the idea of justice, from the manner and measure of its

agency throughout the people's life, from each nation's fundamental ideas, not to be juridically formulated, and from all the many things which are likewise unsusceptible of juridical formulation, but are closely connected with the more deeply-seated national peculiarities generated by those fundamental ideas and thereby invested with an inward importance." A great number of important matters cannot be completely or even partially settled by the law; for freedom must prevail throughout the State. No virtue can be legally prescribed or even enforced; for each virtue is the product of the respective individual's moral labour. Which of them could be engendered by statutes, independently of moral family-ties and of home education in religious feeling, uprightness, modesty, strength of character, compassion and other jewels of the soul? And how, at a critical moment, would the State hold its own with mere laws, were its subjects wanting in self-sacrificial patriotism? Of how little worth, after all, are those general principles which are the outcome of legal compulsion! "Woe to the State" exclaims Held, "in which there is no justice or fulfilment of duty save that procurable through the medium of tribunals, and in which judicial decisions are only recognised as authoritative because their execution can be enforced. Individual freedom constitutes not only necessarily a vast realm with which no law can meddle, but a still more spacious field for fair-play considered in connection with the enforcement of the law. This is especially the case as far as those laws are concerned which are framed in conformity with the real notion of a Constitutional State; i.e. a State which relies deeply and weightily upon the consciences of its subjects—which, in utilising its legislative machinery, keeps in view the influence of the whole organic popular life, and is thereby constrained to defer to the

principle of compromise;"—a truth expressed by Bismarck in the words "compromise is the basis of every constitutional government," and by Odilon Barrot in the sentence, "Les réformes ne sont que des transactions." In all States the principle of compromise has been, and is, the support of its organic component parts; but where a constitutional *régime* obtains, the spirit of compromise should inspire the totality of the State's being. "The laws themselves," continues Held, "would lack anything like higher life if they alone constituted the entire existence of a State. For, instead of leaving men free by according to them a sphere of action uninvaded by law, they (the laws) would make them the mere slaves of a number of positive statutes, because they would have to dispense with the right of sanction, a dignified human prerogative, and with the means of achieving an organic and therefore sure development." Such, indeed would be the Justice-Realm (Rechts staat) in its extreme expression. It would be the crystallization, completed at a particular moment and then definitely fixed, of a people's inward higher life, and consequently (in its very topmost stage of development) would entail utter annihilation of individual freedom and of capacity, in men as well as States, for progress. Even the more mildly-framed Justice-Realm —which one hears lauded as the perfection of Constitutionalism, and which does not actually exclude from the State those factors of social life that exist side by side with the law-makers, but insists that social life itself shall concern itself with nothing but the creation, fulfilment and maintenance of laws—is a monstrosity. The object of it is, as Held remarks, to exhibit the Constitutional State as a diametrical contrast to the administrative Police-State, by absolutely dissevering legislation and justice from administration, and enlarging the sphere of the former whilst

proportionately reducing that of the latter. This method is a mixture of truth and falsehood. "For the satisfaction of all State-needs does not lie in the manner of passing a law, nor in the acceptance of a legal force equally applicable to every circumstance with which a State may be called upon to deal; but in this, that things appertaining by the very conditions of their inner nature to legislation and the administration of justice shall only be subordinated to these latter, whilst those matters shall be handed over to government which, for identical reasons, cannot be left to legislation and the administration of justice. The State would suffer equally were one or the other sphere widened or narrowed in discord with the nature of things." Finally, the agency of Providence, in comparison with which all human legislation appears ineffective, is one of the factors by means of which the development of States is achieved. To its sphere of action unquestionably belongs the appearance upon the world's stage of potent personages, alike distinguished by intelligence and force of character—or the peculiar and individual specialities of those who are legally or otherwise called upon to occupy conspicuous and influential positions; and, indeed, the intervention of Providence does not consist in the providential nature of certain men, but in the fact that men equal to dealing with extraordinary circumstances are always forthcoming. The importance of this fact is said to have been diminished by Constitutionalism. Held justly declares this view to be an erroneous one. It is so far correct, that Constitutionalism has annulled or restricted certain purely personal influences—not only evil, but good ones. But, on the other hand, it is untrue that *all* such influences have been or can be done away with by Constitutional institutions; for no one can fail to perceive that those institutions have developed and rendered unavoidable

a number of other personal influences that are actively brought to bear upon the State.

We now come to the leading axioms of our Chancellor's moral code of statesmanship, some of which have been reflected in his above quoted utterances. To think and act in a statesmanlike and politic manner is to know what you want—to think and act in conformity with historical teachings and the nature of things, that is to say, practically, honestly and with foresight, only desiring what is needful, striving to attain what is feasible, and not disdaining that which is good because you cannot achieve what would be the very best. This definition applies no less to the treatment of foreign than of home affairs. Policy takes no cognizance of human feelings; to speak more correctly, it has none, but knows how to utilise those of others for its own purposes. Still less does it give way to passion. It adapts itself to circumstances, after the manner indicated by Schiller:

> "Straight strikes the track
> Of light'ning, or the dreadful cannon-ball.
> . . . . The foot paths trod by men
> With bliss to guide them, are by them pursued
> Along the streamlet's course, the vale's spontaneous windings."

The statesman ignores revenge. He wages war in order to secure peace; avoids it as long as he can do so without injury to his country, and urges it on, when it has become inevitable, upon the principle that timely attack is the best defence. Our Chancellor is a statesman of the very highest rank; firstly, by reason of his indefinable genius and political instinct for finding out means and measures applicable to new political situations; and secondly, because he always regulates his actions in accordance with the above canons of statesmanship. In 1866, he was of opinion that, of the territories then captured by our armies, only Hanover,

Hesse and Nassau (with Frankfurt) should be annexed, in order to fill up the gap existing between the eastern and western moieties of Prussia, and because their populations were upon the whole homogeneous with those of Prussia. He spared Austria, in order not to preclude, by giving her cause to regard Prussia with enduring rancour, the possibility of coming to an understanding with her at some future time. He hurried on the conclusion of peace in order to avert France's participation in the prosecution of the war, because a small French auxiliary force would have sufficed to impart unity and enterprise to the South German troops, which had meanwhile acquired great numerical strength; in making peace he exhibited the utmost consideration for our vanquished South-German foes, thereby ensuring valuable alliances in the future. He did not annex Elsass and a part of Lothringen because they had once been German—"that is a Professor's notion" he observed to us during the war with France—but because the commanding position of Strassburg and the penetrating wedge of Weissenburg cut South Germany off from North Germany in military respects, and exposed the former to sudden inroads. He did not convert those territories into a Prussian province, as many well-meaning patriots desired, but made them Imperial, thus awakening a common interest in those results of conquest through the fact that they became the common property of Southern and Northern Germany, and constituted a strong connecting link between the States situated northward and southward of the Main. Throughout all the negotiations that took place concerning these questions, and others that subsequently cropped up, he displayed the self-restraint, prudence and foresight of a true statesman, as well as the fairness so closely allied to those qualities; in no single instance did he allow himself to be diverted by

sentiment from resolves which appeared to him practical and expedient.

A few of the Prince's verbal utterances are appended in proof of the foregoing assertions. He has often declared that he invariably keeps life and its actual conditions in view—perhaps most pregnantly in the statement that "he had always acted upon grounds that were not discoverable at the green table, but out in the green fields." On the 17th August, 1866, in the Lower House, he gave an account of the policy observed by him at the conclusion of peace, observing; "The next thing we had to do was to lay down firm foundations for the new Confederation. In my opinion, the more extensive they were, the less solid they were likely to turn out; we could not possibly, for instance, exact from such a State as Bavaria conditions we are compelled to impose upon our Northern Confederates. We have established the most important of the foundations in question, in the shape of a powerful Prussia—of, so to speak, a vigorous home-power, vested in the leading State, to which end we have considerably fortified the latter by adding to its immediate possessions. The ties of close alliance, by which we have further sought to unite North Germany, will scarcely prove as strong as that of actual incorporation. However, there were only two or three possible ways of avoiding a repetition of the conditions which had led friendly and kindred races, under the compulsion of their respective Governments, to fall upon the rear of our armies. One of these methods is incorporation and complete amalgamation with Prussia, even against the will of the people—that is to say, of the employés and officers who feel themselves bound by their oaths and fealty to former Governments. We propose to surmount these difficulties in German wise—by treating peculiarities with indulgence and gradually accus-

toming the recalcitrant to our rule—not, as is the custom with Latin people, at a single blow. Another method is the partition of Sovereign rights, in such sort that there may be a military ruler and a civil ruler, governing simultaneously; we shall be compelled by circumstances to make experiment of this method in Saxony.* I formerly entertained a lively

* On the 20th of August Bismarck told the Saxon negotiators that he would only treat with them for peace upon the conditions that the military sovereignty of the King of Saxony should be transferred to the King of Prussia, that the Saxon troops should take the oath of allegiance to the latter monarch, that they should be fully incorporated with the Prussian army, and, finally, that they should be stationed in garrisons without the Saxon frontier. Prussia could not tolerate the further existence of a Saxon army, which—taking into consideration its excellent condition and the valour displayed by it throughout the campaign in Bohemia—would constitute a serious danger, if allied to a first class military power, supposing that Prussia and Saxony should once more fall out at some future time. The Saxons replied that the Constitution of the contemplated North-German Confederation would prevent matters from ever reaching that point, and that, in obedience to their instructions, they were bound to insist upon the conservation of a special Saxon army-corps, as well as of their King's military sovereignty; further, that they could only consent to the absolute subordination of their army to the supreme command of Prussia in case of war and (but under certain limitations) even in time of peace. It would, they added, be a moral impossibility for the King of Saxony to authorise the annihilation, as an army, of troops which had achieved and suffered so much in his cause. Bismarck rejoined, however, that he must abide by his demands, which were not at all suggested by distrust of the Saxon army, but were forced upon him by experience. The present Saxon cabinet might be animated by the best intentions towards Prussia; but those intentions, as far as the future was concerned, were materially valueless. Different views might arise with respect to the framing of the Federal Constitution; some foreign power—Austria, for instance—might take part in the dispute; and in such a case the Saxon army, acting as the vanguard of the Imperial hosts, might prove a very serious consideration. At that moment the Vienna cabinet was pleading on behalf of Saxony, and so was the French Government; all the diplomatic machinery of Europe had been set in motion in her favour, a

predilection for this system. But, judging by the impressions which I derived from the arrangement of the February conditions with Schleswig-Holstein, I fear that such a system will prove a lasting source of uneasiness—a spring of disagreeables that may flow long after the dislike of a new *régime* will have subsided in the absolutely annexed territories . . . But, putting aside my feeling on the subject, the system in question has this disadvantage, that one of the two rulers—the military and foreign one—is bound to appear invariably as a claimant of concession after concession; whereas all the beneficent influences of civil administration remain attributes of the old-established local Sovereign. I regret that we are compelled, as already stated, to make this experiment in Saxony. The third method is the dismemberment of hitherto existing State entities—for instance, the reduction to very small dimensions of Saxony, Hanover, Elector Hesse, &c. This we have disdained. It was with this system that we acquired such dismal experiences in Saxony, in the year 1815. True, the districts then handed over to Prussia have become integral portions of our realm; but from that time forth a

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circumstance which in itself sufficed to prove how dangerous it would be to accede to her terms. This was a point utilised by foreign countries as a lever wherewith to unsettle the consolidation of Germany and to prepare all sorts of embarrassments for Prussia, in case of another war; therefore Saxony must be rendered innocuous. He seems to have adhered to this view of the matter; for when (21 October) Savigny and Stosch concluded a Treaty of Peace with Saxony in which no mention was made of the incorporation of the Saxon troops with the Prussian army, Count Bismarck (who had meanwhile been lying ill at Putbus and had not been kept informed with regard to the negotiations) expressly disapproved of the result in that particular respect—with which result, indeed, he only became reconciled after the establishment of the Empire and of our present military relations with the South-German States.

steadfast dislike to Prussia has been kept up in the portion of Saxony that retained its independence. Upon this account we have now entirely done away with that system, and have placed the interests of the persons to be ruled above those of the dynasty. This may possibly seem like injustice; but policy is not charged with the mission of a Nemesis. We have nothing to do with revenge; it is for us to carry out that which is absolutely necessary to the Prussian State, and we cannot allow ourselves to be guided therein by any dynastic sympathies. Our endeavours have already elicited acknowledgment from the countries they chiefly concern. With regard to our Allies, they were few in number and feeble; but prudence, as well as duty, ordains that we should keep our word, even to the least of these. The more implacably Prussia demonstrates her resolve to sweep her enemies off the map, the more punctually must she fulfil her promises to her friends. Faith in our political honesty will have great weight in our favour, especially in South Germany."

On the 12th September, 1866, in answer to Deputy Schulze, who had found all manner of fault with the Federal Treaty of that year, Bismarck said: "Amongst other matters censured by the honourable member is this: that there is no mention in the Federal Treaty of Consular representation, handed over exclusively to Prussia, whereas the right to be diplomatically represented abroad is retained by the other Confederate Governments. Gentlemen, in putting forward such a claim you exaggerate the importance of diplomacy. I remember well how the most favourable opportunity for negotiating with the German Princes upon this subject was lost. Governments attach an altogether disproportionate weight to this particular privilege and can only with the greatest difficulty be induced to forego it. I

say an altogether disproportionate weight; for if the standing of a realm be really so important that foreign countries are bound to treat it with consideration, an officer, a merchant or a private gentleman will suffice to maintain all necessary relations, and may be received by the Sovereign, if desirable, upon any insignificant pretext. If, however, the position of the Sovereign in question be of no great importance, he may send as many Ambassadors as he pleases; it will make no difference; his own Parliament will soon put a stop to his indulgence in such expensive luxuries . . . The last speaker remarked that we have not sufficiently profited by our victories from a political point of view. Well, gentlemen, it is easy to make mistakes with respect to the limits prescribed by conquest, and the future will show whether or not we have been in error. We believe that results of the war have put us in possession of what we require—or at least of its groundwork—to make arrangements that shall be at once durable, and in keeping with the desire of the nation."

Relative to the conquest of Elsass-Lothringen, the Chancellor (May 2, 1871), expressed himself in the Reichstag as follows: "In the course of centuries our wars with France had resulted in the establishment of a geographico-military frontier-line which teemed with temptation to France and with menace to Germany; and I cannot more aptly characterise the situation in which we—particularly Southern Germany—found ourselves than in the words of an extremely clever South-German Sovereign, addressed to me by him at the time when Germany was being urged to take the part of the Western Powers in the Crimean War, although in the opinion of her several Governments she had no substantial interest whatsoever in the prosecution of that struggle. I can give you his

name; it was the late King William of Wuertemberg who said to me: 'I am quite of your opinion that we have no interest in mixing ourselves up in this war. But should we fall out with the Western Powers upon the subject—should matters come to that pass—you may count upon my vote in the Federal Council up to the date at which war shall break out. Then, however, the affair will assume quite another aspect. I am resolved to adhere as strictly as anyone else to the engagements I have undertaken. But beware of taking men for anything else than what they really are. Give us Strassburg, and we will unite to encounter any eventuality; but as long as Strassburg remains a sally-port for a permanently armed Power, I must continue to entertain the apprehension that my country will be overrun by foreign troops before the German Confederation can come to my aid. I shall not object for a moment to eat the dry bread of exile in your camp; but my subjects will write to me, and you will be pestered with applications to bring about a change in my resolve. I do not know what I shall do; I do not know whether everybody will exhibit the necessary firmness. But the main point is Strassburg; for until that city shall become German it will always stand in the way of Southern Germany devoting herself unreservedly to German Unity and to a German national policy.' The question is, how to obtain hostages, wherewith to guard against invasion; they must be of a territorial nature—guarantees given by Foreign Powers can avail us but little, for guarantees of this description are often, I regret to say, supplemented by declarations that curiously impair their value . . . Other arrangements were suggested; we were recommended, from several quarters, to content ourselves with the war-expenses and the razing of the French fortresses in Elsass and Lothringen. I steadfastly opposed this, as an

unpractical expedient; I did so in the interest of the maintenance of peace. It would be instituting servitude on foreign soil, and inflicting an oppressive and distressing burden upon those affected by it, as far as their feelings of sovereignty and independence were concerned. The cession of the fortresses will scarcely be more deeply resented than would be a foreign prohibition to construct defensive works within the boundaries of one's own territory . . . Another expedient would have been to convert those provinces into a neutral State, like Belgium or Switzerland. By that means a chain of neutral States, reaching from the North Sea to the Swiss Alps, would have been created, which would certainly have rendered it impossible for us to attack France by land, inasmuch as we are accustomed to respect treaties and neutralities, and, moreover, should have been separated from France by the intervening space in question. But France would in no way have been hindered thereby from carrying out the project entertained by her during the last war, i.e., of sending her fleet with an expeditionary force to our coasts, or of landing French troops on the coasts of her allies, thence to invade our country. France would have been endowed with a girdle protecting her from us; whilst we, as long as our fleet should not have become equal in strength to that of the French, should have remained vulnerable from the sea. This objection, however, came second in order; the first was, that neutrality is only maintainable when a population is resolved to establish itself in an independent neutral position, and, at need, to defend that position by force of arms. It could not be expected that this would proximately prove the case with a newly-constituted neutral Elsass-Lothringen; on the contrary, it appeared more than probable that the strong French element remaining in that country and likely to remain

there for a long time to come, would (in the case of another Franco-German War) coerce the 'neutral State,' whoever its sovereign might happen to be, into joining France again . . . We therefore had no choice but to transfer those provinces, together with their mighty fortresses, to German custody, with the double object of utilising them as a powerful *glacis* of defence against France, and of pushing back, to the extent of a few days' march, the starting-point of French attacks upon Germany."

In September, 1870, the *National Zeitung* complained of the considerate treatment accorded to the captive Emperor of the French. "Nemesis," it observed, "should have been less polite to the man of the 2nd September, the promulgator of the *Loi de Sûreté*, the author of the Mexican tragedy, the instigator of this gruesome war." "Popular feeling" considered that the victors had been by far too chivalric in their behaviour towards the vanquished. Bismarck by no means shared this view. "Popular feeling, public opinion," he said, "always take that line. People insist that, in conflicts between States, the conqueror should sit in judgment upon the conquered, moral code in hand, and inflict punishment upon him for what he has done, not only to the victor himself, but to third parties as well. This is an altogether unreasonable demand. Punishment, reward and revenge have nothing to do with policy. Policy must not meddle with the calling of Nemesis, or aspire to exercise the judge's office. That is Divine Providence's business. It is not for policy to avenge what has been done, but to take care that it be not done again—to simply and solely, under no matter what circumstances, occupy herself with the question 'What, in this matter, is to the advantage of my country, and how can I realise that advantage in the best and most productive manner?' In

such a case as the one referred to, the question would be, 'Which of the two will be most useful to us—a badly-used Napoleon or a well-used Napoleon? It is by no means impossible that he may one day rise to the surface again.'"

The Chancellor expressed himself in a similar sense at Versailles with respect to a remark made by his cousin, Count Bismarck-Bohlen, upon the arrest (October, 1870) of Jacoby, to the effect that "he was glad they had shut up that tiresome chatterbox." Our chief replied, "I am not at all glad of it. A mere party-man may rejoice over such an event, because it gratifies his vengeful instincts. A real politician experiences no such feeling. All he asks himself is, 'Is it of any use to ill-treat one's political opponents?'"

Highly characteristic are the Chancellor's pronouncements upon the reception which the treaties, concluded in Versailles (anent the admission of the South-German States into the Northern Confederation), had to expect from public opinion in Germany, and upon the demonstrations that might be looked for—demonstrations which actually came off later on. On November 23, when the Treaty with Bavaria was signed, he said: "The newspapers will not be satisfied with the Convention, and whosoever shall one of these days write the history of our transactions will probably find fault with it. He may say, 'The stupid fellow should have asked for more; he would have got it, they would have been compelled to yield if he had pronounced the words, 'You must!'" But to me it seemed more important that the good people should be thoroughly content with the transaction; what are treaties concluded under compulsion?—and I know that they went away from me perfectly satisfied. I would not hear of putting pressure upon them or of profiting by the situation. The treaty is defective; but it is all the more durable for being so. I

count it amongst the most important of our achievements this year." Whilst taking tea on the evening of December 1, he remarked: "The papers are dissatisfied with the Bavarian treaty. I thought they would be. It displeases them that certain officials should call themselves Bavarians, although conforming to our laws in every respect. The same with the army. Neither are they pleased with the beer-tax; just as if we had not had it for years past in the Customs' Union! They find plenty of other things to grumble at besides, although everything of any real moment has been effected and satisfactorily settled. They behave as if we had been making war against Bavaria, as in 1866 against the Saxons; whereas the Bavarians are acting with us as our allies. Before approving of the treaty they want to wait until they obtain Unity, in a form agreeable to themselves. They will have a long while to wait. Their ways are the ways of postponement; our business is to act with promptitude. Should we hesitate, our enemies will have time to sow tares in our field. The Treaty ensures us a good deal; those who want everything are frequently in the way of getting nothing . . . A Constituent Assembly! And suppose the King of Bavaria should not choose to be elected thereto. The Bavarian people cannot compel him, nor can we."

On February 24, 1871, at Versailles, the subject of conversation being the dissatisfaction of several German journals (amongst them the *National Zeitung*) with the capitulation of Paris, on the ground that they looked forward to the "Brilliant Entry" of our troops into that city as a "military satisfaction" well earned by those valiant hosts, the Chancellor observed: "All that is based upon profound ignorance of the situation before and in Paris. I could have carried it through with Favre; but the populace! They

could dispose of powerful barricades and of three hundred thousand men, one hundred thousand of whom would certainly have showed fight. Enough blood—German blood—has flowed in this war. Had we employed force, the Parisians were in such an incensed temper that much more blood must have been shed. The further humiliation thus inflicted upon them would have been purchased too dearly; we should have acted unpractically and impolitically."

When (December, 1881) Deputy Virchow reproached the Chancellor with inconsistency in having withdrawn from his contest with the Clericals after prosecuting it so long and so vigorously, Bismarck replied: "In every struggle there is a maximum point of violence; but no internal contest between parties and the Government—no conflict of that kind—can be dealt with by me as a lasting and useful institution. I must make war, but solely with the object of obtaining peace. These combats of ours sometimes wax very warm; that they do so is not always my fault alone; but my aim throughout them all is invariably Peace. If I believe that a greater probability of attaining a peaceful solution exists at the present moment than existed when the struggle was at its height, it is clearly my duty to turn my attention to peace—not, like a political brawler, to go on fighting for the sake of fighting . . . If I can bring about peace by an acceptable *modus vivendi*, or even only an armistice, like those heretofore established between ourselves and Rome, and which have endured throughout centuries, I should not be doing my duty did I not close with such an arrangement."

To conclude this exposition of the Chancellor's political creed—the Chancellor has been reproached with believing that Might goes befo e Right, and with openly avowing that

belief. He denied this; but echo, unconvinced, still repeats the accusation. As a matter of fact he never uttered the sentence attributed to him; but what if he had? Would it have been untrue? Is not force—is not the overthrow of obsolete or unnatural rights often far more beneficial than right itself? and who, in certain cases, shall say what really is right? One man's opinion will differ from another's, and both will form their judgments according to their respective conceptions, circumstances and interests; nor does any tribunal exist above them that does not do as they do.

CHAPTER II.

His Religious Views.

It is intended that in this, as well as in the foregoing chapter and those which are still to come, the Chancellor shall characterise himself with respect to the subjects indicated in their headings; to which end we have arranged in groups a number of his public and private utterances. We shall for the future guard more carefully against the fault of indulging in generalisation than has been the case in the extracts by means of which we have endeavoured to depict Bismarck in his character as a politician. The copious material at our disposal, whereby we may be enabled to appreciate the attitude assumed by the Prince towards religion and the Church, must be sifted, and that more carefully than other evidence, also in our possession, bearing upon other traits of his spiritual physiognomy.

One may write a treatise upon Goethe, considered as a politician, a patriot, or a cosmopolite, and only arrive at semi-correct or wholly incorrect conclusions therein, if one fail to regard his declarations of opinion (upon which such a treatise must be founded) in immediate connection with the time and place of their pronouncement, with their object, origin, and relation to one another. They must be judged by the period of development during which the poet and thinker let them fall, by the state of his feelings at that

time; by the influence which may have been exercised upon him by the school of philosophy then prevailing, or the political conditions surrounding him, or the persons to whom he addressed them. Thus only can they be appraised at their just value; thus alone can that which is really weighty and enduring in their totality be made known in its full historical significance. The writer who deals otherwise with his subject—and many have done so—who hunts up evidence and patches it together with the light of preconceived opinions, can just as easily come to the conclusion that Goethe was "the lackey of Princes," a reactionary, an unpatriotic spirit, as that he was exactly the converse of all these. By dealing in such sort with him and quoting certain chapters of his "Wanderjahre," it is easy to convert him into a sort of Socialist of the Fourierist variety. This applies in a still higher degree to his attitude towards religion and the Church. Many passages may be extracted from his poems and correspondence which seem to prove him a heathen or a pantheist; as many more, on the other hand, clearly demonstrating that he was a Christian in thought and feeling. If we recall the closing scene of Faust (Part II.) or certain utterances in "Wahrheit und Dichtung," we may even bring ourselves to regard him as an inspired apologist of Catholicism. The latter utterances (which belong to the year 1812) present an altogether too astounding glorification of the Papal Church's entity and institutions —in particular, of the Seven Sacraments, and, above all, of ordination. But, only a short time previously, Goethe, as a Spinozist, had given expression to a passionate aversion to Christianity, and a little later, as a Persian Dervish, he scoffed at the mystery of the Holy Trinity. What he thought of the priestly mission may be gathered from the words of Eugénie (Die natuerliche Tochter):—

"Den Wunsch der Liebe, die zum All das Eine,
Zum Ewigen das Gegenwaertige,
Das Fluechtige zum Dauernden erhebt,
Den zu erfuellen ist sein goettlich Amt."

It would appear, however, that with respect to Bismarck's religious belief the truth is not so hard to get at as in the case of Goethe; for we but seldom come across utterances of his in that direction which are not readily reconcileable with one another, and never meet with any of his reflections upon heavenly matters in direct contradiction to other such, previously by him enounced. Nevertheless, before utilising the materials with which he has supplied us, in the shape of letters, private conversations and public speeches, we must not omit to answer as well as we can the questions above indicated, and possibly to put forward a few others.

Imprimis, it may be confidently assumed that Bismarck has not always entertained the same view of these matters, and that he has never been quite able to make up his mind about them. He himself acknowledges that, in religion as well as in politics, he has successively arrived at different stages of development. First of all he passed through a rationalistic phase; then came a time during which he was an unbeliever, or, at least, experienced no religious requirements at all; later on he gave expression to such decided opinions that no doubt could be entertained as to his views, obviously those of a man whose standpoint was Christian and even Confessional; and of late years he appears to have retained only as much positive belief as entitles us to consider him a profoundly religious spirit, believing firmly in God, heavenly order and a personal existence continued after death; doing his duty in conformity with this faith, and deriving from it strength wherewith to fulfil his earthly mission; but making small account of creeds, absolutely

condemning intolerance, and exhibiting no very conspicuous yearning to fortify his soul with ecclesiastic observances or by partaking freely of the Means of Grace.

The outward influences and inward circumstances and conditions that led to these transitions are to some extent easy of recognition. The Prince's youth was passed in a time when rationalism still ruled throughout large circles of society. His mother was a remarkably intelligent and enlightened woman; his father was a man of feeling, but experienced no very deeply-seated craving for acquaintance and consonance with the supernatural world. The schools in which their son underwent his primary education were by no means calculated to awaken or strengthen in him religious sentiments or aspirations. Still less so was the immediately subsequent period of his life, during which he attended the University and was surrounded by friends and acquaintances. That was the time when, by all manner of eccentricities, he earned the nickname of "the Mad Squire" (*Der tolle Junker*); when his psychic condition was one of fervent paroxysm and storm, full of arrogance and mischief. And yet that very time was not totally devoid of efforts on his part to attain higher and better things; it ended, indeed, in disgust with his own conduct and in an eager longing to flee from the vexations that conduct had brought upon him. Speaking of the gloominess that pervades the works of English poets, Goethe says: "How many of them have led dissolute and intemperate lives in their youth, and have at an early age felt themselves justified in proclaiming the vanity of all earthly things." This sentence applies to Bismarck's nature, which, even during that tempestuous time, was fundamentally a serious one. Possibly he was to some extent under the influence of the very poems alluded to above. In the mean time he had become acquainted

with Spinoza's works; and although we do not know how far he adopted that philosopher's views of things in general, we may fairly assume that they produced some effect upon him, and contributed to the pessimism which took possession of him about that time and continued long afterwards to darken his soul. His physical conditions also were such as to superinduce a state of mind to which the world appeared barren and mournful. In a letter addressed to his sister (August 1846) he signed himself, half in jest, half in earnest: "Thy consumptive brother." He also suffered from other ailments that are generative of melancholy—for instance, from stomachic neuralgia. Finally, throughout several years of this particular period of his development, his pecuniary affairs were of a nature to depress his spirits and suggest the desire to seclude himself from society. It was in the temper of mind produced by these untoward circumstances that he expressed the wish to "emigrate to the Polish forests with his last few thousand thalers in his pocket, in order there to commence a new life as a simple farmer and hunter." Such gloomy thoughts as those over which he then brooded might have prompted any other man—particularly a Roman Catholic—to set up as a hermit with a hair-shirt, or to enter a monastery in which the strictest discipline was enforced.

Thus Otto von Bismarck, then approaching his thirtieth year, was more than sufficiently prepared to enter upon another stage of his psychical existence; and we shall not be far wrong in assuming that his affection for the young lady who subsequently became his wife conducted him thitherwards, or caused the seed to sprout which had been sown in him by others. Johanna von Puttkamer was the daughter of pious parents, powerfully moved by the spirit of Quakerdom. That the "Kneiphof Squire"—the young man destined to develop into the "Iron Chancellor"—

should have been accessible to that spirit, will not surprise anyone who has read the above paragraphs; for his being so was consistent with a tender trait that has not infrequently made itself manifest in his character. We have no reason to believe that he took delight in the sickly sweetnesses of Quakerdom; but it is probable that he became deeply interested in the more wholesome teachings of that particular form of pietism. Even Goethe the "Heathen" was greatly attracted in his younger years by the system of fraternal communities—"this Society gathered together under the banner of Christ."

Meanwhile the number of pious, or at least of church-going families had considerably increased within the circles of the Prussian nobility. After the accession to the throne of Frederick William the Fourth, it was regarded by many as the result of irresistible inward impulse, and by others as a mere fashionable movement, that the moral *terrain* occupied by the higher social classes—thitherto planted with rationalistic theories or with the ideas of Rousseau and Voltaire—should suddenly be flooded and drenched by supranaturalistic, pietistic, and orthodox inundations. Rationalism was much too flat, dry and sterile; it was by no means æsthetic, and had become rather vulgar; it had failed to move the heart or excite the fancy; it was too near akin to the Liberalism then endeavouring to do away with the scanty remains of such feudal rights as had been spared by the Stein-Hardenberg enactments. Hegel's doctrine was not suitable to ladies, or to the men of sentiment associating with them; and it had put forth a shoot, in the shape of Young-Hegelism, which threatened existing institutions more imminently than did the teachings of Rationalism itself. Revolution was looming like a thunder-cloud in the western and southern horizon; to many anxious spirits Christianity,

with its lessons of self-denial, humility and godliness, seemed the only power capable of averting the menacing danger. Along the whole line of defence, from Bunsen to Stahl and Gerlach, it became the practice—imitated from the very highest personages—to speak in unctuous phrases. The ancient dogma of Original Sin, of the inborn sinfulness of human nature, was once more dug up and thrust into the foreground. Everything in the visible world from the time of the Fall was pronounced to be evil. Whatever was not in diametrical opposition to Nature was declared to be wicked —self-satisfaction, the most heinous of crimes; salvation could not be achieved by inward means—it could only reach one from above.

Bismarck, shortly before his marriage, was introduced into circles in which ideas of this class were prevalent, through making the acquaintance at Zimmerhausen of his friend Moritz von Blankenberg's wife, a daughter of Von Taddens of Triglaff, described by Hesekiel as "a pious and clever lady." Later on, he encountered the same views in the Puttkamer family and elsewhere; such was the moral atmosphere in which this young nobleman thenceforth chiefly lived and breathed for several years. The Quaker view of mankind and the world became closely blended with the sad, discontented, yearning sentiments by which he had been previously animated. We have reason to believe that Bismarck felt himself exalted and inwardly deepened, as well as emancipated from his retrospective sufferings, by the positive opinions he derived from the view in question. He had felt a huge void within him, which by this means was beneficently filled up. He was blest in having become a Christian; and that joy was amalgamated with yet another—his felicity in married life.

In a letter written to his wife from Frankfort in July 1851

he said: "The day before yesterday I was at Wiesbaden, and contemplated the scene of former follies with mingled melancholy and precocious wisdom. If it would only please God to fill with his bright strong wine this vessel, in which, fourteen years ago, the champagne of youth frothed over so uselessly, leaving only stale lees behind! Through how many transformations have my views of worldly matters passed during the interval, each of which, in turn, I deemed conclusively correct! how much seems paltry to me now that then appeared grand—how many things worthy of respect at which I was then wont to scoff! How many a leaf may sprout, wax green, give shade and wither away in our inner-selves ere other fourteen years shall be past and gone! . . . I cannot understand how any man who thinks about himself, and yet neither knows nor wishes to know anything about God can, for very scorn and weariness, endure to live. I know not how I formerly managed to put up with existence; had I again to live, as then, without thee and the children, I really am at a loss to say why I should not put off this life as though it were a dirty shirt."

About that time he experienced the desire to aid others to attain the standpoint at which he himself had arrived. On a pleasure trip from Frankfort to Ruedcsheim he took his New Testament with him, and held "Christian talk" of an evening on the balcony of the inn with Count Lynar, one of his companions, in the course of which conversation he long and unsuccessfully strove "with the Rousseau-like virtuousness of his (Lynar's) soul."

We may assume that all the external influences which brought about Bismarck's leaning towards Christian thought and action would have proved ineffectual or, at least, would have failed to govern him for any length of time, if the pessimism of his manhood's earlier years had not clung to

him throughout his later life, sometimes thrust down into the depths of his soul, sometimes rising to his lips or pen's point in loud complaint; still further, if Christianity had not appeared to him as the very basis of the State and a bulwark against the assaults of the revolutionary spirit of the age—in other words, a means of defence; and lastly, to speak theologically, had not the belief in a personal God and in the eternal life of man, once adopted by him, served him as compass and guiding-star for his actions, and as a source of strength and comfort in the heavy perplexities and struggles of his career as a statesman.

Christianity is the religion of contempt for mundane things. To it—in contrast to antique Heathendom and to the Renaissance, which regarded Nature as genuine and holy, maintaining a *cultus* of joy in the world, and imparting to virtue, by the aid alike of law and morality, a fully developed and guaranteed force—this earth and the worldly being of mankind is but a vanity of vanities, a vicious and unreal delusion and snare. Real life is only in the other world. But, as already pointed out, the pessimism which has possessed the Prince even in his more advanced years from time to time—probably oftener than we are aware—and still creeps over him in his hours of weariness, is closely akin to this contempt for mundane things. It may be that this state of feeling has to do partly with the condition of his health, and partly with his many vexations, disappointments, and melancholy forebodings. Goethe's observation, in explanation of the mournful tone characterising the majority of English poets, may well apply to Bismarck; viz.:—"How many of them have plunged into worldly affairs, have played a part in Parliament, at Court, in Ministries and Embassies, have distinguished themselves in their country's internal struggles, in conspiracies against

the State and in the overthrow of Governments, and have experienced failure more frequently than success, if not through their own fault, through that of their friends and patrons . . . But even to have been only a spectator of such great events makes men earnest; and earnestness cannot but prompt them seriously to consider the transitory and worthless nature of worldly things." The development of these views is reflected in the lines referred to by Goethe as "terrible:"

> "Then old age and experience, hand in hand,
> Lead him to death and make him understand,
> After a search so painful and so long,
> That all his life he has been in the wrong."

In a word, Bismarck has always suffered at intervals from fits of melancholy; pessimism, like an unresolved minor discord, mars the harmony of his life. Within certain limits we may assume that he is chiefly a Christian because his deep and strong conviction of the finality and worthlessness of mundane existence, in all its varied phenomena, predisposes him in favour of the Christian dispensation.

His private correspondence and verbal utterances afford numerous illustrations of the views entertained by him in the above direction. In a letter to his wife, dated St. Petersburgh, July 2, 1859, we find expressed the weighty scruples suggested to him by "Prussia's policy, ever lapsing more and more into the wake of Austria." He writes as follows:—"The will of God be done! Everything here is only a question of time—races and individuals, folly and wisdom, war and peace, come and go like waves, but the sea remains still." (This image, if not borrowed from a psalm, or from one of the Scriptural prophets, is probably an echo of his Spinozistical studies.) "There is nothing upon this earth but hypocrisy and juggling; and whether this mask of flesh

be torn from us by fever or grapeshot, fall it must, sooner or later. When it does, a resemblance will make itself manifest between a Prussian and an Austrian (if they happen to be of the same height) which it will render it difficult to distinguish the one from the other; the skeletons of fools and wise men present pretty much the same appearance." (See Hamlet in the churchyard.) "From this point of view it is easy to rid oneself of specific patriotism; but it would drive one to despair to believe that our salvation depended thereupon."

In a letter (August, 1861) to his brother-in-law, Oscar von Arnim, whilst endeavouring to console the latter for the loss of a son, he observes :—"We must not attach ourselves to this world or make ourselves at home in it; twenty years hence, or, at most, thirty, we shall be past the troubles of this life, whilst our children will have reached our present standpoint and will discover with astonishment that their existence (but now so brightly commenced) has turned the corner and is going down hill. Were that to be the end of it all, life would not be worth the trouble of dressing and undressing every day." (This is a recollection of a passage in Goethe's 'Egmont').

Since the above letter was written years of brilliant success have passed over the Chancellor's head. He has covered himself with imperishable glory, and raised the German people to a rank amongst nations far surpassing that which it had occupied during foregoing centuries. Many will be of opinion that he should look back to the long list of his deeds and works, as God the Father did, upon the seventh day, to the world He had created. "And God saw all that he had made, and behold, it was good." Perhaps, on the whole, the Chancellor experiences this feeling; but there are moments, from time to time, when it is otherwise with

him—when he labours under depression of spirits, brought about by discontent and dissatisfaction with his achievements and his destiny. To these moments belongs an occurrence that took place in the autumn of 1877. I have related it elsewhere, but think it worth repeating here, as peculiarly characteristic of Prince Bismarck.

It was twilight at Varzin, and he was sitting—as was his wont after dinner—by the stove in the large back drawing-room, where Rauch's statue of "Victory Casting Wreaths" is set up. After having sat silent for a while, gazing straight before him and feeding the fire, now and anon, with fir-cones, he suddenly began to complain that his political activity had brought him but little satisfaction and few friends. Nobody loved him for what he had done. He had never made anybody happy thereby, he said; not himself, nor his family, nor any one else. Some of those present would not admit this, and suggested "that he had made a great nation happy." "But," he continued, "how many have I made unhappy! But for me, three great wars would not have been fought; eighty thousand men would not have perished; parents, brothers, sisters, and widows would not be bereaved and plunged into mourning . . . That matter, however, I have settled with God. But I have had little or no joy from all my achievements—nothing but vexation, care, and trouble." He continued for some time in the same strain. His guests kept silence; and those amongst them who had never before heard him say anything of the kind were somewhat astonished. It reminded one of Achilles, speaking to King Priam in his tent before Ilion.

> "Wir schaffen ja nichts mit unserer starrenden Schwermuth;
> Also bestimmten der Sterblichen Loos, der armen, die Goetter,
> Truebe in Gram zu leben, allein sie selber sind sorglos."

This speech of the Chancellor—the "character of iron,"

the spirit one had accustomed oneself to think of as proudly and sternly certain of itself—sounded (especially with relation to the statue of Victory, stationed in the corner opposite his seat, and making as though it would cast laurels wreaths at his feet) like an echo of the feeling running through the soliloquy, "To be or not to be," in the course of which Hamlet exclaims :—

> "How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable
> Seem to me all the uses of this world !
> Fie on't ! O fie ! 'tis an unweeded garden
> That grows to seed ; things rank and gross in nature
> Possess it merely !"

Still more keenly did all this pessimism of his remind one of that passage in the Koheleth, the author of which makes the Royal Preacher complain in the following terms : "But when I looked at all my works which my hand had wrought, and at the trouble that I had taken, behold, it was all vanity and vexation, and nothing more under the sun." *

What was the cause of his melancholy? Possibly it resulted from physical suffering, which conjures up painful dreams even to the wakeful mind, from excessive irritability caused by overmuch thinking and anxiety, by lassitude, by discords in his nervous system, or perhaps—and this seems to me most probable—by an unwitting outburst and overflow of Christian feeling. One thing is certain—that of late years he has repeatedly expressed himself in words almost identical with those above quoted, and that, upon such occasions, no arguments have availed to soothe him.

His public speeches bear witness that the Chancellor long ago recognised in religion, and especially in Christianity, one of the foundations and bulwarks of justice and the State, a protection against the Revolution on the one

* Ecclesiastes ii.

hand, and against the sentimental humanitarianism that would fain emasculate the penal laws on the other. His frequent reference, in these discourses, to the Christian basis of the Prussian and German State-systems, is a proof of his religious propensities, and still more so of his acquaintance with history. He is not a prophet; his glance is fixed upon the natural coherence of past events. Europe, its culture and its political institutions, form a structure founded upon Christianity, though they have frequently striven with it; and upon that foundation Bismarck takes his stand. On the 15th June, 1847, he said in the United Diet:—"I am of opinion that the conception of a Christian State is as old as the çi-devant Holy Roman Empire, or as all the States of Europe put together; that it is precisely the soil in which those States have struck root; and, that every State, if it wish to ensure its durability and to prove its right to existence, must rely upon a religious basis. For me, the words "By the Grace of God," which Christian rulers append to their names, are by no means an empty sound; I perceive in them the confession that Princes are called upon to wield in conformity with the will of God those earthly sceptres entrusted to them by the Deity. But I can only recognise as God's will that which is revealed in the Christian Gospel . . . If we deprive the State of this religious basis, we shall find that what remains is merely a hap-hazard aggregation of laws—a sort of bulwark against the warring of all men upon one another, erected by antique philosophy. Its legislation will then no longer derive self-regeneration from the springs of Eternal Truth, but from the vague and changeful conceptions of humanity, begotten in the brains of those who may happen to be at its head. How it will be possible, in States of this class, to contend against Communistic notions of the immorality of

property, the exalted moral merit of theft as an endeavour to re-establish the inborn rights of man, if these notions should become prevalent, I cannot surmise; for the propagators of such ideas deem them essentially humane, and, indeed, regard them as the very blossom of humanity."

In the great oration pronounced by Bismarck (15 November, 1849) in the Prussian Lower House against civil marriages and upon the subject of the people's Christian consciousness, we meet with the following characteristic passages:—"I do not believe it is the Legislature's duty to ignore that which the people holds sacred. On the contrary, I believe it to be the mission of the Legislature, as the people's teacher and guide, to act in such sort that popular existence, in its every circumstance, shall lean upon the staff of Faith—not to arbitrarily cast away that staff, wherever it may be to hand, as an useless appendage, thus undermining reverence for the Church and for religious institutions wherever that reverence may have struck root deeply in the life of the people; and this during an epoch which has taught us in letters of blood that wheresoever the freethinkers have succeeded in imparting to the masses their indifference to any and every positive profession of faith, nothing has been left to the people of their Christianity but such insipid dregs as consist in an ambiguous moral philosophy—that there the bare bayonet alone interposes between criminal passions and the peaceful citizen—that there the war of class upon class is no fiction. Take away from a man his belief in the revealed difference between good and evil, and you may possibly succeed in convincing him that robbery and murder will be severely punished by laws which the well-to-do have framed for the protection of their property and persons; but you will nevermore be able to prove to him that any action is in itself bad or good. I

have of late seen many an 'enlightened' friend brought to admit that a certain measure of positive Christianity is necessary to the common man, in order to prevent him from becoming dangerous to human society . . . If we go further in that direction; if we make article 11 (the toleration of all creeds) so far an actual reality that we compel our gendarmes to protect the *cultus* of those democratic visionaries who, during their recent meetings, placed their martyr, Robert Blum, upon a footing of equality with the Redeemer of the World, I still hope to see the day when the ship of the age we live in, with its crew of fools, shall founder on the rock * of the Christian Church; for Faith in the revealed Word of God is more firmly implanted in the people's heart than the salvation-conferring force of an Article of the Constitution."

When (1st March, 1870, in the Reichstag of the North German Confederation) the Chancellor replied to the speeches of certain Deputies who had advocated the abolition of the penalty of death, he observed :—"The impression I have derived from this discussion, briefly summarised, is that the opponents of the death-penalty exaggerate alike the value of life in this world of ours, and the importance of death. I can conceive that capital punishment may appear harder to those who do not believe in the continuance of individual life after physical decease than to those who believe in the immortality of the souls granted to them by God; but, looking more closely into the matter, I can scarcely even accept that view of it. For him who does not believe—as I do, from the bottom of my heart—that death is a transition from one existence to another, and that we

* It is quite obvious that Prince Bismarck did not mean the "Rock of Peter" at the Vatican; and so he explicitly stated to the Ultramontanes on the 17th December, 1873, when Deputy von Gerlach reminded him of the above utterance.

are justified in holding out to the worst of criminals in his dying hour the comforting assurance, *mors janua vitæ;* I say that, for him who does not share that conviction, the joys of this life must possess so high a value that I could almost envy him the sensations they must procure to him. His occupations must appear to him so teeming with promise of reward that I cannot realise to myself what his state of feeling must be, if, believing that his personal existence terminates for ever with his bodily demise, he considers it worth while to go on living at all. I will not in this place refer you to Hamlet's tragical monologue, which sets forth all the reasons capable of inducing him to put an end to himself, but for the contingency of dreaming—perhaps of suffering—after death; who knows what? He who has made up his mind that no other existence succeeds this one, can scarcely expect a criminal—who, in the words of the poet, gazes steadfastly into the night from the Rabenstein, and for whom death is the peace, the slumber yearned for by Hamlet—to carry on the necessary phosphorisation of his brain for any length of time within the narrow limits of a prison-cell, forlorn of all that lends a charm to existence . . . It strikes me, moreover, that the views of the Opposition in this matter are guided by a certain sickly disposition to protect and guard from wrong the criminal more carefully than his victim . . . I am quite prepared to admit that the progressive perfection of human insight and education, all the blessings of civilization which we hear so justly vaunted, and the development of moral culture, have a bearing upon the question at issue (the diminution of crime); but it is that development of moral culture the basis of which can be traced back to the Christianity of our forefathers; which is still quick in every class of the people and keeps up morality at this very time. Compared with that influence, the

abolition of capital punishment has achieved but few and brief experiences in extremely limited districts. For my part, I do not feel justified in making this experiment at the expense of the majority of peaceable citizens."

That the Chancellor, up to the very latest times, has firmly upheld the Christian character of modern States is proved by the speech which he pronounced in the Reichstag, on the 2nd April, 1881, during the debate on the Accidental-Insurance Bill. "I could wish," he observed, "that a State which (however much you may object to the designation 'Christian State') consists in a large majority of Christians, should allow itself to be guided to a certain extent by the principles of the religion we profess, especially with respect to the aid every man owes to his neighbour, and to the sympathy due to the sad fate awaiting infirm old people."

We have no reason, whatsoever, to doubt the absolute sincerity of Bismarck's belief in personal perpetuation after death. But we may be permitted to ask what he—who pronounces Life worthless without the positive conviction *mors esse januam vitæ*—would find to say, were some one to open Goethe's 'Faust' before him, and point to this passage:—

> "Thor, wer dorthin die Augen blinzend richtet!
> Sich ueber Wolken seines Gleichen dichtet!
> Er stehe fest und sehe hier sich um,
> Dem Tuechtigen ist diese Welt nicht stumm.
> Was braucht er in die Ewigkeit zu schweifen?
> Was er erkennt, laesst sich ergreifen."

The following quotation, which partly belongs to the evidence we are enabled to advance in support of our third assumption respecting the causes and motives of Bismarck's religious tendencies, furnishes fresh and convincing proof that, in these respects, he has remained true, in the main,

to his earlier views, although his eyes and ears are closed to anything like indoctrination. In one of the Culturkampf-Debates (10th February, 1872) in the Prussian Lower House, the Chancellor replied to an Ultramontane adversary: "The previous speaker has reminded me of speeches to which I gave utterance in 1849, three-and-twenty years ago. I might dispose of this allusion by simply remarking that I am accustomed to learn something in three-and-twenty years, especially when they happen to be the best years of my manhood; and moreover that I, at least, am not infallible. But I will go a little farther than this. Whatever, in my former utterances, may have applied to a lively profession—to a profession of the living Christian Faith," (here observe the word 'living,' which indicates the converse of dead dogmas,) "I confess quite openly to-day; and I do not flinch from making this profession, publicly or in my own house, at any and every time. But it is precisely my living, Evangelical, Christian faith which imposes upon me the obligation to protect, in every way, the high office confided to me in the country of my birth, to serve which God created me. When the foundations of the State were attacked from the Republican party's barricades, I deemed it my duty to stand in the breach; and if they be attacked from quarters, formerly and even still called upon to strengthen, instead of undermining, the foundations of the State" (the speaker here referred to the Centre, and, in connection with the Schools Inspection Bill, to the Old Conservatives) "you will then also find me stationed in the breach. That is the post assigned to me by Christianity and by my belief."

That Bismarck never scrupled, in cases requiring the sacrifice of his religious convictions to the welfare of the State, to make that sacrifice, he demonstrated in 1873,

when the question of obligatory Civil Marriage was settled. On January 17 of that year he declared in the Lower House that "not readily, but most unwillingly and after a severe mental struggle" he had resolved to recommend the sanctioning of the measure in question to the King; and continued as follows:—"I am not here to propound dogmas, but to transact politics. From the political point of view I have convinced myself that the State—in the situation to which it has been brought by the revolutionary conduct of the Catholic Bishops—is constrained by the dictates of self-defence to enact this law, in order to avert from a portion of His Majesty's subjects the evils with which they are menaced by the Bishops' rebellion against the laws and the State; in a word, that the State is forced to do its duty as far as in it lies."

We now come to the third fundamental principle of Prince Bismarck's religiosity. Beside his strong feeling with respect to the vanity of everything earthly and human—beside the melancholy tendency to a belief in finality that lurks within his breast and from time to time finds loud and lively utterance, exists (at least so we are entitled to conclude from a number of his deliverances) the faith that something Eternal, Enduring and alone truly Real lives and reigns over or in this perishable world. This faith is to him—as pulpit orators would say—a primitive fount of duty as well as of justification; a Divine guiding-star, which never changes its place or alters its light, and upon which he must invariably keep his eyes fixed when called upon to choose the right path among many; a never-failing support, and a treasure—ever attainable by the seeker—of invigoration for the hard-working, struggling human soul. Certainty is the breath of life to a hero. Outside the realm of the finite, vague and indistinct, he must find some ground upon which he

can set both his feet firmly, if he desire to lift the world and remove it to some other orbit. Creative activity is impossible if the convictions of him who would fain exercise it do not repose upon an immovable basis. Luther's whole nature finds expression in the first verse of his hymn "Our God is a firm tower." Other heroes of history—Napoleon, for instance—have looked for the primary cause of all their endeavours within themselves alone—in their desire to become conspicuous, in their yearning for fame and power—and have subsequently imposed it, under other designations, upon their surroundings, their nation and their epoch. Our political Reformer sought and found it where religious men would have sought and found it; it became the source of his devotion to duty, of his strength and comfort in need and danger, and he called it God, Faith or Christianity. Others give it the name of Conscience. But God dwells in the consciences of rising peoples—in their ethics, in that which prescribes to them their path, stimulates and guides them in political life, and irresistibly moves them to act thus, and not otherwise—and the hero is the concentration of this Divine Agent, which he consciously or unconsciously absorbs into and amalgamates with himself, becoming, as in Bismarck's case, absolutely identical with it. Consciously and unconsciously, Bismarck has invariably applied his genius to the service of German conscientiousness and of Prussian sense of duty—has stedfastly laboured, fought and conquered with Kant's categorical imperative. He has often, as we shall shew, directly avowed this, particularly of later years; formerly he gave utterance to it for the most part in theological forms.

Should the reader wish to have all this set forth in simpler, more worldly and more sober terms, perhaps he may find what he requires in the following judgment, pronounced

upon Prince Bismarck's character by a friend of the author: "He (Bismarck) is manifestly a *dilettante* in religious matters; he is no theologian and has not put together for his own use any system of coherent convictions. His religiousness is that of a practical person, who endeavours to cover his rear as best he can. His capacity of achievement is great; but still he feels that he cannot do everything, and that things and circumstances innumerable escape him. When this feeling possesses him, he seeks and finds a supplement to his forces; that supplement which Napoleon I. called *l'ordre des choses*, and Bismarck calls God. Both these great men have now and then felt uneasy, despite all their power and foresight; they have experienced a sense of loneliness, and have plunged from time to time into materialism and generalities, shaking off the fetters of their individual entities. Bismarck owns a God besides himself. Compare with him Goethe, in the pròèm under the heading "Gott, Gemuet und Welt."

> "Im Innern ist ein Universum auch
> Daher der Voelker loeblicher Gebrauch
> Dasz jeglicher das Beste, was er kennt,
> Er Gott, ja seinen Gott, benennt,
> Ihm Himmel und Erde uebergiebt,
> Ihn fuerchtet und, wo moeglich, liebt."

Bismarck's sense of duty, however, is Old Prussian. Kant and Fichte are also Prussians—prophets of the energy of volition. Bismarck seems to me a genial, marvellous personification of Prussia. The real Prussians however are found in the ranks of the lesser nobility, the army and the bureaucracy, such as it has hitherto been. Bismarck is a typical Prussian nobleman, soldier* and official. With all

* In the great speech against Richter and Bamberger, delivered by the Chancellor in the Reichstag on the 14th June, 1882, the following

this, and in requisite contrast to it, he is not wanting in a slight dash of frivolity."

Let the reader combine with the above observations the following evidence, adduced in support of the author's own opinions with respect to Prince Bismarck's religious views.

One day, in the autumn of 1877, as he was showing me his study at Varzin, we came to the gigantic green chimney-piece, on the right of the door communicating with the library. In the centre of this chimney-piece, under an effigy of the German Imperial Eagle, is graven the motto "In trinitate robur." When Bismarck held the post of Envoy to the Confederation at Frankfurt, King Frederick of Denmark conferred upon him the Grand Cross of the Dannebrog Order. Now it is the custom that the name and arms of any person in possession of this decoration shall be set up in the Foundation-Church at Copenhagen, with a motto which must be selected by the person in question and must have a double meaning. "So I hit upon this one," observed the Prince. "'In trinitate robur'—the trefoil, clover, oakleaf, the old device of our family." "And my strength in the threefold God?" I asked. "Quite so; that was how I meant it," he gravely replied.

In a letter to his wife, dated 4 September, 1863, after the dissolution of the Chambers, he wrote :—"God knows what is the good of it. . . By God's help I am well enough; but

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passage occurs: "The first thing said about me when I made my début as a Minister was something particularly flattering to my feelings, i.e.: 'Anybody can see at a glance that he is nothing but a Prussian officer n plain clothes.' I gratefully accepted that definition of my appearance; and my feelings as a Prussian officer, although I only wear the outer insignia of that career, bear me forward higher on the wave of national aspirations and love of my country than any parliamentary attribution I exercise in this place."

humble faith is requisite in order not to despair of our country's future." In another letter, dated 16 May, 1864, and addressed to a Prussian Conservative (Gerlach, be it observed) with regard to the condition of affairs in Schleswig-Holstein (where he avowed, later on, that he had carried out his most brilliant diplomatic campaign) crops up once more his trust in Divine aid, *ut sequitur:* "The longer I am engaged in politics, the less I place faith in human calculations"; and, towards the end:—"You will gather herefrom my view of the matter, as suggested by mere human intelligence; as for the rest, I am animated by an ever increasing thankfulness to God for His support in the belief that He knows how to turn even our mistakes to good account. This I experience daily, to my most salutary humiliation."

When—early in the morning after the battle of Sedan—the Chancellor was summoned by General Reille to meet the Emperor of the French, there lay upon a table beside the bed in which he had slept all night, the "Daily Solutions and Instructive Texts of the Fraternal Congregation for 1870," and on the floor another manual of devotion instituted "Daily Refreshment for Believing Christians." Both these works had been forwarded to the Chancellor from Berlin by some sympathetic soul with the object of keeping him well supplied, whilst abroad, with spiritual nutriment. His manservant stated that "Excellency was in the habit of reading the books in question before he went to sleep."

In 1847 Bismarck concluded a speech in the United Diet with these words: "Do not let us lower Christianity in the estimation of the people by shewing them that their legislators do not regard it as a necessity; let us not rob them of the belief that our legislation emanates from Christian sources, and that the State aims at the realisation

of Christianity, even if not always able to attain that object. When I fancy myself in the position of having to obey a Jew, as a representative of the King's Most Sacred Majesty, I must confess that, were such the case, I should feel downtrodden and crushed; the gladness and high-spirited sense of honour with which I now endeavour to fulfil my duties to the State would depart from me." Compare with this a passage in the Prince's speech (9 October, 1878) in the Reichstag, during the debate on the Socialist Bill, viz.: "If I had come to entertain the belief attributed to these men" (the Social Democrats); "well, I live a life of great activity and occupy a lucrative post—but all this could offer me no inducement to live one day longer did I not, as the poet says, 'believe in God and a better future.'"

The religious feeling with which the Chancellor attributed to God his own capacity for contention and endurance and his faculty for exhibiting activity and patience alike, expressed itself most vigorously and drastically in some after-dinner remarks made by him in Rothschild's château at Ferrières (28 September, 1870), and which were published in the first volume of "Bismarck during the Franco-German War," some of the strongest passages, however, being omitted from that work. He said:—"If I were not a Christian, I would not continue to serve the King another hour. Did I not obey my God and count upon Him, I should certainly take no account of earthly masters. I should have enough to live upon, and occupy a sufficiently distinguished position. Why should I incessantly worry myself and labour in this world, exposing myself to embarrassments, annoyances, and evil treatment, if I did not feel bound to do my duty on behalf of God? Did I not believe in a Divine ordinance, which has destined this German nation to become good and great, I had never taken to the diplomatic trade; or,

having done so, I would long since have given it up. I know not whence I should derive my sense of duty, if not from God. Orders and titles have no charms for me; I firmly believe in a Life after Death, and that is why I am a Royalist; by nature I am disposed to be a Republican. To my steadfast faith alone do I owe the power of resisting all manner of absurdities, which I have displayed throughout the past ten years. Deprive me of this faith, and you rob me of my Fatherland. Were I not a staunch Christian, did I not stand upon the miraculous basis of religion, you would never have possessed a Federal Chancellor in my person. Find me a successor animated by similar principles, and I will resign on the spot . . . How gladly would I retire from office! I delight in country life, the woods and Nature. Sever my connection with God, and I am the man to pack up my trunks to-morrow and be off to Varzin to reap my oats."

In Versailles, on the 30th of January, 1871, the Chancellor delivered a sort of lecture upon his conception of a politician's duty and mission to the Frenchmen who had been sent from Paris to negotiate with him. He observed that consistency in politics frequently resulted in error, obstinacy, and wilfulness. Consistency is apt to blind men and prompt them to ignore the actualities of Life, which incessantly alter conditions and requirements (the Heavenly force and ethical stimulus belonging to the people, designated above—perhaps neither quite aptly nor exhaustively—as the popular conscience). It is necessary that a politician should mould himself in conformity with facts, the situation of affairs, and probabilities; that circumstances, not his opinions (which too frequently are prejudices) should dictate to him how he should serve his country. When he himself commenced his political career, he entertained views and aimed

at objects altogether different from his present ones. He had, however, turned these matters over in his mind, and had subsequently not flinched from sacrificing, partially or entirely, his own wishes to the requirements of the day. He concluded with the axiom "*La patrie veut être servie, et pas dominée*," which, chiefly, by reason of its pregnant form, made a profound impression upon his Gallic guests and hearers. One of these latter remarking that "the word *servie* implied the subordination of the talented individual to the opinions and will of the majority, and that majorities were invariably characterised by a lack of understanding, practical knowledge, and character," the Chancellor answered him very happily, by laying stress upon his consciousness of responsibility to God—which he described as "one of his guiding stars"—and by contrasting *le devoir* (manifestly Kant's categorical imperative) with the *droit du génie* so highly appraised by the Frenchman, as the nobler motive of the two, and that which had the greater weight with himself.

The matter as well as the tone of Bismarck's above quoted utterances have reminded a good many people of Cromwell. Any one who examines them closely, however, will be unable to admit the similarity in question, except under certain restrictions. The Bismarckian deliverances rather resemble those of Carlyle than those of Cromwell. But the founder of Germany's greatness bears a striking likeness—in one respect about to be set forth—to the mighty spirit who exalted England to the rank of an Universal Power. Cromwell, although himself a strict, ardent, and eager Puritan, observed towards Catholics, Quakers, and Jews, a tolerance thitherto unknown in England. Similarly, Bismarck's religious feeling is in no way mixed up with zeal for dogmas; neither is it obtrusive

and intolerant. His sense of fairness—one of the most conspicuous traits of his character—and his political acumen are accountable for this fact. Let every one have his due, as long as that arrangement is not detrimental to the interests of the State. He knows that he "lives amongst heathens;" but he does not choose to "make proselytes."

"Christianity—not the Creed of the Court Chaplains," he once observed to the author of this book, during the winter of 1878–9. In the course of after-dinner conversation (at St. Avold, 12th of August, 1870) reference was made to the Mormons and their plurality of wives, as well as to the circumstance that the Government of the United States tolerated such a sect; and upon that occasion the Chancellor propounded principles extremely favourable to liberty in matters of belief, adding, however, that tolerance must not be expected from one quarter alone. "Everybody has the right to go to heaven his own way," he observed; "but Church property must remain in the possession of those who stick to the old Church, that property's owner. Whosoever chooses to quit the Church must make some sacrifice to his convictions, or rather to his unbelief . . . It is regarded as but a trifling offence in Catholics that they should be orthodox—in Jews, as none at all; but in Lutherans, as a very serious one, and the Church is persistently reproached with exhibiting a spirit of persecution whenever it rejects the non-orthodox. That the truly orthodox, however, should be persecuted and scoffed at by the press and in private life is regarded as quite natural and right." At a later period of the war the subject was again brought upon the *tapis* one evening at table, and once more Prince Bismarck advocated religious tolerance not less uncompromisingly than before. "But," he reiterated, "the 'enlightened' are by no means tolerant. They persecute believers, not with threats of the

scaffold, truly—for that sort of persecution no longer obtains —but with newspaper jeers and scoffs; and as for the people, so far as they are concerned with unbelief, they are now pretty much what they formerly were. I should not like to be a witness of the pleasure that would be manifested by the crowd assembled to see Parson Knak* hanged." It was mentioned that Protestantism of old had been exceedingly intolerant; and Bucher called attention to the fact that, according to Buckle, the Huguenots had been zealous reactionaries—as, indeed, were all the Reformers at that period. "Not exactly reactionaries," replied the Chancellor, "but petty tyrants. Every person was a miniature Pope.' He spoke of Calvin's behaviour to Servet, and added, "Luther was just the same." Another of his guests reminded the Prince how Luther had treated Karlstadt and the Muenster visionaries, recalling the deeds of the combative theologists in Wittenberg, after Luther, and the execution of the Chancellor Krell in Dresden, who atoned for his crypto-Calvinism with death. Bucher remarked that the Scottish Presbyterians, towards the close of the last century, condemned a person who had only lent Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man" to a friend, to twenty-one years' transportation, and loaded him with chains to boot.† Another of the Chancellor's guests made mention of the Puritans in the New England States, who had formerly exercised—and to some extent still continued to do so—the most intolerable and oppressive compulsion upon society with their stiff-

* A preacher at the Bohemian Church in Berlin (now dead), distinguished in his time for maintaining the assumption put forward in the Old Testament to the effect that the sun goes round the earth, and that Joshua made it stand still for several hours.

† The so-called "Scots Martyrs" of 1793, Muir, Palmer, etc., are here referred to.

necked intolerance of opinions differing from their own, and more especially with the Liquor-Law. "And the way they keep the Sabbath holy in England and America," said Bismarck; "it is sheer tyranny of the most appalling description. I remember that, the first time I went to England and landed in Hull, I began to whistle in the street. An Englishman whose acquaintance I had made on board the packet begged me not to whistle. I asked 'Why not? Is it forbidden to whistle here?' 'No,' he replied; 'but this is the Sabbath-day.' I was so much annoyed that I forthwith took a ticket for another steamer, bound to Edinburgh; I could not stand not being allowed to whistle when I pleased . . . On the whole, however, I am by no means against keeping the Sabbath holy," he continued, after Bucher had observed that Sunday in England is, after all, not altogether so abominable as people in Germany generally imagine; its quietude had always done him good after the bustle and clamour of the London week-days. "On the contrary, as a landed proprietor, I do what I can in that direction. Only I will not permit any compulsion to be exercised upon my people. Every man must know how best he may prepare himself for the other world . . No work ought to be done on Sundays, not particularly because to labour on the Sabbath is a breach of God's commandments, but because human beings require repose. This rule does not, of course, apply to the service of the State, especially in the diplomatic department, where despatches and telegrams have to be attended to on Sunday as well as upon any other day. Nor can the peasant be blamed during harvest time, who, after a long spell of rain, fine weather having set in on Saturday afternoon, carries his hay or wheat on Sunday. I could never have the heart to prohibit my farmers from doing that by a clause in their

leases. For myself, I can afford to put up with the loss inflicted upon me by a rainy Monday." Somebody present remarking that pious people in New York allow no cooking in their houses on Sunday, and that upon that account, having been once invited to dine with a distinguished family in New York, he had been compelled to eat a cold meal, the Chancellor rejoined; "Well, in Frankfort, when I was even less particular than I am now, we always ate very plain food on Sundays, and I never had the carriage out, on account of the servants."

One day in the autumn of 1876 the Prince was out riding at Varzin and came to a spot close to the confines of his estate. There, to his surprise, he saw a number of peasants working away with mattocks and spades in the adjoining field, although it was Sunday. "What men are those over there?" he enquired of his bailiff. "Our labourers, your highness," was the answer. "We cannot spare them from our fields during the six week-days, and so they are obliged to till their own plots of land on Sundays." The Prince at once rode home, sat down to his desk and wrote off instructions to all the bailiffs and land-stewards on his different estates, to the effect that thenceforth the tillage of his labourers' fields was to precede that of his own, and that for the future no work whatsoever was to be done on his estates of a Sunday. The consequence of this eminently equitable arrangement has been that ever thereafter his labouring-men have got through the work required for the cultivation of their own ground in two or three days, and have then turned to with vigour and alacrity at whatever labour was necessary on their master's estate, so that the Chief-Bailiff has been in a position to report that the tillage, &c., of the Prince's land had never thitherto been so rapidly executed as it has since the new arrangement was instituted.

It was pretty generally acknowledged at the time that the measures with which the Chancellor met the pretensions and encroachments of the Ultramontanes in 1872 were aimed at the political, not the religious attributes of the Catholic Church, and could not, therefore, be traced back to any intolerance in his views. What could not be put up with was interference in the State rights and public of Prussia by the Roman Curia, invested with absolute power by the proclamation of the Infallibility Dogma. Although nowadays all intelligent people are at one, as far as that matter is concerned, it may be as well to revive some memories of the struggle above alluded to; for there are a great many people in this country who are the reverse of intelligent, and the proverb "Lies have short legs" has been proved by experience to be a rule that has exceptions.

During the sojourn in Versailles of a mobilised department of the Prussian Foreign Office, the news reached us of the Italian irruption into the Quirinal, and it was mentioned that Pope Pius had announced his intention of transferring his residence from Rome elsewhither—perhaps to some part of Germany. After explaining to us at some length the consequences that might accrue should the Holy Father settle down in Cologne or Fulda (this portion of his remarks upon the occasion was published in 'Prince Bismarck during the Franco-German war,') the Chancellor remarked:—"Well, supposing a few people in Germany were to revert to Catholicism—I shall never do so—it would not matter much, so long as they were believing Christians. Faith is the main point—not one creed or another."

In his diplomatic as well as his parliamentary utterances, however, the Prince has repeatedly and in the plainest language made it known that nothing is farther from the objects of his policy than any encroachment upon the

Catholic Church in its character as a saver of souls. When Count Arnim, formerly Prussian Ambassador to the Curia, proposed in a despatch written by him about the middle of May, 1869, that Prussia (in common with the rest of Germany) should—conformably to a custom observed by her governments with respect to previous Œcumenical Councils—cause herself to be represented as a State at the Vatican Council by special Plenipotentiaries (*Oratores*), Bismarck, in rejecting the proposition in question, expounded his reasons for so doing. One of them was the following: "There is only one standpoint for Prussia, constitutionally as well as politically; that of the Church's absolute liberty in matters ecclesiastical, and of determined resistance to her every encroachment upon State-rights." During the debate on the Budget of Public Worship (Prussian Lower House, 30 January, 1872) the Chancellor declared, towards the close of a lengthy speech:—"It is the Government's serious resolve that every religious denomination—and especially that of the great Catholic Church, which, by reason of the great number of its followers, is deserving of every consideration—should enjoy all possible freedom within the limits of this realm . . . . Every dogma, not excepting those in which we (the Government) do not believe, which is regarded as inviolable by millions of human beings, must also be held sacred by their fellow-countrymen and their Government. But we cannot admit the ecclesiastical authorities' permanent claim to exercise any part of the power affected to the State, and we feel compelled in the interests of peace to impose restrictions upon them, so far as they already possess that power, in order that Church and State may have room to exist side by side in mutual tranquillity." On May 14th, 1872, after having expressed to the Reichstag his regret

and astonishment that the Holy See should have rejected Prussia's proposal to appoint Prince Hohenlohe as her representative at the Vatican, Prince Bismarck remarked :—"The Government owes it to our Catholic fellow-citizens not to slacken its efforts towards finding a way to regulate the frontier-line between spiritual and temporal power—of which boundary, in the interest of our domestic peace, we absolutely stand in need—in the most considerate and least vexatious manner." In the course of the debate in the Upper House (March 10th, 1873) upon certain changes in the Constitution, the Chancellor said :—"There is no question of a struggle between an evangelical dynasty and the Catholic Church, as our Catholic fellow-citizens have allowed themselves to be persuaded, or of a contest between faith and infidelity, but of the primeval fight for supremacy between Royalty and Priesthood, which dates much farther back than the advent of our Saviour upon this earth. This struggle is subject to the same conditions as any other political encounter ; and the assertion that we have in view the oppression of the Church is an evasion of the real question at issue, only put forward to create a false impression in the minds of ignorant people. What we aim at is the protection of the State, the establishment of a distinct boundary-line between priestly dominion and Royal rule, defined in such sort that the State may be enabled to abide by it. For, in the kingdom of this world, the State is entitled to power and precedence." During the discussion of the motion for suspending the State-subventions to the Catholic Church (March 16th, 1873) the Chancellor exclaimed :—"I believe that I am serving my God by serving my King for the protection of the community whose ruler he is by the Grace of God ; it being the King's duty, imposed upon him by God (and in which I serve him), to

defend the independence of his people against Roman oppression, and to emancipate it from foreign spiritual influence."

How, from 1878 to the present day, the Prince has repeatedly given effect to the love of peace and tolerance expressed in the above quotations, despite the many obstacles thrown in his way, is still fresh in everyone's remembrance, and therefore does not need to be set forth in detail and exemplified by illustrations. The Chancellor entertained a strong objection to becoming mixed up in this ecclesiastical conflict about the Infallibility Dogma, it being his opinion that any interference of the temporal power on behalf of the more moderate prelates would assuredly do the latter more harm than good. Several times, and as lately as November 1883, Bismarck has in private expressed himself to the effect that, in all struggles between monarchy and priesthood, the object of strife has really been the obtention of temporal power, not the establishment of dogmas; that the Roman Curia struck him as being more of a political than a Christian institution; and that, in the contests above referred to (between monarchies and priesthoods) the latter combatant (not only nowadays and in Rome, but in the days of Agamemnon and Calchas, of the Egyptian priests under the Pharaohs' rule, of the Persian sacerdotal caste; briefly, in Heathendom as well as Christendom) had always found his handiest and most efficient weapon to be the popular belief that priests are better acquainted with the will of God than laymen, consequently, than the king himself. "Against the priest's definition of God's will," he proceeded, "there is no appeal; he interprets it authentically, and temporal power, whenever it declines to submit itself to him, puts itself in the position of being at odds with the Divine decree, thereby exposing itself to

be stricken with bans and interdicts. The early Christians had no priests—certainly no infallible ones; decisive authority was originally vested in the Christian commune and subsequently, even at the time of the first two or three Œcumenical Councils, by no means exclusively in ecclesiastics. A series of admirable Popes—admirable rather as statesmen than as Christians—first succeeded in securing to the priesthood the exclusive right to interpret Christian doctrines, and the monopoly of dictation, with respect to dogmas. They thus acquired a power over believing Catholics which rendered the papal claim to supremacy over all temporal monarchs an intelligible one, instead of an absurd monstrosity—granting, of course, the implicit belief of all the members of the community in priestly infallibility, and the absolute submission of a sternly disciplined priesthood to the personal rule of the Pope. It was easy enough for Catholic monarchies to reconcile themselves to the theocratic pretensions of the Holy See. On the principle that one hand washes the other, priests inculcate obedience towards monarchs, as long as the latter do not refuse it towards the Pope. For Protestant States to achieve peaceful relations with the Church of Rome is—under the most favourable circumstances—a problem like that of squaring the circle, the solution of which one may go very near, but never quite attain. Neither party can get farther than some sort of a *modus vivendi.* This may be said with equal truth of Catholic States and the Vatican; for the relations between monarchy and priesthood are invariably regulated by actualities, not by principles, and the two powers remain incommensurable—that is to say, as long as the temporal declines to submit itself unconditionally to the spiritual. They generally succeed, however, in coming to terms, except with regard to mere fractional

matters. But, from the Roman Catholic stand-point, a predominantly Protestant government is always a malady to be treated therapeutically or surgically with a view to its cure. The leading idea of the last Œcumenical Council was to effect a surgical cure of Prussia's 1866 victories and the establishment of the North German Confederation, regarded in Rome as symptoms of European disease. France, the Pope's soldier, was "called in" to operate with her bayonet, as a lancet wherewith to phlebotomize German Protestantism. That the promulgation of the Infallibility Dogma should have taken place in Rome simultaneously with the French declaration of war against us was certainly an extraordinary coincidence, especially as the latter event was brought about, as every body knows nowadays, chiefly by the exertions of the Ultramontane French Empress Eugènie. That France would prove victorious was as little doubted in Rome as in Paris; and France, had she conquered us, would certainly have exercised the preponderance she would thereby have acquired (in concert with the Pope and with the object of establishing the new Dogma) in every direction, more particularly, however, in that of Germany."

On one occasion the Chancellor publicly alluded to this Roman-French intrigue, i.e., when he referred to the then contemplated new "gesta Dei per Francos." At the time of the Œcumenical Council he was perfectly alive to the danger that, in the face of this foreign conspiracy, the consideration due to Catholic Prussians by the Government and Legislature might readily be lost sight of, and resisted, long and steadfastly, every suggestion of temporal interference in questions which (although he himself deemed them eminently political) are regarded by the believing masses as dogmatical or purely ecclesiastical. He never

underestimated the difficulties presented to a temporal government by a conflict of that description, and, at the time above referred to, was wont in conversation with intimate friends to recall his youthful memories of "the inflexible resistance encountered by the powerful and absolute government of Frederick William III. in the loyal province of Nether Pomerania, during its struggle with the Old Lutherans, a handful of people without any especial leader, whom, however, the strong and resolute executive of that period utterly failed to subdue to its will." He sketched in words to his hearer's amusement, "the stiff-kneed gendarme toiling on, with his clanking spurs and long sabre dragging at his heels, after the light-heeled candidate for holy orders whom his female co-religionaries were ever ready to stow away in barns or pantries."

During the inception of the ecclesiastical conflict, he rejected every proposition to participate in it, and wittingly refrained from taking part in any of the skirmishes that broke out sporadically in Braunsberg and other places. Whilst blaming the Catholics for constituting a confessional party on political grounds, he maintained friendly relations with all the Catholic deputies and with Bishops von Ketteler and von Ledochowski—so thoroughly, indeed, that the former was enabled to apply frankly in person to the Chancellor in order to lay before him the complaints of the new Catholic "fraction" with respect to the Imperial Constitution. Prince Bismarck was in uninterrupted friendly communication with Ledochowski whilst the latter staid at Versailles; and the Chancellor, when the bishopric of Gnesen became vacant, had urgently solicited Bishop Ketteler to accept it in order to disprove the false assertion that the Prussian government was making war upon the Catholic religion in Posen, when in reality it was only

putting down the Polish revolutionary movement. Ketteler declined the appointment in question—which had been approved of by His Majesty the King—on account of his imperfect acquaintance with the Polish language; but had thereafter kept up amiable relations with the Chancellor.

The subsequent estrangement between these two eminent men, who entertained many views in common with respect to purely national questions, was chiefly brought about by Herr von Savigny. This gentleman, a schoolfellow and boyhood's friend of Bismarck, had become his enemy at the moment when he (Savigny) found it necessary to give up all hope of ever obtaining the post of Federal Chancellor. In the original Draught-Constitution this title had been selected for the Prussian presiding-plenipotentiary, instead of that of "President Envoy," thitherto obtaining by custom in the Federal Assembly. This "Federal Chancellor" was at first intended to be nothing more than a Prussian presiding-plenipotentiary with a vote, whose instructions should be imparted to him by the Prussian Minister of Foreign Affairs. But the post acquired an altogether different character—a ministerial one, indeed—through a parliamentary amendment, adopted during the revision of the Constitution, to the effect that the presidential decrees, in order to become valid, would require to be countersigned by the Federal Chancellor. As soon as this amendment had actually become law, Prince Bismarck informed Herr von Savigny that the post of Federal Chancellor, unless it were to be that of an independent Minister, ranking above the Prussian Minister of Foreign Affairs, must be held by himself (Bismarck). Herr von Savigny probably did not close his mind to the logical reasoning of this intimation, but was of opinion that the Minister-President should have opposed the amendment above alluded to in

Parliament; whereas Prince Bismarck, far from resisting it, had in all likelihood been the cause of its suggestion and adoption. It did not strike Herr von Savigny that a national politician could hardly have acted otherwise in this matter. All he saw was that a post specially designed for him, and the official residence attached to which he had already taken possession of, had slipped through his fingers. The Minister-President's offer to appoint him chief of the Federal chancery with the title of Vice Chancellor (a position subsequently held by Delbrueck) remained unacknowledged *ab irato*, and prompted Savigny to quit the above-mentioned official residence without delay, as well as to break off all intercourse with one who had thitherto been his friend. Thenceforth Savigny became the Chancellor's inveterate enemy, and set to work organising a hostile faction. We find him shortly afterwards, in concert with Ketteler, busy founding the Centre-Party. It lay in his inborn disposition to bestir himself behind the scenes rather than on the stage itself, and, whilst participating in the arrangement of the Constitution, he carefully abstained from making any oratorical display in Parliament. His share in the foundation of the Centre-Party is consequently not so well known to the world as that of other persons. But, though by no means an effective public speaker, he was an able diplomatist and took a leading part in getting together this particular group of deputies and determining their line of action; which had not originally been indicated by personal enmity to the Chancellor.

Prince Bismarck was drawn into this struggle by degrees, as we have reason to believe, not by confessional but by purely political motives. These latter had nothing whatever to do with Italian affairs or the seizure of Rome. On the contrary, the Chancellor was highly provoked with

Italy during the Franco-German war on account of Garibaldi's participation in the resistance offered to our armies, and also of King Victor Emmanuel's unmistakable inclination to take part with Napoleon against Germany. When the Frankfort peace was concluded, German politicians were altogether indisposed to oblige the Italians in any way—least of all at the expense of the Pope, with whom Berlin at that time kept much closer touch than it did with Italy.

It was not the Italian, but the Polish question which decided the Chancellor—quite irrespective of the Vatican or Infallibility—to take an active share in the conflict that broke out between the Prussian Ministry of Public Worship and the Roman Catholic clergy. The apprehension that, under priestly leadership, a National-Polish propaganda might be started in Upper Silesia, thitherto satisfactorily Prussian and monarchical in feeling, gave the first impulse to his action. Endeavours to Polonize Silesia were no novelty; even later than 1848 we have seen the Rev. Mr. Schaffranek declaiming in that sense from the tribune of the Diet. But nothing worth mentioning had been achieved until the movement alluded to found vigorous and influential advocates in the well-known "Catholic Department" of the Ministry of Public Worship. That department had been originally created to defend the rights of the Crown against the Roman Church by means of Catholic State-Officials, but in the course of years it had degenerated into an organ of the Catholic propaganda, which astutely sought and promptly found support in this Government Board, so influential in matters connected with education. The Propaganda College has invariably fostered the Polish tongue, as well as others—Flemish, for instance—which have no pretensions to universality, because any tribe of human beings isolated by the exclusivity of its idiom is

much more easily held in thrall by a masterful priesthood than are other races differently situated. During the years immediately preceding 1870, the Catholic Department of the Ministry of Public Worship had purposely favoured the Polish element in Prussia at the expense of the German element. Certain members of an illustrious Polish family, related to the Reigning House, succeeded in exercising a direct influence upon that department and its head-official, a Herr Kraetzig, as well as in furthering its objects at Court. And thus it came to pass that the process of Germanising West Prussia and Posen was stopped to give play to the Polonising of those provinces. From one census to another the statistical reports demonstrated, in West Prussia alone, an increment in the number of the Polish population (as against the German) of about 30,000 souls. In the course of two generations entire villages suffered transformation from German into Polish, and German grandsires, who had all their lives long never understood a word of Polish, left behind them Polish grandchildren, unable to make themselves intelligible in German.* This result of the Prussian official system of

* According to statements made by Minister von Gossler in the Prussian Chamber (March 8th and 14th, 1883) German Catholics have, in steadily increasing numbers, been transferred to the Polish national camp year after year since 1849, in Posen as well as in West Prussia; and nowadays a large proportion of those persons who, a decade or two ago, put themselves forward as representatives of conspicuous and indisputable German nationality, must be reckoned—either themselves or their children—as thorough-going Poles. Von Gossler alleges that 67,906 German Catholics belonged to the Government District of Posen in the year 1861, and only 58,299 in 1872, whilst that section of the province (exclusive of the parishes of Birnbaum, Fraustadt, Bormst and Meseritz) contained 22,970 German Catholics in 1862, and only 10,320 ten years later. For the instrumentality of the Catholic clergy in promoting this movement, see Von Gossler's speech in the Prussian Diet of February 8th, 1882.

education prompted the Minister-President to propose to the Ministry of State that some attempt should be made to remedy the evils in question, and—as soon as it became manifest that this would not be possible under existing institutions without the co-operation of the Catholic Department, which co-operation was refused—to demand the suppression of the refractory department. Its abolition was accordingly effected when Minister von Muehler was in office, and signalised the active participation of the Minister-President in the "Kultur-Kampf," thitherto confined to the special Government offices connected with religious worship and education.

This struggle was subsequently embittered by the circumstance that the Conservative Party not only refused to support Prince Bismarck in defending national education, but even declared war against him with respect to certain disputes that arose concerning the inspection of schools and provincial constitutions. The party carried on hostilities with a fierceness and personal malignity such as had never been displayed during the conflicts between the Liberal Opposition and the Chancellor; and this desperate warfare reached its apogee during the epoch of the Kreuz-Zeitung under Nathusius, of Perrot's notorious libels, of the 'Reichsglocke' and the prosecutions for calumny in which the names of noblemen belonging to both religions figured in the list of defendants. Not even one of Richter's press-organs, as far as we remember, ever published such insinuations—not against the policy, but against the personal character of the Chancellor—as those which at that time flowed from the pens of Messrs. von Löe, von Arnim, von Diest and other of their titled confederates, whose private friends contrived to bring about the circulation of the "Reichsglocke" in all the German Courts. We have been

assured that eleven copies of that disgusting sheet were smuggled into the Prussian Court alone by officials of the Royal Ministry of the Household. The judicial proceedings and other sources of information respecting the origin of the calumnies propagated against the Chancellor lead us to assume that Herr von Savigny was at the bottom of them all. Manifestly it was he who set afloat the fable of Prince Bismarck's improper participation in certain limited liability undertakings in Berlin. He first communicated his invention or error to a high official of the Foreign Office, who in his turn imparted it to a near relative; and thus the vile fiction eventually reached the late Herr von Wedemeyer, who shot himself as soon as he discovered that the story he had believed in and repeated to others was in every respect untrue. It was from papers left behind by this unfortunate man that Herr von Diest subsequently compiled the allegations by publishing which he got himself into the prisoner's dock.

It is worthy of note that during and after this journalistic onslaught of the Conservatives not a single Liberal paper ever printed a single word in defence of the Chancellor; not less so that no organ of the Conservative party emphatically condemned and stigmatised the abominable accusations brought against him, even after their groundlessness had been conclusively demonstrated in the course of the public proceedings instituted against his calumniators. Another experience derived from those libel trials, in which the first official of the State was called upon to vindicate his honour, will be found instructive for the future position of our tribunals as far as its connection with party-life is concerned—namely, that the persons conducting those proceedings appeared much more anxious to convict the Chancellor of some reprehensible transaction or other

than to bring down punishment on his calumniators. This method of dealing with the cases in question was so far advantageous to the calumniated person, that every successive piece of evidence elicited by the Bench exposed more and more clearly the falsehood of the charges laid at his door.

The bitterness of the impressions made upon Prince Bismarck by the events above alluded to must have been greatly enhanced by the knowledge that the results—honourable to him in every respect—of these trials proved alike unsatisfactory to his professed friends, to his enemies, and to the tribunals themselves—all of whom would have infinitely preferred that some of the dirt thrown at him should have stuck. If the reader will endeavour to realise to himself the feelings which must have been aroused in the Chancellor by this particular episode of his life, he (the reader) will be less likely than people in general have hitherto been to reproach Prince Bismarck with lacking affection and respect for the parties and persons with whom he has had to deal in politics and Parliament. It is very certain, with respect to his participation in the "Kultur-Kampf" that the struggle between Church and State would have been less violent and envenomed in character if the Conservatives had refrained from breaking (on account of the School-Inspection Bill) with a Minister who was one of themselves, and in whose place they could put forward, as their leader, no member of their party possessing qualifications at all resembling his, far less equalling them. If the Chancellor had experienced confidence instead of distrust at the hands of his former fellow partisans—if he had been enabled to carry on the necessary defence of State rights against the Papacy at the head of the Conservative party—the split between Church and

State would never have become as deep as it now is, and confessional peace would have been in all probability restored years ago to its normal condition, obtaining in Prussia throughout two centuries prior to 1848—such a condition, in fact, as is attainable with relation to Rome in States the populations of which profess various creeds.

In the course of the conflict with Rome, Prince Bismarck stuck steadfastly to his political standpoint, never troubling himself about differences of opinion concerning the dogma itself, or indeed about any matters ecclesiastical whatsoever. To this fact the foregoing quotations from his speeches bear testimony. In legislation he took the initiative by bringing about the abolishment of the Catholic Department, and by introducing lay school-inspection—which, by the way, was intended to be only facultative, as he wished to leave power to the State to suffer its functions to be exercised by the clergy, without being compelled to do so. Moreover, the modifications of the Constitution were effected at his instance; he is without doubt fully responsible for them, inasmuch as he was only able to obtain his liberal colleagues' consent to them, by making their acceptance or rejection a Cabinet question. On the other hand it may be believed that his participation in the May-Laws was a passive one, or even that he took no part whatever in bringing them to pass.* We have heard from trusted collaborators of the Chancellor that as soon as he had read through these statutes, *ex post* and for his personal information, he expressed strong doubts as to the possibility of carrying out all their prescriptions, and much astonishment at the high importance attached to

* Be it remembered that at the time these Laws were framed, Count Roon was Prime Minister, and Prince Bismarck, as a rule, did not then attend the meetings of the Cabinet Council.

the *Anzeigepflicht** which he regarded as an empty form. We take leave to doubt the correctness of the latter view; but are entirely at one with another opinion of his, to the effect that "School is the chief weapon of the State." But, in connection with this subject, we must now endeavour to render intelligible the attitude assumed by the Chancellor towards the Jews and the Jewish question recently brought upon the *tapis* anew; to which end the best we can do is to let him speak for himself.

In the first United Diet on June 15th, 1847, (portions of the speech pronounced by him on that occasion have already been quoted in this work) he declared himself opposed to the unrestricted emancipation of the Jews. "I am no enemy of the Jews," he said; "and should they be foes of mine, I forgive them. I even like them—under certain circumstances. I would also accord to them every imaginable right, except that of holding authoritative office in a Christian realm." The idea that a Jew might be qualified to encounter him in the capacity of a representative of His Majesty the King produced a depressing and discouraging effect upon him. He must, however, have found it necessary to become reconciled to this idea later on, although I do not suppose he has ever quite liked it; for he offered no opposition to the measures granting equality of rights to Jew and Christian, incorporated, firstly, in the Constitution of the North German Confederation, and secondly, in that of the German Empire; indeed, he supported them, although we can scarcely imagine that they enlisted his sympathies to any great extent. Sitting at table with us in Ferrières, on September 25, 1870, he said

* In these matters repression is possible, not prevention; the State invariably knows too little about the new ecclesiastic to be able to form any forecast as to his future behaviour.

(speaking of the Jews) :—" As a matter of fact they have no real home. So to speak, they are European in a general sort of way; cosmopolitans—in a word, nomads. Their Fatherland is Zion, (here he turned towards Abeken) Jerusalem. Outside that, they belong, as it were, to the whole world, and hang together all over the earth. The petty Jew alone experiences anything like a feeling of local patriotism. Amongst Hebrews of that class may be found some decent, honest people. There was one such in my part of the country (Pomerania) who dealt in skins and such matters. His affairs could not have been very flourishing, for he became a bankrupt. Upon that occasion he came to me, begging me to let him off easy and not to take out proceedings upon my claim against him, for he would surely pay me what he owed, a little at a time, as soon as he could. As had been my wont of old in such cases, I agreed to his proposal; and he really *did* pay up. Long after, when I was Envoy to the Confederation at Frankfort I was still receiving instalments from him at intervals; and I believe that I lost far less by him than did his other creditors—if, indeed, I lost anything at all. Perhaps there are not many Jews of that sort to be found nowadays. Even Jews, however, have their good qualities; they are renowned for respect to their parents, conjugal fidelity and benevolence." On December 19th, 1870, after having been for a drive about the environs of Versailles with Simson (afterwards President of the Imperial Supreme Tribunal), he observed to us:—" I thought he would have taken some interest in the park and its pretty views; but he manifested none whatsoever. It seems that he has no sense of the picturesque. That is the case with a vast number of Jews. As far as I know there are no Jewish landscape-painters, and but few Jewish painters of any description." Meyer-

heim and Bendemann were mentioned. "Yes," he replied, "I grant you Meyerheim; but it was only Bendemann's grandfather and grandmother who were Jews. There have been plenty of Jewish composers—Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, Halévy; but as for painters—well, a Jew will paint, but only in case he is not compelled to get his living by his brush." A few days later (December 23rd) we were all talking at table about the arrests of Social-Democratic demagogues which had taken place in Germany a short while previously, and Count Lehndorff asked if anything serious was to be apprehended from the imprisonment of Bebel and Liebknecht—if it might be expected to arouse a great deal of excitement? "No," replied the Chancellor, "there is nothing to be feared on that score." Lehndorff: "But Jacoby's arrest gave rise to no end of noise and clamour." The Chancellor: "He was a Jew and a Koenigsberger. If you only catch hold of a Jew, forthwith an outcry arises from every nook and corner." Shortly afterwards (January 10th, 1871) the conversation at table turned upon the names Meier and Kohn, of common occurrence amongst the Jews, and I offered an explanation of that circumstance, winding up with the remark that the patronymic Kohn (originally signifying a priest) had now and then suffered transformation into Kuhn, Kahn and Hahn. This brought the Chancellor to the subject of Jews who had been converted to Christianity, and later on to that of mixed marriages between Christians and Jews—of which he seemed not to disapprove. "Indeed," he continued, "I am of opinion that Jews must be improved by crossing their breed. The results are really not so bad." He mentioned a few noble families which had assimilated Semitic blood by marrying some of their male members to Jewesses, and added, "They are all quite intelligent, nice

people." Then, after reflecting awhile—omitting to give words to a passing thought anent the union of noble Christian damsels, German Baronesses and Countesses, to wealthy and talented Israelites—he added with a smile: "On the whole it is better the other way—I mean, by the conjunction of a Christian stallion of German breed with a Jewish mare. The Jews' money is thus brought into circulation again; and the result of the cross is a very fair breed. I really do not know what I shall advise my sons to do, one of these days." This was a jocular utterance *inter pocula*, but not altogether devoid of a serious *substratum*. It certainly did not justify the assumption that the Chancellor entertains any prejudices against the Semitic race.

Of late years the Jewish question has been again and again *à l'ordre du jour*, and voices have been publicly heard to recommend the partial abrogation of the civil and political rights conceded to the Israelites by the Constitution; but the Chancellor has forborne from giving utterance in public to his views with respect to the agitation in question, its causes and aims. We have reason to believe, however, that the anti-Semitic movement appeared to him by no means difficult to account for, but somewhat untimely, and therefore inconvenient. That was the opinion expressed in tolerably plain words by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, which also observed that the Jews were indebted to the Chancellor for his assistance in obtaining their emancipation, but failed to display any gratitude towards him—on the contrary, for the most part they sustained and strengthened the Opposition in its hostility to his policy. It is well known that this assertion is correct. The Prince himself once repeated it to me in the course of private conversation, with the remark: "Men who own property of any kind pay their

taxes, abstain from writing democratical leading articles, and do not frequent barricades. It is the other sort of people that does these things."

On the other hand I should doubt the entire authenticity and freedom from embellishment of the observations he is said to have let fall to a Jewish acquaintance two years ago at Varzin. According to press reports, they were as follows: "Nothing can be more incorrect than the notion that I approve of the anti-Semitic agitation. On the contrary, I most positively disapprove of this attack upon the Jews, whether prompted by dislike to their religion or antipathy to their race. It would be just as unfair to fall upon Germans of Polish or French extraction on the pretext that they were not real Germans. That the Jews preferentially devote themselves to business pursuits is a matter of taste; moreover, it may be the national consequence of their former exclusion from other callings; but it is certainly no justification for raising an outcry against their wealth, or reproaching them with being better off than Christians—a proceeding which I consider reprehensible, because it provokes envy and hatred amongst the masses. I will never consent to any curtailment of the constitutional rights accorded to the Jews. Their intellectual organisation disposes them to criticism, wherefore they are for the most part to be found in the ranks of the Opposition. But I make no difference between Christian and Jewish adversaries of the economic policy which I defend because, in my opinion, it is beneficial to the country."

Whether or not certain of the above utterances are to be accepted as absolutely authentic, the whole deliverance probably represents the Prince's actual attitude towards the matter in question with sufficient accuracy. In any case he

has certainly not as yet contemplated any limitation of Jewish civil and political rights. The anti-Semitic petition, in which a desire was expressed that some such measure should be adopted, remained unanswered; and when Deputy Haenal interrogated the Government with regard to its views upon the Jewish question, Count Stolberg, at that time Vice-President of the Prussian State Ministry, declared—indubitably with the Chancellor's concurrence—that the standing laws proclaimed the equality, as far as all civil and political rights were concerned, of all religious denominations, and that the Cabinet entertained no intention of introducing any change in that condition of things. His declaration sounded somewhat frigid and reserved; it certainly lacked the warmth of temperature characterizing the Progressist interpellation which elicited it; but it was all that was requisite. The Chancellor regards the Jewish question with a statesman's eye, which has warned him against interfering (unless under the pressure of urgent necessity) with laws that have struck root, and against reinforcing his old adversaries by new ones who, in virtue of their wealth, influence upon the press and close cohesiveness constituted by no means a despicable force. He bears himself in this question as a practical politician, who subordinates his own personal feelings and wishes to the collective requirements and demands of the State—as a statesman capable of imposing silence and patience upon his own sentiments in the interest of his country's tranquillity and prosperity, when he finds it impossible to reconcile that interest with the realisation of his own views.

The Chancellor, as we have already seen, justifies the keeping holy of the Sabbath not so much upon the ground of Scriptural Revelation, or of the Mosaic Commandments, as upon that of mankind's need of a day of rest from the

labour of the week. Neither, it seems, does he attach much importance to ecclesiastical observances and ceremonies. For instance, he is not an assiduous church-goer; at least he has not been so, either in Berlin or Varzin, for many years past, as far as the author of this work has been able to ascertain by personal experience and enquiry. True, Hesekiel says: "The Chancellor and the members of his household attend the neighbouring Trinity Church, in which he was once confirmed (by Schleiermacher, according to the same authority). He receives the Holy Communion from the hand of Consistorial-Councillor Souchon, who confirmed all his children in turn. When Bismarck is prevented by indisposition from attending Divine Service in public, he likes to have it privately performed for himself and his family by a young clergyman." The author of this work cannot say to what period reference is made in the above statement.

One of the reasons why the Chancellor but seldom hears a sermon or joins in the congregational singing of his parish church (he takes the sacrament regularly twice a year) may be most aptly expressed by the proverb "Serve your master first, and God next." "In my life" he wrote to his sister in July 1865 "there is so much that *must* be done, that I am seldom able to do as I please." "I have so much to do that I could wish every day was six or seven hours longer than it is," he observed to me once at Versailles; and this remark applies to later times as well, notably to the months he is accustomed to pass in Berlin year after year. He has little leisure for church-going, and none for theatres, concerts, art-exhibitions and court festivities. Perhaps too, he thinks that by serving his master in matters of importance he serves God; for, as we have already seen, he regards his mundane mission as work

imposed upon him by the will of God; and by him performed in the name of God and for the realisation of Divine inspirations. Another reason is due consideration for his state of health. The cold temperature that prevails in our churches invariably gives him a head-ache, as he once hinted in a highly characteristic letter to his friend the Rev. Roman von Andrè, e.g. "With respect to church-going it is untrue that I never visit the House of God. I readily admit that I might do so oftener; that I do not is not so much from lack of time as on account of my health, especially during the winter; and I am quite prepared to explain why, to anybody who feels called upon to sit in judgment over me in this matter. . . . Although I am doubtless an item in the sum-total of sinners who are regarded by the Deity as of but little account, I hope that His mercy will not deprive me, amidst all the dangers and doubts of my career, of the staff of humble faith with which I endeavour to find my way about; nor shall this hope of mine render me hard of hearing to words of blame, when pronounced by friends, or wrathful when made the subject of unamiable and impertinent judgments."

How the Chancellor dealt with written communications belonging to the latter of the above categories, the following example may illustrate. In 1873, when the Old Conservatives turned their backs upon him and attacked him in their press-organs on account of the attitude he had assumed towards the School-Inspection Bill, an old gentleman in Pomerania (Senfft-Pilsach) considered it his right and duty to address an absurd sanctimonious letter to him (Bismarck) exhorting him to return to the flock and take to prayer The Prince in his answer (which he read over to me in 1881) referred the writer to Psalm xii, v. 4 & 5: "They shall cut off all flattering lips and the

tongue that speaketh proud things; who have said, with our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is Lord over us?"

Bismarck has never allowed himself to be put down by clergymen; not even by Andrè, when the latter disapproved of his views of duelling, from the priestly standpoint, of course. In the letter quoted above, he wrote to his reverend friend: "As far as the Virchow affair is concerned" (Bismarck had sent Herr von Puttkamer to the Progressist Professor and Champion of the Diet with a challenge to fight him with pistols on account of a gross insult addressed to him by Virchow in the Lower House; but the "tonguey" hero had declined to meet him), "I am past the time of life at which a man accepts advice in such matters from mere flesh and blood. If I set my life upon a cast" (here, indeed, speaks a spiritual kinsman of Cromwell), "I do so in the belief which I have strengthened, throughout long and heavy struggles, by honest and humble prayer to God, and which no words uttered by mortal man, not even by a friend in the Lord and servant of the Church will upset."

His relations to "servants of the Church" were undoubtedly closer ones in former than of late years. The change that has occurred in this respect is probably to be attributed in part to the circumstance that several hundred evangelical clergymen were amongst the "Deklaranten," who publicly took up the cudgels for the *Kreuz-Zeitung*, when that paper was conducted by Nathusius. We know, at least, that the Prince has remarked with much bitterness that he had expected protection and support against the blackguardism of the *Kreuz-Zeitung* and *Reichsglocke* from the "servants of the Church," and found none. Not a single Liberal journal defended him against the Conservatives' defamations; nor did he ever hear that a clergyman

took his part, with respect to all those lies and abominations. Neither can his conflict with the Catholic Church have induced him to regard the flesh and blood of his fellow-men invested with priestly functions as the incorporation of Christianity. During that contest he was wont to exclaim, "What do these gentlemen mean by 'the Church?' Doubtless, nothing more than a totality of priests, their rights and their pretensions!"

In the foregoing paragraphs, I have endeavoured to propound my theme with lucidity, but, as I feel, insufficiently so. In this man of genius and hero, whom we all honour, there are mysterious depths which our understanding cannot plumb, and for which perhaps even he may be at a loss to account to himself, clearly and sufficiently. Talking to us once at Versailles about his sleepless nights, he observed: "I would sleep if I could; but something keeps me thinking and speculating all the time." What that something was that forced him to think, against his will, remains unexplained. One may guess at it, but ever doubtfully. Whatever one may discover, there always remains an inexplicable residue; and the results of investigation reveal themselves as mere glimpses of colour and form, seen through a veil; the truth, but not the whole truth. Those persons with whom the Prince is in daily intercourse could get nearer to the whole truth than we can, had they the disposition or aptitude to do so. Possibly the residue alluded to is something very simple, as plain as the answer to many a riddle. It is otherwise with that which must be mentioned ere this chapter come to a close.

Even the greatest intelligences are susceptible to something besides religious belief that enlightened people are accustomed to designate as "superstition," and which, although only partially the offspring of Christianity, gene-

rally keeps up a certain connection with religion. It is not infrequently encountered in extremely clever men, lacking alike in imagination and religious instinct, in generals, like Napoleon I., politicians, like Gambetta, and even in diplomatists. Symptoms of superstitiousness—and not a few—are apparently manifest in Prince Bismarck.

Somewhere in East Prussia there is an uninhabited castle, which stands empty because its owner is convinced that it is haunted by the ghost of a lady who, during her life committed a crime within its precincts. The spectre in question is said to be visible in broad daylight. This story was told to Bismarck one day in the presence of some friends, one of whom began to turn it into ridicule; whereupon the Prince remarked, very gravely, that "it was better not to scoff or jest at such matters; there might very well be something true in the tale, for he himself had undergone a similar experience." He refrained, at the time, from saying any more upon the subject; but what he referred to was an occurrence at Schoenhausen, recorded by Hesekiel as follows:—

"One night Herr Von Bismarck (then not yet Minister-President) was lying abed in the very room* in which he had been born; a party of his friends was staying in the castle, among them a Herr von Dewitz, and a shooting expedition had been arranged for the morrow, on account of which orders had been given to a servant to awaken the gentlemen at an early hour. All of a sudden Bismarck started up from his slumbers; he heard in the next room a door open that communicated with the library, and then footsteps. At first he thought it must be the servant, come to call him; but immediately afterwards he heard Herr von Dewitz, three

* It should be observed that the windows of the bedroom referred to look out upon a neighbouring churchyard.

rooms off, exclaim 'Who's there?' He jumped out of bed, the clock struck twelve; nobody was there."

After the battle of Gravelotte, during dinner at Pont à Mousson, we were talking about what would happen after the French should have been completely vanquished; and the Chancellor concluded the exponence of his views with the remark "Do not, however, let us talk about the skin of the bear until we have shot him. I confess to being superstitious in this regard." At Rheims, on another occasion, Count Bismarck-Bohlen was counting the places at table before dinner, and muttered to himself:—"We are surely not thirteen? No. So much the better; for the Minister does not like that at all." Another time we really were thirteen at table, and when I mentioned it to Bucher, who sat next to me, he begged me not to say it aloud, as it would certainly annoy the Chief. On the 14th Oct. 1870, General Boyer came to Versailles, on a mission from Bazaine; but Bismarck transacted no serious business with him that day. He asked in the office, "What is the day of the month?" "The fourteenth, your Excellency." "Indeed; so were the days of Hochkirch and Jena; we must not attempt to do anything important on the 14th."

Perhaps it also occurred to him that the 14th in question was also a Friday, which is a day of the week, in the opinion of many people, unpropitious to the transaction of business and in every respect unlucky. In 1852 he wrote to his wife from Halle: "I have been seriously thinking that yesterday—when I started on my journey—must have been a Friday after all; anyhow, it was a 'dies nefastus,'" in proof of which he proceeds to recapitulate a whole string of travelling annoyance,—a hotel "full of bugs and infamous coffee, Jew pedlars and tiptop ladies of pleasure from a notorious haunt of vice," and "an obtrusive Privy Councillor"

in his compartment of the train. In November of the same year he wrote home from Blankenburg. "I had not such good sport in Letzlingen this time as three years ago; it was Friday." During dinner on Oct. 26, 1870, at Versailles, he observed:—"Yesterday I was p ecuted by a whole series of mishaps, one after another. First of all a person (Odo Russell) who had important business with me asked to see me. I sent a message to him, asking him to wait two minutes, as I was engaged upon a matter of urgent importance. When I asked for him a quarter of an hour later he was gone; and the peace of Europe may possibly depend upon my seeing him or not. Then I went off to the King at midday—earlier than usual—and consequently fell into the hands of ——, who compelled me to listen whilst he read me a letter, and thus caused me to lose a whole hour, at the expiration of which I sent off several important telegrams, which, through being delayed till then, perhaps have not reached even to-day the persons to whom they were addressed. In the mean time decisions may have been arrived at and circumstances may have changed, the results of all which may prove very serious and altogether alter the political situation. And all of this comes of Friday!" he added; "Friday negociations! Friday measures!" In January 1871 he remarked to the Governmental-President, von Ernsthausen, "To day is the 13th and Friday into the bargain. That won't do, Sunday will be the 15th,—Wednesday, the 18th, on which the Ordensfest is always held—that will be a good day on which to issue the proclamation (one concerning the Emperor and Empire) to the German people."

During tea-time one evening at Versailles (Nov. 23, 1870) he began to talk about his own death, and indicated the exact age he was predestined to attain, and the year appointed

for his decease. "I know it," he wound up, saying, after some of those present had remonstrated against his assertions; "it is a mystic number." Seven years later he repeated this assurance to me at Varzin, adding, however, "But God only knows!"

Finally, it may be mentioned that the Chancellor is firmly convinced of the moon's influence upon all growing things, and especially upon hair and plants. "You are looking as young again as usual, Privy Councillor," he observed jestingly one day at dinner to Abeken, who had just had his hair cut. "Moreover, you chose exactly the right time to be shorn, for the moon is waxing. And it is just the same with trees as it is with hair. If you want beech-roots to strike out and grow again, you must fell the tree during the first quarter of the moon; if they are to be uprooted, in the last. There are plenty of learned people and schoolmasters who will not believe this; but our foresters know it well enough, and the Administration of Woods and Forests as well.

The clearest of thinkers, upon political questions more profound and farseeing than any of his cotemporaries, always hitting off the right conclusion, free from prejudice, far above conventionalities; and yet a ghost seer, a chooser of days, a believer in mystic numbers!

Really! But no; with the exception of the Schoenhausen episode, it is all pretence or jest. In the autumn of 1883 he expressed himself thus upon the subject. "All that nonsense about my superstitiousness has no more solid foundation than mere jokes or my consideration for other people's feelings. I will make one of thirteen at dinner as often as you please; and I transact the most important and critical business on Fridays, if necessary." *

* The Berlin Congress, presided over by Prince Bismarck, was both opened and closed on a 13th.

And the affair at Schoenhausen? Was that really superstition? Well, there are things between heaven and earth that are not dreamt of in our philosophy.* This sentence may be read in either of its two meanings. I would rather accept it in that intended by Shakespeare. It is open to powerful minds to interpret it otherwise. The public, itself strong-minded, will probably do as they do.

* It may here be remarked (not superfluously, as far as our materialistic physicists are concerned) that the word "philosophy," as Shakespeare understood it and as it was used in the older English language, had a much more comprehensive meaning than the one now attached to it. It included all the natural sciences, and, indeed, specially dealt with them. The above passage from Hamlet might, therefore, be also rendered "Things not dreamt of in your physical science."

CHAPTER III.

THE JUNKER-LEGEND.

One of the chief Articles of Faith of vulgar Liberalism, as well as one of the most effective means of attack and persuasion which it is accustomed to avail itself of during elections, etc., is the assertion that the German Chancellor is a Junker—that he has always more or less clearly and positively adhered to the views of Junkerdom, has practised its outward behaviour and represented its interests—and that, particularly during the last four or five years, he has (with respect to the internal affairs of Prussia and the Empire) unmistakably carried out a policy which can only be described as "Junkerish." The masses readily take Liberalism's word for gospel. We, however, demand proofs of its correctness; and desire, moreover, to put a question or two.

Are these allegations—which throughout such a long succession of years have been handed down from generation to generation of orators at district meetings and newspaper politicians, and which figure as incontestable in the catechism of "staunch partisans"—founded on fact? Can any one of them be justified historically, by experience, or by actualities? Let us ask a counter-question. What is a Junker, and what do the complainants in the Progressist camp understand by the word Junkerdom? By replying to this question we shall answer the others as well; and as the

matter cannot be settled by the employment of empty phrases and confused definitions (such as are commonly in use in the camp above referred to) let us endeavour to make it clear by means of thorough-going investigation.

According to Grimm, the German word Junker means the son of a noble House as contrasted with his father, who functions as the Senior or Elder of that House. It was used in this sense in mediæval German; still later, in Goethe's 'Goetz von Berlichingen,' in 'The Death of Wallenstein,' and 'William Tell'; and is still current in certain parts of Germany amongst serving folk in attendance upon the children of country nobles. It is, moreover, the custom to apply this epithet to cadets of patrician families who are sent up to Court to take princely service, and to nobly-born retainers or pages—whence the titles "Kammerjunker," "Jagdjunker," &c. Further, as it was usual for young men of this class to devote themselves temporarily or permanently to the military profession, the lowest rank of commissioned officers came to be designated by the title of "Portepéejunker," or "Fahnenjunker" (ensign or cornet), and was in some parts of Germany—in Bavaria, to wit—until a few years ago only recorded in the Army List as "Junker."

In old-fashioned books the country noble is commonly enough called a Junker, irrespective of his age, and modern writers, such as are given to imitating those of times past, also use the word in that manner. Thus Kleist, in 'Kohlhaas,' speaks of "Junker Wenzel von Tronka"; and Uhland begins one of his poems "Rechberger war ein Junker keck."

The worse characteristics of the provincial nobility appear to have been identified with the word Junker at a somewhat early period. A proverb in Simrock's 'Collection' says:

"Je kahler der Junker, je groesser der Prunker" (the balder the squire, the bigger the fop), and another is to the following effect: "The peasants do not ask much of God; only that the Junker's horses may not die, for then he would ride bumpkins with his spurs on." In the duchy of Bremen those ears of corn are styled junkers which contain no grain, and therefore do not bend down like the others, but carry their heads high and erect, just by reason of their vacuity and worthlessness. Similarly, in Upper Hesse, a field which only bears stalks and ears, but no grain, is spoken of as "junkering." To these familiar expressions, the outcome of observation, others have been added, chiefly of an unfavourable character; as in the well-known story of 'Junker Alexander,' whose cow was endowed with privileges denied to plebeian cows. Voss describes the Junker as one—

"Der die Maedchen des Dorfs missbraucht, und die Knaben wie Lastvieh
Auferzoege, wenn nicht sich erbarmeten Pfarrer und Kuester,
Welche, gehasst vom Junker, Vernunft uns lehren und Rechtthum."

(who abuses the village-girls, and would bring up the youths like beasts of burden, did not the parsons and beadles take pity on the latter and (detested by the junker) teach us common-sense and justice). During the last century such expressions as "Junkerei," "junkeriren," and "Junkerhandwerk" came into use—one and all having a reproachful or contemptuous signification—and, as early as 1840, Moritz Arndt rhymed as follows:—

"Wie viel sie auch flittern und flunkern
Wie viel sie auch gaukeln und junkern,
Doch sieget das ewige Recht!"

Only the darker side of the Junker, or provincial noble, is here indicated. He is shown as the petty village-tyrant of foregone centuries, who plundered and ill-treated his

vassals; as empty, puffed-up, disposed to indulge in mad freaks; the adversary of reason and justice; a creature of limited intelligence, and quite in the dark as to his noble extraction; neither having learnt nor choosing to learn anything. Other authors, however, added exalted passions and a certain *brusquerie* of manner—taking, rather than offensive—to these unpleasant characteristics of the Junker.

Full and final development was given to the definitions above cited a short time before 1848, in the course of that remarkable year and throughout the period of reaction against the stormy surprises of the "March-Days." They became at once a watchword and a weapon during the struggle commenced by the middle class, which then rose to the surface, against the nobility, or rather against that part of it which desired to hark back to feudal conditions, or was anxious at least to stick to what it had thitherto been able to keep, in the way of privileges, &c. At that time people, when they spoke of Junker-rule and Junkerdom, meant the predominance and entity of the old nobility—more particularly of the land-owning or provincial variety—which was averse to all the modern notions, exactions, and endeavours of Liberalism, and resolute in hammering away on behalf of its prescriptive status. In his 'History of Rome' (where, be it parenthetically remarked, such a sentence was curiously out of place) Mommsen wrote: "Coldheartedness and shortsightedness; the special and inalienable privileges of every genuine Junkerdom."

Since then the expression "Junker" has become familiar, in the above sense, to the Parliamentary tribune, to the press, and to electioneering manœuvrers. He who still cherishes Conservative views—who wishes to see Constitutional Monarchy defended against Democratic pretensions—who ventures to raise his voice against the parasitical

growths and surprises of Liberal Legislation during the last three or four decades, is at once thrust into one saucepan with the real reactionaries—especially if he be unlucky enough to wear a "von" in front of his name. That our aristocracy has its bright as well as its dark side—that, in many cases it is the benevolent adviser, support, and protector of its poorer dependants; that it renders highly noteworthy services to the State; that it has prevented the bureaucracy from interfering unduly with public affairs; that, for centuries past, it has wholly and solely provided our armies with officers, and still continues in great measure to do so, although the pay is anything but a temptation—all this is too generally overlooked. Hence the expression "Junker" is become a term of reproach. In certain social circles it plays the part of the red rag, a mere glimpse of which causes the Progressist bull, the "respectable elector," and the beer-sodden Philistine either to rear up infuriate or to recoil in terror.

No one who is moderately well acquainted with latter-day history and with the actual state of political relations will dream of denying that, in Prussia as well as in other parts of Germany, certain cliques exist in the Conservative party to which the stigma of Junkerdom, as defined by Mommsen, applies in its worst sense. Under the *régime* of Stein there was no lack of eager advocates and champions of a State-organisation on the feudal pattern, that "order prescribed by God"—I need only recall the name of Marwitz—and later on, at the time of the United Diet, Hotspurs of this class took frequent occasion to bestir themselves to action. When subsequently the National Assembly in Berlin—an offspring of universal suffrage—set about abolishing the nobility's privileges, a number of patrician landowners, supported by their relatives and a few

plebeians who shared their opinions, formed a sort of league for the purpose of more energetically defending the prerogatives they held so dear. Their Liberal opponents christened this association—which was in favour of class-representation, and therefore was by no means hostile to a constitutional *régime*, and which struggled with might and main against abuse of the concessions made by the Government in consequence of the 1848 "March-Days"—the "Junker-Parliament;" and, as party-strife waxed hotter, the expression "Junker," theretofore only possessing a special social significance, acquired a political meaning and, as already observed, began to sound offensively in the public ear. Nor is this surprising, if we call to mind the period of reaction; and even now, although the old-Conservatives have learnt much and forgotten a good deal, there are those among them who can well understand why they are hated and regarded with apprehension.

Now let us enquire: Is Bismarck a Junker, or has he ever been one; and, if so, in what sense and within what limits?

He is descended from an ancient family of country nobles, inhabiting the Marches, which has supplied to the Prussian kings a goodly number of "Junkers," all of whom became officers in the army, not a few dying the death on the battlefield, under Frederick the Great and during the War of Emancipation, for honour and their country. When he had grown up to early manhood the "Junkerish" attributes above alluded to—arrogance, high temper and *brusquerie*—were strongly developed in him; the least objectionable of them, however, were the most salient. As a student he was notorious for a saucy tongue and a ready sword; the older citizens of Goettingen still bear his wild tricks in mind. When he subsequently entered the State service its pedantic

routine proved so exceptionally repugnant to him that he soon gave up that career, declaring that he experienced no desire to become as leathery as his official superiors, and retired to Pomerania, there to manage one of his father's estates and to lead the sort of life recommended to him by his impetuous disposition. This was the continuation of his "Sturm und Drang" period—the transformation of a collegian's frivolity into that of a provincial Junker. It was then that the young ladies of neighbouring mansions, their mammas and aunts, shuddered whilst their papas and uncles, shaking their worthy heads and prophesying dread calamities, told tales of furious carouses, during which floods of champagne and porter were ingurgitated; of breakneck rides across country, worthy of the Wild Huntsman; of pistol-shots with which visitors at country houses were aroused from their slumbers in the dead of night; of audacious defiances to all that was respectable and conventional, carried out with infinite mischievousness and insolence. That much of this was true the old mansion-house of Kniephof, long since replaced by a much more elegant structure, could have testified, as well as that at least half of it was founded upon neighbourly invention. The prophesies of evil to which these excesses gave rise have, at least, remained unfulfilled; for the fermenting must, after throwing up its exuberant scum, became clear at the right moment; what sort of liquor it ultimately turned out, everybody knows.

At that time Bismarck was inclined to entertain Liberal views. On the other hand his surroundings influenced him to a certain extent; and here it may be mentioned that Thaddens' estate, Triglaff, was situate not far from Kniephof, and that its owner's son-in-law, Von Blankenburg, an intimate friend of Bismarck during the latter's boyhood, also

lived hard by. Pure and undefiled feudalism was worshipped in the clique to which these gentlemen belonged, and which consisted of advocates of class institutions, enthusiastic partisans of Legitimism, believers in the Holy-Alliance policy, High Churchmen, etc.; and it would have been indeed surprising if some of the ideas current in such society, and freely ventilated therein during every political discussion, should not have taken root in the mind of a young man still undergoing a process of intellectual development. The whole thing was in reality not nearly so bad as it seemed to be; and it is perhaps a pity that men like Thaddens were not permitted, later on, to take their stand upon the ground of Constitutionalism, for there was in them not a little of the material for a parliamentary "Right" which, by reason of its concentrated force and steady integrity, might have played a very different part to the agitatory *rôle* now so highly in vogue in the Conservative camp.

Judging by the foregoing record of facts, Bismarck was indisputably a Junker at one time, and in the fullest sense of the word. We may add that, as far as that expression may be held to denote a country squire, he still is so, and wishes to be so considered during the tranquil days of his annual furloughs at Varzin and Friedrichsruh. The remark of a person very near and dear to him, "He likes a turnip better than all your politics," must not be taken literally; but there is a grain of truth in that assertion. The Chancellor is extremely fond of agriculture, and delights in being upon his estate, far from town-life. We may go even farther, and admit that Otto von Bismarck, in politics as well as in private life, belonged for some years to the category of persons described as Junkers by the 1848 Liberals; but this admission can only be made under certain restrictions

and but partly in the sense of the word adopted by his adversaries. He was in the front rank of those who participated in founding the *Kreuz-Zeitung* and the "Junker-Parliament;" he represented certain phases of what the Liberals of 1850 called Junkerdom in the Chamber—still more keenly and eagerly as a writer in the above-mentioned journal, and in private conversations—he even accepted the designation of Junker, applied to him in the Prussian Lower House, unhesitatingly and fully. On April 8, 1851, Von Vincke stated that he looked upon Bismarck as Junkerdom personified, and later on Simson remarked that Junkerdom was a designation which no category of His Majesty's subjects bestowed upon itself, and to which no one could recognise himself as belonging. Upon this Bismarck rose, in order—much to the astonishment and annoyance of the Left—to give utterance to the following declaration:

"The member for Koenigsberg (Simson) has expressed the opinion that there is nobody in the Prussian kingdom who claims to belong to the category of Junkerdom. As far as I am personally concerned, I must contradict that assertion. When Junkerdom is under discussion by the member for Aachen (Von Vincke) or by Herr Peter Minus (the *nom de plume* of Gustav Schiedtmann, who had about that time published several pamphlets), I conceive that I have the same right to appropriate this appellation to myself and my political friends as a good and faithful officer has to feel himself alluded to and honoured when democrats are talking about mercenaries and the like. Whigs and Tories are also expressions which originally signified something derogatory; and you may rest assured that we, for our part, shall know how to convert the designation "Junkerdom" into a title of honour and distinction."

How exuberantly Prince Bismarck—as Minister, Federal Chancellor and Imperial Chancellor—has justified this prediction needs demonstration as little as the fact that little or nothing has ever been known of any fulfilment of that assurance by his fellow partisans of that epoch. Nevertheless he has most assuredly not carried out the programme of the genuine and typical Junker latterly, either in his foreign or internal policy. Even long before the commencement of his splendid series of brilliant achievements and creations, the more perspicuous of those who assailed him with the epithet of "Junker" knew very well that it was only partly applicable to him. It was, in fact, a trump which they played against his self-conscious abrupt behaviour and demeanour—a cue, to which the masses, trained for that purpose, invariably responded with applause for the conscientious Liberal orator who pronounced it, and with prompt condemnation of the person whom it denoted. The truth is that Bismarck, even when he was only a deputy, was much too keen an observer of life, and too practical a man, to deliver himself up absolutely to any doctrine; and as he mostly recognised what was achievable by Liberal-Democrats, so, as a rule, did he know the exact limits within which circumstances restrained the Conservatives. Therefore in those days he only conditionally subscribed to the majority of the dogmas set forth in the feudal and reactionary catechism, the contents of which were designated in the Liberal dictionary by the epithet "Junkerdom." He was not then free from prejudices and idiosyncracies; it was not, however, so much these latter as his downright way of speaking, self-consciousness and contemptuous bearing towards the matadors of the democratic party, that imparted to him the seeming of a Junker, such as is defined in the lexicon above alluded to.

Bismarck's speeches in the United Diet justify this assertion. Looking back to them we find very little exactly corresponding to the views of the Kreuz-Zeitung; and even they contain a good deal of truth. But, during that epoch of development in his character, we observe in him, not only remarkable combativeness and an extraordinary faculty for tracing things back to their natural causes, for giving due credit to experience and for opposing a practical policy of German home-growth to Liberal doctrines imported from abroad, but that sturdy adherence to old Prussian lealty, to the absolute sovereignty of the king, to Christianity and its results to the State; that proud regard for the national honour; and that genuine patriotism which subsequently enabled him to become the regenerator of his country.

He welcomed the Patent of 1847, and looked forward to its organic development; but the exaggerated demands put forward by the Rhenish and East-Prussian Liberals in the sense of French Constitutionalism were repugnant to him. Later on—after the 1848 "March-Days"—he was dissatisfied with the King's adoption of the Constitutional programme, not only because it was extorted from his Majesty, and because the Crown's first concessions went too far, but because, in his opinion, it involved departure from a system which might without any risk have been made to work well. During the debate on the address of the second United Diet (April 2, 1848) he observed: "The past is buried, and I regret more poignantly than many of you, that no human power is capable of reviving it, inasmuch as the Crown itself has sprinkled earth upon its coffin. But if, constrained by the force of circumstances, I accept this state of affairs, I cannot depart from the United Diet with a lie on my lips—i.e. with the assurance that I rejoice in, and am grateful for a measure which I regard as at least

erroneous." Constitutional rights did not arouse his suspicions and objections, but the 1848 concessions did, to which he would have preferred a quieter and more gradual process of Reform upon the basis of class-rights. Perhaps he was not altogether wrong; at any rate it was quite comprehensible that he should have opposed an address expressing joy and thanks to the King for granting a Constitution which was bound to lead to the perpetuation of the democratic abominations that then possessed Berlin and other large Prussian cities. In this respect he was more than justified by the attitude of the National Assembly, which began to play the part of a tyrannical Convention, although itself terrorised by club-orators of the most vulgar description. Whosoever still remembers how matters stood in the Prussian capital at that time—the parts played by Held, Karbe, Lindenmueller, Ottensoser and other dirty rascals—the performances of such a stupid and insolent crew as Rehberger and his engine-smiths, "the brazen pillars of democracy"—the speeches of the "later Left"—the ill-usage and threatening of members of the Right by the mob—Jacoby's impudent remark to the King, and the chaotic hubbub attending the storming of the Arsenal, will be inclined to regard Bismarck's antipathy to the new era as prophetic. To such an one even the saying attributed to him during that episode of frivolity, disgust and absurdity, will scarcely appear unnatural, or even strongly "Junkerish," except in form. "If great cities, headquarters of revolution as they are, continue to disturb the peace of the country, they must be swept from the face of the earth."

When the Constitution was subsequently revised, Bismarck spoke very forcibly against the right of the Diet to regulate taxation, as transferring the centre of gravity of State-power from the Crown to the majority of the Chamber, and leaving

little more to the former that the faculty of carrying out the decrees of that majority. The Prussian Crown, he observed, must not allow itself to be crushed down into the condition of impotence characterising the English Crown, which latter was scarcely more than an ornamental cupola surmounting the State-edifice, whilst in that of Prussia he recognised the central pillar supporting the whole building—an opinion which, judging by his parliamentary utterances of 1882, he still entertains. "The word Constitutional" he continued "is one of those catch-words which have been privileged of late years to pass current instead of facts. All these references to England are harmful to us. Give us all the English qualities that are lacking to us, and then I will be the first to say, 'Govern us after the English pattern.'"

As a member of the Chamber, Bismarck has repeatedly and valiantly attacked democracy, the sovereignty of the people, and other doctrines or phrases of the period above referred to; but even in his speeches upon these subjects scarcely anything of what is called Junkerdom can be detected—least of all any trace of repugnance to correct Constitutional principles. With these he had meanwhile become reconciled; but he would not hear of Parliamentary domination, or of what the gentlemen of the Left spoke of as "the people's will." When these latter appealed to the people's will on behalf of their pretensions, he said to them. "No expression has been more commonly misused of late years than the word People. Each individual has interpreted it in such sort as to suit his own turn; generally in the sense of a mob of persons whom he has contrived to convert to his own views." What intelligent man will nowadays call this "Junkerish wisdom," and reject it as such?

In the speech opposing the grant of an amnesty, he said: "The strife of principles which has shaken Europe

to her foundations this year is one in which mediation is impossible. The principles in question are so fundamentally different as to be the respective negations of one another. One derives the source of its justification from the people's will—in other words from violence, as practised behind barricades. The other is based upon an authority instituted by the Almighty—an authority existing by the grace of God —and seeks its development in an organic connection with Constitutional institutions. According to one of these principles, rioters of all sorts are heroic champions of truth, justice and freedom; according to the other they are rebels. No decision upon these principles can be arrived at by Parliamentary debates, or by majorities; but sooner or later the God of battles will settle the matter with one cast of his iron dice." Democratic journalists and orators will say, Junkerdom spoke when those words were uttered. But we recognise in them a simple truth and luminous forecast, which has been fulfilled in Dresden, Baden, Vienna and Hungary; fortunately not as yet in Prussia.

Temme, in his 'Sketches,' relates an anecdote in connection with that period which is in some essential respects unfounded, and therefore needs rectification. Temme sat by Bismarck in the so-called "dissolved Chamber," and accident brought the two gentlemen together in the "section" as well, where members of the higher and lower nobility had to sit with five democrats (amongst them d'Ester, George Jung and Schulze-Wanzleben) at one and the same long table, at one end of which, according to Temme, the "aristocracy" took up its position, whilst democracy was grouped at the other. The remaining members of the "section" took their seats in the middle. Naturally enough, Bismarck at first occupied a place amongst the "noble lords." But one day, during a sitting,

he suddenly arose, pushed his chair back noisily, gathered up his papers and blotting-pad, walked coolly down the whole length of the table, took a chair, and sate down amongst the five democrats. Temme writes: "He joined us with the words, 'Those people are too stupid for me,' pointing to the end of the table he had just quitted. He was probably not far wrong. His manner towards us was extremely polite, and we remained good neighbours, although often politically at odds, and that sharply. It was certainly curious to observe how, from our little group at the democratic end of the table, the most vigorous attacks conceivable were made upon reaction, aristocracy and Junkerdom, varied every now and them by an onslaught of ultra-Junkerish vehemence upon democracy. Thus, I remember upon one occasion (I think it was during the debate upon the proposed suspension of the state of siege in Berlin) that Herr von Bismarck said to his neighbour d'Ester: 'If I were in command, I would at once have you shot;' to which d'Ester promptly replied, 'Well, Herr von Bismarck, if ever we come to power, I will have you hanged.'"

This is an outrageous perversion of facts. Bismarck could not migrate from the Conservative to the Democratic region of the table, because the Deputies were not sorted out according to their political opinions, but sat mixed altogether quite haphazard; and he could not have uttered the words attributed to him by Temme, firstly, because he was a man of good breeding, and secondly, because the Conservatives present were anything but "stupid." (Amongst them, for example, was Stiehl, an extremely clever bureaucrat). As to the exchange of remarks with d'Ester, the following is the truth of that matter. The diminutive gentleman in question came to the committee-meeting one day in a very

beery condition, and addressed these words to the member for the West Havel District. "Herr Von Bismarck, of all your party you are the one who has always been civil and polite to us. We therefore propose to make a compact with you; if we get the upper hand, we will protect you; if things go the other way, do the same by us." This proposal Bismarck, however, declined in a friendly way, replying;—"Should your party prove victorious, d'Esterchen, life will not be worth having for me; if we get the upper hand, hanging will be the order of the day, but with politeness, even to the very last gallowsbird."

To the above category belongs a trifling anecdote recounted by Von Unruh in his 'Reminiscences.' One day the latter wound up a conversation with Bismarck, after reminding him of the incident with d'Ester, by saying: "Well, should your party gain the day, take me under your wing, and I will do as much for you if we get the best of it. Are you agreed?" "Willingly," replied Bismarck, although he had no fear that his party would succumb. Eight years later, Von Unruh found it advisable to remind Bismarck of this jesting agreement and to claim his protection. Bismarck kept his word.

Bismarck's convictions at that time were but little in harmony with the decisions of the Frankfort Assembly, in which well-meaning but unpractical professors and lawyers took the lead, side by side with straight-horned and crumpled-horned democrats. He designated those decisions as illegal and not binding upon Prussia, because they had only been accepted by governments which, when combined, only counted six millions of subjects, all told—governments "whose Ministers were industriously occupied with the endeavour to make sure of keeping, under the *régime* of constituted anarchy obtaining in Frankfort, the offices they

had contrived to appropriate during the 'March Days.'" "Ere long," he continued, "we shall see the democrats calling upon the new Emperor and asking him, 'Do you believe this Eagle is a gift to you?' Every endeavour will be made to compel Prussia to play in Germany the part that Sardinia played in Italy, and to bring us to the same point as that occupied by Carlo Alberto before the battle of Novara. I think it would be utterly out of keeping with our mission were we to confuse the German question still further by lending our approval to the Frankfort cravings for sovereignty just at the moment when Europe is beginning to recover from the dizziness of revolution. I believe that if we withhold our support from these projects it will be easier for Prussia to bring about German Unity in the manner already pointed out by the Government. If it come to the worst, however, I would rather that Prussia should remain Prussia, than see my King lower himself so far as to become the vassal of Messrs. Simon and Schaffrath's political associates. In her own character she will always be in a position to give laws to Germany, instead of receiving them from others."

Speaking later on against the 1849 Project of Union, he remarked: "What has hitherto kept us going has just been our specific Prussianism, the remains of the heretical old-fashioned Prussianism which has survived the Revolution, i.e. the Prussian army and exchequer, fruits of intelligent Prussian administration, and the vigorous interchangeable activity that connects King and People in Prussia. . . The people, whose truest representative is that very army, does not desire to see its Prussian kingdom melt away in the putrid fermentation of South German insubordination. Its loyalty is not attached to a paper Board of Directors of the Empire or to the sixth part of a Council of Princes,

but to its living and free King of Prussia, the heir of his ancestors. . . . We all wish that the Prussian Eagle should spread his wings, alike protecting and ruling, from the Memel to the Donnersberg; but we want to see him free—not fettered by a new Ratisbon Parliament, or supported on the pinions of those levelling hedge-clippers at Frankfort. Prussians we are, and Prussians we will remain; and I hope to God that we shall continue to do so long after this scrap of paper will be forgotten as though it were a withered autumn leaf."

Lives there a man endowed with a healthy intellect and memory who can interpret these words as the vapourings of a narrow-minded Prussian country squire? Must not one rather recognise in them the deep, farseeing discernment and practical intelligence which subsequently surmounted all the difficulties of the German Question?

During the discussion upon the formation of the First Chamber, Bismarck took occasion to say a word for the nobility. "From the battle-field near Warsaw Bridge," he observed, "where the Great Elector laid the foundation-stone of Prussia's independence, to the walls of Rastatt you will find in all directions the roots of Prussian freedom abundantly fed with the blood of our noble families. At the commencement of this century the privileges of the nobility —which long possession had induced it to look upon as its rights—were abolished by the Legislature. But you have not seen the nobility allowing itself to be forced, by the exaction of this sacrifice, into assuming an attitude in any way resembling that now taken up by the Democracy towards the Government. Their losses did not convert them into grumbling plotters; on the contrary, when the King called his people to arms in 1813, the sons of the Prussian nobility were found in the front rank of those who were

ready to spend their substance and shed their blood for the preservation of the Royal House and the Fatherland, whose Legislature had imposed so heavy a sacrifice upon them."

History, which records the above, says nothing about Bismarck having ever come forward to demand the restoration of any one of the privileges in question, or having expressed the wish that anything of the kind should be done. Taking into consideration the practical impossibility of effecting such a restoration, this is perhaps no great merit on his part, but it must be expressly mentioned here, because during the very last parliamentary elections the lying agitators of the Party of Progress reproached him with his endeavours in that direction. We shall soon adduce a striking proof that he not only thought but acted in a manner diametrically opposite to that attributed to him.

In the Erfurt Parliament, as well as in the Prussian Lower House, Bismarck opposed the Union Constitution, in virtue of which sixteen millions of Prussians were to have been domineered over by five millions of non-Prussians, and concluded his speech with the memorable dictum: "If you do not make more concessions to the Old Prussian spirit than are hitherto granted by this Constitution, and if you persist in inflicting this Constitution upon Prussia, she will prove a Bucephalus, always ready to carry its accustomed master with mettlesome gladness, but equally ready to throw any clumsy Sunday-equestrian and to shake off his black, red and gold trappings to boot."

In another of his most brilliant speeches (Chamber of Deputies, Dec. 3, 1850) whilst dilating upon the war that was bound to break out should Prussia stick to the Union and take up the Hessian question, as well as that of Schleswig-Holstein, he said: "Why do great States make war nowa-

days? The only sound basis of a great State is egotism, not romance; and it is unworthy of a great State to fight for any question that does not concern its own interests. Show me an object worth fighting for, and I will vote with you. I am convinced that Prussian honour does not require Prussia to play the part of Don Quixote all over Germany on behalf of fretful Parliamentary celebrities who fancy that their local Constitutions are imperilled. To my mind it is indispensable to the maintenance of Prussian honour that, above all, Prussia should hold aloof from any disgraceful connection with Democracy; that, in the question before us as well as in all others, she should not allow anything to take place in Germany without her consent; and that whatever Prussia and Austria may consider sensible and politically correct, after according it their impartial consideration in common, should be carried out by the two Powers which function, with equal rights, as Germany's Protectors."

Looking through these last-quoted utterances, the reader will find it difficult to recognize in Deputy von Bismarck a representative of narrow-minded and short-sighted Junkerdom; but easy enough, I imagine, to regard him as an enlightened politician, keenly perceptive of the actual and necessary. If it appear from other of his speeches, delivered during the period above referred to, that he, in unison with his party, judged Austria more favourably than was justifiable, that circumstance may be accounted for by the fact that he regarded that Empire as *avant tout* a mighty ally against the Hydra of Revolution, whose heads, although just then chopped off, might grow again. When (whilst Envoy to the Federal Diet at Frankfort) he became convinced that the policy of Schwarzenberg and Schwarzenberg's successors would not tolerate absolute parity between the two Great German Powers, but aimed at the overruling of Prussia in

the Federal Assembly by aid of a majority favourable to Austria, he very soon changed his opinion, without troubling himself about the doctrines of the real Junkers, i.e. the Prussian Conservatives, and took prompt action in consequence thereof, advising the King to put forward the highly justifiable egotism of Prussia against that of Austria and the Smaller German States. When Prussia's interests were threatened by the German Governments that sided with Austria, he displayed no less energy in defending those interests than he had manifested in warding off the dangers with which the German Democratic movement had menaced Prussia.

With respect to Constitutional institutions likewise, Bismarck, whilst at Frankfort—if not even earlier—adopted views very different to those which animated his speeches of previous years. He regarded those institutions as useful, even necessary; the Prussian Diet appeared to him in the light of a means towards increasing the prestige and influence of Prussia in Germany; and he had thoughts of a Customs' Parliament. Towards the close of a private letter written by him to Manteuffel on February 12th, 1853, the passage occurs: "I may add, as a curious circumstance, that Herr von Prokesch spoke of a total abolition of the Constitution in Prussia as a purpose unquestionably entertained by the Royal Government, and my contradiction of that assumption, as well as my remark that I myself did not consider such an extreme result would be correct politically speaking, quite surprised him." In another letter (dated Reinfeld, in Pomerania, September 11th, 1856) addressed to a Prussian politician whose name is not given, he wrote: "I believe that after 1865 we must borrow an institution from the Union-projects of 1849, a Customs' Union to be reorganised by Prussia for the exercise of class-rights in

connection with the Zollverein's affairs; in other words, a sort of Customs' Parliament . . . The governments will be hard to move in that direction; but if we are stern and persistent, we can get our own way to a great extent. The Chambers and the press ought to discuss the German Customs' policy vigorously and unreservedly from the Prussian point of view; if they did, the attention of Germany might once more be attracted to them, and our Prussian Diet might become a power in Germany. I could wish to see the Customs' Union and Confederation, as well as Prussia's relations to both, subjected to the scalpel of the keenest criticism in our Chambers; nothing could be more advantageous to the King, his Ministers and their policy—if they understand their business."

In March, 1858, Bismarck wrote to Minister von Manteuffel: "In Prussia the Royal authority reposes upon such a solid basis that the Government, without incurring any risk, can exercise very effective influence upon German affairs through a livelier activity on the part of the Legislative Bodies. Observe what an impression has been made throughout Germany by the circumstance that the Saxon Chambers have lately busied themselves with looking into the policy of the Confederation as regards Saxony's connection with the Bund. How much more forcible would have been this impression if an analogous discussion had taken place in the Prussian Chambers? If Prussia would only allow her German policy, her attitude towards the Confederation, the difficulties she has had to surmount, and the machinations of her opponents to be publicly discussed, a few meetings of the Prussian Diet would probably suffice to put an end to the pretensions of the domineering majority in the Bund. That Federal policy which is specifically needful to Prussia can only gain by publicity

and open discussion. As far as the press is concerned the light of truth will not be able to penetrate the gloom superinduced by the mendacity of subventioned journals unless Prussian newspapers be empowered to deal fully and freely with everything connected with the Confederation, and be supplied with the materials for so doing."

Towards the close of another letter, written by Bismarck from Stolpmuende to the Moderate Conservative Below-Hohendorf on September 18, 1861, the passage occurs: "We want a new and plastic institution in the Customs' line, and a number of other arrangements in common, to protect our material interests against the disadvantages accruing from the unnatural configuration of the German frontiers. We should leave no doubt as to our intention to demand these things fairly and seriously. I do not, moreover, at all see why we should recoil so affectedly from the notion of letting the people be represented either in the Confederation or in a Customs' Union Parliament. We cannot surely denounce as revolutionary an institution legally established in every German State—one, too, which even we Conservatives would rather not dispense with in Prussia."

Would a thoroughgoing Junker ever have entertained such ideas or proposals? Certainly not; nay, it is mentioned in one of Bismarck's Petersburg letters (August 1860), that these views of his at that time caused him to undergo the reproach of heresy at the hands of his party. Referring to certain calumnies (emanating from the Court of Coburg) asserting that he had given his support to projects for giving up the Rhenish provinces in exchange for certain roundings-off of the German frontier, he wrote:—"If I were an Austrian statesman, or a German Prince and Austrian reactionary like the Duke of Meiningen, our *Kreuz Zeitung* would have taken me under its wing, as it has the latter. But as I am

only an old fellow-partisan, who is so unlucky as to have views of his own upon a good many matters which he understands, it allows me to be slandered *ad libitum.* There is more injustice to be found amongst friends, who have eaten out of the same pipkin for years, than amongst enemies."

At that time his connection with the out-and-out Junkers had become very slack; and when Bismarck became a Minister he never belonged to any party, but—invariably in the true interests of Prussia and Germany—sometimes supported the Liberals' demands, and sometimes the Conservatives' objections. From the very first he assumed a conciliatory attitude and—quite at variance with the wishes and hope of the Hotspurs of genuine Junkerdom—endeavoured to bring existing conflicts to a close by means of compromises. But the Liberals did not trust him and, for the most part, held him in small account. The democratic press sang its old ditty about his vices and nefarious projects, calling him a "flashy Junker," an "empty-headed braggart;" a "Napoleon-worshipper," &c.: and the burden of the song was always, "Bismarck is equivalent to a *coup d'état.*" The *Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung*, Vincke's paper, edited by Julian Schmidt, and consequently preaching an infallible two-headed doctrine of wisdom with relation to State affairs, sketched his character as follows:—"He began his career as a country noble of moderate political education, whose intelligence and acquirements by no means surpassed those which are the common property of all fairly well informed men. He attained the apogee of his parliamentary reputation in the Revising-Chamber of 1849 and in the Union-Parliament of 1850. As a speaker he was rough and reckless, furiously *nonchalant*, and sometimes coarsely witty; but when did he give utterance to a political idea?"

On the other hand the Feudalistic party rejoiced greatly over him, hoping that the time for a good, hearty reaction was come; but was, as events proved, just as much deceived in him as were the Liberals in at once fearing and undervaluing the new Minister.

When Bismarck made his appearance for the first time in the House of Deputies at the Ministerial table, he made a statement that was by no means to the taste of the Junkers —to the effect that, as it was presumable that the House would reject the estimates for Army Reorganisation included in the Budget of 1863, as they had in that of 1862, the Government had resolved to withdraw the 1863 Budget "in order not to aggravate the obstacles to an understanding." At the same time he promised to lay the 1863 Budget before the House at the commencement of the following session, together with a Draught Measure for the regulation of compulsory military service, maintaining the essential conditions of Army Reform. Justifying the outlay already incurred for that reform, he continued: "If this crisis can be honourably surmounted the Government will gladly meet its opponents half way. Germany is not concerned with Prussian Liberalism, but with Prussia's might. Prussia must collect her forces for a favourable opportunity, such as has already been let slip more than once. The frontiers, as settled by the Vienna Treaties, are not suitable to a healthy State. The great questions of the age are not solved by speeches and the votes of majorities—that was the mistake of 1848 and 1849—but by Iron and Blood!"

Bismarck's conciliatory endeavours proved fruitless. The House of Deputies wilfully rejected the hand he stretched out towards it. It either did not or would not (out of sheer dislike and distrust of the "Junker" who pronounced them)

understand the very intelligible hints he threw out with respect to the object of strengthening the army; it was determined to shut its eyes and ears and run its head against a wall; and so the Diet had to be closed.

Moderate as ever, he said in the course of his concluding speech :—"The Government finds itself compelled to carry on the administration of State affairs without the support presupposed by the Constitution, and is fully aware of the responsibility it incurs through this regrettable circumstance; but is also mindful of its duty to its country, which duty authorises it to provide for the outlay requisite (until the Budget shall be legally adjusted) for keeping up existing State-institutions and promoting the welfare of the realm; feeling confident that, in due time, its action in this respect will be fully sanctioned."

When the Diet re-opened, Bismarck left no stone unturned to terminate the crisis without violating the Constitution, which no Junker of the class to which he was assigned by the Opposition could have brought himself to do. During the debate on the Address (Jan. 29, 1863) he remarked to the adversaries of the Government: "The Constitution steadfastly maintains the equality of the three legislatorial forces (Crown, Peers and Deputies) in the Budget question as well as in all others. No one of these forces can compel any other one to give way; therefore the Constitution recommends recourse to compromise. . . But if compromise be frustrated because one of these forces is resolved to carry out its own particular view with doctrinary absolutism, the series of compromises must necessarily be interrupted. In their place conflicts will then arise; and, as the existence of the State cannot be brought to a standstill, conflicts will become questions of "which is the stronger." He in whose hands actual power lies will then,

of course, act as he thinks fit. . . Whatever rights the Constitution concedes to you, you shall exercise to their full extent; but when you ask for more, we shall refuse, and shall persistently uphold the rights of the Crown against your pretensions. . . Prussian Royalty has not yet completed its mission; it is not yet fit to constitute an exclusively ornamental decoration of your Constitutional Edifice, or to be adjusted to the mechanism of a Parliamentary régime as a passive bit of machinery."

This was realistic State-philosophy—not a manifestation of Junkerish reactionary longings, adverse to the Constitutional rights of the country—which (as Bismarck denied, but the Liberals directly and indirectly asserted) were by no means exclusively the rights of the Chamber of Deputies; it was well-founded reliance upon established facts—real fidelity to the Constitution—not, as Deputy Gneist was pleased to style it "an open manifesto of absolutism." On the contrary; the Chamber desired to carry out its own will absolutely and unrestrictedly with regard to Budget Legislation, which was not only unconstitutional but—at that particular time—fraught with peril to the State. As a minister, Bismarck has always respected the special rights of the people's representatives in financial matters. Quoting from a conversation he had in 1871 with Jules Favre, he one day observed: "I told him we wanted money, and Paris must get us some. He replied that we could effect a loan. That, I rejoined, could not be done without the Imperial Parliament or the Diet. 'Ah!' he exclaimed, 'you can surely lay hold of 500,000,000 fr. somehow or other without troubling the Chamber.' I replied: 'No, not five francs.' He would not believe it. But I told him that, although I had been at war with the House of Representatives for four years I had always stuck at effecting a

loan without the Diet's consent; that was my limit, and I had never dreamt of overstepping it."

We cannot here go further into the story of the "Period of Conflict," and the author must content himself with stating that what he has said above applies equally to all Bismarck's utterances throughout that episode, so far as they concerned the question of State-rights. When, in 1866, Vilbort expressed his astonishment that the Chancellor should have succeeded in inducing the King to accept universal suffrage, he replied: "It is a victory that I have won after four years' hard fighting. When the King called me in, our position was an extremely difficult one. His Majesty shewed me a list of Liberal concessions, and I said: 'I accept it, and the more Liberal the Government can be the better.' Throughout the conflict I followed the King. It is an arbitrary assumption to say that I am, by nature or system, an opponent of the nation's representatives." He did not at that time (like many of his previous fellow-partisans) yearn for reaction any more than he does now-a-days, when he is again accused of so doing. Had he wished for it, he could probably have had it. If his defiant attitude and sarcasms aimed at the doctrinaires of the Liberal and Democratic Opposition may be qualified as "Junkerish," they were at least not calculated to aggravate the conflict—an offence of which he has been accused. They were—as he himself lately remarked to me—practical exemplifications of the *jus talionis*. He used offensive words and expressions, by no means seldom; but only upon distinct provocation; and never of such a virulent character as those hurled at him by his angry and embittered adversaries. These gentlemen, and the yelping press inspired by them, hit much harder and more maliciously than did the Minister-President. They were profuse of abuse and threats;

talked about a "Kreuz-Zeitung Ministry," a "Cabinet of Rope-dancers," the "Cain brand of Perjury" stamped upon the forehead of Army Reform, and other cheerful matters *ejusdem generis*. Bismarck was not the man to leave such invectives unacknowledged; when anybody slapped him on the right cheek it was not his way to offer the left, but to pull himself together and return cuff for cuff.

Besides, it was undesirable to persist in observing towards the Chambers that more than oriental courtesy to which they had been accustomed. No absolute monarch has been so toadied to by sycophants as was the Lower House of those days by Liberal Ministers, and the Chamber (as well as public opinion) had sniffed up the incense of flattery until it had come to believe that it was everything it was represented to be by a Premier angling for a majority. It was Bismarck's object to dispel this delusion by his shortcomings in the matter of politeness.

He was, moreover, actuated by his contempt for the doctrine of the People's Sovereignty, inferentially and directly professed by the Opposition. To him, a Prussian royalist by profound conviction, that doctrine was all the more loathsome because the Democrats worshipped what he regarded as the "miscarriage of a spurious philosophy" with religious veneration—a circumstance that annoyed him even more than the venomous, vulgar polemics of the Liberal parliamentary praters and leading-article manufacturers, and consequently stimulated him to appear more scornful, trenchant and ironical than he would have been but for this provocation. Finally, he was influenced by the natural and intelligible disgust with which a truly great mind cannot but regard political impotence and narrow-mindedness—the pathetic obtuseness and stiff-necked unteachableness of many of the doctrinaires with whom,

then and subsequently, he had to deal and contend. Scarcely one of the leaders of the Opposition (at the time referred to) who clamoured so greedily for a share in, or even monoply of government, possessed the least pretensions to statesmanlike sagacity or real qualifications for taking part in serious political business. Of this fact the Prussian electors of 1866 were entirely unaware; consequently they sent these pseudo-politicians up to the Diet thrice consecutively. But somebody who was acquainted with it (Lothar Bucher, I believe) explained the phenomena in question very lucidly in the *New York Tribune*, as follows:

"It is not every one who has either opportunity or leisure to study the science of politics. But every one can pick up something of that, as of any other science, if he have occasion to observe, the eye of an observer, and a certain adroitness of hand, fitting him for experimentalising. In Prussia, opportunity and this happy aptitude to experimentalising on a small scale were altogether lacking. The electors did not know how to test a politician. Whenever they proceeded to exercise their electoral rights they lapsed into an excusable but deplorable error; they said to themselves: 'This man is an admirable naturalist, lawyer, historian, schoolmaster—a first-class capacity in his profession or science—he will make a splendid member of Parliament.' The consequences of this error may be set forth by reversing a dictum of Aristotle, who says: 'A Legislative Assembly, in its corporative capacity, displays a higher intelligence than that of any one of its individual members.' In 1861 and 1866 it was frequently remarked that nearly every member of the Lower House, if you took him aside and talked to him, was a sensible man enough; but that one and all were transformed into blockheads as

soon as they got into that accursed, ill-ventilated room overlooking the Doenhofs-Platz."

It has been said of the French Academy: "If you gather together too many clever people in one place, they become muddle-headed;" and of the French Chamber of 1848: "If an Assembly of this description remains in session for any length of time it loses perception and judgment, as far as the outside world is concerned." In great measure this was then, and is still, the case with the Prussian House of Deputies, as we have been reminded of late by many a debate and vote in the Reichstag. "Idealists and old bachelors"—thus wrote "A National-Liberal Partizan," in a South-German journal (1879)—"who keep up no sort of touch with the people have acquired an altogether too pernicious influence in certain parties, whereby the actual direction of affairs seriously affecting the people's welfare has fallen into the hands of professional politicians, intriguers, and coterie-heroes. . . Most of the speeches in our Imperial Parliament sound like a second edition (with *addenda*) of the Frankfort National Assembly; many words, little sense; nearly always the same rhetorical carpet-beaters, who deal with every subject according to cut and dry theories or patterns, and invariably have the last word." This criticism might be expressed in milder and politer terms; it teems, perhaps, with excessive reproach. But it is in every respect applicable to the opposition of the so-called "Conflict Period."

In the opinion of these wrong-headed spirits Bismarck was a Junker, and remained so even after the grand disclosure and realisation of his German plan came off in the summer of 1866—at least, in the opinion of the "consistent ones, true to their principles and faithful to their party," who may be described as types of wrongheadedness. Others

allowed themselves to be converted by facts, permanently or temporarily, to more intelligent views, and thus gained the honour and joy of sharing in his great work. Had a genuine Junker, in Bismarck's place during the "Conflict Period," been scarcely able to withstand the temptation of advising the King to abolish, or, at least, materially modify or suspend the Constitution, such a man would undoubtedly have become arrogant after the victories in Bohemia, and would have avenged himself upon his opponents; for the Junkers—I mean the out-and-out ones of the Kleist-Retzow sort—are no politicians. The real politician is free from arrogance and vengefulness, alike in thought and action. He simply asks himself, "of what use will be this or that proceeding towards the attainment of my object?" That was Bismarck's case in the autumn of 1866. From the pinnacle of his triumph he stooped to ask for a vote of indemnification. He appeared before the people's Representatives bearing, not a laurel-wreath, but the olive-branch of reconciliation which he had plucked in Avignon four years previously—too soon for the Opposition.

Not long before that time he had proved, with respect to the Duchy of Lauenburg, that in another respect he did not belong to the Junker brood, and was capable of bringing it to its bearings (when requisite in the interest of the State) as energetically and even as contemptuously as if it had been composed of the stupid and insolent democrats of the Berlin Diet.

In virtue of the Gastein treaty the Duchy had been handed over to the Prussian Crown. This tiny realm was a legal curiosity; in comparison to its neighbour States (even to Mecklenburg) a monstrosity. It was, so to speak, a petrifaction of the state of the law in Germany during the seventeenth century, and, had such an arrangement been

practicable, ought to have occupied a distinguished position amongst the antiquities of the German Museum. Nobody within its precincts had ever thought of clearing out the feudal rubbish which had accumulated there, as in a gigantic lumber-room. An exalted official who had been charged with putting it in order said to me, "In whichsoever direction one looked throughout the duchy's institutions, nothing was to be seen but mediæval trash and robbery of the majority by a small privileged minority. In a word, Lauenburg was the Pompeii of German constitutional history, or—which comes to the same thing—the Paradise of Junkerdom and of a traditionally pampered bureaucracy."

Its former sovereigns in Copenhagen had, one after another, confirmed the privileges of the "Staende" without looking into them, and these privileges were set forth upon a yellow worm-eaten parchment, called "The Recess." The German Confederation, which occupied the Duchy in the autumn of 1863, and the Austro-Prussian Commissioners who administered it later on, had not been able to remedy any of the existing abuses; they had too little time at their disposal, and circumstances prevailed which made it uncertain who would eventually become the owner of the territory. Therefore, until Prussia took possession of it, the order of the day (not to speak of such facts as the total absence of a code of laws and the monopoly of common rights by individuals) was the occupancy of numerous lucrative official posts by a few "select families," which made a practice of letting the enormous State domains (of course, far under the value of their produce) to one another, thus assimilating the fat of the land in large quantities. "This class of person ruled almost unrestrictedly, wore the Order of the Elephant upon its breast, and ate up all the good things of the country. Those who belonged to it did

nothing, for they could do nothing; and from that pursuit they derived incomes amounting in some cases to ten thousand thalers per annum. They allotted themselves valuable perquisites and imposed heavy dues upon others; the people subjected to their sway were obliged to drink detestable beer, brewed on their estates, and nobody throughout the Duchy was able to purchase a few acres of land, because they did not choose that more than two thousand human beings should live upon a square mile of ground."

Now it happened that on the 25th of September, in the year of Grace, 1865, King William entered the Duchy in order to receive the homage and oath of fealty of his new subjects in its capital, Ratzeburg. At Buechen, on the frontier, he was greeted by a deputation of the "Staende" with an address, in which the passage occurred: "We have your Majesty's word that you will govern us justly and in accordance with the customs and laws of the country," by which, no doubt, was meant keeping up the abuses of patrician and bureaucratic nepotism and of feudal equity, rather than fair-dealing justice. In his reply, however, the King made no reference to it.

During the afternoon of the 25th—the homaging ceremony was appointed to come off on the following morning in St. Peter's Church, Ratzeburg—Bismarck, who had accompanied His Majesty thither, was enjoying the mild autumnal air on the pretty lake close to the town, in the company of a distinguished member of the Lauenburg Assembly. As the latter had theretofore heard nothing of any royal intention to confirm the local privileges, and was suffering from the restlessness caused by uncertainty, he plucked up courage, and asked—

"*Apropos*, Excellency, what about our 'Recess?' I

hope His Majesty will sanction it before he exacts our homage."

"I fancy the King will not do so," replied Bismarck.

"Then," rejoined his companion, "we shall refuse to take the oath in Church to-morrow."

"Very well," observed the minister. "In that case you gentlemen will be informed to-morrow, also in church, that you have been incorporated in the nearest Prussian province."

After which the two gentlemen remained a little longer in their boat upon the smooth surface of the lake, talking about the beauties of the neighbourhood.

As soon as he returned to his quarters, Bismarck sat down and drew up a Royal Decree announcing the incorporation of Lauenburg in the province of Brandenburg—to be read aloud in case the "Staende" should really refuse to take the oath and do the "correct hereditary homage"—and ending with an exhortation to all present to swear fealty *en masse;* an exhortation which would undoubtedly have been complied with by the people. He then made sure of the King's sanction to the Decree, and went to church next morning with this little torpedo in his coat-pocket. A hymn was sung, followed by a sermon from the superintendent. Then the vassals were summoned to take the oath; and behold! they swore without a murmur. So did the other "Staende." The "Recess" remained unconfirmed.

Let us sum up the foregoing briefly and seek the lesson contained in it. Feudal conditions of the "good old days" are always put forward in electioneering speeches as the Junkers' ideal. That ideal was realized most comprehensively in the Duchy of Lauenburg. There, far longer than in any other part of Germany, had been kept up patrimonial jurisdic-

tion, local and family police, hereditary vassaldom, rights of compulsion and ban, stringent game-laws, hunting monopolies, and absolute dependence of the peasants and labourers upon the landowning authorities and officials. One would think, therefore, that a downright Junker, finding himself the sole, uncontrolled and irresponsible Minister of the country in question, would not take the initiative in putting an end to this Junker-Idyll, but would wait at least until he should be compelled to do so. This, however, was not the case. Nobody exercised any pressure upon him. He might have secured the whole "institution" under lock and key if, on the occasion of the "hereditary homagings" he had agreed to the demands of the "Staende" (amongst whom, under the leading of their Syndic, Wittrock, strong Guelphic tendencies prevailed) and had advised the king to promise that the local Constitution should be maintained in force. Instead of this we see that, being at the time a Minister, he firmly withstood the pretensions of the "Staende," and met their threat of refusing to do homage with the counter-threat of exhorting all who should be present at the ecclesiastical act of homaging to perform that rite by acclamation. Subsequently we see that he took rapid legislative steps to bring about the abolition of all the prerogatives above recited, and to free the working-classes of Lauenburg from the dependence in which they had thitherto been kept by the four chief officials of the Duchy, in virtue of plenary powers conferred upon them by "local institutions" with respect to the preventive and punitive police alike. Would a Junker have been disposed to pitch all these antique prerogatives out of window?

In that very same Lauenburg, where light was thus shed upon feudal darkness in 1865, the apostles of Progressist agitation had the audacity, during the autumn parliamentary

elections of 1881 to persuade the peasants that Bismarck was Junkerdom incarnate, casting about him to revive the old times, or worse; and the silly people, oblivious of what had happened, believed the senseless assertion and exercised their electoral functions accordingly. Of course the agitators themselves and their wire-pullers in Berlin knew their accusation to be untrue—a sort of spectre wherewith to frighten fools—a bait wherewith to catch votes.

Within the last few years even the more honourable and moderate Liberals have been heard to complain loudly that Prince Bismarck, who had gone with them from 1866 to 1877, had quitted them in the latter year in order to steer the ship of state into the waters of reaction. This is a distorted view of what really occurred. The Chancellor could not abandon the National-Liberals, for he never belonged to them; and he could not revert to reaction (of the class professed by Kleist, Lippe, Count Bruehl, Rochow, and Tettau) because he will not have anything to do with reaction, of that or any other kind.

Whilst conversing (Jan. 1881) with the author of this work about the complaints and reproaches uttered by Herr Bamberger in the above sense, he observed:—"Ever since I became a Minister I have not belonged to any party—neither to the Liberal nor to the Conservative; the King has been my sole political associate, and my only objects have been to defend monarchical power against unconstitutional Parliamentarism, and to restore, strengthen and develope the German Empire. The Conservatives have always been against me—that is, whenever they wanted reaction, because I would not have it. They remember the attitude assumed towards me by the *Kreuz-Zeitung* in 1872 and later, at the time of the great libels (published by Joachim Gehlsen in the 'Reichsglocke'). It was then that they forsook me and

began to attack me in every imaginable way because I could not go with them. It was just the same with the National-Liberals in 1877. When the Bennigsen Ministry failed to come to pass, because Bennigsen asked for impossibilities and the King would not have him, and expressly forbade any further negotiations with him,* they left me in the lurch, threw me over, and told all manner of lies about me. Thenceforth they only supported me tepidly—or not at all—in the Chamber, and endeavoured to get my Ministerial colleagues to side with them."

* Unruh reports: "During the negotiations relating to the Tobacco Duty Bill of 1878, when Bismarck declared his ideal to be a Monopoly, Bennigsen told me that he had informed Bismarck of his inability to pledge himself to that system, and consequently had given up his intention of joining the Cabinet. This requires correction. According to Bismarck's own account of the matter, what took place was as follows. Count Eulenburg, the Home Minister, wished to retire in 1877. Bismarck offered the post in question to Herr von Bennigsen, who required that Herren von Forckenbeck and von Stauffenberg should also be appointed Ministers, no portfolios being at that moment disposable. Meanwhile, Eulenburg had acquainted the King with the Chancellor's intention to nominate Bennigsen his (Eulenburg's) successor, and had raised objections which resulted in the King sternly forbidding the Minister-President to treat with Bennigsen any further. This took place a few days after the conversation which Bismarck had had upon the subject with Bennigsen at Varzin. Bennigsen subsequently went up to the Chancellor in the Reichstag, and asked him about the Tobacco-Monopoly. Bismarck answered that he considered it a good thing and should try for it; whereupon Bennigsen rejoined that he could not support it, and therefore must forego joining the Cabinet. "This conversation, held two months after that of Varzin, was in no way a pursuance of the negotiations, prohibited to Bismarck by the King. The Chancellor, who continued (quite independently of the Ministerial question) his endeavours to keep touch with Bennigsen and the National-Liberal party, could not conveniently inform Herr von Bennigsen that the possibility of negotiating with him as a Ministerial candidate had been put an end to in the highest quarter two months previously. Therefore, he allowed Bennigsen's version of the matter—that the Tobacco-Monopoly had been the obstacle to further negotiations—to pass uncontradicted.

Prince Bismarck, therefore, has not been a party-man for many years past, which, with us Germans, is much the same as saying he has not been an adherent to one or another doctrine. Always sure of his own purpose, like all the great characters of history, he looks for a Constitutional majority wherever he thinks he can find it, when he wants it. Keeping his above-mentioned two main objects steadfastly in view, he has invariably endeavoured to manipulate the more important political parties in such sort that they might be available for the attainment of those objects, making concessions from time to time first to one and then to the other—concessions which appeared to him insignificant compared with the aims he sought to attain, and which might, if necessary, be modified in some respects after those aims should be attained. It having been remarked, during a recent debate in the Reichstag, that he had approved of parliamentary freedom of speech in 1870, he replied:—

"At that time, in order to foster the young and tender plant of German Unity by every feasible means, I agreed to many things that were greatly at variance with my political convictions. It was not then my business to consider economical questions, or to fret myself about trifles, but to further the consolidation of the German Empire. Now we can discuss such matters quietly. Had we not then made a solid job of the Empire, discussion would not help us now-a-days."

When Bismarck looked about him amongst the representatives of the people for assistance to achieve his task, his glance naturally fell upon the National-Liberal party. With respect to national aims he was essentially at one with it; but it was also necessary that he should come to terms with its Liberal elements. This gave umbrage to the Junker party, or *Kreuz-Zeitung* Association. As early as

1870 the editor of that paper, Beuthner, when I called at his office one day with an unsympathetic mandate from the Chancellor, said to me haughtily, "We will not do it. Ministries vanish, not excepting the Bismarck Ministry; but our party remains"—a sentence which the worthy man certainly did not derive from his own diminutive brain. Prussian Junkerdom was out of temper with the Chancellor "become a Liberal;" first it sulked, then it waxed furious, and early in the year 1872 it commenced active hostilities against Prince Bismarck on the question of the Schools Inspection Bill, allying itself to Herr Windhorst—for lack of a sensible confederate—and inscribing upon its banner "Vindication of the Monarchical Principle against Parliamentary Majorities" and "Defence of our State's Christian Character." According to the Conservative organ, the Prince, in his speech of Jan. 30, "had directly attacked or renounced all that the Conservative Party in Prussia had proclaimed and defended as its fundamental principles for twenty years past." The passage of his speech in which all this was discovered ran as follows: "But as matters actually stand, this being a Constitutional State, we Ministers stand in need of a majority which, on the whole, supports our policy." This was designated "an uncompromising recognition of that Constitutionalism which the *Kreuz-Zeitung* had thitherto successfully withstood, because it was not strictly Constitutional in Prussia."

To these remarks the following correct answer was returned in the *Spener'sche Zeitung* by the Chancellor's order: "Not Constitutional? Are we, then, not living under a Constitutional system of government? Have we an Assembly representing the people? Is its consent required to make the laws valid, and is that consent obtained through a majority? If so, it follows inevitably that the advisers of

the Crown are compelled to obtain a majority for the passing of their laws—at least, to the extent of generally supporting the Ministerial policy, even if it does not approve of every measure proposed. The man criticized by the *Kreuz-Zeitung* with such surpassing sagacity has proved, in the storm and strain of eventful days, that he is not one to sacrifice what he deems necessary to any majority. But that same statesman has said, 'Conflicts ought not to be a standing institution of the State.' Wherever a Parliament exists majorities will always be obtainable. If the statesmen of the Right withdraw their support from the Government it becomes a question whether or not the latter (which, after all, has to keep the business of the State going) can find representatives of the people on its Left who are fit to govern, and on whose support it can reckon. The Minister-President has already reminded the Right once that it has transferred the centre of gravity to the other side of the House by wilful opposition. That warning has lost none of its significance. Majorities can only be matters of indifference in States governed absolutely, where the laws require no confirmation on the part of the people's representatives."

Are these the words of a Junker, or the principles of that caste commonly defined as Junkerdom? I stand in no fear of contradiction when I assert that these deductions, put forward by the Chancellor, are precisely the converse of Junkerish notions and endeavours.

The words quoted above were aimed at the extreme Right, or darkest shade of True Blue Conservatives. The other members of the party were eulogised, e.g. :—"The Conservative party sought and found its mainstay in the Government. This the *Neue Preussische Zeitung* designates 'the source of evil.' We deem it more correct to recognize in that fact the source of this party's respectability and vigour.

It has risen from the insignificance of many a long year under a powerful and enterprising Government. By loyally adhering to the policy adopted by His Majesty, it not only rendered the success of that policy possible but became identified with it—thereby acquiring an indisputable right to share its fame and honours. It cannot be said that, during the last few years, the Government has to thank the Conservative party exclusively for any parliamentary victory. But it is to the party's credit that it attached itself to a Government which was capable of carrying out what the party could not *per se* bring to fulfilment."

Nearly the same that was thus said of the Conservatives—more particularly of their right wing—applied to the extreme Left of the National-Liberals, which separated from that party some years ago, and still hovers in the air (like Mahomet's fabulous coffin between two magnets), between its old friends and the Progressists, who have much more in common with it than the former. At the time of that secession, when the said extreme Left was to a great extent predominant, the words in question were, indeed, applicable to the whole party; for the National-Liberals only earned their share of honour and glory in connection with the rearrangement of German affairs by supporting and identifying themselves with the Chancellor's policy. At the commencement of the internal construction of the new edifice they, thanks to the more salient features of their political character, were bound to strike the architect as workmen peculiarly fitted for the execution of that task; and, in order that it should be rapidly completed, their utilisation—as well as that of those Conservatives who comprehended and were willing to further the Chancellor's plans and endeavours—was indispensable. There were amongst them some thorough-paced Liberals, scarcely amenable to

reason, who most reluctantly made up their minds to stand by the Government; such a course having been thitherto by them regarded as out of keeping with true Liberalism, accustomed to regard uncompromising opposition as the correct thing under all circumstances. The Chancellor won these Liberals over by making certain advances to them, and showing consideration for their prejudices. He gained friends amongst them by making formal concessions to some of their favourite fads, which might, for the time being, be regarded as harmless. But, although he manifested every disposition to make himself agreeable to them, he never permitted them to restrict the rights of the Crown, or to infringe its Constitutional authority.

Thitherto Liberalism had professed the doctrine that the Government must either submit to the will of the people's representatives, or retire to make room for a Ministry emanating from the majority of the Prussian Diet or the German Parliament. Up to 1866 Bismarck had simply declared this doctrine—imported from England, where it is little more than an old custom, by no means prescribed by the Constitution—to be inapplicable to Prussia. Thereafter, however, he took pains upon several occasions to convert the Liberals to views more cognate to monarchical institutions. Furthermore, he sought to controvert and get rid of an erroneous belief which (as above pointed out) regarded antagonism between the Government and the people's representatives as natural and in every way efficacious, and considered that the first duty of the latter was to observe a steadfast and watchful mistrust of the former's plans and proposals—its next, to redeem the assumed rights of the people, and to emancipate the subjects of the State (now possessed of sufficient political culture to qualify them for governing themselves) from

official tutelage. At one time, as it seemed, Prince Bismarck's endeavours to induce the National-Liberals to reject these traditional paradoxes were not unsuccessful, so that on the whole, relations of a very friendly description were established between him and the most considerable (in numbers and ability) fraction of the Liberals, resulting in several concessions to these latter on the part of the Government, e.g., with respect to economic interests, administrative reform, the struggle with the Ultramontanists, judicial reform and military organisation. Hereby the Chancellor always attained his object, as far as essentials were concerned, whilst yielding to Liberal demands of less moment —in other words, by adopting a system of compromises.

Taking into consideration the rapidity with which the internal construction of the German Empire was advanced by the above means, it was inevitable that—when the time came for closely and carefully inspecting the work achieved —certain flaws should be detected, requiring immediate elimination. One section of the National-Liberals recognised this fact—another failed to do so. All the members of that party recalled to mind their *doctrinaire* past, to a greater or less degree, and remembered their engagements to their electors, erroneously assuming that the majority of these latter regarded the old articles of the Liberal Creed as Golden Rules or things holy and inviolable; hence the support of the Chancellor by this party became more and more questionable daily. It still figured in the Liberal programme; but, as an actuality, it left much to be desired. The party lent him its aid most unwillingly when he strengthened the Criminal Code, emasculated by humanitarians *à la mode*, and the measure emerged from the Parliamentary debates in a mutilated condition. On the third reading of the Judicial Reform Bill the Liberals

certainly made concessions of no inconsiderable importance; but they had previously brought their *doctrinaire* Liberalism heavily to bear upon the question, pruning and cobbling the Bill in all directions.

The Parliamentary elections of 1877 showed pretty plainly that the leaders of the party had deceived themselves with regard to the feelings and wishes of the electors, a large number of whom was favourable to the Prince's policy. Consequently a good many National-Liberal Deputies failed to reappear in the Berlin Parliament, whilst the Conservative fractions were strongly reinforced.

At Eastertide, 1877, the Chancellor offered his resignation to the Emperor, who replied to him with the famous "Never!" speaking for the vast majority of the German people interested in political matters. The chief motives prompting Bismarck's wish to retire from office were set forth at the time in a series of articles published by the *Grenzboten*, which it is unnecessary to reproduce in this chapter. But there were others as well; for instance, vexation and weariness, superinduced by the waving opposition of the strongest fraction of the Liberal party, which, in view of the hostility displayed by the Ultramontanists to the empire, should have vigorously sided with the latter, but on the contrary—in order to keep up its reputation for Liberal consistency—never lent its support to the Chancellor fully and freely, preferring to peddle with subtle special-pleadings and Talmud-like straw-splittings, with bargainings and reservations, in order to gain credit for at least playing a special part in the political drama. The Left Wing of the National-Liberal party felt that it was their mission to criticise rather than to co-operate, and harked back to their assumed "call"—namely, to act as guardians of the people's menaced rights and liberties—so

that it became difficult, from time to time, to distinguish them from the party of progress on the one hand, whilst on the other they came to resemble very closely the Centre in its opinions and style of oratory.

In the meantime the Chancellor's plans for remodelling the economic institutions of the empire had ripened—plans which aimed at augmenting the Imperial revenue by means of Customs' duties and indirect taxation; at giving aid to national industry and agriculture in their struggle against the forces of foreign competition; at relieving the middle classes of the population, overburdened with direct taxes, and the communes, saddled with excessive obligations in the nature of outlay for schools and paupers. To achieve these objects Bismarck strove to secure the support of the National-Liberals, and during the autumn of 1876 (as we have already mentioned) opened negotiations in that sense with Herr von Bennigsen, the leader of the party's right wing; who, however, could not or would not take upon himself to come to a decision, but simply took cognizance of the Chancellor's proposals, in order to talk them over with his fellow-partisans in Berlin. This he did; and behold! a few days later the watchword "Constitutional Guarantees" was given out by the National-Liberal papers. This pointed to a business transaction, manifestly suggested by Herr Lasker, who, as early as 1873 (declaring that at length the "People's Rights" must be exacted and conceded), had demanded a Press-Law after his own heart, but had been disposed of by the Chancellor with the remark, "We all belong to the people—not exclusively the party which styles itself Liberal without invariably being so." Now, however, that the party found itself in request—necessary, and even, as it thought, indispensable—the time was come, according to Herr Lasker's calculations, for

taking advantage in a commercial spirit of so favourable a conjuncture, and for putting pressure on the Government to some purpose. Not that the party was at one about the "Constitutional Guarantees" which it desired to obtain in exchange for its pledge to support the Chancellor in carrying out his economic projects. But that it laid claim to any such guarantees was the plainest conceivable expression of the feeling (repeatedly given utterance to by the Extreme Left) that the Liberals regarded the Chancellor as an adversary, rather than as a friend and *collaborateur*—as a person only to be approached with precaution, and whose legislative schemes must be larded with all sorts of provisoes, in order to render them harmless. The demand for "guarantees" smacked of a tradesman's way of thinking, crossed with that of a solicitor. The "people," in whose name it was of course put forward, was in reality the fraction of the Liberal party which yearned for the introduction of English Parliamentarism into Germany, and mechanically echoed the views and wishes of its leaders—ambitious agitators, or *doctrinaires* utterly alienated from the world of actualities. The real people—the great mass of German citizens, by no means shared that yearning, nor even understood what it was about, although the Liberal press boasted of it daily as though it had been the fulfilment of a sacred duty. The Chancellor, however, rejected it as impracticable; nor would he have been able to consent to it, even had it been consonant with his political principles; for the Emperor would not have permitted him to do so.

Thereafter the National-Liberals constituted a party which voted with the Opposition upon nearly every question brought before the Reichstag and Lower House of the Diet, and refused to grant the Chancellor's simplest requests with the object of putting pressure upon him. The separa-

tion that took place of the Extreme Left from the rest of the party made but little difference in this respect; for the National-Liberals had all more or less relapsed into their old political groove, and, in so doing, had thrown the Chancellor over, as we have already pointed out—not he them. Their press organs assailed him in a tone every whit as hostile as that adopted towards him by the Progressist journals. Their representatives in the Diet rejected every proposition made by the Government; those belonging to the Reichstag did the same, overthrowing amongst others the Socialist Bill, a measure urgently needed, and only deigning to pass it after two attempts upon the Emperor's life had been made by persons belonging to the ranks of the revolutionary party, and the nation had been put into a temper which threatened the parliamentary future of those who, out of "fidelity to their principles," refused to apply any remedy to the Socialistic evil. By accumulating obstacles in the Chancellor's path these gentlemen above all wished to prove that they constituted a damaging and impeding power, with which it would be necessary to reckon and negotiate, in order to secure its goodwill (of course, by means of concessions) whenever any fresh question should crop up. But, ever since this policy of the National-Liberals made itself clearly manifest, Prince Bismarck has felt more strongly than ever theretofore that they are untrustworthy friends. He has, moreover, carried several important points of his programme of Reform by the aid of others; not so many as he could have brought to pass had he been supported by both wings of the National-Liberal party, but enough for the present.

Those others were the Conservatives and the Centre; a fact, however, which affords not the least pretext for asserting that the Chancellor is either become a Conservative—in

the Junkerish sense of the word—or that he has gone over to Ultramontanism. Both the parties in question showed themselves willing to assist him in realising certain of his purposes, and he accepted their co-operation. It is quite open to the moderate Liberals to approach him anew, and to get on with him again by means of compromises. When he commenced his enterprise of economic reform he observed: "I have in view positive and practical aims, which I intend to attain; an intention in fulfilling which I have been sometimes aided by the Left, sometimes by the Right. If I could have had my way, both parties would have assisted me. Let him help me who will, whether those aims be attained forthwith, or after years of common effort, does not so much matter. I will work with anybody whose object is that which, in my opinion, is calculated to further the interests of the State and the country at large. It is all the same to me what political fraction he belongs to."

Those interests—in Prussia and the German Empire alike—cannot be advanced in any way by the policy advocated of late years by Liberals of every *nuance;* on the contrary, we have nothing to hope and everything to fear from the success of the purpose which regulates the attitude of the Opposition in all home questions; i.e. the introduction of Parliamentary Government into Germany. England's experiences, up to the present time, of Parliamentarism—that is, of alternating rule, exercised by majorities of the House of Commons—by no means stultify this assertion; for in that country the institution in question reposes upon aristocratic foundations. The English Constitution (admitting that there is such a thing) is in a position to allow full play to its erratic forces, being always susceptible of re-regulation by the habits of the people amongst whom it sprung up (by the way, in a quite common-place and unreasoning manner, like a product

of Nature) and by their conservative, monarchical and national bent of mind. England, after all, is an island, exhibiting developments peculiar to itself and requirements that differ essentially from those of Continental States. In spite of all this: we have yet to see what England's future, as shaped by Gladstone's projects for the extension of the suffrage, will bring forth; already since the passing of the first Reform Bill, Radicalism has struck root in several broad *strata* of the population, and it is to be apprehended that it will continue to gain ground and finally become the ruling Power in the State. It is already numerously represented in the House of Commons, and the present Premier has found himself compelled to admit men of avowed democratic—aye, of republican principles into his Cabinet.

The adoption of a Parliamentary system of government in Austria-Hungary, France and Italy has failed to fulfil any one of the expectations attached to it, and has justified all the objections put forward against it. It has weakened those States within and without. But there is even less prospect of its proving useful in Germany, and more reason to apprehend that it would result disastrously, our international situation being a far more difficult one than that of any of the above-named Great Powers. The predominant position at present occupied by Germany in the "European Concert" is regarded by the majority of the other performers as an anomaly, to be done away with as soon as may be. War with France threatens our future in the West—with Russia, in the East. A coalition of both these Powers against us and our Ally on the Danube is improbable just now, but by no means impossible in times to come; and we can scarcely hope for support of a steadfast and decisive nature from Italy though it is through us that she has attained her full liberty and independence. In reality we owe the maintenance of

peace to the respect with which our army and leading statesman have inspired our neighbours; and to the assumption that the foreign policy of the Empire will be carried on with the firmness and consistency that have hitherto characterised it. Hence, the rudder of that policy must never be entrusted to the hand of Proteus-like, ever-variable Parliamentarism; but we must remain a Military power—one that will not put up with any sort of Parliamentary government. The German Army will always feel that it is the army of its Emperor-King, and will never learn to obey parliamentary commands or to produce Parliamentary generals.

Moreover, the solution of the social question—the Latter-Day problem of problems—cannot be attempted with the least prospect of success by any one of our existing political parties. Were the Party of Progress to come to power it would repeat its old errors and renew a hopeless struggle by abolishing the Socialist-Law. That Bismarck is aware of this, and has undertaken to solve the social question in a practical manner, will one of these days be counted amongst the greatest services he has rendered to his country. It must, however, be remarked of his resistance to Parliamentary government that it was not inspired by the feelings of a Royalist Junker, but by the foresight of a gifted statesman, whose unerring glance takes in present and future, foreign and home affairs, with equal clearness and accuracy.

Let us now look back and extract their gist from the foregoing paragraphs.

The Chancellor was born a Junker; he lived a Junker's life for a considerable time, and to some extent represented the views of his fellow-Junkers. As a Minister, however, he only belonged to the party designated by the epithet "Junkerdom" so far that, like itself, he was a Royalist in

thought and feeling, and, above all, objected to Parliamentary government. As was proved by his application to the Diet for indemnification after Koeniggraetz (and by many other utterances and transactions) he was at all times faithful to the Constitution. That he was no patron of aristocratic privileges was demonstrated by his attitude towards the "Recess" of the Lauenburg Junkers, as well as by various measures of his adoption—for example, his frequent choice of commoners as Ministerial colleagues. There are those amongst his contemporaries who do not yet understand this, obvious though it be. But the stupid phrase "Bismarck's Junker-Policy" will, we feel assured, be undiscoverable in the pages of future history.

If he were styled "soldier" instead of "Junker"—if his militarism were grumbled at instead of his Junkerdom, there would be some sense in such a view of his character although it would be no reproach to him. What is spoken of as militarism is in reality that Prussian discipline by virtue of which all the forces in the State, all the members of the governmental organism in its various branches, work together with one common object—that system, the first principle of which for all connected with it (from the lowest to the highest in rank, including the Sovereign) is obedience, or rather the subordination of each individual's personal inclinations and opinions to those of his immediate official superior in particular, and to the interests of the State in general. Every part of this system is an accurate fit, dovetailing admirably with the part adjoining it; all goes on smoothly, as in the army, which is merely the most distinct outcome of the spirit animating all our State institutions and officials, besides being the chief and central school in which that spirit is imparted to the population at large. Such a system as this—of which Bismarck himself

once said, "I am ambitious to deserve one day the praise bestowed by history upon Prussian discipline"—is quite compatible with an abundant measure of political liberty, but not with the Parliamentary form of government demanded by our Liberals—a system that is bound to be always unsteady, because unavoidably mutable as well as fettered with respect to its action and constantly restricted to half-measures; whereas nothing in political life can approach (for efficiency) the swift offensive power and steadfast defensive force of a monarchy organised in the manner above described.

Bismarck is the incorporate ideal of the Prussian officer and official, not of the Prussian Junker. Nothing short of stupidity or dishonesty can account for any man mistaking him in this respect. Future generations will not be guilty of such folly or wickedness.

"It is easily to be understood," says Vischer ('Altes und Neues,' vol. iii. 141), "that political atomists should reproach the man whose life-purpose it is to create animate unity, concord and community, and to overthrow the rule of the many-headed, with an exclusive desire to set up his own masterful individuality above all else. And the people has allowed itself to be persuaded into believing that it is a shame one man should do so much; it (the people) has come to regard a colossal Number One with apprehension. Doubtless it is a misfortune for a man that he should be so much cleverer and more capable than the generality of his fellow-men. Mankind cannot endure the thought that the intelligence and volition of so many should be concentrated in one; the masses detest that one, and sow hatred of him everywhere. It is indeed a tragical lot to be a genius. Nor, as a matter of fact, can a genius fulfil his mission without using violence, towering so high above others as he

does, nor without feeling contempt, seeing what pigmies he has to contend with."

These are golden words. The babble of narrow-minded and envious Philistines will one day be recognised as what it really is; and already, in the rising generation, there are those standing by the door, ready to carry away such rubbish and bury it out of sight for ever.

CHAPTER IV.

DIPLOMATIC INDISCRETIONS.

Diplomacy is the art of making good the justifiable self-interest of a state by means of negotiations with other states. In other words, its mission is, by observation, written and spoken representations, and persuasions to defend the commonwealth to which its practitioners (i.e. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassadors, Envoys, Chargés d'Affaires, &c.) belong against foreign adversaries; to prevent the conclusion of alliances hostile to that commonwealth; to gain allies and keep them; and to act with these latter in such sort that the interests of the Monarch and people represented by the diplomatist may be advanced—their influence, power and well-being promoted and enlarged.

Everything else considered appurtenant to the qualifications and duties of a diplomatic agent is superficial, supplementary and chiefly ornamental. That many, perhaps most of the gentlemen practising diplomacy, attach more importance to these extraneous matters than to the essential ones, is nothing to the purpose; indeed it exhibits their capacities in an unfavourable light, as do the opinions and actions of certain philologists, who make a great fuss about trifles. It may be assumed that such people know but little about the science they profess, or lack vigour for its furtherance.

Questions of outward show, etiquette and ceremonial cannot but be invested with a certain importance, Court circles being what they actually are; and an exact knowledge (acquired by careful study) of the rules and precedents obtaining in those spheres is indispensable to persons called upon to move and act therein. But the first duty and most exalted object of the occupant of a diplomatic post is, and always must be, to obtain the advantage for his employer in all political transactions. His mission is closely akin to that of the soldier of high rank, and to that confided to ecclesiastics by the Roman Catholic Church, in its capacity of a political entity and temporal power.

This relationship has led to the circumstance that the ranks of diplomacy have been largely recruited, at times, by generals and prelates. In the Middle Ages the latter were considered to be specially qualified for conducting political negotiations; not alone because they were in those days almost exclusively possessed of the requisite education, but because the Church, as a combative force, ever striving to obtain greater influence and the extension of its rule—a power to which the use of the sword was not becoming or (in cases where Popes surmounted their scruples in that regard) was not practicable on account of extraneous reasons—had cultivated to a very high degree in its dignitaries and, be it observed, not invariably to the detriment of mankind, the art of attaining its ends by working upon human passions and appealing to special interests by persuasion and cunning manœuvres of other descriptions, by wily artifices and ingenious deceptions. Even nowadays the Cardinals, Nuncios and Legates of Rome enjoy the reputation of being uncommonly astute diplomatists, in the practice of which profession it should be remembered that they have the advantage of the Church's experience for at

least a thousand years past, embodied in transmitted recipes and maxims of approved value.

Hence it was by no means surprising that temporal sovereigns in later times, and even down to the present century, employed politicians belonging to the ecclesiastical caste to serve their ends, not infrequently with excellent results, seeing that the very able persons in question as a rule served a King just as well as, in another official position, they would have served the Pope. The names of Richelieu and Mazarin will suggest themselves to the reader, as well as that of Talleyrand, Bishop of Autun, who was the model of a skilled diplomatist of the præ-Bismarckian era; and passing reference may also be made to the position in which, some years ago, the Prussian Government had intended to place Cardinal Hohenlohe.

The affinity of superior military officers with the diplomatic world is too obvious to need demonstration at any length. We talk about diplomatic tactics, strategy and campaigns. In our own days we have seen French generals functioning as ambassadors at foreign Courts, Pelissier in London, Fleury and Chanzy in St. Petersburg, nor has it been unusual to entrust Prussian and German officers of high rank with diplomatic missions; I may mention as examples Lieutenant General von Mueffling, sent to Constantinople in 1829 to mediate in the arrangement of a peace between Russia and the Porte; Generals von Manteuffel, von Rochow (Bismarck's predecessor as Prussia's representative at the Federal Assembly), von Schweinitz (first in Vienna, then in St. Petersburg) von Roeder (until lately in Berne), and von Fabrice, who brought about the intercourse that took place between Thiers and the Versailles diplomatists during the "period of transition." Moreover the circumstance that Bismarck (although only in

a titular sense) holds rank in the army, and calls attention to that fact by almost invariably wearing uniform, may be held to point to the intimate connection between military and diplomatic duties.

Besides priests, soldiers and professional diplomatists, the policy of monarchs has availed itself of other intelligent persons, whose services must not be undervalued because rendered by agents not occupying any official position; I refer to ladies and Jews. The influence exercised by Frau von Cruedener, the Princess Lieven and the Duchess of Dino, is well known; in the same category, at more recent dates, may be classed the Queen and Princess of Prussia during the Crimean War (see Lady Bloomfield's 'Reminiscences of Court and Diplomatic Life,' vol. ii. pp. 34, 51), the Archduchess Sophia, the late Queen of Holland, the late Grand Duchess Helene and the Empress Eugénie. Moreover, petticoat politicians have very frequently played a part at Court, in Ministries and in diplomatic *salons*, sometimes with salutary results, but more frequently with disastrous ones—for the most part actuated by sentiment, and seldom, indeed, by sensible reflection—always, however, so manifest in their agency that, in all peculiarly complicated and perplexing cases, we are driven to the enquiry, "Où est la femme?" I only state facts, without enquiring into the causes of these phenomena, as to do so would be to diverge too widely from my subject, and would, moreover, necessitate the exposure of circumstances and relations of an extremely delicate nature. Suffice it to remark, that the influence possessed by an Envoy at the Court to which he is accredited, and the services he is enabled to render there to his Sovereign, are not his own doing in every case. Were the Orders with which he is decorated bestowed in reward of real merit, they would now and then adorn the breast of his better half or

of one of his female friends amongst the ladies of the Court. Niebuhr in his "Lebensnachrichten" observes: "It is a good thing to be Ambassador at the Papal Court, for there, at least, there are no maids of honour."

On the other hand, the wily, industrious and persevering Children of Israel—citizens of the world as they are—have frequently been employed upon diplomatic business as spies, go-betweens and messengers; to wit, Ephraim, the confidant of Haugwitz and agent of the Prussian Cabinet in 1805, who kept up communications between Prussia and foreign Cabinets, always working, however, in the interest of France.

Still oftener diplomacy has utilised them to influence public opinion by means of the press. Sometimes they have become more than mere subordinate agents, their advice and quiet activity having been found of the highest efficiency in transactions of importance. But—except under the Third French Republic, in which Jews, baptized and unbaptized, have played an extraordinarily important part—they had only risen to the position of ambassador or, in one case, to that of Minister of Foreign Affairs when either they or their fathers before them had renounced the faith of their race, as in the cases of Disraeli-Beaconsfield, of the diplomatist Hamburger, who accompanied Gortchakoff to the meeting of the three Emperors at Berlin in 1872, and another of the Czar's diplomatic officials, who was once a contractor, notorious for the cleverness of his dealings in that line of business, and whom the Czar subsequently employed to represent Muscovite interests at one of the Western Courts.

A considerable number of capacities, seldom collectively possessed by an individual, is essential to the efficient occupancy of an important diplomatic post. The chief requirements are, first of all, political intelligence; secondly, a practical turn of mind; then, a thorough historical and geo-

graphical education, familiarity with the traditions of the Court to which one is accredited, freedom from prejudice, knowledge of human nature, *sang-froid*, a sharp eye and a quick ear for the development of affairs and for the differences between seeming and reality, the essential and the unimportant; still further, tact, refinement of feeling, discretion, and the gift of displaying firmness and resolution with the greatest amiability of manner; finally—and this is especially requisite when a genius happens to be at the head of the Foreign Office at home—an intellect capable of subordinating and adapting its own views, wishes and convictions to the ideas and instructions of the leading spirit above alluded to. High birth is also a qualification; and it is of considerable advantage to employ members of princely families in the diplomatic service, on condition, of course, that these exalted personages are willing to observe discipline and submit under all circumstances to the will of their chief, the Minister. Whatever may be said to the contrary, the education and training enjoyed by the well-to-do nobility during youth fits them much better for those Court circles in which an Envoy has to live and take action than does the system upon which common hobbledehoys are brought up; and an ambassdor belonging to the most insignificant of Reigning Houses will be regarded even by the Russian Czar as to some extent his equal, will associate with him more intimately, and experience greater facility in gaining him over to the views he (the ambassador) is instructed to advocate, than a less august personage could possibly do. It may be imagined, for instance, what the influence of a real live Serene Highness would be who should represent a great State at the court of *parvenu* sovereigns like Napoleon and Eugénie. On the whole the persons least suitable for employment in the diplomatic service are scientific men,

whose participation in practical politics, indeed, is in every way undesirable, inasmuch as they are almost invariably *doctrinaires*, and consequently liable to fall into gross errors leading to serious misunderstandings. Josias von Bunsen was a striking example of this assertion's correctness. His ideal—a firm Anglo-Prussian alliance—was a fact none the less absurd because Vincke and his following took it up enthusiastically; his notion that the restoration of Poland would be not only feasible but useful, was a most dangerous illusion.* Furthermore, an Envoy must keep his private affairs in good order, make no debts, be dependent upon no requirements compelling him to say to himself, "As I can't take five from four, I must carry one over," and experience no inclination to speculate on 'Change, or in land, grain, &c.; because in any of those cases he would run the risk of being compelled to "oblige" Jewish financiers at the expense of his country's interests or honour. Finally it is desirable, for obvious reasons, that his wife should not belong to any foreign nationality.

These exceptional qualifications, some twenty years ago, appeared more abundant amongst the nobles of Latin and

* That he was not particular about telling the truth may be demonstrated by the following anecdote, derived from a supremely trustworthy source. During the Crimean War, he reported from London to Berlin, that the English would ensure the possession of Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia, if the latter would take part in the hostilities against Russia; whilst at the same time, he told the Ministers in London that Prussia would march against the Russians if the Elbe Duchies should be guaranteed to her. Both these assurances were absolutely unfounded; when the whole affair came out, he was urged to send in his resignation. His conduct was being discussed one day at the King's, and His Majesty remarked: "For twenty years past we have regarded him as a friend, and yet see what he has done now!" Old General von Rauch rejoined: "He has lied to and betrayed Your Majesty for twenty years past!"

Slavonic origin than amongst the illustrious families of Germany. Since then Bismarck made his appearance on the scene, after having unobtrusively given abundant proofs of his capacity as Envoy to the Federal Diet and as the adviser of Manteuffel and Frederick William IV. At the Assembly of Sovereigns in Frankfort and during the Schleswig-Holstein business, the Austrian Kaunitz-policy was defeated by him; Benedetti and Gramont, in his hands, became the laughing-stocks of Europe; even Gortschakoff had to strike his top-sails to Bismarck's superior intelligence. But, after all, he only constituted a remarkable exception to the general rule. To many an one who has had opportunities to look over their cards our other diplomatists' deficiencies cannot but be plainly manifest; these gentlemen, appraised by comparison with the ideal of an Ambassador and Foreign Minister, will inevitably appear even more insignificant than those of a still earlier date. However, in common fairness towards them, we must not omit to observe that, before 1866 and even up to 1871 the demand upon our nobility to supply the State with diplomatists and courtiers, as well as with officers, was much heavier than in any other European realm. The contingent required during the epoch of "Plurality of States" was so numerous that picking and choosing were out of the question. It was felt by many to be a disastrous state of things, but one that could not be avoided. For, as a matter of fact, it appertained traditionally to the dignity of petty Sovereigns that they should own a couple of Envoys or Chargés d'Affaires, or at least a share in them; and on the other hand the distinguished and influential families which had theretofore been accustomed to see their scions occupying posts of that description, were, as might have been expected, strenuously opposed to any reduction of their number; and, in great measure actuated by similar feelings, the great noble

families in other European countries fought against the unity of Germany, because it would entail a considerable simplification of the Fatherland's diplomatic machinery. What a number of comfortable sinecures would be swept away by such an achievement! Whither, if the attaché-appointments at the kindly, pleasant German duodecimo-Courts should be abolished, should they send their young people in order to put them in the way of acquiring the elementary routine requisite to prepare them for the real diplomatic work awaiting them in their riper years at the first-class Courts. There was, indeed, from this point of view, a great deal to be said against the project of a German Federal State (alone to be represented abroad), which shortsighted people, claiming to be patriots, paid little or no attention to, but which weighed, nevertheless, very heavily in the balance.

The Bismarckian Reformation made an end of this idyllic state of affairs—that is, to a certain extent. Since the North-German Confederation was founded we have kept up fewer Legations and Missions than theretofore, and fewer still since the creation of the German Empire; but, if we take into consideration the wishes of many amongst us, and the capacity of our nobility to furnish us with meritorious diplomatists, too many posts of that description are still in existence. Moreover, not a few of our young noblemen, after spending a couple of years in one of the Universities "to study," pass into the school of diplomacy, instead of beforehand acquiring practical knowledge and learning how to work for a certain time as referendaries, farmers or anything else connected with real life outside the Court-sphere. And yet all this is the more necessary that of late years diplomatic posts have gained in importance; not, of course the purely ornamental ones which the smaller Courts contrived to save from the flood. These, however, are of no

account. The Chancellor remarked to us at Rheims: "A good many people worry themselves most unnecessarily about the danger of keeping on representatives of the petty States side by side with those of the Confederation. Even were those States powerful they could keep up correspondence with foreign Courts without the aid of official representatives, and intrigue by word of mouth against whatever we may undertake. A tooth-drawer or some other person of that class could manage it for them."

"If my aunt had wheels she would be an omnibus," says the proverb. Bismarck, I may add, is of opinion that in these matters it is well to look between one's fingers. Whilst we were at Versailles Minister Delbrueck observed in the course of an after-dinner chat, that during the negotiations respecting Germany's reorganisation, Bavaria had put forward a claim to a sort of co-representation of the new German Federal State or Empire abroad (this was in the autumn of 1870) to be arranged in such manner that the Bavarian Envoy should carry on the business of the Embassy whenever the German Ambassador should be absent. To this the Chancellor replied: "No, no; anything else—but that will really not do, for the question at stake is not the Envoy but the instructions he receives—and in that case we should be obliged to have two Ministers for Foreign Affairs in Germany."

Amongst the young gentlemen who become attached to a Legation or enter the Foreign Office immediately upon quitting the University, or soon after they have performed their one year's service in the army, those who have been accustomed to speak French from their childhood upwards occupy an exceptionally fortunate position. Unless a sucking diplomatist possessed of this advantage should be absolutely devoid of every other capacity, it would be little short of a miracle did he not get on to a certain extent in time and at

the very least become chief of some small, unexacting and unimportant Legation, to which, however the title of "Excellency" is appended and possibly the handsome Star, or even Grand Cross of an Order of Knighthood. The French language is employed in verbal as well as epistolary intercourse with the majority of foreign countries as far as official communications are concerned, and is also the one indispensable vehicle of "l'art de causer"—i.e. the art of talking agreeably without saying anything in particular. In the examinations for the diplomatic career especial stress is laid upon the French "style" in which the exercises set to future Talleyrands or Bismarcks are to be couched. Less importance is attached to the competitor's German, which, until very lately, would appear to have been regarded as of scarcely any moment whatsoever. Indeed, ambassadorial reports have passed through my hands, the writers of which manifestly lived upon very distant terms with ordinary grammar, not to mention anything at all approaching a logical sequence of ideas.

These short-comings, however, are mere superficialities; too often it is the matter enveloped in such unprepossessing garments of diction that causes the reader of these productions to shake his head and mutter with a mournful smile: "What am I to do with this?" Reports of the class alluded to are amongst the consequences of the peculiar school through which the Envoy has passed. Employed as a *galopin* in the Foreign Office, or attached to some Legation abroad, the apprentice to the diplomatic craft soon becomes acquainted with the two lines of business—personal and professional, the drawing-room and the office—in which he has to employ and improve himself; and then, as a rule, it becomes apparent that we human beings are but a feeble folk, lacking in the force of character we ought to possess in the

presence of God, of important actualities and great truths. Every old diplomatist was once a young one and remembers which he liked the better when he commenced his career—the examinations he had left behind him or the world that was all before him. At that time of life it is necessary—and gladly recognised to be so—to bestow all possible care and attention upon producing favourable impressions with regard to mere externals. A young diplomatist is asked to Court, frequents illustrious and wealthy families—especially those of financial magnates, who bask in the rays emanating from the peerage—dines, sups, dances, plays at cards, haunts the Jockey Club and other institutions of that class. All this he does, not merely for his own pleasure, but, indeed, chiefly in fulfilment of his duty, for every item of it is "de la plus stricte necessité." He must look about him, make himself favourably known to the *élite* of society, study the *personnel* and state of affairs at Court, and above all make sure of not being kept in the back-ground, but rather of being prized, sought after and distinguished. This is the novice's first task, and how can he possibly perform it otherwise than by assiduously and conscientiously utilising the institutions and opportunities specially to hand for that purpose? So far there is nothing to be said against existing arrangements. But their natural consequence is that the majority of young gentlemen adopting the career of diplomacy devote their attention to the attractive side of their profession in preference to the other, and that the view and method of life thereby imparted to them reacts upon their judgment and actions when they are called upon to transact real business. They accustom themselves in social intercourse (chiefly with their acquaintances in the Corps Diplomatique) to make use of empty and purely conventional phrases; they learn to take delight in witty but frivolous prattle, in tittle-tattle,

highly spiced anecdotes, humorous slander and backbiting; in making themselves extremely agreeable to their present enemies whilst making ill-natured remarks about their absent friends; in weaving intrigues, pumping and cross-questioning their acquaintances about the merest trifles, and only speaking the truth with modifications. Consequently, they at length come to mistake semblance for reality, and to attach greater moment to accessories than to essentials; by degrees this habit of mind becomes so absolutely their second nature that thenceforth, often throughout life, it inspires their treatment of the affairs confided to them and dictates the reports they address to their official superiors.

This is the sort of training that has been undergone by nearly all our older diplomatists and still obtains amongst their successors, with few exceptions. In order to appreciate its results, let us picture to ourselves the typical Envoy provided by this system. Suppose him called upon, for instance, to induce the Government to which he is accredited to act in unison with his own Government in some matter concerning a third power. The transaction having been formally opened by means of a despatch or verbal instructions, the diplomatist in question commences action in the manner he has been taught to regard as the only correct and efficacious one, namely, by intriguing and endeavouring to get to the blind side of people, to deceive them by misrepresentations and to lure them with illusory temptations. In connection with this *modus operandi* an accomplished *chef de cuisine* and a cellar full of choice wines may prove eminently serviceable, although the days are past in which ambassadors or envoys endowed with an exceptional capacity for withstanding the effects of alcohol were wont to carouse with less thoroughly seasoned dip-

lomatic agents, until the latter made concessions that were contrary to their instructions.

Formerly it was by no means uncommon for diplomatists themselves to invent dainties for the dinner-table, sauces, puddings and made dishes, as, for instance, Nesselrode pudding, *pouding glacé à la Metternich*, *pain d'abricots à la Richelieu*, *quenelles de volaille à la Talleyrand*, *saumon à la Richelieu*, *filet de bœuf à la Westmoreland.* A young diplomatist, who had recognised the importance of the cooking-art in his profession, carefully collected the *menus* of the dinners and suppers given by the chief of his Legation, had them handsomely bound and kept them in his library, presumably in order to study worldly wisdom in them from time to time, or to become thoroughly versed in the leading chapter of the art of managing men :—

> "Tout s'arrange en dînant dans le siècle où nous sommes,
> Et c'est par les dîners qu'on gouverne les hommes."

I do not share the opinion expressed in these verses of Boileau, or believe that the attaché alluded to stored up a particularly precious treasure of recipes for governing mankind in his book of *menus.* In other words, I am convinced that the great questions usually dealt with by leading personages have never been settled in this way—nor are they nowadays. Nevertheless, it is the plan of action generally adopted by subordinate diplomatists. Justice, the public good, the interests of the commonwealth, &c., are alluded to, and advocated in their written communications ; but in their personal conversation upon the question at issue these phrases seldom occur. Anybody using them "in society," would be ridiculed as a person of feeble intellect. They are only tolerated in the drawing-room when it is deemed necessary to humbug some amiable theorist who believes in "that sort of thing," and to whose

prejudices circumstances render it expedient to defer for the time being. The object is to encourage one's supporters and increase their number, as well as to gain over or paralyse one's opponents; and it is upon this field of action that kitchen and cellar frequently play a remunerative part, combined with the gift of persuasion, employed in opening up prospects of personal advantage, of decoration conferments, advancement of relatives, &c., or in dropping ominous hints calculated to produce a terrorising effect upon the person under treatment. The real matter at stake is for the most part lost sight of, and the diplomatist's whole attention is bestowed upon individuals, whom he deems it his business to attract, utilise or damage, as the case may be. Intriguing, which should be a secondary consideration, thus becomes his primary object.

It was, and to a great extent still is, in this fact that lay the most calamitous shortcoming in the training of our young diplomatists, as well as the explanation of the circumstance that many of the older ones (who had passed through the school above described and lived exclusively in the atmosphere of Courts, and the social circles immediately connected therewith) have proved unequal to the management of serious and important transactions. Dazzled by the glitter of mere accessories they have lost the power of perceiving essentials, or at least weakened it; by persistently laying traps for others they often incur the risk of being trapped themselves; they come, at last, to believe that the only things worth trying for are those which they fancy other people are anxious to obtain. They write reports about all sorts of rubbish, in which nobody but Court lackeys of the highest or lowest rank can take the least interest, as:—"The pain in Her Royal Highness the Princess So-and-so's leg" (a limb of no political moment

whatsoever) "appears to have got worse," with an elaborate explanation of the reasons for entertaining this opinion; or, "Despatch, No. 101." "The health of His Majesty" (needless to observe, a "Majesty" with whom we are in no way concerned) "is improving;" "Despatch, No. 102" (written the following day, obviously with breathless eagerness). "His Majesty slept well last night;" "Despatch, No. 103." "His Majesty is getting better." When they are on a journey they send their Minister long detailed accounts of every reception accorded to them—say at Pesth, Rustchuk and Varna, or by the Grand Vizier or Sultan. Their judgment of circumstances and persons is dependent upon the more or less courteous attention shown to them personally, so that they are mere weathercocks, pointing one way to-day, and another to-morrow, but very seldom in the right direction. Utterly inexperienced in all conditions and relations of men and things existing outside Courts, and "high life," or, at the best, but superficially acquainted therewith, they allow themselves to be stuffed with the most ludicrous falsehoods, misstatements and exaggerations, which they then incorporate (sometimes in an absurdly high-flown style) in their communications to the Home Government. To quote one example of many, I have had before me certain reports written by a foreign Envoy, in which were contained statements about the Democrats and Socialists in Saxony and Bohemia of an absolutely inconceivable impertinence and senselessness, all of which His Excellency had taken for granted, and transmitted to his Chancellor with the object, doubtless, of adding to the latter's store of useful information. I am sorry to be obliged to add that I have only too good reason to believe that sins of this description are freely committed in our own diplomatic service; but then I have the comfort

of knowing that he to whom drivelling nonsense of the kind above alluded to is submitted is perfectly aware of its utter worthlessness.

An exact acquaintance with the firmament of Stars (Orders of Knighthood) which hangs above Europe is quite indispensable to a diplomatist, and cases have occurred in which all the talents and energies of a gentleman in that line of business have been exclusively devoted to the obtention of some particular decoration. With many persons this yearning for Orders becomes a veritable passion, quite as insusceptible of complete gratification as any one of the three longings described as insatiable in a somewhat equivocal Bible-text. If at any time the European Cabinets manifest but little desire to attain the solution of some burning question by means of a Congress, their disinclination in that direction must not be ascribed to the agency of their diplomatists. On the contrary, whosoever of these latter has the least chance of being sent to a gathering of that class will, as a rule, do everything in his power to ensure the realisation of that prospect, because an unusually heavy shower of stars is sure to take place upon an occasion of this kind—to the adornment of his dress-coat in due proportion to his official rank or to the class of such Orders as he may already be possessed of. Perhaps even, it may let fall upon his manly breast the broad Riband of some exalted decoration!

Another variety of ambition has been developed of late years amongst diplomatists. They are apt to assume airs of undervaluing the press, which they accuse of doing a great deal of harm and of being comparatively useless. Strange to say, however, these gentlemen are practical negations of their own assertions respecting journalistic injuriousness and inutility whenever they happen to be

personally concerned in press utterances; for they take the utmost pains to make sure that this very same press shall bring to light their services from time to time—aye, even the smallest of their doings, scarcely perceptible by the aid of the microscope, as well as those which have no existence whatsoever, and recommend them to the attention of the general public, to the end that this latter may recognise what treasures King and Fatherland possess in these invaluable diplomatists, and how deeply their fellow countrymen are indebted to them. I could extract from my collections of memoranda a goodly number of examples of ingenious manœuvres carried on between Envoys athirst for fame, and newspaper editors or correspondents alacritously ready to render services of this kind to their Excellencies, did the space at my disposal permit me to point such anecdotes and were it the object of this work to expose the faults and follies of individuals, instead of to point out the necessity of reforming existing conditions; to which end the first thing needful is that the office should take precedence of the drawing-room in the estimation of professional diplomatists.

To the best of my knowledge Prince Bismarck, with his intellectual earnestness, contempt for appearances and trivialities, frankness and untiring industry, has served as a pattern to but few diplomatists. These few, however, quietly and unobtrusively share the burden of his labours. Like him they only recognise one duty—that of serving the State—and do not keep their eyes fixed upon their own personal advantage, upon Court approbation and grace, or upon journalistic praise. They do not seek to curry favour with their chief, to establish relations likely to lead to their advancement, or to gain external distinctions. Their working capacities are utilised; but they work in common with others, not intent upon rendering themselves conspicuous.

They are, as a rule, alike unfit for "representation" and intriguing; they usually lack private means as well as handles to their names; their conscience alone sustains and rewards them. It is towards these persons—teachable and serviceable forces; the working-bees in a hive well-stocked with drones; officials of high character and devoid of frivolity—that Ambassadors and Chiefs of Missions should direct more of their attention. Many grave difficulties, however, stand in their way, and to them, indeed, the proverb may be aptly applied, "Blessed are they who expect nothing, for they shall not be disappointed." The author would in no way be surprised were some young, or even old drawing-room diplomatist, taking up this book by accident, to exclaim, "Who the deuce has put together all this stuff? Doubtless the Councillor of Legation N. N.; that packhorse;" I will answer him beforehand: "Not so, your Excellency; not by any manner of means. What is here written is the result of personal study at the best possible sources, of personal observation and personal experience; and you would do better, instead of putting yourself in a passion, to be thankful that my sketches are not portraits recognisable by the general public. Only think; your own counterfeit presentment might be amongst them!"

Formerly, life in Ministries of Foreign Affairs was tolerably pleasant and easy-going, that is, during the ordinary course of affairs, seldom interrupted for any length of time. It has however been far otherwise since the commencement of the Bismarckian era. A new spirit animates the world; much business of universal interest is transacted in Germany, and a great deal of work has to be done. Still there are certain people occupying exalted positions who know how to make themselves comfortable by transferring their burdens to the shoulders of others. By this means they contrive to find

plenty of time for the drawing-room and club, for their favourite amusements, such as a cosy little bout of gambling, &c., for private business and other occupations. An hour per diem, or at most two, in the office suffices them to get through the "troublesome business" that must be done, and this sacrifice of course fully entitles its victim to spend at least three months of the year in recovering from such killing exertions at some delightful country-seat or *en voyage. Honi soit qui mal y pense!*

In times past, when things went more easily than now, a Legation exacted even less labour from the diplomatist and afforded him more leisure for amusement than the Foreign Office itself. Such a post was comfort itself—a sort of idyll, especially at the smaller Courts. Secretaries and attachés of such Legations received, it is true, a more or less liberal salary; but then they did next to nothing for it. A youthful Baron or Count was then wont—during the hour or so daily that he could not avoid deducting from the other portion of his professional incumbencies—to sit at his ease in front of his writing-table in the *chancellerie*, with a Manual, Martin's *Guide Diplomatique*, and the indispensable *Almanach de Gotha* before him on the desk, but in a half-open drawer a thrilling new novel, in the enjoyment of which he was only disturbed from time to time by his chief passing through the room. Shooting parties, visits of "artist" friends and such-like, musical *matinées*, theatrical rehearsals and other agreeable engagements left him but little superfluous leisure in which to discharge his official duties. Now and then there might be something to do; but he soon disposed of that. If he ever had a busy time, it was only on post-day. Nowadays those quiet hours, consecrated to the secret improvement of one's mind by aid of French novels, have either been done away with altogether or painfully abbreviated.

Railroads and the baneful telegraph-wire have dealt hardly with them. The former bring along so many subjects of the State which it is the attaché's duty (as well as that of his chief) to represent, that he can hardly grapple with them, and is compelled to waste at least two hours a day in attending to them; for, strange to say, these people get it into their heads that the Legation exists for the purpose of being useful to them, and every one of them has some affair or other on hand, in which he expects "his Minister" to back him up with word and deed. A good many, moreover, occupy a position in the State or in society which renders it obligatory upon the diplomatist to accord specially attentive consideration to their business, whatever it may be, although he has nothing to hope from them in the way of a *quid pro quo*—such people, for instance, as Members of the Diet or Parliament. In a word, he is overwhelmed with work. In the good old days a Legation's register of "important affairs" was a sort of princely and aristocratic supplement to the ordinary registration-lists concerning the common herd, and contained little more than official notifications of births, deaths and marriages in Royal, Ducal and other illustrious families. At present there is scarcely a department of State business with respect to which reports have not to be made by diplomatic agents abroad. Railways, schools, manufactures, tobacco, farmers' prospects, the prices of timber, the labour-market, the attitude of the Catholic priesthood—the much-to-be-pitied Legation is expected to understand all these things. It ought, indeed, to be omniscient, but is only too well aware how very little it really knows. From time to time these demands upon its intelligence result in occurrences of the description recorded in the following delicious story, which I took down in my note-book some years ago, and now reproduce textually, only omitting the names of those who figured in it.

"Early this morning, —— came to see me and read aloud to me a passage from a letter in which the Secretary of Legation, Count —— (whose tutor he had formerly been) informed him that his chief, Excellency —— had instructed him to prepare, within a term of two months, a report upon the finances of ——, and more particularly upon the Tobacco-Monopoly. Of these matters he had not the faintest notion. Could —— not manage to scribble something of the sort for him? That is to say:—the Ambassador in St. —— wishes to send our chief a report, presumably of his own framing and composition. For this report he gives an order to an ignorant young *attaché*, who in his turn implores a subordinate official of the Home Ministry to help him out of his difficulty by supplying him with the required information, which is then to be sent back (as emanating from the Ambassador) to the locality in which it was originally manufactured, and where, by simply reading the newspapers a month ago, all the information could have been obtained which may possibly be transmitted thither some ten weeks hence by carrying out the plan above suggested."

Returning to generalities, and taking the opportunity to observe that, in addition to the actual burdens of business inflicted, as above described upon the suffering Legations, telegrams reach them daily (whenever anything out of the way is on the *tapis*) which must be answered without delay, we may well sympathize with the diplomatists in question when they murmur. "Nothing but trouble and worry nowadays!" Without looking more deeply into the matter our readers will perceive that the *personnel* of diplomacy now constitutes one of those classes of human beings which is bound to learn and work more than it used to, in order to get on in the world and supply useful members to society.

It follows, as a matter of course, that in the selection of persons for that career more importance should be attached now than heretofore, to capacity, knowledge and industry, than to birth and family connections.

No matter how well informed, intelligent and industrious may be the *personnel* of the Diplomatic Service, it can only do its work properly if its chief be thoroughly competent to direct its labours. It is his province to furnish the diplomatic agents with their instructions; and nothing is more essential to the importance of missions representing a Sovereign at foreign Courts and Cabinets than that the persons composing such Missions should at all times be accurately acquainted with the views and objects of their own Government and should be supplied with clear instructions as to how they are to conduct themselves in relation to questions actually on hand. But, in order to be able to direct its representatives abroad how they shall speak or act in this or that circumstance, a Government must itself know what it wants and how to get it, and must, moreover, entertain an intelligible, unambiguous, resolute policy. Although this was not the case with us formerly—especially during the so-called "New Era" of Prussia's political existence, and although at that time Berlin's foreign policy was characterised by poverty of ideas, indecision and vacillation, nobody can complain of these shortcomings at present. For more than two decades past we have had all that we have required in Germany, as far as foreign policy has been concerned. On the other hand, another blemish has made itself manifest more than once since Bismarck's accession to office, and precisely in Embassies of importance—namely, the insubordination of certain Diplomatic Agents, who fancied themselves cleverer than their Minister, and attempted to take action in accor-

dance with that notion. This sentence naturally suggests to its readers the name of Count Harry Arnim; but one of that ambassador's predecessors in the Paris post, Von der Goltz, had (as will be seen) also indulged in disobedience to his chief, although not to so great an extent as his immediate successor. The behaviour of these two gentlemen reminds one of circumstances that obtained during the reigns of Frederick William III. and Frederick William IV., greatly to the injury of the country, and were at that time regarded as perfectly natural by a great many diplomatists. Upon this subject I was instructed to write as follows in the *Hanover Courier* (May, 1874) when the conflict between Bismarck and Arnim was raging, and several journals were taking the latter's part :—

"Although it is a popular error that the title 'Minister Plenipotentiary,' borne by our ambassadors, places them upon a footing equal to that occupied by Ministers of State, the fact is indisputable that Prussian envoys have not unfrequently treated their chief as though they had been his colleagues, and carried on disputes with him such as might have occurred between two Councillors of a Government Board, or two judges on the bench. In fact, Prussian diplomacy was formerly notorious for its lack of discipline. Amongst examples on record is that of an Envoy who quitted his post without leave of absence and travelled home to Berlin in order to obtain a hearing for his views at Court and to vindicate them in the newspapers. It was not a domineering spirit that prompted the Chancellor to shelve a number of 'Excellencies' of the old school, but the conviction that, although that sort of conduct might have been tolerated at a time when Prussia was the fifth wheel of the European political coach, it was totally incompatible with the carrying out of the programme which

Herr von Bismarck brought into office with him in 1862, and which he has fulfilled in such a manner that his name is upon every tongue, whilst those of the recalcitrant 'Excellencies' are only to be found in the pages of some old encyclopædia. Even Herr von Blankenburg, a military author belonging to a Pomeranian family connected with Count Arnim on the mother's side, alludes in the *Schlesische Zeitung* to Bismarck's 'un-colleague-like behaviour.' Now, ambassadors are not the Minister's colleagues, but his agents. They have abundant opportunities of setting forth their views in official reports; but when once a decision has been arrived at, all they have to do is to carry out their instructions with a good grace. In a Council differences are readily settled by putting questions to the vote. But differences between a Minister and his subordinate who fails to carry out his orders can scarcely be arranged otherwise than by the retirement of one or the other, that is, in a properly governed State. This is what has happened in the case of Count Arnim; and it is to be deplored, in the interest of the State service, that it did not happen sooner."

Count Arnim was compelled to resign his post: he was subsequently arraigned in a Court of Justice and found guilty, a verdict which had been anticipated by public opinion all but unanimously; and he would have been speedily forgotten but for his audacity in reminding the world of his existence by publishing the notorious pamphlet "Pro Nihilo." His friends amongst the shelved diplomatists ascribed that action on his part to "the courage of unappreciated and persecuted innocence." Others, probably in greater number, recognised in it the outcome of the ex-Ambassador's three leading characteristics,—extraordinary assurance, vanity, and *naïveté*. It was this last which en-

abled him to credit the public with the capacity for believing that some anonymous worshipper of truth and justice had taken up the cause of the wrongfully sentenced-one disinterestedly, out of sheer compassion, and that it was not Count Harry Arnim himself who was pleading that cause; whereas it could not but be unmistakably plain to any one who had ever read the productions of his pen that he, and no other, had written every line of the pamphlet from beginning to end. His name alone was wanting to it; but all the strained humorousness and *esprit*, the tendency towards making use of comparisons, quotations and superfine phrases void of real meaning, and finally the would-be aristocratic trick of depreciating mankind, which characterize the Arnim style of composition, were conspicuously manifest in the pamphlet. Though he hid his face, the rest of him was perceptible enough throughout that compound of perversions, suppressions and self-laudations. In the last respect he out-Heroded Herod; "approved expertness," "knowledge of business," "diplomatic tact," "collected demeanour," and "subtle intelligence" were by no means the largest or shiniest laurel-leaves which Count Arnim wreathed about the brows of Count Arnim. After he had, in the course of his pamphlet, repeatedly expressed admiration of his own lofty spirit, keen perception, and prophetic faculty of appraising coming events, he concluded by remarking:—"During his thirty years' service Count Arnim, by his conscientious and intelligent fulfilment of duty, earned the approbation of his Sovereign, Government and country, and even—before his services became publicly renowned—that of the Chancellor himself. It has also been shewn in the foregoing narrative that he has claims to the intellectual origination of many political measures to which the Chancellor owes his great reputation; and he has been for some

time past regarded as Prince Bismarck's probable successor in office."

Anybody capable of believing the above assertion, might well exclaim: "Good heavens, what an enviable conscience! what a man! what a treasure!" It is a pity that Count Arnim's "Hymn of Self-Praise" should itself undermine such a pleasing faith, and demonstrate, clearly and irrefutably, that which experts in his character knew only too well all the time—namely, that the Chancellor, in his Ambassador to Thiers and McMahon, had to do with a conceited, disobedient, artful intriguer, who strove to get his own way in everything, who plotted against his chief at Court in Berlin with confederates of his own kidney, and who put a finishing touch of unexampled indiscretion to his unqualifiable conduct (in the hope of at once clearing and avenging himself) by publishing documents which ought to have been kept secret under any and every circumstance whatsoever.

On the other hand, it was easy to gather from the pamphlet in question, despite all its misrepresentations of facts with respect to the Chancellor, that Prince Bismarck objected to Count Arnim's conduct, would not put up with it, and was resolved to make an end of it swiftly and sternly, regardless of the Paris Ambassador's exalted position and still more exalted protectors. Heartfelt gratitude is due to him for so doing; for his courage in breaking with the antique traditions of Prussian diplomacy, which, like many other abuses, had obtained currency even under his immediate predecessor at the Foreign Office; for vigorously and resolutely vindicating his position as solely responsible Minister, and therewith the Constitutional principle in the German Empire's diplomatic affairs, as against Arnim's endeavours to import the Absolutist principle into their management. As he himself expressed it in an official

decree dated July 19, 1873, he "recommended to his Majesty measures such as were necessary for the conservation of unity and discipline in the Foreign Department, in order to guarantee the interests of the Empire from prejudice unjustified by the Constitution."

Count Arnim was pleased to describe this proceeding as "Ministerial Despotism." Intelligent people speak of it as subordination, to be unconditionally exacted and stringently maintained. Count Arnim turned up his illustrious nose because the Chancellor once remarked, "My ambassadors must wheel about at command like non-commissioned officers, without knowing why." Practical thinkers—even if they be not Privy-Councillors, will not have to reflect long before coming to the conclusion that the above axiom accurately indicates the relation which should always exist between the leading spirit of our Foreign Office and his agents at foreign Courts. For my part—with the kind permission of the Excellencies and Grand-Crosses referred to by Prince Bismarck—I see no reason why they should not have been by him described as despatch-boxes, or as secretaries to the Chancellor. The more absolutely (suppressing their own volition and self-consciousness) they regard and conduct themselves as non-commissioned officers or secretaries—in fact, the more submissively they *serve*—the better will they do their work; and should they be clever fellows as well, capable of manœuvring with dexterity and tact within the sphere assigned to them by their chief—unprejudiced and clearsighted observers, and industrious reporters to boot, they will pretty nearly fulfil every expectation that can reasonably be entertained on their behalf.

I may here observe that abominations of the class practised by Goltz, Arnim and other Prussian diplomatists have also occurred now and then in foreign Legations,

notably within the last five years. Some of my readers will probably remember the scandal which agitated the Austrian Embassy at the Court of St. James's, in March, 1878, and subsequently came to light in the columns of the press. Arnim had been the chief of an Embassy; but in this case it was a mere understrapper who took upon himself to transact politics upon his own account, and behind his chief's back, in a direction altogether different to that prescribed to the latter by his instructions. Count Montgelas, a secretary of Legation stationed in London, succeeded for some time in convincing the British Cabinet that he—not the ambassador Count Beust—was really Andrassy's confidential agent. By means of his family connections and by assuming an air of importance he contrived (with the aid of Montague Corry, Disraeli's confidant) to impose himself upon the English Premier as the only true interpreter of the views entertained by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Vienna. No matter how plainly the latter gave the London Foreign Office to understand, in official despatches, that England must not count upon Austria's active cooperation against Russia, Count Montgelas managed to keep up the belief in Downing Street that those very despatches, communicated officially to the Foreign Secretary by the Austrian Ambassador, by no means expressed correctly the Imperial-Royal policy, but that there was every prospect that Austria would enter into an offensive alliance with Great Britain for the purpose of making war upon Russia. At length matters went so far that Disraeli deemed it his duty to point out this contradiction in the utterances of Austria to the Emperor Francis Joseph's official representative, a step attended by very unpleasant consequences. Count Montgelas' conduct was something so unheard-of that it was thought at the time that he had not been intriguing on his own account, but as the

instrument of an exalted personage. Whether or not this conjecture was well-founded is not for me to say; but it was certainly remarkable that Montgelas was at first only slightly reprimanded and subsequently allowed to retire on a full pension; that the negotiations between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain were broken off shortly after the exposure of the scandal; and finally that rumours were spread abroad from Vienna to the effect that Andrassy's position was imperilled and even tottering to its fall.

The moral of what has been written above respecting the necessity of personal discipline in the diplomatic service is as follows:—Diplomacy, in many important respects, is akin to the army; above all in this—that it must have but one leader, and must function organically; in other words, that branch of the public service which regulates communications and relations with foreign States stands more in need than any other of tense subordination of its members to its head, and of unanimity in their utterances. All the diplomatists of any State are bound to carry out the ideas of their Minister—to turn and twist themselves about, in obedience to his will and command, like the shuttles of a weaving-machine when the steam-engine is at work. No exception to this rule can be made in favour of first-class talents. Hesitations, tergiversations, "knowing better" on the part of Ambassadors, divisions between the different organs of the staff abroad, paralyse a government's action, undermine its prestige with other Cabinets, and, at certain critical moments, endanger its very existence.

A disorganised diplomatic service can only be injurious to the interests of Sovereign and people, like an army whose subordinate generals should refuse to obey its commander-in-chief when expressly ordered by him to march in this or that direction, to attack or to retreat. A certain measure of

personal initiative is only permissible within the limits prescribed by the ideas pervading instructions from Headquarters. He who fails to understand this, or who objects to conform to it because he deems himself better informed or cleverer than his chief, had better send in his resignation, and strive (outside the diplomatic organism to which he has belonged) to become chief in his turn. He will probably find it somewhat difficult to supersede Bismarck; and the Emperor William, who is a soldier *avant tout*, will not be easily induced to sanction any such arrangement.

What has been our Chancellor's attitude towards the "shady side" of the diplomatic world described in this chapter? We observe in him an inveterate foe of all pretence, verbiage and attitudinising; a truly practical politician, a man of facts, averse to petty stratagem and frank to an extraordinary degree, that is, whenever he finds it possible to be so—no one knows better than he how to conceal his projects and opinions when reserve is necessary. We know him to be of an equitable disposition, inclined to look at matters from a lofty point of view, ever advancing towards his goal with a firm step, and inspired by genial instincts, aware of his own value, and consequently free from ambition. Furthermore, he is a mighty worker, utterly inconsiderate of himself whenever state requirements stand in the way of his own need of rest and recreation. Finally, he is a humourist of a decidedly satirical turn, who never hoards up his arrows in their quiver when he catches sight of aught that is either funny or despicable.

These being his leading characteristics, the feelings aroused in Prince Bismarck's breast by some of his colleagues when he first (as plain Herr von Bismarck) became intimately acquainted with European diplomacy, were very naturally far from agreeable ones, and there is documentary

evidence to prove that he did not deem it necessary to keep that circumstance to himself. He also gave free vent in words to his opinions with respect to the disfigurements of the craft that claims him for its Grand Master; and his damaging criticisms were not always gratifying to their subjects—for who is there that likes to hear the truth about himself, especially when it is told in sarcastic language?—but, on the other hand, gave infinite pleasure to the public at large, more particularly to all those who love justice and appreciate humour. I now propose to subjoin a choice selection of utterances and anecdotes, which may serve as specimens of his opinions with respect to the average members of this particular class of our own officials, as well as a few foreign and "fancy" diplomatists, and as illustrations of the treatment he accorded to such persons. I reserve all exclusively humouristic anecdotes of this description for another chapter. As will be seen, his Frankfort colleagues accredited to the defunct Federal Diet come off very badly at his hands.

In May, 1851, soon after Bismarck's first appearance at Frankfort in an official capacity, the newly appointed Councillor of Legation wrote to his wife:

"Frankfort is hideously tiresome; I have been quite spoilt by the affection shewn to me, and by having plenty to do, and am just beginning to perceive how ungrateful I have always been to many people in Berlin. Putting yourself and our belongings quite out of the question, the more temperate measure of goodwill accorded to me by my compatriots and fellow-partisans may be described as intimate regard in comparison with my intercourse here, which really consists in nothing but mutual distrust and *espionnage*. If we only had anything to find out, or to conceal! The people here worry themselves about the

merest rubbish, and these diplomatists with their pompous peddling already appear to me a good deal more ridiculous than a Member of the Second Chamber in all the pride of his lofty station. Unless external accidents should accrue—and we super-sagacious Federal creatures are incapable of either bringing them about or dealing with them—I know exactly how much we shall effect in one, two or five years from the present time, and will engage to do it all myself within four-and-twenty hours, if the others will only be truthful and sensible throughout one single day. I never doubted that, one and all, these gentlemen prepared their dishes *à l'eau*, but such thin, mawkish water-soup as this, devoid of the least symptom of richness, positively astounds me. Send me your village schoolmaster or road-inspector, clean washed and combed; they will make just as good diplomatists as these. I am making tearing progress in the art of saying absolutely nothing in an infinite number of words; I write letters, many pages long, which read as glib and smooth as leading-articles; and if, after reading them, Manteuffel can tell me what they are about, he knows a good deal more than I do. Each one of us behaves as if he believed that his neighbour was stuffed full of ideas and projects, if he only chose to let some of them out; and in reality all of us put together know no more what is going to become of Germany than a grocer's paper-bag knows about next summer. No one—not even the most malignant sceptic of a Democrat—could conceive what an amount of quackery and humbug there is in this diplomacy!"

Anything but flattering for most of his official colleagues in Frankfort are the sketches of their Excellencies' characters contained in Bismarck's despatches and private letters to Manteuffel. But few obtain favourable mention; least of all Messieurs von Prokesch (Austria), von Nostitz (Saxony)

and von Reinhard (Wuertemberg), whose portraits, however, bear the stamp of faithful reproduction.

Of Prokesch he writes—I have put together extracts from several of his letters, so as to present the reader with a sort of mosaic likeness of the diplomatist in question—"The calm and readiness with which he asserts falsehoods and denies facts surpass my most extravagant expectations in that direction, and are only equalled by the altogether astounding coldbloodedness with which he lets a subject drop, or changes front with respect to it, as soon as the lie with which he started has been irretrievably found out. When in a corner, he covers a retreat of the above class by an outburst of moral indignation, or by an extremely personal attack, by means of which he transfers the discussion to fresh and heterogeneous ground. His principal weapons in the petty war I am compelled to make upon him, when the interests we respectively represent happen to diverge, are: 1. Passive resistance; that is to say, putting off the question, by doing which he makes me appear a troublesome and pettifogging dun; 2. Attack; consisting of unimportant encroachments upon the prerogatives of the presiding Envoy, prepared in such sort as to impart to any remonstrance on my part the character of quarrelsomeness or hyper-criticism. Thus it is almost impossible for me—as far as he is concerned—to avoid appearing in the light of an altogether insupportable person, unless, indeed, I were to sacrifice the interests of Prussia to an extent that would encourage him to aggravate his pretensions." A few weeks later he writes: "The unpleasant impression produced upon me by this individual has been recently deepened by the unexpected and unmeasured personal irritability to which Herr von Prokesch not infrequently gives way, and with respect to which it is somewhat difficult to hit off the exact moment when indignation,

assumed for diplomatic purposes, is transformed into real, natural fury that breaks all bounds of decent behaviour. I endured the first few of these outbursts in silence, in order to avoid compromising our otherwise friendly relations; and even went so far, in one or two cases, as to try and find out whether, after the expiration of a couple of days, Herr von Prokesch might be inclined to take a calmer view of the question at issue. As this, however, did not prove to be the case; as it struck me that my colleague seemed to anticipate satisfactory results from conducting negotiations in this manner; and as the expressions of which he made use in relation to Royal officials and to the actions performed by them at the instance of our government, were constantly such as my position did not permit me to listen to, I found myself compelled to call Herr von Prokesch's attention to these facts in a very serious manner. Up to the present time this appears to have had the effect of causing his irritability —restrained upon one subject—to explode still less justifiably in connection with other matters; at least, during yesterday's sitting of the Military Committee, Herr von Prokesch used such violent language to me, *à propos* of an insignificant detail, that I was obliged to tell him he had no right to speak to me in such a manner, nor would I for a moment put up with his doing so."

Amongst this Austrian diplomatist's unpleasant characteristics were a predilection for preaching and a tendency to indulge in rhetorical pathos when nothing of the sort was called for. In a report (May 7, 1853) addressed by Bismarck to his Minister upon a conversation he (Bismarck) had had with Prokesch, he observed:—"I have only given you the sense of his utterances, without the colouring imparted to them by my friend's high-flown oratory. Our conversation took place during a stroll, and I had repeated occasion,

by friendly interruptions, to bring down my companion's style of delivery to the level of ordinary talk—especially when he raised his voice to a pitch that attracted the attention of the passers-by. Putting aside Herr von Prokesch's specialities in the way of declamatory exaggerations, the sum-total of what he had to say seemed to me to amount to this; that, in my colleague's opinion, interference in the internal affairs of Austria by the Vladika of Montenegro could not be less worthy of notice or consideration than Prussia's views anent the question of the Federal fortresses. In order to avoid becoming infected by his excitement, I had at last to change the subject of our conversation; whereupon he promptly got off his high horse and glided into a flow of cordial confidential chat." Reverting to the Baron's chief *trait* of character in another report, Bismarck writes; "It is undoubtedly every diplomatic agent's own business to settle with himself what amount of frankness and attachment to truth he will display in negotiating with foreign envoys. Herr von Prokesch has reduced his stock of both these commodities to such a minimum that—now that he has been a member of the Federal Assembly for nearly a year—those amongst his colleagues who most fully do justice to his industry and to the lively interest he takes in business, would with difficulty be induced to accept any assurance made by him upon his word and faith; on the contrary, whatever he says or does, no matter how unimportant, in his quality of President, the first question that everybody feels inclined to ask is, 'What unacknowledged purpose is he aiming at?'"

Let me complete Prince Bismarck's sketch of his whilom Austrian colleague at Frankfort by the following reminiscences. Recalling his Bundestag experiences one day at Versailles, the Chancellor said, "I could get on very well with Thun (his first Austrian fellow-Envoy at the Palace in

the Eschenheimergasse). He was a decent sort of fellow. Rechberg (the third Austrian representative during Bismarck's sojourn in the Federal capital) was also not so bad on the whole—at least he was a man of high personal honour, although extremely violent and tempestuous. As an Austrian diplomatist of the school of that day he was, of course, unable to be quite exact in the matter of truthfulness. But Prokesch was in no respect the man for me. He had brought the vilest intrigues back with him from the East (Prokesch had been Internuncio at Constantinople). The truth was absolutely indifferent to him. I remember once, at a large party, that reference was made to some Austrian statement, which was not in accordance with facts. Raising his voice, so that I might hear him, he exclaimed: 'Well, if that is not true, I must have lied in the name of the Imperial-Royal Government!' And then he looked at me. I returned his gaze and said carelessly, 'Quite so, your Excellency.' He was obviously startled; looking around him he became cognisant of downcast eyes and a dead silence, proving that everybody present agreed with me; he then turned his back upon us and walked away to the supper-room, where the table was laid. After supper he pulled himself together and came over to me with a glass full of wine in his hand—but for which I should have fancied he was about to challenge me—saying, 'Come, let us make peace.' 'Why not?' I replied; 'but the protocol must be altered, notwithstanding.' 'You are quite incorrigible!' he rejoined with a smile; and there was an end of the matter. The protocol, however, was altered—an acknowledgment that it had contained a falsehood."

Bismarck thought well of his Bavarian colleague, Von Schrenk, whom he wrote of as "one of the best elements in the Assembly, with respect to capacity as well as to character.

He is a thoroughgoing and industrious worker, practical in his views and judgments, although his judicial training and turn of mind dispose him to be disputatious and thereby sometimes to hamper the prompt transaction of business. In official intercourse he is frank and agreeable as long as his over-wrought and supersensitive Bavarian national feelings are respected—a weakness I have made it my special study to treat with consideration." Of Von Bothmer, the representative of Hanover, Bismarck also spoke favourably. "He is not only a man of upright and trustworthy character, but the only one of my colleagues sufficiently independent to lend me a more than passive support when I am compelled to put forward demands upon the Presidency." Those amongst the remaining members of the Federal Assembly with whom Bismarck was more or less satisfied, are characterised as follows: "Herr von Scherff (Luxemburg) is our faithful ally, personally quite devoted to the interests of Prussia; a man of business; experienced and most anxiously prudent. Of the gentleman who sits next to him, Baron von Fritsch (Weimar) I only wish that his power to support Prussian policy were equal to his will." "The Mecklenburg Envoy, Herr von Oertzen, justifies in every respect his reputation as a man of honour, by which he was known to me before he occupied his present position. Immediately after the reassembling of the Bundestag, a leaning towards Austria became unmistakably manifest in him; but it seems to me beyond a doubt that his two years' experience of the machinations practised here by the Austrian Government through its organ, the President, has brought about a reaction in Herr von Oertzen's honourable nature (although he has a son in the Austrian army) which enables me to count upon him, personally without reserve—and politically as far as his instructions will allow him to go." "Herr von Buelow, the representative of Denmark for Holstein and

Lauenburg, is one of the ablest members of the Assembly, and I regret that the attitude of the State he represents does not permit him to take a more important part in current business." "The Baden Envoy, Herr von Marschall, does not lack intelligence or business availability, but takes infinite trouble to avoid becoming responsible for an independent judgment and to find out in the most indisputable question some medium stand-point from which it may be possible to agree with both parties, or at least to disagree with neither. When he cannot help himself, however, he inclines to take part with Austria rather than with us, perhaps because his government is more afraid of Vienna than of Berlin.

"The representative of Electoral Hesse, Herr von Trott, is also moderately well-disposed towards Austria, but is not a particularly important personage. He takes as little part as possible in the proceedings, i.e. in drawing up reports and attending committee-meetings, and is frequently absent on leave, preferring country life and field-sports to the business of the Bund. He appears to be more of a jolly, portly provincial squire than an Envoy."

"Nassau and Brunswick are represented by Baron von Dungern, an inoffensive character, exercising no influence in the Federal Assembly either by personal capacity or political prestige. The circumstances that he and his wife are connected by ties of relationship with families pledged to support Austria's interests, and that two of his sons are serving in the Austrian army—which keeps him in greater fear of Austrian than of Prussian resentment—are probably accountable for the fact that whenever questions arise upon which Nassau and Brunswick differ he adopts the Nassau—that is, the Austrian—view of the matter at issue. But it is a grave error that Brunswick should be represented by a servant of the Duke of Nassau (Dungern had pro-

viously been a Nassau Minister) who is here situated in the immediate vicinity of his own Court (one absolutely dominated by the influence of Austria), and can only keep up such exiguous relations with Brunswick as can scarcely be considered an equivalent for the five thousand florins which His Highness Duke William contributes annually to Dungern's salary."

"The representative of the fifteenth Curia (Anhalt, Schwarzburg and Oldenburg) is Herr von Eisendecher—a man whose pleasant manners, combined with conversational wit and vivacity, are very taking. He was formerly an advanced Gotha-ist, and it would appear that his tendency in that respect has become transformed into a lively sympathy for the development of the federation into a strong individual central power, in which, with the aid of Austria, he hopes to find a substitute for the abortive efforts to achieve German Unity undertaken by the advocates of Prussian leadership in the Fatherland."

One of Bismarck's reports characterises the Saxon Federal Envoy, von Nostitz, as follows :—"It seems to me that he fundamentally entertains a traditional leaning towards Prussia and her political system, chiefly based upon Protestantism of a nationalistic rather than orthodox sort, and upon fear of Ultramontane encroachments. But I also believe—and I should be glad to discover that, in so believing, I have done him an injustice—that on the whole he allows his personal interests to take precedence of the political ones he represents, and that the malleability of his character permits him to submit the latter to a light that is always eminently favourable to the former. His pecuniary affairs (apart from his official salary) stand in this relation to his position in Frankfort; he lives here in a house of his own, for which he paid a large price before 1848, and which

he has unsuccessfully endeavoured to let for five years past. Through this circumstance his political attitude is inspired by the wish to retain his official post here; and, taking into consideration the present tendencies of the Saxon Government, Austria has certainly just now more opportunities of strengthening his position here than Prussia has. This fact does not prevent Herr von Nostitz from careful avoidance, as far as his instructions permit, of giving any conspicuous offence to Prussia; but, by reason of his great working powers, intelligence and long experience, he is in reality the most effective supporter of all Austria's machinations in the Federal Assembly. He has a peculiarly happy knack of drawing up reports and motions upon disputed questions of a critical character, to which reports, &c., he imparts a seemingly mediatory tone without ever yielding a point in which Austrian interests are involved. It is only when his said reports become subjects of serious negotiation that we discover their real objects (to effect which he drew them up) to be indicated in apparently purposeless and incidental words. Should a change of front, favourable to Prussia, take place in Dresden, the weighty personal support which Herr von Nostitz—thanks to his intelligence and experience and to his reputation for both—is able to afford would as certainly be rendered to Prussia as it now is to Austria; unless, indeed, the circumstance that one of his sons is being brought up in the Austrian Naval College, whilst another is already an officer in the Imperial Service, should bind him irrefragably to the cause he at present serves."

The Hessian Envoy, Baron Von Muench-Bellinghausen, figures in Bismarck's report as Prussia's principal opponent. "Not only is he connected with Austrian interests by his relationship to the former Presiding-Envoy, but his

antagonism to Prussia is materially aggravated by his strong and (I believe) sincere devotion to the Roman Catholic Church. In private life he is a man of agreeable manners and, as far as his official conduct is concerned, I cannot say that I have detected in it any tendency towards intrigue or duplicity exceeding the measure of reserve imposed upon him by the anti-Prussian policy of his Government. Anyhow, it is an anomaly that a Protestant Sovereign, actually engaged in a conflict with Catholic prelates, should be represented in the Confederation by Herr von Muench. Nor can the Rhenish-Federative proclivities of Herr von Dalwigk and Prince Emil of Hesse suit the political views of Herr von Muench, which favour the so-called 'Grand-German' scheme, advocated in Prussia by the Reichenspergers and some others."

The first observation made with respect to the Wuertemberg Envoy, von Reinhard, is that all his work "bears the stamp of superficiality and bewilderment." Bismarck then goes on to say: "I do not know whether or not his departure from Berlin had to do with any circumstance which may have inspired him with an enduring dislike to Prussia, or if the muddled political theories, which he prefers as subjects of conversation to practical business, cause him to believe in the noxiousness of Prussia's influence in Germany. However this may be, his antipathy to us certainly exceeds the bounds of that which, considering Wuertemberg's political situation, may be considered allowable in his Sovereign; and I have reason to believe that he actively exercises his influence, as far as he can independently of his instructions, altogether to the prejudice of Prussia. I may remark *en passant* that he is invariably late in his attendance at the sittings, in which he moreover constantly gives rise to repetitions involving great waste of time, through inattention

and consequent interference in the current discussion whilst labouring under misapprehension."

Baron von Holzhausen, the Envoy of the 16th Curia (Waldeck, the two Reuss Duchies, Lippe and Hesse-Homburg), is described by Bismarck as an out-and-out Austrian of a somewhat comic aspect. "It is said of him that for the most part he makes out his own instructions, even when he has plenty of time to obtain them in the regular way, and encounters any remonstrances made by his co-employers either by silence or by dexterous manipulation of them so as to get a majority in his favour, which is not difficult, by reason of the limited intercourse existing between them. Besides, most of the petty Princes are disinclined to launch into the expenses for their Federal diplomacy that would be requisite to keep up a regular *chancellerie* established on a proper footing; and were Herr von Holzhausen (who got the post on Baron von Strombeck's retirement, because he asked for less salary than anybody else did) to resign they would have some difficulty in finding so stately a representative as this well-to-do member of the oldest patrician family in Frankfort, decorated with several Grand-Crosses and an Actual Privy-Councillor to boot. Herr von Holzhausen is unmarried and childless; but his nearest relatives are in the Austrian service. Moreover, this gentleman's over-weening family pride and traditions hark back perpetually to the connection of the Frankfort *noblesse* with the splendours of the Holy Roman Empire, and Prussia's whole attitude appears to him a revolutionary usurpation, the chief object of which is the annihilation of the Von Holzhausens' privileges. His large private fortune justifies me in assuming that personal ambition is the tie connecting him with Austria (perhaps the craving for some Imperial Order or for an Austrian Count's title), not

pecuniary interest—unless, indeed, the fact that he owns a great deal of Métalliques stock may influence his conduct. . . It is scarcely probable that even those Governments which follow the Austrian policy should have empowered Herr von Holzhausen to display his Austrian tendencies with such conspicuous ostentation, to dispense with asking for instructions upon questions of the most vital importance, and to exclusively regard Austrian interests as the one consideration by which votes are to be determined."

In a private letter to Manteuffel (March 14, 1858) treating of the Federal Envoys' terror of Austria, Bismarck pronounced a truly crushing sentence upon several of his Frankfort colleagues. "It is quite amazing what successes Austria achieves with her system of incessantly and uncompromisingly persecuting every diplomatist who dares to vindicate the interests of his own country against the will of the Vienna Cabinet, until, panic-stricken or weary of resistance, he submits himself to her dictation. There are but few diplomatists here who have not preferred capitulating with their conscience and patriotism, and relaxing their steadfastness as far as the defence of their own Sovereign's and country's interests is concerned, to contending, at the risk of their personal positions, against the difficulties threatening them on the part of so mighty, unforgiving and unscrupulous a foe as Austria. Austria never gives us any choice but this: unconditional surrender to her will, or war *à outrance.* I might, if I pleased, make my life as easy here as my predecessors did theirs, and, like the majority of my colleagues, manage all my business arrangements snugly and comfortably, and acquire the reputation of a *camarade supportable*, simply by committing high-treason to a moderate and scarcely perceptible extent. But so long as I refrain from adopting that line of conduct I shall stand quite alone

to resist every attack; for my colleagues do not dare to support me, even if they felt called upon to do so."

The Federal Diplomatists, therefore, were in great part insignificant, incapable, and far from disinterested persons—petty, timorous and dependent—but nevertheless men against whose past, as far as their private life was concerned, there was little to be said. The year 1857, however, threatened to recruit the diplomatic corps in Frankfort with a personage of exceedingly ambiguous antecedents, with respect to whom Bismarck wrote a despatch to Manteuffel, observing that the conferment of a diplomatic post upon this individual by Prince Reuss (of the younger line) who proposed to nominate him Minister-Resident in Frankfort, had aroused general amazement. The accounts of his former career, &c., then current went back as far as the time "when he, then a cobbler's apprentice, was taken into the favour of an elderly unmarried lady, at whose expense he subsequently received a high-class education and eventually purchased the title of Baron; upon which she married him." Frequently sent by his Government on congratulatory missions to Foreign Courts, "in order to obtain decorations for him," he figures "in newspaper articles written by himself, as ranking amongst the most eminent diplomatists of the Great European Powers." It is observed that "the Government, which aims at compulsorily obtaining admission into good society, hitherto sought by him in vain, for such an individual as this, may be said to keep an open shop for patents of nobility, in which anybody—no matter who—may purchase the title he fancies by paying the price set upon it in a fixed tariff." In all probability the same Government, "should its business in that line prove remunerative, will open another shop of the same class, for appointments to the Diplomatic Body."

Pathetic expressions, would-be impressive oratory and endeavours to be touching have nothing to do with diplomacy; and he who attempts to work with such tools as these only proves himself to be a humbug. We have seen what Bismarck thought of such artifices, in his reports concerning Prokesch, and shall, in another portion of this book, be made acquainted with a delightful story, having for its subject Gagern, in his time a highly respected and much overrated patriotic Pathotechnician—*sit venia verbo*, I mould it after the model of pyrotechnician—and setting forth his comic notions of diplomacy.

Two anecdotes of a similar character may not be out of place here, as exemplifying the Chancellor's way of treating such sentimental negotiators. The first relates to Jules Favre, who transformed himself from a barrister into a diplomatist after Sedan, and attempted experiments in foreign politics by aid of the practices and tricks of his former trade; which did not succeed with Bismarck. After the conferences at Haute Maison and Ferrières the Chancellor, speaking of Favre, said: "It is quite true that he looked as if he had been crying, and I made some endeavour to console him. But, after inspecting him carefully, I came to the conclusion that he had not squeezed out a single tear. Probably he hoped to work upon me and move me by play-acting, as the Paris lawyers are wont to do with their audiences. I am firmly convinced that he was painted as well—white on his cheeks and green round his eyes and nostrils—certainly he was the second time, here in Rothschild's château, upon which occasion he had 'made up' much more grey and infirm, to play the part of one deeply afflicted and utterly broken down. His object was to excite my compassion, and thereby induce me to moderate my demands and make concessions. But he ought to have known that feelings have nothing to do with politics."

Thiers suited the Chancellor better than Favre, although he once remarked of the former, "There is scarcely a trace of the diplomatist about him; he is far too sentimental for that trade. He is not fit to be a negotiator—scarcely even to be a horse-couper. He allows himself to be 'bluffed' too easily; he betrays his feelings and lets himself be pumped." On February 22, 1871, Bismarck, whilst at dinner, gave us an account of his second meeting with Thiers. "When I exacted a certain condition from him, he sprang to his feet (although, as a rule, he could contain himself very well) and exclaimed, '*Mais c'est une indignité!*' I did not allow that to disturb me: but forthwith spoke to him in German. He listened for a time, evidently not knowing what to make of it; then he whimpered out: 'Mais, Monsieur le Comte, vous savez bien que je ne sais point l'allemand!' I at once replied, in French: 'When you spoke just now of *indignité* it struck me that I did not understand French well enough, and so I thought it better to speak German, in which tongue I know what I say and what I hear.' He caught my meaning instantly, and at once agreed to the very condition which he had characterised as an indignity. And only yesterday," continued the Chancellor, "he began to talk about Europe, which would certainly intervene unless we moderated our demands. I replied, 'If you talk to me about Europe I shall talk to you about Napoleon.' He would not believe me, and insisted that France had nothing to fear in that direction. I pointed out to him, however, that he should think of the *plébiscite*, of the peasants, and of the officers and soldiers. The Guard could only regain its old position should the Emperor be restored, to whom it could not be difficult, by judicious management, to gain over a hundred thousand of the soldiers then prisoners-of-war in Germany. All we should have to do would be to send them well-armed across the frontier, and France would

be once more his (Napoleon's). . . . If they would agree to satisfactory conditions of peace, we would even go so far as to put up with an Orleans, although we knew well enough that under that *régime* war would infallibly break out again in two or three years. Should they however prove obdurate, we would interfere in their affairs, which thitherto we had not done, and they would get another spell of Napoleon. This must have produced some effect upon Thiers; for this morning he stopped himself just as he was beginning to talk about Europe again, and said, 'Pray excuse me!' On the whole I like him very well; he has a clear head and good manners, and narrates in capital style. Indeed, I am often sorry for him, for he is in a painful position. But that cannot be helped."

Here is a delightful example of the diplomatic tact with which (during the peace negotiations at Frankfort) the Chancellor contrived to gain his ends with the Frenchmen. The story was told to me by the late Count Wartensleben, who had it from Bismarck himself. "One day—it was after his first *pourparler* with Favre and Pouyer-Quertier—Bismarck was looking very much worried and annoyed, and when I asked him why, he replied that the Frenchmen had shewn an uncommon degree of stubbornness, and added that he had however, secured an ally in their own camp. 'I proposed to Favre,' he said, 'that he should bring M. Goulard, a member of the National Assembly, with him to the negotiations. He seemed very much surprised, and at first would not hear of it. I then pointed out how useful it would be to him. Goulard would feel highly flattered and grateful, and would, as his co-negotiator, be compelled to defend him in the National Assembly. So Favre consented.' But Goulard was also of great use to the Chief; for the portly little gentleman with the white tie and exuberant shirt-

collar was extremely grateful to him for having suggested his admission to the conferences, and invariably spoke in favour of concessions when the two other Frenchmen were disinclined to make them, saying, 'Let it pass; I will be answerable at home for your doing so; we may consent in this case.' The best of it was that Favre finished by formally thanking Bismarck for advising him to allow Goulard to take part in the transactions."

In certain Bismarckian utterances pronounced shortly before and during the war, Gramont repeatedly figured as a combination of wrongheadedness and dullness. The Chancellor also spoke of Ollivier with undisguised scorn. Of these persons he once remarked, "Gramont and Ollivier are pretty fellows! Were I in their place, having brought about such a catastrophe, I would at least enlist in some regiment, or even become a franc-tireur, if I had to be hanged for it. That great strapping fellow, Gramont, would do well enough for a soldier." (Upon another occasion he remarked that, had the war in Bohemia proved a failure, he would have sought a soldier's death, being perfectly sure that, unless he did so, the old women in Berlin would flog him to death with their wet pockethandkerchiefs.) Odo Russell mentioned that he had once seen Gramont out shooting near Rome in a blue velvet suit. "Yes," observed the Chancellor, "he is a good sportsman, well-built and muscular enough. He would have made a capital gamekeeper, or district-forester. But as a Minister of Foreign Affairs—one can hardly conceive how Napoleon could have employed him in that capacity!"

Upon the same occasion he spoke in praise of Russell's compatriot, Lord Napier, formerly British Envoy in Berlin, as a man with whom it was very easy to get on; also of Buchanan, whom he described as "dry, but trustworthy." "And now we have got Loftus," he continued. "The posi-

tion of an English Minister in Berlin is one of special responsibility and difficulty, on account of the family connections existing between the English and Prussian Courts. It exacts the greatest possible tact and attention from its occupant." He then became silent; but his silence spoke. Subsequently, however (no Englishman being present), he expressed, and in very forcible terms, his opinion that Loftus in no way fulfilled the above-mentioned requirements.

Upon Gortchakoff the Chancellor pronounced judgment to me as follows, in March 1879. "Without the least reason, many people take him for a particularly clever and skilful diplomatist. He never has any really great object in view, and therefore cannot point to any remarkable success. His policy is not that of Czar Alexander, nor is it a Russian policy, but one dictated and guided in the first place by considerations personal to himself, and in the second by his predilection for France, which his master does not share. His chief characteristic is a highly developed egotism; his chief aim the gratification of his yearning to be esteemed a politician of the first class, which is just what he is not. Hence his chronic disposition to invent scenes in which he can play a part likely to elicit applause from public opinion. The Russian Chancellor has only exhibited any personal activity during the past four years; and no expert will venture to say that his operations have revealed either adroitness or perspicuity. These four years were devoted on his part to preparing the war with Turkey and to making sure that the struggle in question should result favourably and profitably to Russia. But his manner of conducting this business has not altogether signalised him as an intelligence capable of clearly discerning its own aims and the means of attaining them. In

preparing to fight the Turks the most important preliminary was to ascertain beyond a doubt what position Austria-Hungary and Germany would take up in relation to Russia's projects, and to establish satisfactory relations with those states. This was not effectually done, as everybody knows. Firm and distinct relations were not even arranged and established with Roumania, although Gortchakoff had ample opportunities for fulfilling that part of his task during his six months' sojourn in Bucharest. But the old gentleman spent too much of his time every day with girls of a certain description to have any to spare for business.

"The results of his policy resembled the work he himself did; both were mediocre. But his yearning to be, or at least to appear, more than he really was, remained as vigorous and lively as ever theretofore. After 1874 it seemed as if his greed for praise and renown would never again leave him any peace or quiet. At the time of the Reichstadt Convention he remarked. '*Je ne peux pas filer comme une lampe qui s'éteint. Il faut que je me couche comme un astre.*' The Triple Alliance only satisfied him for a very brief period. Already in 1874 threads of the Gortchakoff-Jomini policy (now set forth in the *Golos*) made themselves manifest in the foreign press—more particularly in that of France and Belgium. Even then the aim of that policy was distinctly perceptible, namely, the revival of intimate relations between Russia and vengefully-inclined France, to the end of threatening and exercising pressure upon Germany. France's rejection of this proposal (which does not seem to have had Czar Alexander's approbation) did not hinder further efforts in the direction indicated. These endeavours culminated in the period between 1875 and 1877, when, *entr' autres*, a rumour obtained currency

all over the world, to the effect that Russia had rescued the French from a great and imminent peril. It was asserted that in 1875, Gortchakoff had been apprised by Gontaut, then Ambassador in St. Petersburg, that Germany was on the point of forcing a war upon France; Gortchakoff had thereupon expressed his disapprobation of any such undertaking; the Czar had then travelled to Berlin, and succeeded in persuading the Prussian military-party (then urging on the enterprise in question) to abandon their projects. Finally, the Russian Chancellor had taken occasion to address a Circular Despatch to his Envoys abroad, beginning with the words: '*Maintenant la paix est assurée.*'

"Of all the details contained in this report—which emanated from St. Petersburg and was intended to display Prince Gortchakoff to the world at large in the light of a benevolent peace-maker and mighty dictator, as well as to recommend him to the French as a friend and desirable ally —only those touching the Czar's journey to Berlin and a high-flown Circular Despatch of his Foreign Minister are founded upon fact. On the other hand, with the solitary exception of its remarks in a sense hostile to France and relating to the Prussian military party's alleged warlike projects, the statement published by the well-known journalist, Oppert-Blowitz, anent a conversation held by him with Prince Bismarck at the time of the Berlin Congress upon the matter in question is absolutely correct. The article appeared in the *Times* of Sept. 7, 1878, and its leading points are as follows:—

"'Bismarck, however, is jealous not only of his own, but of his country's reputation, and denies such a plan (of attack upon France) was ever conceived. On my remarking at the end of my interview with him that Europe counted upon

peace as soon as it knew he wished for it, he eagerly caught up the phrase for the purpose of reverting to the 'scare,' of strongly disavowing any complicity with the authors of the plan of settling his account with Prince Gortchakoff, and of absolving Germany from the unwarrantable scheme which terrified Europe. He exclaimed. 'I should not have wished for peace if I had been the villain Gortchakoff made me out to be in 1875. The whole story which then startled Europe, and to which a letter in *The Times* gave so great an echo, was nothing but a conspiracy devised by Gortchakoff and Gontaut. It was a plot between Gontaut and Gortchakoff, who was eager to reap praises from the French papers, and to be styled the saviour of France! They had arranged this so that the thing should burst forth the very day of the arrival of the Czar, who was to appear as a *Quos ego* and by his mere appearance to give security to France and peace to Europe. I never saw a statesman act more heedlessly—from a sentiment of vanity to compromise a friendship between two Governments; to expose himself to the most serious consequences in order to attribute to himself the role of saviour, when there was nothing in danger. I told the Emperor of Russia and Gortchakoff, 'If you have such a mind for a French apotheosis, we have still credit enough in Paris to be able to make you appear on some theatrical stage in mythological costume, with wings on your shoulders and surrounded by Bengal lights. It really was not worth while to depict us as villains for the sole purpose of issuing a Circular.' That famous Circular, moreover, commenced with the words. 'Peace is now ensured;' and when I complained of that phrase, which would have confirmed all the alarming rumours, it was altered into the 'maintenance of peace is now ensured;' which did not mean much less. I said to

the Russian Chancellor: 'You certainly will not have much room for congratulation on what you have been doing in risking our friendship for an empty satisfaction. I frankly tell you that I am a good friend with friends and a good enemy with enemies!"

Returning to German diplomatic circles, we find that the Chancellor values some of their members very highly. But I have only heard him speak with warm admiration of one of them, with the single exception of Lothar Bucher. This was the Secretary of State von Buelow (deceased, 1879), whom he praised in his reports from Frankfort, and who was, as the Prince has assured me in person, a *collaborateur* of his as capable and well informed as he was indefatigably industrious. Concerning other "Excellencies" the Chancellor expressed himself with less warmth; but I can only quote such of his remarks as applied to persons who are no longer living.

Once I took the liberty of asking him whether or not Von der Goltz, our former envoy in Paris, had been really so clever and influential as many people assert him to have been. "Clever, yes, in a certain sense of the word," replied the Chancellor; "a quick worker and well informed, but unsteady in his appreciations of persons and relations—to-day quite taken up with one man, or plan, to-morrow with another—sometimes with the exact converse of the first. And then he was always in love with the Royal ladies to whose Court he was accredited; first, with Amalia of Greece, then with Eugénie. He was of opinion that what I had 'had the luck' to bring about, he, with his superior intelligence, could have done much better. Consequently he was always intriguing against me, although we had known each other as boys: he wrote letters to the King complaining of me, and warning His Majesty against me. *That* did not do him much good, for the King gave me the

letters, and I answered them. But he was persevering in this regard, and went on sending them, unvexed and unwearied. His subordinates all disliked him; in fact, they absolutely hated him."

On another occasion, Privy-Councillor Abeken having remarked how variously the Secretary of State, Cardinal Antonelli had been appraised by the newspapers, some of which had pronounced him to be a man of subtle intelligence, others a cunning intriguer, and others a drivelling idiot, the Chancellor observed: "True, but such inconsistencies occur, not only in the press, but in the judicial capacities of a good many diplomatists—Goltz, for instance, and 'our Harry.' Of Goltz I will say nothing; he was different. But the other one—he was one thing to-day, and another to morrow! When I was in Varzin, and had time to read his reports one with another, I found that he changed his opinions about people at least twice a week, in exact proportion to the degrees of their civility towards him. His views varied with each successive postal delivery—sometimes even in one and the same despatch." "Our Harry," I may remark, was Count Arnim, whose subsequent opposition to the Chancellor has been already referred to, and whose reports, whilst he was Ambassador in Paris, certainly were Protean in character. Another time Bismarck remarked of him: "I should like to know how he feels just now; probably in one way before breakfast, in another after dinner, and quite otherwise to-morrow morning—like his despatches!"

Of Savigny the Chancellor said: "It is his fault that we concluded a Treaty of Peace with Saxony in which the military question was settled in an unsatisfactory manner. He did it, not I, for I was on my back, very ill, at the time. When the treaty first reached my hands, I thought of

congratulating him upon it, but when I looked more closely into its condition, I changed my mind and forbore doing so." It was, moreover, the Chancellor's opinion that Savigny's catholicism was partly accountable for his yielding to the Saxon negotiators.

In January, 1871, Bismarck expressed himself as follows, with respect to Count Bernstorff, formerly representing Prussia and Germany at the British Court: "I have never yet succeeded in filling up whole pages and sheets with elaborate dissertations upon matters of no importance whatsoever, as he did, and always teeming with back-references—'as I had the honour to report in my despatch of January 3, 1863. No. so-and-so;' or 'as I respectfully announced in my telegram, No. 1665.' I send these things to the King, who naturally wants to know what it all means, and writes on the margin in pencil: 'Don't know anything about it.'" Somebody observed that Goltz, too, had scribbled a great deal of irrelevant rubbish, and Bismarck added: "Yes, and, in addition to his despatches he often sent me private letters of six to eight closely written sheets in length. He must have had a frightful lot of spare time. Fortunately, I got angry with him, and that nuisance came to an end." Another of the persons at table remarked: "What would Goltz say if he could know that the Emperor is a prisoner, that Eugénie is in London, and that we have been bombarding Paris?" "Why," rejoined the Chancellor, "he would not worry himself so much about the Emperor as about his flame, Eugénie. Nevertheless, in spite of his amorousness, he would not have made such a mess of it as others have done." By "others" Bismarck meant Count Goltz's successor (Werther), whose eyes had been closed to the French Government's war projects throughout the summer of 1870 up to the very

last moment, whilst his subordinates had clearly perceived what was going on and imparted it to the home authorities.

In speaking of the value of diplomatic reports—a not unfrequent subject of comment on his part—the Chancellor invariably referred to them in disparaging terms. On one occasion he said, "Many of these productions are agreeable reading enough; but they contain nothing essential, and are mere *feuilletons*, written for the sake of writing. Of this class were the reports of our Consul in ——. You read them through, thinking all the time, 'Now it must be coming.' But it never comes. The style is good and fluent; you read on and on. By and bye, coming to the end, you find that there is really nothing in it—that it is all deaf and empty." Another example was cited, that of the military plenipotentiary B——, who came to the front as a historian with some long treatises on Russia; and the Chancellor observed: "When we appointed him we thought we should get something out of him—and so we have, in quantity as well as in style. He writes pleasantly, in the *feuilleton* manner; but, reading through his sheets upon sheets of close diminutive and elegant manuscript, I find that, despite their amazing length, there is absolutely nothing in them."

Of diplomatic literature in general he observed: "For the most part it is nothing but paper and ink. The worst of all is when the writers run to great length. One was accustomed to Bernstorff, who always sent in a ream of paper full of stale old newspaper-cuttings. But when others take to exuberant writing—Arnim was wont to distinguish himself in this respect—one is apt to get annoyed; for as a rule, there is nothing in it. If you wanted to utilise it for historical purposes, you could not

get anything worth having out of it. I believe it is the rule to allow historians to consult the F. O. archives at the expiration of thirty years (after date of despatches, &c.). They might be permitted to inspect them much sooner, for the despatches and letters, when they contain any information at all, are quite unintelligible to those unacquainted with the persons and relations treated of in them. Who knows, thirty years after date, what sort of a man the writer himself was—how he looked at things and impressed his individuality upon them. What one should know would be what Gortchakoff, Gladstone, or Granville really thought about the matter reported upon by the Ambassador. One has a better chance of getting something trustworthy out of the newspapers, of which Governments also avail themselves frequently to say what they mean more distinctly than by the mouths of diplomatists. Besides, accurate knowledge of all sorts of circumstances is essential. Finally, the most important information of all is communicated confidentially, by word of mouth or in private letters which never reach the archives." He mentioned several instances of such communications, and concluded by saying: "All this one comes to know privately—not officially."

One day, at our dinner-table in Versailles, the conversation turned upon diplomatists who had turned their positions to account in the way of speculating on 'Change, and had made a good thing of so doing. The Chancellor denied that there was much to be done in that line with such necessarily limited fore-knowledge of political events as can be attained by the head of a Foreign Office. Events of that class do not, as a rule, produce an immediate effect upon the money-market, and it is impossible to say beforehand on what particular day they will do so. "Of course," he added, "it would be possible to complicate matters so as to bring about

a fall; but that would be dishonourable. The French Minister G—— did so, and doubled his fortune thereby, one might almost say that he made war with that object. Moustier, it seems, also transacted business of that description—not with his own money, but with that of his kept-mistress—and poisoned himself when threatened with exposure. . . . If a Minister wanted to make money out of his position by such means, this is the way he would have to do it, i.e. get some obliging official at each legation abroad to send him the 'Change telegrams together with the political ones. These latter take precedence of all others at the Telegraph Offices, so that he would gain an advance of from twenty to thirty minutes, and would have to keep a swift-footed Jew by him in order to utilise that time advantage. There have been, it is said, people amongst us who have managed the thing in this way." (Here he mentioned the names of some of these gentlemen.) "Thus may a Minister make from 1500 to 15000 thalers a day, which, in the course of a few years, would mount up to a very pretty sum. But my son shall never have it to say of his father that he had made a rich man of him by transactions of this kind."

Later on, another variety of diplomatic money-making was discussed (Jan. 26, 1871). From the subject of Strousberg's cleverness and indefatigable activity the conversation turned to Gambetta, respecting whom somebody asserted that "he had made five millions by the war"—an assumption disputed (I believe justly) by others present. Speaking of Napoleon III., Count Bismarck-Bohlen then observed that he (Napoleon) must have saved at least fifty millions of francs during his nineteen years' reign. "Some people say eighty," interposed the Chancellor, "but I doubt it. Louis Philippe spoilt the business. He got up *émeutes* and then sold on the Amsterdam exchange. At last the

brokers, &c., found him out." Count Hatzfeldt (or Baron Keudell) remarked that, every now and then, that most illustrious, enterprising and wide-awake of all speculators used to fall ill, with a similar object. It was then mentioned that, under the Second Empire, Morny especially distinguished himself by the variety and ingenuity of his expedients for making money. The Chancellor said: "When Morny was appointed ambassador to Petersburg he arrived there with a long string of fine elegant carriages, and all his trunks were full of lace, silks and ladies' toilettes, on which of course he had to pay no duty. Every one of his servants had a carriage of his own, every *attaché* or secretary at least two, and he himself five or six. A day or two after his advent he sold off his *impedimenta*, carriages, lace, dresses and all. They say he made a clear profit of 800,000 roubles." "He was unprincipled but amiable, and could really make himself extremely agreeable," added the narrator.

That diplomatists may be classified as "purchasable," and "non-purchasable," may be gathered from the following little story, told to me when I was on a visit at Varzin. It concerns an attempt made by one Loewenstein to bribe Bismarck when the latter was on the point of starting for Petersburg as Ambassador to the Russian Court. "This Loewenstein," said the Prince, "was a secret agent, acting simultaneously on behalf of Buol and Manteuffel—spying, executing commissions, and doing other things of that sort. He came to me with a letter of recommendation from Buol. When I asked him what I could do for him, he replied that, 'he had come to tell me how I might do a good stroke of business, with a profit of twenty thousand thalers—perhaps more.' I answered, 'I do not speculate, not having the wherewithal.' 'Oh, you do not require any money; you can manage it another way.' I said I did

not understand that; what, then, was I to do? 'Only to exert your influence in Petersburg, to bring about a good understanding between Russia and Austria.' I made as though I would think it over, but could not quite trust him. Loewenstein then referred me to his letter of introduction. I said that was not sufficient, and demanded a written promise; but the Jew was too cunning to give me anything of the sort, and observed that his letter was legitimation enough. Then I turned rusty, and as he was going away, told him the plain truth, viz.:—that I should not think of doing what he wanted, but felt greatly inclined to throw him down the stairs, which were steep. So he went off, but not before he had menaced me with Austria's wrath. On subsequently applying to —— he found his proposals readily understood and accepted, as was also the case with ——, who receives 'subventions' from Vienna to this very day."

Is there anybody fitted to become Bismarck's successor in office—anybody equal to, or even, from an intellectual point of view, approximatively akin to him? Will he leave a school of statesmen behind him? I believe I must answer both these questions in the negative. The present German diplomatists may, some of them, be persons of respectable talent in their way; but, one and all, they are far inferior to their chief—and the Liberals, who hope to inherit his authority, have still fewer capacities in their ranks, and no routine whatsoever. Virchow, in some of his public speeches, has mentioned that they (the Liberals) expect to take the helm under the next king, and has observed, in addition, that "then, the policy of Germany, abroad as well as at home, will be altogether different from what it is now. Bismarck is a gifted politician, but he represents a school of diplomacy that has heretofore been regarded as superseded." There will be nice doings,

doubtless; they will not last long, however. But in the meantime hideous follies will be committed, and great damage done, some of it probably irreparable.

The Prince, despite all that has been said and written on the subject, has not founded a school—at least, not one like that which Moltke has formed round himself. Certain diplomatists may have noted down, as generally useful, a maxim or two contained in his instructions. Now and again he himself has referred pointedly to such maxims. He has no time to do more; and, indeed, it would have been labour in vain, since genius is born, not manufactured, in the diplomatic career, as in every other, and new situations, which are always cropping up, can only be dominated by the intuition of genius, not by axioms summarising past experiences. The thing chiefly needful is not knowledge, but capability. "*Ce jeune homme sait un grand nombre de choses,*" said Nesselrode once of a German *attaché*, '*mais il ne sait pas faire une seule;*" and this remark applies to a good many actual colleagues of the gentleman who suggested it. It is a difficult matter enough to discover a competent Secretary of State. What will it be to find a new Chancellor who will not contrast ridiculously with the old one? These are unpleasant truths; but truths they are, and nothing can make them aught else.

CHAPTER V.

BISMARCK AND AUSTRIA.

BISMARCK'S line of policy has to no inconsiderable extent been determined by the conduct of adversaries who were persistently blind to their own interests; and some of his principal successes have their origin chiefly in the stiff-necked obstinacy with which those persons have striven, even to the eleventh hour, to maintain obsolete rights and unreasonable pretensions in defiance of the reforming genius, intelligence, and volition by which Germany's demand for an historical entity was realised. Thus, in the Schleswig-Holstein affair, *imprimis*, the calculating and disloyal policy of the Danish National Democrats compelled King Christian to incorporate Schleswig in contravention of an international arrangement, thus affording to the German Great Powers the only valid pretext they could possibly have advanced for declaring the London Protocol null and void; secondly, the question (in a subsequent phase of its development) was treated by the Duke of Augustenburg as if it had been an ordinary civil suit about a private gentleman's estate, the title-deeds of which—in the shape of an old, worm-eaten, olive-green parchment—he preserved and worshipped like a miracle-working relic. When the case came forward, this good gentleman so stubbornly rejected the demands (at first very moderate ones) put forward by Prussia on behalf of National interests, that he at last rendered

annexation unavoidable. Again, in the Hanover business, King George (doubly stricken with blindness) so utterly failed before as well as after the 1866 catastrophe to perceive his true interests, which he would have served either by co-operating with Russia or by maintaining an honourable neutrality, that he over and over again abruptly declined the offers urged upon him from Berlin to enter into an agreement upon the basis of Bismarck's plan for the reform of Germany, thus bringing about the annihilation of his own rights by the Power representing new and superior rights, and the incorporation of his kingdom in that of his conqueror. In this, as in the other question referred to (Schleswig-Holstein), the Prussian Minister's keen perception of his adversary's weak points and cleverness in putting the latter in the wrong, as far as public opinion was concerned, were singularly efficacious. Finally (not to mention other examples), in the question of limiting the sphere of Austrian influence as against that of North Germany, the old comedy was played all over again—this time throughout a period of more than a decade and a half, until the sword severed the Gordian knot, did away with dualism, set up a fair and equitable Prussian hegemony northward of the Main, and established parity of law throughout Germany—a political entity which later on, obtained its completion—never lost sight of by Bismarck—through an alliance that revived the good and useful terms of the former Austro-Prussian league, and settled satisfactorily once for all, relations between the whilom rivals.

But for the Schwarzenberg policy, practically a resuscitation of that of Kaunitz, and steadfastly pursued by Buol and his successors, Germany's development into a Federal State —which commenced with Bismarck's nomination as Envoy to the Federal Assembly, and attained its first important stage in 1866—would have been next to an impossibility.

Possibly a similar conclusion might have been ultimately arrived at, by other means, and at a much later period—and even then only in case an energetic and talented statesman had arisen in Prussia to undertake the solution of the problem. The departure of Prince Schwarzenberg and his successors in the guidance of Austrian policy from the considerate and conciliatory attitude maintained towards Prussia by Metternich—their greedy aggressiveness, in fact, hastened the march of events. We have to thank them for swiftly and thoroughly reversing the opinions with regard to Austria which prevailed in Berlin up to 1848, and which Bismarck took with him to Frankfort. What the King thought of that transformation may be gathered from the letter he wrote to Metternich on April 18, 1848, when the latter had fled from Vienna on account of the Revolution. The closing sentences of this document are highly characteristic: "My personal relations to you remain what they were of old; and yet they are rejuvenated, invigorated, and fortified by our common misfortunes. I feel towards Austria as I did in the year 1840. I will honestly do all I can to obtain hereditary Roman Imperial rank for the hereditary Emperor; and the Roman Emperor must again become the Honorary head of the German Nation. A Cæsar—as special elective chief of the special German Realm—appears unavoidable. But I will not be that Cæsar. It is my ambition to become Arch-Generalissimo of the Empire. God be with you, honoured Prince! May he preserve you to this world until better times!"

A foregoing chapter has made us acquainted with the attitude assumed towards Austria by Bismarck during the years immediatly following the Berlin Revolution. When the Chancellor of to-day was appointed (July 15, 1851) Envoy to the Federal Assembly his experiences in various

directions had probably caused him to alter his former opinion as to the policy of Austria; but he was certainly not a thoroughgoing opponent of the Hapsburg Empire at that time. Indeed, he regarded it as a valuable ally in the struggle then maintained by Prussia with the still formidable democratic Revolutionary Party, and fully agreed with the instructions imparted to his predecessor, General von Rochow, i.e. to adhere (with relation to the resuscitated Federal Diet) to the system of co-operation, on the part of both great powers, which had generally obtained in the days of Hardenberg, Ancillon and Metternich, and was carried out thus: Austria and Prussia came to a clear mutual understanding in every case, upon the measures to be recommended to the smaller Federal States, and then imposed their will upon all the remaining members of the Confederation. In a speech pronounced by him in 1850, Austria he referred to as "the representative and heir of a German Power which had often and gloriously wielded the sword of Germany."

At the commencement of his occupations in Frankfort Bismarck took up an attitude with respect to the business of the Bund, quite in keeping with the above view. He made it a rule "to confer tête-à-tête with Count Thun, the Austrian Envoy, upon any questions containing germs of dissension between Prussia and Austria, before bringing any such matter before the Federal Diet," and took great pains to avoid any serious differences upon pending issues, intimating the purport of his instructions from Berlin with all possible suavity, and frequently subordinating his personal wishes to those of the majority. But his conciliatory and yielding dispositions were of course limited by the interests and dignity of the State he represented, and vexatious experiences soon convinced him that placability was out of place in connection with Federal transactions.

The authorities in Vienna were altogether in favour of the unity wished for at Berlin—but only upon the condition that Prussia should give way to the views entertained by Imperial politicians just as readily as the medium and petty states had theretofore yielded to decisions adopted by Austria and Prussia in common. Should Prussia presume to have a will of her own, Austria—in Schwarzenberg's opinion—could dispose of machinery in the Federal Diet wherewith to bend and break that will; and this calculation was so far correct that most of the petty states ascribed projects of union or annexation to Prussia, and were consequently always ready to outvote her in the Bund, to keep her down to her own level, to narrow the sphere of her independent action and enlarge the prerogatives of the Federal Diet. Bismarck's conviction that the Monarchy of Frederic the Great was in no way bound to submit to the voting majority of the petty States constituting Austria's following, and that pliancy under such circumstances could only lead Prussia to her ruin, was diametrically opposed to all the endeavours of the smaller Confederates; and on the other hand he perceived clearly that the State he represented could stand alone, without danger to itself, if those in charge of it would only act firmly and consistently.

On September 23, 1851, after barely three months, observation of the situation—a question in which Prussia's power and independence were involved being then on the *tapis*—he pointed out to his Minister that in his opinion it was not only possible but desirable to break up relations with the Bund, which had sensibly become more unsatisfactory than they had theretofore been. It was just after the Berlin Cabinet (it having been agreed all round to fall back upon the basis of the old Federal Law) had requested the Bund to give up its control over the three eastern provinces

of Prussia—incorporated in the Federal realm during 1848—that course of action appearing necessary, in relation to the political tendencies then prevailing at Frankfort, as affording legal grounds upon which Prussia might found an independent European policy. Austria voted in favour of this proposal unwillingly and under compulsion. But when the question was being haggled over in the Federal Assembly Bismarck (writing to Manteuffel) declared that "he should have been personally very glad had he been in a position to make a categorical declaration upon the subject, instead of being obliged to tout for the consent of his coy colleagues to the proposal," and closed his report with the remark that, "should the vote be postponed or be given in the negative, he would declare that Prussia would go her own way, even without the consent of those contradictory gentlemen."

Shortly afterwards (Nov. 12), he urged his chief in Berlin (upon the occasion of the note upon the expenses of the Federal "execution" in Electoral Hesse) to make an experiment in the direction of ascertaining how many notes of the Federal Diet would be given in favour of a certain Prussian view, at the risk of bringing about a scission in that Assembly; adding, "For my part, I should not object to letting it be generally known that Prussia stands alone in this matter."

Austria continued to utilize the votes of the petty States in the Bund for her own purposes, in a sense adverse to Prussia, whose representative could not help finding out that insurmountable difficulties stood in the way of anything like harmonious co-operation between himself and his Austrian colleague. In every direction he found himself circumscribed and molested, in a highly vexatious manner by the great majority of the medium and petty German States' representatives, obedient to the instructions wired to

them from Vienna. For instance, when an Austrian motion for the publication of the Federal Diet's sessional reports came on for discussion, and, despite Prussia's remonstrance, a committee was elected to make a selection of the proceedings suitable for publication; the choice of matter made by this committee at once demonstrated that Bismarck had been justified in predicting that the committee would turn out a contrivance favourable to Austria and adverse to Prussia. He personally attacked this nuisance in the columns of the press, and by a vigorous protest addressed to the Bund itself, the result of which was that the whole thing was knocked on the head.

The North Sea Fleet (created in 1848) and its maintenance by the Bund constituted another cause of conflict, during which resolutions were adopted that were distinctly prejudicial to Prussia, and, as such, were declared unconstitutional, null and void by her representative. Another was the project of a Customs' Union with Austria, which led to nothing but a fruitless Conference in Frankfort, and only served to bring out into strong relief the domineering character of Schwarzenberg's policy and its ill-will towards Prussia.

In connection with these questions and occurrences Bismarck spoke his mind clearly and unreservedly (Dec. 22, 1851), to his Chief in Berlin, upon the subject of Austria's new anti-Prussian policy. "The attitude of the Vienna Cabinet," he observed, "since Austria, having for the moment arranged her domestic affairs, has been once more enabled to meddle with German politics, shows that on the whole Prince Schwarzenberg is not satisfied to reoccupy the position accorded to the Empire by the Federal Constitution up to 1848, but desires to utilize the revolution (that all but ruined Austria) as a basis for the realisation of farseeing

plans—just as the phenomena attending the inception of the Thirty Years' War made the Emperor master of Germany after having been insecure in his own palace of the Hofburg. It is natural that the struggle for the material and formal strengthening of Austria's position in Germany should be now commenced (if not fought out) upon the field of discussion in the Federal Diet, and that successfully; for, in any case of divergence between Austria and Prussia as matters now stand, the majority of the Federal Assembly is ensured to Austria. This state of affairs is attributable to a mistrustful irritability maintained towards Prussia by most of the medium German Courts ever since the epoch of the March-Revolution. In those quarters an inclination obtains to lend credence to insinuations that, by reason of her geographical situation, Prussia cannot but be bent upon coercing, in one way or another, the Princes whose realms abut upon her frontiers into dependence upon her, appealing against them (with this object) to popular sympathy with German Unity. Austria, meanwhile, flatters the particularistic Sovereigns with the prospect of being rendered independent and autocratic, as far as their respective subjects are concerned, pointing out to them as well that the geographical position, with relation to herself, of the smaller States incapacitates her from attempting to encroach upon their independence. We should not, moreover, underestimate the influence exercised upon most German Sovereigns by their personal *entourage*. As a rule, the most influential personages at German Courts belong to a social class which has much more to hope for from an Austrian than from a Prussian evolution of German affairs. Besides, a great many persons appertaining to this category have sons or other relatives in the Austrian service, whose advancement they consider to be bound up with their own further

ance of Austria's policy. . . . Furthermore, I regard the following as an important consideration. The German States are afraid of reprisals on the part of Austria, whereas they feel sure of conciliatory and benevolent treatment on that of Prussia, whatever may happen. . . . Our co-Confederates are accustomed to Austria's system of strict reciprocity, in friendship and in enmity, and of never allowing herself to be restrained, either by moral or legal principles, from fully paying out anybody who, being expected to stand by her, fails to do so."

In an earlier letter, addressed to Manteuffel, Bismarck sets forth the moral of Austria's method in the following words: "I can only see my way to bringing about a change in the voting conditions now unfavourably affecting us in the Federal Assembly by steadfast persistence on the part of Prussia in showing no consideration whatsoever to any German government which does not take pains to deserve it." We shall see that in his later reports, describing Austria's transactions with the Bund and their success—reports which are the outcome of long observation and copious experience—he recommends this "method" in very plain and urgent terms. It may be here observed that he did not preach to deaf ears upon this subject. In him we perceive the adviser of Manteuffel and King Frederick William IV. in whom they reposed implicit trust, and whose utterances, written and verbal, continuously inspired Prussia's policy in relation to Austria and her journeymen in the Bund. His Royal Master frequently summoned him to Court in order to confer with him; and the Chancellor himself has told me that, in the course of one year, he had to make thirteen journeys "by command" from Frankfort to Berlin.

Bismarck's opposition to the projected outvoting of Prussia in the Federal Diet, soon gave offence to Austria.

Towards the end of December 1851, Count Thun informed his Prussian colleague in the course of a private conversation that "such resistance to the decisions of majorities could not fail to break up the Confederation;" and received the reply that "If the Federal Assembly, by direct and reckless enforcements of the system of majorities, attempted to constitute a Board having for its functions the exercise of compulsion upon Prussia, means would be found to suspend to this last bond of German Unity a weight which it would prove incompetent to bear. The Federal Assembly had not been intended to confirm, under any and every circumstance, decisions with respect to which either Austria or Prussia might happen to find herself in a minority, hence, up to the year 1848, the formal rights of majorities were only utilised *cum grano salis*, for at that time the illusion was not entertained that German Dualism, which had existed for a thousand years, could be done away with by the mechanism of majority votes."

In January 1852 differences of opinion about the fleet developed into a conflict upon fundamental questions, touching the Federal Constitution. The German North-Sea fleet had been created in 1848 to serve the German Imperial Power then expected to be called into existence. With that "coming event" in view, Prussia had paid her just share of the outlay; whereas Austria had contributed nothing, and some of the medium States little more. The "Imperial Power," came to nothing; but these ships, etc., were to the fore, and the resuscitated Confederation was bound to provide for their maintenance. When Prussia, for this purpose proposed that the matricular arrears for the year 1848 should be paid up, all the Governments refused their assent, and the Federal Assembly, at their instigation, decided (July 1851) upon a fresh pecuniary advance.

Against this measure Bismarck lodged a protest on behalf of Prussia, pointing out that the fleet was not an organic institution according to Federal law, and that consequently absolute unanimity was requisite in any financial measure concerning it. This was repeated six months later. After an animated debate in the Federal Diet (January, 1852), it was resolved to issue a loan through Rothschild wherewith to cover the arrear outlay for the fleet, pledging monies belonging to the Bund to the banking-house in question. Bismarck was absent, in Berlin, and his representative for the time being protested against this resolve. This brought matters to a point; and thereafter Bismarck acted in concert with Manteuffel. On Jan. 10 he telegraphed to the Councillor of Legation, Wentzel: "Prussia does not regard the projected financial operation as a Federal Loan; no one has the right to divert the monies deposited with Rothschild from the purpose assigned to them by treaty. Lodge a protest with Rothschild against the expenditure or pledging of these monies; we shall hold the house of Rothschild answerable for any prejudice accruing to ourselves or the Confederation through the payment in question. Meanwhile, suspend every payment to the Federal exchequer, including those already advised." Wentzel handed in the protest personally, and then reported to Berlin that Thun was violently excited, declaring the step taken at Rothschild's was an insult to the whole Confederation and a derision of the Federal Decrees. In reply Bismarck telegraphed: "So long as the fleet is not recognised as Federal property, we shall regard and treat any expenditure thereupon of Federal funds, not sanctioned by ourselves, as illegal. For damage thus unlawfully done to us we shall impawn all payments due by us to the Federal exchequer.

Make this known to Count Thun and to the other Envoys. No one here thinks of giving way."

The subsequent developments of the Fleet-Question and its ultimate settlement by the auctioneer's hammer, have nothing to do with the objects of this work, and must therefore be passed over. Reference, too, can only be made to the leading features of Austria's second onslaught upon the Prusso-German Customs' Union, which began in January 1852. Mindful of the intention previously manifested by Austria to play into the hands of the Federal Diet—practically identical with the Cabinet of Vienna, which commanded its majority—Prussia had taken the precaution to conclude a special treaty (to take effect from Jan. 1, 1854) with Hanover and the remaining members of the Duties Union, in case the Central and Southern German States should withdraw from the Customs' Union. The Berlin Cabinet had then (Nov. 1851) given notice respecting the Customs' Union Treaties that would expire at the close of 1853, and had invited its Confederates to a Conference in Berlin, for April 1852, at which a new Customs' Union should be organised on the basis of the treaty with Hanover and her allies. The annoyance caused to the other German States by this proceeding, which they regarded as inconsiderate, was utilised by Austria, who, at the commencement of 1852, invited all the German Governments to Vienna, there to discuss a Customs' and Commercial Treaty with the Empire, and—Prussia having declined the invitation—about the same time opened secret negotiations with Bavaria, Saxony, Wuertemberg, Baden, both Hesses and Nassau, in that direction; i.e. to conclude a commercial treaty favouring Austria above all other countries, and subsequently to create the "Darmstadt Coalition," a Customs' Union embracing Austria and the

above-mentioned seven States. A general understanding was arrived at with respect to the former arrangement, and it was agreed that the latter was desirable, but that was all, for a Customs' Union without Prussia was tacitly admitted to be an impossibility. The Darmstadt Leaguers were afraid of a Prussian hegemony, but an Austrian hegemony was equally objectionable to them; a Customs' League with the two Great Powers would have been welcome to them, but Prussia would not hear of it; a continuance of economic relations with the latter was a vital necessity to German manufacturers, who, on the other hand, apprehended great danger to their interests from an intimate connection with Austria. Standing securely upon the solid basis of material interests, Prussia forthwith declared that she could only negotiate with Austria about a commercial treaty after the Customs' Union should have been reconstituted on the principles of her Treaty with Hanover; whilst Austria and the above-named seven States demanded simultaneous negotiations. This gave rise to a long series of diplomatic manœuvres, accompanied by popular agitation of a lively character. Bismarck participated eagerly in both. In numerous reports he strove to keep Manteuffel posted up in current events and the feelings prevailing in Southern Germany, as well as to make him stick to the Customs' Union policy thitherto pursued; he repeatedly came forward to oppose the machinations of Austria and her followers; he endeavoured by means of newspaper articles and pamphlets, to strengthen the South's existing sympathies for the menaced commercial relations, to obtain the support of influential personages, to instigate petitions to the Chambers and to make Frankfort the centre of the entire agitation.

During this period he was sent to Vienna, where he represented the Prussian Envoy, von Arnim, from June 8 to

July 7, 1852, and was instructed to come to an understanding with Count Buol (the successor to Prince Schwarzenberg, who died in the first week of April 1852) with respect to a more conciliatory policy, of which, however—as he soon became aware—there was no prospect whatsoever. On June 11 he wrote to his wife :—"The people here either do not want to come to terms or fancy that we do, a good deal more so than is really the case. I fear that the opportunity for an arrangement will be let slip, which will lead to an evil reaction at home, where they think that, in sending me hither, they have taken a very conciliatory step. They will not be in a hurry to send another man as well disposed to come to an understanding as myself, or entrusted with such plenary powers."

On June 14, Bismarck had a long conversation with Buol, and ten days later was received in special audience by the Emperor, to whom he had brought an autographic letter from King Frederick William. His interview with the Austrian Premier confirmed his opinion that the Vienna Government was resolved to rely upon the co-operation of the Central German States rather than upon the friendly disposition of Prussia. "Count Buol," he reported to Berlin, "has obviously not abandoned the hope of attaining the objects hitherto aimed at by the Darmstadt Coalition by passively but unyieldingly maintaining Austria's present attitude, in the presumption that the obstacles to the reconstruction of the Customs' Union brought forward by the Coalition, will compel us to withdraw our opposition to Austria's wishes." At first Bismarck expressed to Count Buol the desire that the differences between the two Cabinets might be disposed of; amongst others, legislation touching the press, reinforcement and organisation of the Federal army, construction of new Federal fortresses, police arrangements and newspaper polemics on either side. Buol did

not manifest a conciliatory disposition with respect to any of these matters. He observed that a preliminary understanding between the two Cabinets upon questions destined to be discussed in Frankfort would be impracticable with relation to the other Confederates—at least, with the completeness desired by the Prussian Envoy. It would of course be possible to come to an agreement with Prussia as regarded general principles, but questions of detail must be left for discussion in the Federal Diet. Bismarck replied that such questions would necessarily remain unsolved should Vienna decline to make arrangements about them beforehand, not only in relation to principle, but to practice, i.e. in concrete cases. Buol did not altogether reject this view, and declared himself ready to discuss the questions alluded to, one after the other, with Bismarck in subsequent conference. His offer, however, came to nothing. They then touched upon the commercial-political question, and Bismarck gave Count Buol to understand that Prussia desired that question to be dealt with and solved in accordance with material rather than political considerations. The history of the past ten years, he observed, had proved that the Customs' Union did not constitute a decisive basis of political influence. Prussia was neither legally bound nor constrained by necessity to fall in with the demands of Austria or the conditions of the Darmstadt Coalition. She was simply prompted by Federal good will and political considerations to display an obliging disposition towards her Confederates, and exacted from them no equivalent for her amicable endeavours to please them. She wished to conclude a commercial treaty with Austria, such as might bring about a still closer *rapprochement* and enable both contracting parties to acquire experience by which they might appraise the practical consequences of relations still more intimate.

"Prussia," he continued, "does not feel justified in making experiments with the material well-being of her subjects upon unknown ground. She therefore requires that the question of a Customs' Union shall be treated as an open one, not at present to be answered affirmatively or negatively. The right of imposing conditions in an issue which is actually *meræ facultatis*, as far as we are concerned, belongs to us, not to the other party; and if you reject our request to comply with our demands in part and to leave the decision open with regard to the rest, preferring to exact the whole of your own demand, we opine that the fulfilment of Austria's wishes will not be advanced thereby."

Buol replied as follows:—"Austria cannot allow herself to be regarded by Germany as a foreign power with which a Commercial Treaty may be concluded as with an alien country; nor would such a treaty be of any value to the Imperial Cabinet unless it recognised, expressly and officially, the Customs' Union and amalgamation of all Germany's interests as the aim of common policy. The consequence of Prussia's refusal even to discuss the Austrian proposals, will be Prussia's exclusion from the Customs' Union, which will manage to exist without her. A large proportion of the German States manifest a lively conviction of the benefits to be derived from the Customs' Union, Austria cannot call upon her Confederates to abstain from representing their interests, identical with those of the Empire, and will never depart from the basis thitherto agreed upon between them without having previously come to an understanding with them. It is not possible to regard this question exclusively as a material one, for it has its political side, inseparable though not predominant. Austria in this matter, is contending on behalf of her legitimate influence in Germany, and should Prussia stand alone at the head of a Customs' Union embracing the whole of Germany,

many people will become apprehensive that the agitations of late years in favour of German Unity may recommence."

Buol's chief arguments consisted of references to Prussia's duty towards Germany, and complaints of the unfriendliness displayed by her towards kindred States. Bismarck rejoined that of late years Prussia had found doing her duty to Germany a thankless business, and was resolved to regulate her own financial and economic affairs in a practical manner, gladly keeping a door open for such of her Confederates as might be alive to their parity of interests with her, but by no means touting for their entrance by concessions lying outside the line she had laid down for herself.

With respect to his audience of Kaiser Francis Joseph, Bismarck reported to the King that the Emperor had observed, "It would always be his eager endeavour to preserve and improve, in the sense indicated in the King's letter, the close and friendly relations fortunately obtaining between both countries. If, from time to time, both Cabinets should differ in opinion upon individual questions relating to material interests, that should not hinder Prussia and Austria from going hand in hand upon the remaining political *terrain*." With respect to the Customs question, the Emperor deemed it his duty to adhere to the programme of Customs' Unity, "being convinced that nothing but an amalgamation of material interests could possibly achieve that measure of consolidation required by Germany as a guarantee of her internal safety and of her position as an European Power." So long as the King of Prussia should continue not to share this view, the Emperor would at least expect, "that the efforts made on either side to invest the Federal Diet with greater power and authority in Germany than it had theretofore possessed would obtain complete success through the concordant attitude of both the Great Powers." The Emperor further

remarked that Count Buol would again confer with Prussia's representative on questions of Federal Law; and it might be hoped that by this means an agreement *in re* the Customs matter might be arrived at." Bismarck replied that his Sovereign had commanded him to repeat verbally, "that the consolidation and further development of a close alliance between both Courts was not only recognised by the King as a personal requirement but—now even more than ever—as a political necessity; and that His Prussian Majesty was ready to do everything compatible with Prussia's situation, to meet the Emperor's wishes." Bismarck then touched upon the Customs' question, explained the Prussian Government's views thereanent, and pointed out that "all which is at present practically feasible in the way of fulfilling the Imperial Government's desires consists in Prussia's willingness to conclude—immediately after the renewed recognition of the Zollverein—a commercial treaty with Austria which should furnish both Powers with experiences still lacking to them, by which they might be enabled to come to a definite decision with respect to the possibility of a Customs' Union." The Emperor listened attentively to this statement, put some questions to Bismarck upon the subject, spoke a few gracious words to him, and then changed the topic of conversation.

Bismarck's mission was unsuccessful. Later on a sort of compromise was arranged with respect to the Customs question. On February 19th, 1853, Prussia and Austria signed a Commercial and Customs' Treaty, to be valid for twelve years; and on April 4, at the Berlin Customs' Conference, the Plenipotentaries of all the States thitherto belonging to the Customs' Union, as well as those constituting the Duties' Union, signed Treaties recording the renewal of the former (*Zollverein*), the addition thereto of the latter

(*Steuerverein*) and the adhesion of both to the Treaty concluded between Prussia and Austria. But the behaviour in the Confederation of the Vienna politicians towards Prussia remained unaltered. Buol carried on Schwarzenberg's "method," of domineering over Prussia by means of a philo-Austrian majority in the Federal Assembly—less vigorously and intelligently, it is true, but with the same instruments, and to the same ends. As before, Bismarck found himself compelled to resist every contestable extension of the Confederation's powers and jurisdiction, and, in the Assembly of Envoys, to weaken and repel Austria's influence by every means at his disposal. Discussions respecting the competency of the presidential authority took place almost without intermission.

There was no functional presidency. The representative of Austria occupied by right the honorary position of Chairman during the conferences, and formally conducted business. As his post was a permanent one it had become practically invested with a certain amount of influence. This had been the case at a time when Prussia being on good terms with Austria, was able to pass it over in silence; but when Austrian policy became distinctly anti-Prussian, Bismarck was obliged to remonstrate with more or less energy against certain encroachments perpetrated by his presiding colleague. This was particularly the case in the time of Thun's successor, the pathetic, insidious and untruthful Prokesch-Osten, when Bismarck expressly protested against the disgraceful circumstance that the Federal Chancery and its officials regarded themselves as exclusively Austrian institutions and were treated as such. He also severely criticised the president's arbitrary manner of conducting business, and ultimately proposed and carried through a fundamental alteration of the regulations of the Federal Diet.

All this criticism and opposition at times looked like petty cavilling; but serious considerations were in the background. Bismarck's tactics consisted not so much in defending the interests of Prussia against Austria as in vindicating the rights of the entire Assembly against its Presidency. Hereby he won the sympathies of many a colleague, even amongst those who habitually favoured Austria. But although these gentlemen gratefully squeezed his hand in private, glancing at him significantly the while, they seldom ventured to lend him the support of their votes at a division; for they were afraid of Austria's vengeance upon their countries, and of prejudice to their own personal interests. This being the case, Bismarck again and again repeated his advice to the Prussian Government to pay the Austrians out in kind, and to hinder the petty States from further acts of molestation by returning them evil for evil.

When the Federal Diet was first resuscitated it turned its attention to putting down all the surviving extravagances of the 1848 revolutionary agitation. To this end a "Political Committee" was elected, which at once proposed to draw up Federal decrees for the prevention of abuses of liberty of the press, and even before promulgating such decrees, to exhort the several Governments to enforce a strict police supervision upon the press. This proposal was agreed to; but as soon as the text of the decrees themselves came under discussion there was an end to the Assembly's unanimity. Bismarck was the Revolution's inveterate foe, truly, but even more important than its suppression appeared to him the duty of saving Prussia from falling under Austrian tutelage through the agency of the Federal Diet; and so he unremittingly opposed the draft of a detailed Federal Press-Law which it was proposed to introduce into all the German States. It was his desire that the Diet should only lay down

such general principles in relation to the repression of press-abuses, as might be acceptable to the Prussian Legislature. He took up similar ground in 1853, when the supervision and restriction of club-life came before the Diet, and energetically defended the existing Prussian laws against the encroachments proposed by the majority of the Diet under Austrian influence.

In view of her insecure relations with Austria and the Central States and the former's steadfast endeavours to stunt the independence of Prussian policy, Prussia found it absolutely necessary, as far as was in her power, to prevent the Bund from dealing with European questions, and also to carefully avoid any collision between herself and the other Great Powers. It was upon this account that Bismarck opposed Baden's proposal to punish Switzerland for her behaviour in the refugee question by occupying her cis Rhenane territories with Federal troops. He also induced Prokesch to omit from his speech to the Federal Assembly, advocating an increase of the Confederation's armaments, a passage in which France was pointed out in very offensive terms as the only Power likely to disturb the peace of Europe. Of exceptionally great moment was his view of the attitude imposed upon Prussia and the rest of non-Austrian Germany by the breaking out of the Crimean War, and by the action of the Vienna Cabinet during the several phases of that struggle between three Great Powers. So was his influence upon Prussian policy throughout the crisis in question. That he practically directed that policy—which was vehemently contested by the Liberals at the time—may be gathered from many of his private letters to Manteuffel, in which he justifies it by exhaustive exponence of its motives and ends.

In 1853 Czar Nicholas believed himself capable of making a great stride towards the solution of the Eastern Question. With his aid the Revolution had been over-

powered in Central Europe; he looked upon Prussia and Austria as his vassals; he deemed England (under the Aberdeen Ministry) indisposed, and France impotent, to thwart his plans; Turkey he regarded as a "sick man" approaching dissolution. His notion was to sever the Danubian Principalities as well as Bulgaria and Servia from the Ottoman Empire, and to convert them into States under a Russian hegemony. When England refused her consent to a partition with Turkey (her share of which would have been Egypt and Candia) the Czar sent Prince Mentschikoff to Constantinople to demand the conclusion of a treaty according to Russia the protectorate over all orthodox Christians in Turkey. Upon the Porte rejecting this demand a Russian army entered the Danubian Principalities in order to hold them in pawn for the satisfaction of the Czar's claim. Upon this, in July 1853, the Envoys of the four other Great powers assembled at Vienna in conference, and made an unsuccessful attempt at mediation. The Sultan then declared war upon Russia, and (March 12, 1854) the Western Powers followed his example, Austria and Prussia, however, restricting themselves for the time being to summoning Russia (April 20, 1854) to evacuate the Principalities and to declaring that they would regard as a *casus belli* the incorporation of those provinces in the Russian Empire. This proceeding was not to the taste of the German Central States. They recommended a more prudent attitude towards Russia, upon grounds set forth as follows by Bismarck in a letter (April 26) to Manteuffel:—"They fear the expenses and calamities of war in general, and in particular that they themselves, at its close, may figure as objects to be dealt with by the Powers, instead of sharers in the profits. Hence I believe myself justified in assuming that, during each and every phase of the ap-

proaching complications, they will timely range themselves on the winning side, if the latter accord to them any kind of guarantee for the maintenance of the petty German Princes' formal independence. They would have found all they wanted in an alliance of conservative tendencies between Prussia, Austria and Russia. Not without inward reluctance would they join a League of the four Western Powers against Russia, because—although they would be on the stronger side—such a League would offer them a weaker guarantee of the *status quo* of their existence, in the ordinary course of events. In such a case, however, they would closely watch the action of France, and on the first symptom of a *rapprochement* between France and Russia, would go any length in order not to be excluded from a Franco-Russian League. Simultaneously with a rupture between Russia and the two German Great Powers, France would find herself in a position to take possession of the hegemony over all the other German States—that is, at the very moment at which she could and would come to an understanding with Russia." In a letter of April 27, he remarked "The 20th of April has disappointed the expectations of the German States, and discredited Prussia with them, for they see that Austria is her master. The mouths of the Danube are of little interest to Germany."

Partly in deference to the above views, Prussia subsequently did her best to avoid a rupture with Russia. But the Central States took measures to impress their objects and aims in the matter upon the attention of both German Great Powers. Under the leadership of Bavaria and Saxony they assembled, in the persons of their plenipotentiaries, at Bamberg, and addressed an "Identical Note" to the Courts of Berlin and Vienna, claiming for the German Confederation, as a first-class European power, a voice in the settle-

ment of the Eastern Question. This step proved abortive, however, and when Prussia and Austria laid their "April Treaty" before the Federal Diet all the members of the Bund, with the exception of Mecklenburg, agreed to the policy therein set forth.

Prussia, at that time, had reason to fear that Austria meant to go farther than the Berlin Government wished to go. Her apprehensions are explained in Bismarck's report of July 25, 1854. "The opportunity for acquisition is favourable to Austria. The Alliance ('April Treaty') affords a sort of insurance against mishaps; in addition, the conviction prevails that Prussia and Germany will deem it necessary, in their own interests, to safeguard Austria, however objectionable her policy may be to them. Nothing but the extinction of this unwarrantable conviction can possibly hinder the Vienna Cabinet from wilfully picking a quarrel with Russia. We cannot place much reliance upon the Central States; but we can at least regain that measure of their confidence which we possessed before 1848. Just now they are anti-French, with the exception, perhaps, of Darmstadt. Nevertheless, steadfast pressure on them, exercised by Prussia and Austria, may soon awaken in them the desire to take France's part on their own account, instead of doing so under the tutelage of the two German Powers. It will come to that ultimately, unless their Governments find Prussia ready to back them up and to represent with vigour *real* German interests—not those so called by Austria. Although I do not unconditionally rely upon a durable good-feeling towards us on the part of the Bamberg Leaguers, I fear that their sentiments for us must be regarded as teeming with true devotion in comparison to those which fill the hearts of Count Buol, Bach, and other disciples of Schwarzenberg's political doctrines, leagued with the Ultramontanists. The system of Germanising

centralisation now practised in Austria has need, for the attainment of its objects, of a livelier organic connection with a robuster hegemony in Germany. Ultramontane efforts just now go hand in hand with those of the Vienna Cabinet. Prussia's powerful position in Germany is the hardest and heaviest stumbling-block to both; its importance diminishes in proportion to the increase of the difference between Prussia's and Austria's respective physical forces, as that difference comes to resemble the contrast between the powers of Prussia and Bavaria . . . Therefore, putting aside all other considerations connected with the Eastern question, we can only consent to an Austrian territorial increment if we obtain at least as considerable an augmentation of territory as that accorded to the Empire. Should Austria go to war with Russia she will not be able for any length of time to refrain from participation in the projects entertained by the Western Powers with respect to a restoration of Poland. Hitherto those projects have never been honourably scouted in London and Paris, and will sooner or later, be brought forward resolutely as the only means of effecting a permanent curtailment of Russia's power. Austria's interests are less adverse to the restoration of Poland than those of Prussia or Russia; they are, indeed, scarcely of such moment as to induce Austria, after having broken with Russia, to fall out with the Western Powers. I am of opinion that, had Austria to choose between Galicia and the Principalities, she would select the latter, which are more accessible to the German language and administration than are the Polish provinces; their population, moreover, is inoffensive; they are susceptible of ample development, and, geographically as well as commercially, suit Austria a great deal better than Galicia, which is stuck on to the Empire outside the Carpathians, and, with its open frontiers, is at the mercy alike

of Russia and of Polish revolutions. The dangers to which Hungary's tranquillity would be exposed by the vicinity of Poland would be counterbalanced by the plentiful recruitment of elements hostile to the Magyars—i.e. Serbs and Roumanians. Furthermore, the restoration of Poland offers the following advantages to the Austrian "system": 1. Prussia would be weakened and held in check. 2. The perils of Panslavism would vanish as soon as there should exist two powerful Slav States differing in religion and nationality. 3. There would be another important Roman-Catholic State in Europe. 4. Poland, restored by Austria's aid, would obviously become the latter's steadfast ally. 5. The restoration of Poland affords to Austria, probably, the only lasting guarantee against Russia's vengeance whenever the Italian question shall bring about a struggle between Austria and France, or Austria shall get into trouble of any sort. If the worst came to the worst the Vienna Cabinet could fall back upon the expedient of re-allotting Poland, without giving up the Danubian Principalities. I do not go so far as to assert that Austria, of her own free will, will propose the restoration of Poland. But if the Western Powers urge it upon her seriously she will certainly not prove inflexible, it being of course understood that the Principalities be offered to her in compensation."

The policy of Prussia was mainly guided by these considerations, even in the subsequent development of affairs. Austria, however, leant more and more towards the Western Powers, strove to come to terms with them on her own account, entertained the project of going to war with Russia in real earnest, and left no stone unturned to obtain the aid of Prussia and the other German States in that enterprise. On June 14th she concluded a treaty with the Porte authorising the occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia by

her troops, and the Austrians marched into those provinces towards the end of July, as soon as the Russians had withdrawn from them. Before the Western Powers attacked Russia upon her own soil, diplomacy had made considerable efforts to stay the gigantic struggle and give matters a peaceful turn. After many fruitless consultations and propositions the Western Powers at last (July 22nd) propounded four points, to serve as the basis of all further negotiations: 1. Abolition of the Russian Protectorate in Moldavia, Wallachia and Servia. 2. Absolute freedom of navigation on the Danube. 3. Revision of the older treaties concerning the Black Sea, and effacement therefrom of Russian preponderance. 4. Rejection of any special Protectorate over the Christians of the Ottoman Empire, and establishment of a system of protection to be practised in common by all the Great Powers. Austria and Prussia supported these demands upon Russia. When Russia rejected them, Austria reinforced her army in Transylvania, and stationed another army upon the Russo-Galician frontier. Prussia appeared practically satisfied by the retreat of the Russians across the Pruth, and made no warlike dispositions. The majority of the Federal States followed her example. The Berlin Cabinet, however, did not take Russia's part decisively, but continued to make representations at Petersburg in the sense of the Four Points. There, however, the custom had long prevailed of assuming the right to "speak the last word" in questions touching German politics, of giving advice to Berlin in the Mentor style, of putting forward unjustifiable claims, and of occasionally holding out threats; so Count Nesselrode, the Czar's Foreign Minister thought fit to maintain a haughty tone. In a despatch (Nov. 6) addressed to the Russian Ambassador in Vienna and referring to "the split between the two

neighbour Powers," and to "the weakness of the German Confederation," he declared that Russia would listen to peace proposals, in order not to imperil the existence of the Bund, but, in exchange, counted upon the lasting neutrality of Germany. Manteuffel repelled this insinuation. Austria then (Dec. 2, 1854) concluded a formal offensive and defensive Alliance with the Western Powers.

To the period thus roughly sketched belong many highly characteristic utterances of Bismarck, addressed to the Berlin diplomatists. The King of the Belgians had observed to Count Hatzfeldt, the Prussian Envoy in Paris (during a visit of the latter to Brussels), that "Prussia must go with Austria, even if she had to sacrifice something of her self-love." Both Powers united, with their 700,000 soldiers, could look forward to any and every eventuality with confidence. On the other hand, Prussia alone could not long sustain a struggle against France, the latter being allied with England. To seek support from the second-rate German States would be labour in vain; they would hang together in a negative attitude, and invariably keep out of the way whenever called upon to act. For Prussia to attack France would be dangerous, perhaps fatal, to the former, and probably lead to the loss of the Rhenish provinces, as England would assuredly stick to her present ally. A Prussian defensive war against France would be quite another thing.

Manteuffel made Bismarck acquainted with these observations, and the latter wrote to him (August 25) on the subject: "This is the very same sagacity with which the King has at all times recognised the true interest of Belgium and the House of Coburg. But I doubt that an essay on Prussian policy by King Leopold would be couched in terms similar to those quoted by your Excellency if His Majesty were more closely connected with Prussia than

with Belgium. It is very certain that the union of Prussia and Austria (even if purchased by the former still more dearly than *au prix de quelques sacrifices d'amour propre*) constitutes one of the most material elements of Belgium's security, particularly since the relations of Belgium to Austria, prescribed by history and confession, have been revivified by the marriage of the Belgian Crown-prince to Archduchess Maria Henrietta. If there is to be a war, Belgium can only desire that it may be restricted to the Russo-German frontier, far distant from Brussels, whilst she (Belgium), surrounded by four Powers friendly to herself and to one another, shall be preserved from any immediate contact with so serious a complication. . . . Austria's demands have risen, by reason of her trust in Prussia's help, step by step from the evacuation of the Danube Principalities to such a height that hints at a possible cession of Bessarabia, published in the Vienna press, no longer surprise anybody. Russia will only consent to such terms at the close of a great and disastrous war. The chances in favour of revolution which such a war would present to the thrones of Europe, are more numerous than the guarantees of Conservatism which lie in an alliance with Austria—herself in need of aid against the revolutionary movement—and the Western Powers, even if Napoleon's life or reign were sure to last for a considerable time to come. *Therefore I am of opinion that an adhesion on our part to the present Austrian policy can only be of use to us so far as it may restrain Austria from attacking Russia.*"

Upon the attitude of the petty German States towards Austria's plans, and upon their view of the situation in general, Bismarck reported to his chief (August 26): "None of my colleagues doubt that Austria even now—although Russia has evacuated the Principalities—is bent upon obtaining such a hold upon Germany's forces that they may

be induced to engage in an Austrian war of conquest. The Central States are by no means disposed to adopt a policy so unfruitful and perilous, as far as they are concerned—especially as long as it shall continue to be directed wilfully by Count Buol, in whose capacity and prudence no one places the least confidence. It were unjust to accuse the Bamberg Leaguers of having from the first turned their eyes towards France in this crisis; what they really wanted was an independent German policy, in connection with which they would have as much as possible to say. When they saw that the two Great Powers would not have this, they hoped, by hanging on to Prussia, at least to keep themselves out of a war in which there was no prospect of gain either to us or to them, whilst its perils were quite incalculable. It is not every one of my colleagues who has an opinion of his own; but the more independent of them talk to me confidentially upon the subject pretty much as follows: 'It is Prussia's interest, as well as ours, to keep Austria out of a war with Russia; and if Prussia has the courage to forbid Austria to attack Russia, she is certainly strong enough to do so. But when we see Prussia allowing herself to be led away by so narrow-minded and frivolous a person as Count Buol, who does not even ask for her opinion upon decisive issues, we are bound to look after our own safety. If both the German Great Powers are to sail with Count Buol for their steersman, it may be confidently predicted that Germany will suffer shipwreck; for the certain consequence of a Prusso-Austrian war with Russia will be a Franco-Russian alliance—which, according to trustworthy rumours, is already in course of preparation, and which Russia, in her need, would purchase at any price. By reason of her internal difficulties Austria is scarcely able to face such a danger; for it will be easy for the French to rouse Italy to revolt, and

for the Russians to stir up either the Græco-Slav or Magyar races. In such a conjuncture Prussia and England would be unable to protect us. If, therefore, the former cannot prevent Austria from going to war, we shall certainly cast in our lot with Austria and France, as long as they stick together, and with France, as soon as she shall separate from Austria and enter into relations with Russia. The duty of self-preservation will not permit us to act otherwise, should Prussia not very soon and very resolutely put forth her undoubted capacity to hinder Austria from making war.'" Bismarck speaks of these views as "natural and reasonable;" and then (the inclination then prevailing at Berlin being more favourable to Austria than he approved of) concluded with the following words: "It is my official duty to acquaint your Excellency with the appreciations thrust upon me in the circle connected with my position here; and, although it does not befit me to even wish to exercise influence upon the decisions of exalted personages, I cannot conceal the anxiety with which I am filled by the confidence of the Austrian organs that Count Buol will succeed in utilising for his own purposes His Majesty the King's friendly disposition to the Bund, and in extorting fresh concessions from Prussia which may inspire the Cabinet of Vienna with the hope of success in its one-sided efforts to drag us after it into an enterprise the eventualities of which will inflict a multiplicity of heavy sacrifices and disasters upon Germany, whilst, at the very best, they will only ensure to Austria results of more than doubtful value."

Compare with the above the closing paragraph of the report addressed by Bismarck to Manteuffel on Dec. 8: "I am not one of those who identify our interests with those of Russia; on the contrary, Russia has done us much wrong, and we can knock the Revolution on the head in

our own country, and in Germany, at least, without Russia's assistance. Although a war with that empire would be a serious matter for us, I should not attempt to say anything against it if it held out the prospect of yielding us a prize worthy of us. But the very notion appals me that we may plunge into a sea of trouble and danger on behalf of Austria, for whose sins the King displays as much tolerance as I only hope God in Heaven will one day shew towards mine."

On Dec. 9 (after the conclusion of the Convention of the 2nd Dec. had been made known) Bismarck wrote privately to Manteuffel: "The rapidity with which Austria's Convention with the Western Powers has followed her agreement with her German Fellow-Confederates, has not exactly served to increase the confidence enjoyed here by Count Buol. The impression is general that Austria is on more intimate terms with the Western Powers—especially with France—than with any German State. Even if Austria's political situation be for the moment so fortunate an one as Herr von Prokesch has depicted it in roseate tints, her policy on the Danube will cause her a terrible headache when she shall recover her sobriety. Let the Western Powers once be convinced that fear (of an Italian onslaught supported by France) is the magic wand with which Austria is to be ruled, and she will soon be not only in their tow, but utterly and immediately dependent upon them. If we should also adopt this policy (which it may be desirable and necessary to do under certain circumstances) I should recommend that we do so by establishing a direct and independent connection with the Western Powers, rather than by appearing in the character of a reserve force, available *ad nutum*, of Austria—herself hampered in her more important decisions. With remarkable self-denial we have offered to Austria the opportunity to take up a policy of her own, supported by

Germany; Austria, however, would rather be dependent upon France than incur any obligation to us; she hopes, moreover, to get more by her dependence than by the other method—she does not even know how much; and finally, she has not the courage, even when backed up by Prussia, and all Germany, to defy French menaces of a rising, etc., in Italy. . . . Arrogance does not permit the Austrians to confess honourably that they stand in need of us and to deal with us accordingly; they prefer trying to circumvent us, in attempting which they commit the gross error of treating political affairs as if they were notarial private business. Treaties between great States are only of value when they ratify the expression of actual interests on either side; and all the clauses and provisions in the world are unavailing, when one of the parties feels itself bested and unfairly treated, to make up for the lack of good will and free, energetic action. . . . If the Convention of the 2nd (which I have not yet seen) be one in which we can join, perhaps a manifestation in the Chamber might be utilized to render our acceptance of that document less bitter to Russia. Should peace be really achieved, it will in my opinion be a great gain to us that thereafter we shall stand better with Russia than before the war, whilst Austria and the Bamberg League will be in bad odour with her. The day of reckoning never fails to arrive, though years may elapse before its dawn." (It arrived in 1866, after Russia's debt to Austria had been increased by the latter's behaviour throughout the Polish insurrection.) "Austria has established herself upon Russia's path as an at present insurmountable barrier; naturally enough the sharpest weapons of Russia's policy will for the future be brought to bear upon that barrier. We can only gain in authority and freedom of action by this change; and it seems to be a very satisfactory result of our hesitant

policy that in the meanwhile the antagonism of Vienna and Petersburg has assumed an angrier and more durable character."

We find Bismarck consistently addressing Manteuffel in this sense, and not without success: "It has rejoiced my heart," he wrote on Dec. 19, "that your Excellency should have answered the questions about our accession to the Treaty (Austria and the Western Powers) and our so-called isolation with cold dignity and without *empressement.* As long as we shall continue to manifest unaffected fearlessness people will respect us and be careful not to menace us. If it were only possible to let Austria know that our patience and brotherly love are not inexhaustible, and that we have not forgotten the road to Moravia, I feel convinced that her fear of us would do more to further the cause of peace than her reliance upon our support actually does."

In view of the Convention above referred to, and of Austria's manifestly warlike disposition, Russia appeared inclined to give way, and Prince Gortchakoff, her Plenipotentiary Extraordinary in Vienna, announced that she would accept, as bases of negotiation, the four points of the Western Powers' declaration of July 22. The interrupted Conference again assembled, but without result, as the Russians did not really mean peace. Prussia drew nearer to Russia, and the Bamberg League adhered to her policy of neutrality, as a counterbalance to Austria's bellicose projects. When Russia collected an army in Volhynia wherewith to threaten Vienna, Austria applied (Dec. 24) to the Federal Diet for the immediate mobilization of the Federal Contingent, demanding that the troops of the 7th and 10th Army Corps should be attached to similar corps of the two Great Powers. But the Central States would only consent to preparations which were far from being a real display of

their fighting forces, and Prussia voted with them. Under these circumstances Austria, whose finances were in a very shaky condition, did not dare to commence hostilities, and adhered to her semi-neutrality.

Concerning this Austrian mobilisation-proposal Bismarck wrote (January 1, 1855) to Manteuffel:—"I do not venture to pronounce whether it be really the Vienna Cabinet's object to drag Prussia into a war of aggression with Russia, or whether Austria still flatters herself with the hope that demonstrative war-preparations, made upon a large scale and supported by Prussia with the same show of earnestness displayed by Austria herself, might suffice to obtain everything she desires from Russia." (Here follow references in detail to former Conventions and Treaties, which I have suppressed as, for the most part, unintelligible to the English reader.—Translator's Note.) "I can only adhere to my conviction, already reported to you, that the most effective means for restoring peace and preserving our influence in Europe, are to be found in the pressure we can put upon Austria, if we choose to do so. Even now I do not think it likely that the war-party will decide the Emperor Francis Joseph's final resolves, if Austria be compelled to incur the risk of being forsaken by Prussia—still less, if it be pointed out in Vienna that Prussia's action might possibly take a hostile turn towards Austria. It is believed, even in Paris and London, that Austria's active co-operation is dependent upon Prussia's decision at the crucial moment; and in my opinion our only prospect of exercising influence upon the resolves of the Western Powers is to let it be clearly understood in Paris and London that the key of Austrian co-operation lies in our hand, and that we are determined, in case of need, to use it fearlessly.- Until this shall be done I cannot doubt that our en

deavours, unaccompanied as they are by either proposals or menaces, will be coldly received by the Western Cabinets. Having made sure of Austria they will not forego that advantage, and estrange Austria, by making separate arrangements with us, unless we either make offers to them surpassing those of Austria, or prove to them that Austria's final decisions depend upon us—not ours on hers. Hitherto the Western Powers have hoped to obtain our co-operation without allowing us to influence their own resolves. They reckon unduly upon the effect of public opinion in Prussia" (where the Liberals were perorating with incurable shortsightedness against Russia, as the foe of Liberalism, and were raving about Britannia's beautiful blue eyes), "and upon the influence of an indefinite anxiety with respect to so-called 'isolation' and to a war with the three contracting parties of December 2. Beyond doubt, in my opinion, our endeavours can only prove successful in influencing the action of those three Powers if our agents in Vienna, Paris and London can awaken the conviction that we are altogether free from anxieties of that description and inexorably resolved to defend our independence and position as a Great Power against every one, if need be, by the most desperate means and exertions. Although it would be unreasonable and dangerous for us to enter into closer relations with Russia than heretofore, I believe that it would strengthen our influence upon the course of events if we hinted to the Western Powers that a *rapprochement* between ourselves and Russia is not beyond the limits of possibility, and to Vienna that circumstances might lead to our becoming more closely connected with the Western Powers than Austria herself is, in virtue of the Treaty of December 2."

In February 1855, it was said that France contemplated

assembling an army on the Upper Rhine, which force—having marched through Baden, Wuertemberg, and Bavaria—should co-operate with the Austrians against Russia. Writing on the subject to Manteuffel, Bismarck observed that it would be better to "level bayonets" than to let the French march through south-west Germany, where such a proceeding would be certain to develope French military rule. He took a cooler view of a French army that should reach Austria by another road. In a letter of his dictation he remarks (February 11): "I should not regard as a misfortune the stationing of French troops in Austria's German provinces, if they were transported thither without touching any other Federal State. The 80,000 Frenchmen who would be in Bohemia could not be on the Rhine; nor would France be any the stronger for such a dispersion of her armies. These troops would be easily got at by our best forces (from the eastern provinces), to which moreover they are in no way equal. Besides, such an arrangement contains the germ of a rupture between France and Austria, sure to accrue if from sixty to eighty thousand Frenchmen—never particularly well-behaved allies—have to be provided for in Austria. Austria's *prestige* in Germany would suffer a heavy blow, accompanied by the deepest distrust. So long, therefore, as Federal rights shall be safeguarded from a hazardous precedent by due notice being given to the Bund by Austria of her intentions, I do not apprehend that it is our business to oppose this step, which, in my opinion, would be the greatest piece of folly committed by Austria for a century past. I do not think she will carry it out until she shall be sure of our consent."

It was stated in June 1855 that Count Buol was once more making up to the Russians; and Bismarck wrote to Manteuffel, on the 17th of that month: "I do not know

whether or not Count Buol has any distinct object in view, as far as his policy is concerned; I scarcely think so, unless it be an instinctive feeling that Austria can make something out of this crisis, and is resolved to profit by it as much or as little as she can without running any great risk. To get rid of the Russians from her southern frontier and to regulate Danube navigation in conformity with Austrian interests constitute a gratifying advantage, but one too inconsiderable to content Austria. If she could have been satisfied with that, she might have obtained it from the Russians with our aid before December 2, without entangling herself in reckless and costly engagements to the Western Powers. Last year Austrian ambition probably aspired to the acquisition of the entire Danube and of a part of the Black Sea coast, and doubtless the Vienna Government has not yet quite given up its hopes with respect to the Danubian Principalities. If it really contemplates secret negociations with Petersburg in order to obtain Russia's recognition by Treaty of the Austrian occupation of those provinces for an indefinite period, we may take it for granted that Austria entertains the definitive intention of building her nest permanently in Moldo-Wallachia."

In the meantime the war upon Russia had been energetically prosecuted by the Western Powers, Turkey and, more recently, Sardinia. After a siege of nearly a year's duration, many severe struggles and enormous sacrifices of human life, Sebastopol fell into the hands of the Allies on September 11, 1855. England was disposed to go on fighting; but the Emperor Napoleon had gathered laurels enough, the new Czar was more peacefully disposed than Nicholas had been, and Austria, as well as Prussia, was extremely anxious to terminate a situation of affairs which might at any moment compel both Powers to take part in

the war. Shortly after the fall of Kars had made it somewhat easier for Czar Alexander to conclude a peace, the Vienna Cabinet sent Prince Esterhazy to Petersburg, who soon came to terms there with Nesselrode respecting a Protocol intended to serve as a basis for peace-negociations. On January 26, 1856, the Sultan accepted twenty-one Articles submitted to him by Austria and the Western Powers (touching the equalisation before the law of Christians and Moslems in the Ottoman Empire, improvements in taxation and legal administration, and other reforms) which were framed with the object of depriving the Russians forever of any pretext for meddling in Turkey's home affairs. These preliminary steps having been taken, a Congress for the settlement of a definitive peace was convoked on February 25, and the Treaty was signed on March 30. As Prussia had taken no part in the war, she at first (presumably at the instance of Austria and England) received no invitation to the Paris Congress. As, however, the Congress might be called upon to alter the Vienna Conventions, guaranteed by Prussia, the latter claimed to have also a voice in the transactions, and her claim was very properly allowed.

We can gather from a private letter written by Bismarck to Count Hatzfeldt, the Prussian Envoy in Paris (February 7) what his opinion was upon these occurrences: "It is no misfortune, either to the Bund or ourselves, that we do not participate in the Conferences; the only result thereof will be that the stipulations agreed to (and which can only be of secondary interest to non-participants in the proceedings) will lack the guarantee of Prussia and the Confederation, and that it will be doubtful, throughout the Conferences, whenever differences of opinion accrue, in which scale the weight of Germany would have been placed . . . We can, therefore, very well put up with being excluded from the

Conferences, but must accommodate to that eventuality our attitude towards Austria's proposal to the Bund. Our position would only become an awkward one were we to take up a stand, here at the Bund, in the way of official votes and declarations manifestly grounded upon the assumption that we should be invited to the Congress, and were then to find the door shut in our faces, after having disclosed what concessions we were inclined to make. Should we resolve to accept the preliminaries and co-operate in their maintenance, we must be certain beforehand that we shall not be denied the opportunity for so doing. For it would be an indignity, to which we could not expose ourselves, that our decisions would assume the character of a memorandum *ad acta*, or by a futile expression of opinion, pronounced by us, as it were, *en qualité d'amateur* . . . . The totality of Confederate States considers itself sufficiently represented if Prussia participates in the Congress, but not by Austria alone, as the latter has interests and obligations in the matter of a private nature, having nothing in common with those of Germany. If, therefore, Prussia's participation be ensured, it will be easy to pass (in Frankfort) a resolution satisfactory to Austria; and half-a-dozen Notes respecting the contents of that resolution will make no very great difference to our Most Gracious Sovereign."

Perhaps the most interesting of all the documents of that period is the private letter of Bismarck to Manteuffel, dated April 26, 1856, treating of Prussia's political situation, the prospects of a war in Italy, the probability of a Franco-Russian Alliance, and the necessity of a proximate struggle *à outrance* between the two great German Powers. I select a few salient passages from this comprehensive document.

"Without committing myself to hazardous conjectures as to the probable duration of the new peace, I may call attention to the anxious uneasiness with which, although peace is only just concluded, most of the European Cabinets look forward into the future, as a symptom of the slender confidence that is reposed in recent arrangements. . . . Probably political groups will now be formed, the significance and influence of which will be based on the *arrière pensée* of the possibility of war between certain combinations of alliances. Closer connection between France and Russia in this sense is at present too natural not to be expected. Of all the Great Powers these are the two who, by reason of their geographical position and political aims, exhibit the fewest elements of discord, and whose respective interests are such that they need not inevitably come into collision. Until now the solidity of the Holy Alliance and Czar Nicholas's dislike to the Orleans family have kept Russia and France apart; but the war just terminated was fought without rancour, and served the internal rather than the external requirements of France. Now that the Orleans have been got rid of, that Czar Nicholas is dead, and that the Holy Alliance is broken up, I do not see anything to hinder the natural attraction of these two States to one another." . . .

"In the present state of Russian feeling towards Austria, and seeing how France's pretensions to exercise influence in Italy have increased, it is not probable that Austria will be called upon to figure as the third party to this Alliance, although she would doubtless be glad enough to do so. She will have to take her share of the dangers that will accrue to Europe through the Russo-French partnership, and to avert them by timely sacrifices—perhaps by bartering concessions in Italy for advantages in Germany —or else to contract alliances with a view to self-defence.

I believe she will adopt the former expedient, possibly endeavouring to regain Russia's confidence by a change in the *personnel* of her Ministry. Only in her extremest need will she allow herself to become dependent upon England's support, or ours. . . . She will consider the German party too weak for an ally, and I think she will be in the right. If it could be anticipated that in a future war Prussia, Austria, the German Confederation, and England would combine their forces honestly, concordantly and trustfully, none but a coward could doubt that they would prove victorious. Matters do not stand thus, however. Let us admit that England would stick by us steadfastly, and that—in spite of the French, Russian, American, Danish and Dutch fleets—she would be able to prevent an invasion, to 'keep the seas' victoriously, to protect our coasts on the North Sea and Baltic against hostile fleets and, upon occasion, to harass the French coasts with from 10,000 to 20,000 men. By so doing, she would surpass my expectations. But the Continental war with the land-forces of France and Russia would chiefly fall to the share of Germany. The four last Army-Corps of the Federal army do not possess the fighting efficiency that characterises the troops of a Great Power, and only time could show how many of them would be upon our side. Based upon a Russo-Austro-Prussian Alliance the Confederation would hold together tolerably well, because it would have faith in the eventual success of that League, with or without the Central States ; but in such a questionable case as war eastwards and westwards simultaneously the Princes (*au fur et à mesure* as they happened not to be under the control of our bayonets) would safeguard themselves with neutrality conventions, or even possibly take the field against us."

"Can we at need, defend ourselves against East and West with Austria for our ally, if Sardinia, the Belgian army and a portion of the German Bund should join our Western foe? Were everything as it should be, I should entertain no doubt upon the subject. But the Emperor Francis Joseph is not master of his realms and subjects in the same measure as our most Gracious Sovereign is master of Prussia and the Prussians. Austria is not to be despised for offensive operations; she can dispose of more than 200,000 good troops for service abroad and still retain a sufficient number at home to keep close watch upon her Italians, Magyars and Slavs. But for defensive purposes, if attacked upon her own territory simultaneously from East and West, I consider the Austria of to-day too weak; the first lucky blow struck by her enemies would probably cause the whole artificial edifice of a centralized pen-ink-and paper *régime* built up by Bach and Buol to tumble down like a house of cards. Apart from this danger, there is one still greater; i.e. that the spirit of a Prusso-Austrian Alliance, even at a moment of extreme common peril, would be exactly the reverse of that which renders a League firm and solid. Mutual political mistrust, military and political jealousy, the suspicion of either that the other, if things should go well, would endeavour to baulk his ally of territorial increment by making separate treaties with the enemy and, in the case of a reverse, would exclusively seek to make good terms for himself—all this would prevail between us (Prussia and Austria) now-a-days more violently and detrimentally than it has ever obtained in the worst assorted alliance of past history. . . . From the point of view entertained by the policy of Vienna, Germany is not big enough for us both. As long as a fair arrangement respecting the influence in Germany of each of us shall not

be made and carried out, we shall both continue to plough the same disputed field; and so long will Austria remain the only State in Europe by which we can enduringly lose or gain. . . . For a thousand years, ever since the reign of Charles V., German Dualism has regularly re-settled its mutual relations once a century by a thorough-going internal war; and in this century also that will prove to be the only feasible expedient for arranging matters satisfactorily."

"It is not my intention to directly infer from the above line of reasoning that we should just now frame our policy with a view to bringing about a speedy settlement between ourselves and Austria under conditions as favourable as possible to Prussia. I only desire to express my conviction that *ere long we shall have to fight Austria for our very existence;* it is not in our power to avert that eventuality, for the course of events in Germany can lead to no other result. . . . It is also out of the question that Prussia should push self-denial so far as to risk her own existence (as I believe in a hopeless struggle) to protect the integrity of Austria. . . . If we were to conquer a Franco-Russian Coalition, for what should we have been fighting? For the maintenance of Austria's preponderance in Germany, and for the contemptible Constitution of the German Confederation. We cannot possibly exert our full strength and risk our existence for such poor stakes as these. . . . If it be true, as is stated here, that Austria has already asked Bavaria for a Guarantee Treaty respecting Italy, that she intends to make similar propositions to us, and that Count Buol has visited Hanover and Dresden with the same object in view, I do not believe that it is her fundamental purpose to rally Germany round her and bid defiance to a world in arms, but rather to utilise our assurances and those of others diplomatically in order to extort from

France and, if possible, from Russia, more favourable conditions to an understanding, and at our expense. . . . Should peace be maintained, Austria will display her gratitude for our friendly Federal feeling by keeping us to our word with respect to the solidarity of German interests in order to juggle the Customs' Union out of our hands. If war break out, all the Guarantee Treaties she keeps in her pocket will not prevent her from ranging herself, promptly and decidedly, on the side affording her the likeliest prospect of maintaining that supremacy in Germany which she needs more than ever, now that she has taken to Germanising-Centralisation.

"As there is no danger in sight, Austria cannot possibly imagine that Prussia would feel disposed to join in a Guarantee-Treaty just now . . . In the year 1851 the perils of an influx of revolution from France and Italy were imminent, and a combination of Sovereigns against that danger came to pass which naturally resulted in our Secret Defensive Alliance of May 16, 1851. That situation could only be reproduced were the French Empire to be overthrown. As long as that shall endure there will be no question of keeping off the democrats, but only one of Cabinet Politics, in which Austria's interests do *not* correspond to ours. A treaty for the defence of Austrian Italy, concluded at the present moment, would only act as a premature provocation to France and as a pretext for coolness on the part of Russia towards us, which would be altogether in Austria's interests; and the Vienna Cabinet would take care to make the fact known in Paris and Petersburg, transferring the blame for any indiscretion to our shoulders. But in everything which Austria has the desire or ability to do without us she would not be restrained from action by a Prussian or German Guarantee-Treaty, even were it the

best of its kind. All she did with the 1854 April Treaty was to make a fuss over it in her own interest, to treat us badly and to pursue a policy as double-tongued as it was unwise. But our Guarantee did not prevent her from secretly concluding the December Treaty or from seeking her own advantage in other directions . . . In my opinion our position, as an ally in demand, is a good one, as long as political combinations do not assume an acute aspect, displaying nothing more alarming than diplomatic activity, and as a good understanding with one Power does not entail a rupture with another. But were a Russo-French Alliance, with warlike purposes, to be realised, I opine that we could not join its adversaries; for, if we did so, we should either be beaten, or perhaps victoriously bleed to death *pour les beaux yeux de l'Autrîche et de la Diète.*"

These last words are supplemented by a letter (May 10) in which Bismarck advises Manteuffel to foster good relations with Napoleon so as to keep open the prospect of an alliance with France. We shall meet with the letter in question in our next chapter.

The period of Oriental confusion during which the majority of the German Central and petty States had maintained a certain connection with Prussia, in opposition to Austria, had been calculated to promulgate the error that community of real German interests constituted a bond between Prussia and the States in question. Various experiences had convinced Bismarck that this bond was but a loose one, and that Austria would assuredly revert to her former policy in the Confederation. His views received confirmation upon several occasions, between the years 1856 and 1859. The efforts of the Presidency to prejudice and embarrass, weaken and humiliate Prussia were frequently renewed, and Austria's satellites in the Bund

reassumed the defensive and even offensive attitude towards Prussian requirements and endeavours which they had observed before the war; aye, the Central States carried their disdain of the great North-German Power so far as to refuse to make unimportant concessions to her.

The chief occasions upon which this reprehensible conduct made itself manifest were the following: 1. The Swiss question, which turned upon the liberation of the Royalists who had been overpowered during the Neuenburg outbreak and were kept prisoners by the Helvetian authorities; 2. The affair of the Holstein-Lauenburg Constitution; 3. Beust's proposal to alter the Constitution of the Bund; 4. The construction and garrisoning of the Federal fortresses, concerning which negotiations were carried on in Frankfort with exasperating procrastination and every imaginable sort of intrigue. In the Neuenburg question Bismarck had to complain that Austria only lent a lukewarm support to Prussia's plans, and for some time raised difficulties in the south-western German Courts against the contemplated transit of Prussian troops to Switzerland; which was accounted for to him by the fact that Austria was jealous of Prussia, feeling herself relegated to a secondary position whilst the latter was displaying her strength and laying the foundation of closer relations to Southern Germany and France. With regard to the Holstein-Lauenburg affair he suggested to his Minister (April 14, 1858) the expediency of closing the correspondence between Berlin and Vienna on that subject, remarking: "It is precisely our many years' experience that Austria utilizes every stage of this question to accuse us, to foreign Powers, of being peace-disturbers, and to Germany, of lukewarmness, which was one of the grounds rendering it desirable that we should transfer the negotiations and their

responsibilities from the two Great Powers to the totality of the Confederation." In the matter of the Rastatt garrison, anent which Austria took great pains to induce German States, generally at one with the Berlin Government, to outvote Prussia in the Federal Assembly, Bismarck plainly declared (June 1858) to Count Rechberg, Prokesch's successor, that he would request Manteuffel to draw up a Protocol in the name of Prussia, announcing that "he regarded the Federal Treaties as violated," and that he (Bismarck) "would be compelled until the receipt of further instructions, to refrain from participating in the proceedings of the Federal Assembly."

We cannot enter into the details of this unremitting struggle of Bismarck against the pretensions of Austria and her train-bearers in the Confederation, but will leave it to himself to describe it to us in extracts from his official reports, in a private letter dated March 14, 1858, and in his "Memoir upon the necessity of inaugurating an independent Prusso-German policy," (known in the diplomatic world as "The Little Book,") which is the most comprehensive and valuable production transmitted by him to his Government during his sojourn in Frankfort. It may be regarded as Bismarck's political testament, upon the occasion of his departure from the capital of the Confederation—recapitulating his experiences, and written with a view to informing his successor, Von Usedom, what views the latter should take of Austria and her satellites, and how he should deal with them. This memoir is a chapter of German history, and contains great wealth of sterling State-wisdom. Keenness of perception, logical sequence of thought, profound and comprehensive intelligence, diplomatic adroitness and sound common sense, as well as true patriotism, are revealed in it, and stamp it as a political

document of the highest class. We subjoin a few extracts *in extenso*, chiefly from its second moiety, concluding with a summary of the moral appended by its author to his invaluable work.

"Up to the year 1848 Austria allowed Prussian policy to obtain throughout Germany, exacting (as payment for this concession) Prussia's support on all European questions. In Germany, the Vienna Cabinet contented itself with making sure, as far as it could, that Prussia should only utilise within certain limits the influence accorded to her. To this end the functional sphere of the Confederation was restricted to few and relatively unimportant affairs, whilst the independence and vetoing rights of the individual governments were carefully fostered. Matters upon which Austria and Prussia were not agreed did not come under discussion; a difference of opinion between the two Great Powers was seldom to be found recorded in the Protocols; an open dispute between their representatives in session was something unheard of and to be avoided under all conceivable circumstances as dangerous to the very existence of the Confederation . . . The notion that serious differences of opinion could be brought before the Bund for settlement by voting-majorities was so remote from men's minds that the Vienna Cabinet only sent its Presiding-Envoy to Frankfort at long intervals, and left the representation of Austrian interests in the hands of the Prussian Envoy for months at a stretch . . . Prussia's tenure of the presidency, as well as the long duration of the two governments' undisturbed concord, contributed not a little to imparting a certain predominance to the presidency in the Federal Assembly."

"Since the resuscitation of the Bund in 1851, the proceedings in the Federal Assembly have presented quite another aspect. Prince Schwarzenberg adopted the plan of ac-

quiring for Austria—by the means furnished to him by the existing Federal Constitution—the hegemony over Germany which Prussia had been unable to attain by aid of the *Constituantes* and the attempts theretofore made to achieve German unity. This notion suggested itself after Austria's internal organisation had taken a direction in which lasting success could only be obtained by strengthening the relatively weak German element in the Empire. It would be feasible to carry out this plan if Austria could contrive to make sure of an enduring majority in the Confederation, thereafter enlarging the competency of that body, and if Prussia should lack the will or the power to offer an effective resistance. The moment was an extremely favourable one for putting this conception in practice. Through her intimate relations to Russia, Austria could rely upon that Power's support in her German policy, and had moreover entered into connections with the newly-established French Empire, which, towards the end of Prince Schwarzenberg's life, aroused apprehensions of a close alliance of the three Emperors in opposition to Prussia and England. A large majority of the German Governments, appalled by the revolution, and threatened by its consequences with being compelled to part with a share of their sovereignty to Prussia, inclined readily towards Austria, which was consequently in a position to nominate the Federal Envoys of the Governments convoked in 1850, and of course selected men who were bound to her interests by personal circumstances, present or past. Austria could therefore make certain, for a long time to come, of a majority in the Federal Assembly. . . The jealousy inspired in the greater number of the other German princes by the steady growth of the Royal House of Prussia throughout two centuries influenced them, in this conjuncture, almost as powerfully as their fears

that Prussia would still further increase her might at their cost.

"Austria has various means at her disposal for the maintenance and furtherance of these arrangements. . . . In compliance with long-established custom the nobility of southern and central Germany enters the Austrian service in considerable number, having but small prospect of advancement in its native countries, whilst the efforts and qualifications requisite for obtaining moderate promotion are not so arduous or various in Austria as they are in the other Federal States. Austria meets them half way in this particular direction. As soon as the relatives of an influential official, Minister or Envoy, attain the age at which a decision may be arrived at respecting their career, they are beset with brilliant offers emanating from Austrian sources; and it has occurred that lads of sixteen, who have never seen a regiment in their lives, have received officers' commissions without having even asked for them. Once berthed in Austria they serve as hostages for their fathers' pliancy, and also to keep up communications in Austria's interest with their kinsmen in Germany holding positions at Court or in the State service. Of the Envoys to the Federal Diet, for instance, those of Saxony, Darmstadt, Nassau, Brunswick, and another State cleave more closely to Austria than to their own Governments, and serve her to the best of their ability in all their official transactions. . . . The Bavarian is a conscientious man, but his Austrian family connections and Catholicism (which he imports into politics) make him an unwitting sympathiser with Austria. Many of the Ministers and Court Officials in the petty States are similarly situated; and even in Prussia connections of this description exist, which render it easy for Austria to keep herself well-informed upon all 'intimate' occurrences. The importance of such

relations and their practical result make themselves conspicuously manifest in Baden just now. The well-known project of dividing that realm between Austria and Bavaria; Austrian intrigues during its archiepiscopal contest; the sympathies of the Briesgau population for Austria, and the awkward position of the Evangelical dynasty in relation to a preponderant Catholic population, are powerful causes of distrust, as far as Austria is concerned, whilst the vigorous assistance rendered to Baden by Prussia against the revolutionists, and the near relationship of the Prussian and Baden reigning families should justify a favourable disposition towards Prussia on the part of Baden. None the less for that, however, has it proved feasible for the Austrian sympathisers who personally surround the Grand Duke, combined with the influence exercised by the Austrian Herr von Meysenbug upon his Baden brother, and with ultramontane machinations, to make Baden's policy dependent upon that of Austria.

"Whenever personal relations of this class are lacking, Austria finds means to create them. She rewards her friends with the same persistence as that which she displays in injuring and getting rid of persons who oppose her. The circumstance that an Envoy permits himself to address reports to his Government without fear of or consideration for Austria, suffices to ensure his persecution. Austria's agents treat him discourteously, endeavour to irritate him, and carefully rake up everything that they can urge against him to his Government, in order to undermine his position. . . . If an Envoy of this sort is not to be pitched off his saddle, because his Minister protects him, the Vienna Cabinet attacks the Minister himself, and strives to embitter his independence of action and his desire to serve nobody but his own Sovereign. All existing dissatisfactions, even those

of the persecuted Minister's subordinates, are summoned to the fray; and the approved certainty that absolute discretion and subtle ingenuity will characterise Austrian intrigues, leads many a man to lend himself to transactions which are closely akin to high treason."

"In all German States the Vienna Cabinet can count upon every assistance of which the political leaders of the Catholic Church can dispose. Even where the bulk of the Catholic population has no grounds for dissatisfaction with its government, the intellectual leaders of Catholic policy are hostile to the Protestant *régime*, and ready to promote the interests of Austria by means of their influence upon the State and people. In all Catholic Parliamentary Oppositions, a leaning towards Austria manifests itself from time to time, revealing her power of putting pressure upon Catholic members, to the extent of inducing them to take action against the government of their own country. The Ultramontane press fights Austria's battles with reinvigorated energy since the conclusion of the Concordat; but still more powerful is the press influence which Austria has purchased with hard cash. Very soon after order had been restored in the Empire, Prince Schwarzenberg set aside much larger sums for the representatives of Austrian policy in the European—and particularly in the German—press than had thitherto been expended in that direction. It has been conclusively proved by Herr von Prokesch's lost papers (they were discovered in an old desk that he sold, and amongst them were drafts of vehemently anti-monarchical newspaper articles, in his handwriting, which had theretofore been believed to have emanated from the Democratic camp) that Austria 'waited upon' the editors of German papers vicariously, in the persons of Messrs. Hock, Lakenbacher and other journalistic bagmen, and entered into agreements

with them, in virtue of which some of them sold themselves out-and-out to Austria, whilst others contracted to insert (in consideration of a yearly subvention, or of so much per article) communications supplied to them by numerous and often highly talented writers, paid by Austria, and gathered together in a special official department called the Press Bureau. The task which these journals are required to perform is to represent Austria as the exclusive representative of German unity and interests, and to point out that Austria alone has the power and mission to realise the better and more wholesome of the ideas that agitated the people during the Revolution, utilising the Confederation, as a Constitutional implement, for that purpose.

"Moreover, the sympathies of the majority of manufacturers and financiers throughout Germany (especially in the South and West) are Austrian, inasmuch as persons of these classes make large profits out of Austria in various ways, or expect to do so from her Customs system. It is precisely one of the Empire's greatest weaknesses—her finances—that constitutes her most fruitful source of political influence. Capitalists hang on to Austria as a doctor does to a patient who pays him well. The disproportionate largeness of the Austrian National Debt renders the number of Austrian stock-holders very great, for the high interest yielded by Austrian State securities (averaging from six to seven per cent. by reason of their low quotations) tempts people to invest capital therein—the more so as Vienna spares no pains to obtain and keep open a market for her stock abroad. Every facility is conceded to foreign holders for drawing their full interest; whereas a foreign holder of Prussian State securities is exposed, for lack of similar arrangements, to all sorts of deductions, losses and botherations, in order to encash his interest. By her adaptability

and high interest, Austria more than counterbalances the insecurity of her National Debt as compared to that of Prussia, greatly to her advantage; for in the first place her home deficiencies, in the matter of capital, are supplied from abroad, and secondly (which is of far greater importance), every holder of Austrian Government Stock becomes a political supporter of Austria, in proportion to the measure in which his property is dependent upon the well-being, prosperity and (consequently) credit of the Empire. The Frankfort financial houses entrusted with the payment of Austrian interest are in a position to testify to the solidity of this foundation for Austrian sympathies abroad, knowing as they do that the administrators of so many Princes' private fortunes have been moved to invest largely in Métalliques or in the National Loan by the high interest yielded by those securities."

"Examples are by no means rare that Austria has pulled all the wires of her influence in order to break down a German Minister's resistance to her. With many gentlemen of this class the feeling of duty and independence is so feeble that it readily makes way for a keen appreciation of their own interests; and a comprehensive glance at Austria's means of attack suffices to convince them that the best thing they can do is to comply with Vienna's wishes. Others belong to the Austrian camp from the very first, and are under no compulsion. Messrs. von der Pfordten and von Beust, however, have made more than one attempt to emancipate themselves, and have suffered, during the past few years, so many insults and humiliations from Vienna that they personally entertain the bitterest feelings towards Count Buol. The Wuertemberg Minister, von Huegel, had to bear with various unpleasantnesses in Vienna, shortly before his nomination; Austria had demanded his recall

thence, and during the early days of his tenure of office he manifested violent irritation against Austria and her Ministers. In spite of all this, not one of these three Ministers ever dared to oppose the policy of Austria, even when they personally condemned it, and spoke pretty openly of Count Buol as an incapable but dangerous man who was bound to destroy the Confederation and lead Germany to her ruin."

"Every German State is more or less concerned with the Bund, and not a few find themselves from time to time dependent upon Federal Decrees with respect to their own most important domestic questions. It is then that the mighty influence of the Presidency, and that the majorities packed by Austria become instruments of punishment or reward, according to the previous behaviour towards Austria of the State whose affairs happen to be under consideration. Hanover, Wuertemberg, Electoral Hesse, Oldenburg and Lippe, have undergone experiences of this sort within the last few years; and Austria has taken great pains to keep their wounds open as long as possible."

"By the intelligent utilisation of all these various mechanisms, Austrian influence upon the Governments of the central and minor Federal States is steadfastly maintained. A remarkably striking proof of its indestructibility is afforded by the circumstance that it suffered no appreciable minishment through the conduct of the Vienna Cabinet during the Oriental crisis, or through the treatment then accorded to the Federal Governments by Count Buol. At that time the Imperial Minister behaved to the German States as if they had been Austria's vassals, instead of her Confederates; in order to coerce them into joining her, he threatened them (not only directly, but through foreign Powers) with the occupation of their territories by French troops. . . . The

Minister von Huegel (who is now become a firm adherent to Austria) related when he took office that Count Buol—in answer to certain modest counter-representations advanced by him—had told him 'the German Governments must get accustomed to the fact that Austria alone had a right to have a foreign policy; it would be advisable for Wuertemberg to keep that fact steadily in view; the sooner Wuertemberg did so, the better for her!' On the same occasion Count Buol observed to the Saxon Envoy, von Kœnneritz, that Austria would squeeze the smaller States until Herr von Beust should have no breath left for contradiction. In her Secret Circular Despatch, Austria declared to all the German Governments that she would not hesitate to break up the Confederation in order to carry out her policy, and invited them (each one separately) to contract an independent and special war-alliance with her, in controversion of the Federal Decrees; the result of which alliance was to be that each State entering into it would obtain—in proportion to the strength of the armed force it should place at the Austrian Emperor's disposal—advantages which could only be accorded to it at the cost of such members of the German Confederation as should abstain from concluding the alliance in question. If Prussia, in analogous circumstances, had made the mildest attempt at treating the German Confederates in this manner, the indignation of the Central States at our unconstitutional, arbitrary, and violent separatism would have endured to the present day; whereas Austria has long since regained her influence upon the Governments and statesmen whom she insulted and maltreated, and disposes of their votes in the Confederation."

"Having the power to secure majorities in the Federal Assembly, Austria has of course endeavoured to widen the sphere of action of so serviceable an implement, by bringing

within the scope of Federal legislation matters of greater importance than those included therein before 1848, and by doing away with the right of individual States and minorities to protest, in deciding upon such matters, so as to impart increased competency to majority-voting."

"The aspirations of most of the Federal States, prompted by their own respective interests, go hand-in-hand with this endeavour of Austria. Each one of them in the Bund, speaks as loudly and has as much right to vote as Prussia, and, when they hold together, they practically decide the disputes between Austria and Prussia which are so frequently brought before their forum. It is not astonishing that they should take an interest in the consolidation and development of an institution by means of which—with very little trouble—they obtain an increment of political importance. Should the Confederation get into a mess and demand sacrifices at their hands they would secede from it fast enough. As soon as its enemies prove stronger than we, those Federal States whose free will is not hampered by the proximity of other overwhelmingly powerful States will by no means feel called upon to sacrifice their existence to an ideal loyalty to the Bund, but will deem it their duty *avant tout* to secure the maintenance of their respective hereditary dynasties; and their Governments, with fatherly patriotic sagacity, will select the right moment at which their care for the welfare of their subjects will make it their painful but inevitable duty to pass over to the enemy. The prospect of this eventuality does not prevent them, as long as they continue to belong to the Confederation, from exercising all their rights therein and endeavouring to attain, through their connection with the Bund, a maximum of influence and moment. When the territories of his own Sovereign do not afford sufficient scope to the activity of a Southern or Central-German

statesman, he gratifies his ambition by seeking to gain, through the machinery of the Confederation, a considerable, if self-exaggerated influence upon Prussia's seventeen millions, the Bund's forty millions or the Central-European Empire's seventy millions of people. Intelligences of a higher order cannot find contentment within the narrow circumstances of petty States; and Herr von Beust, having been Count Buol's leader during the Dresden Conferences, considers himself capable of managing Germany in partnership with the Imperial Minister, if only the Bund--their tool —had greater command over the individual German Governments."

Up to the above paragraph, the memorial of March, 1858, described the situation into which the German States had been conjured by Schwarzenberg's and Buol's policy. In the following passages the author points out the consequences accruing to Prussia from this disastrous state of affairs, as well as the duties incumbent upon her.

"Not only at Austria's instigation, but in accordance with their own conviction, do the German Governments strive to lessen their independence with relation to the power of the Bund, by enlarging the latter's competency. In this system, however, there is no place for Prussia, as long as she does not choose to renounce the character of an European Great Power. Such a Power, being resolved to base its home and foreign policy upon the foundation of its own strength, can only fall in with a stricter centralisation of the Federal arrangements to the extent of itself acquiring the leadership of the Confederate body, in order to ensure the promulgation of decrees that suit its own policy. It is therefore only natural that Austria, as well as Prussia, should simultaneously endeavour to attain that position in the Bund. But only one of them can have it.

Austria is that one at present, and is well provided with the means of remaining so. As the Confederation is now organised, and so long as its decisions are exclusively dependent upon the German Princes and their ministers, it must be, humanly speaking, impossible for Prussia to deprive Austria of her predominant influence. Austria is quite aware of this, and therefore unhesitatingly rejects every proposal on the part of Prussia to come to some arrangement for the partition or exercise in common of that influence. She knows that Prussia is predestined to be in the minority in the actual Federal Assembly, and consequently believes that, supported by the majority of the other States, she (Austria) can tow Germany along in the wake of her own policy, without, and even in despite of Prussia. . . . This state of things has been aggravated by the circumstance that Austria has appointed to the Presidency of an Assembly in which her own position (as Member and Presiding Power) is a very delicate one, three men, one after another, (Thun, Prokesch and Rechberg) of notorious irritability. Neither the character of the persons entrusted by Austria with the defence of her cause in the Bund against Prussia, or her choice of weapons for the fray has contributed to impart an amicable and conciliatory tone to the Federal proceedings. There has been no lack of attempts at outwitting (such as are prescribe l by the traditions of diplomacy for centuries past), at the perversion of facts, at personal calumniation; even falsifications of documents containing written agreements between the different Governments have been officially brought home to Herr von Prokesch."

"These conflicts in the Confederation commenced immediately after Prussia had rejoined it. Their first pretext had to do with the confirmation of negotiations undertaken without her sanction. Then a majority,

consisting of nearly all the other Governments, was found in readiness to support Austria's unjustifiable pretensions with respect to the Fleet and Liquidation questions. Austria claimed a right to the Fleet, without contributing to its cost; and declined to pay her share of the general liquidation under the pretext that her Italian and Hungarian wars were Federal wars, for which she had a right to be indemnified. Then came the Customs' question, which gave rise to an agitation got up with the object of proving (as appeared in diplomatic documents and newspaper articles) that the Bund alone was to be regarded as the future promoter of public welfare, whilst every Prussian effort in that direction must be stigmatised as particularism, calculated to injure everybody except Prussia herself." (The remainder of this paragraph has been suppressed, as altogether forlorn of interest to English readers.—Translator's Note).

"In the matter of foreign policy the war in the East proved highly instructive as to the Central States' views of Federal conditions and responsibilities. There was scarcely one of them that did not confidentially give the Berlin Cabinet to understand that, should an Austria-French Alliance really come to pass, it could not engage itself to be bound by the prescriptions of Federal Law or by considerations of general Confederate interests, but would be compelled to conform to the requirements of its own individual safety." (During the Eastern crisis, the King of Wuertemberg observed to Bismarck, "After all, my shirt is nearer my skin than my coat is.") "This contrasted curiously with the previous pretensions of the Central States not only to settle Austro-Prussia differences, but to prescribe a 'Foreign Federal Policy,' to which every member of the Confederation—Prussia in particular—would have to give

its adhesion and support." (A few lines are here omitted, for the reason already given above.—Translator's Note.) "With what unhesitating determination the Vienna Cabinet pursues its purposes, is as distinctly manifest upon the field of European politics, as in the proceedings of the Bund. Even in questions not affecting its interests, or in which these latter were identical with those of Prussia, it has spared no exertions to diminish Prussia's prestige, and hamper her policy. Prussia's participation in the Paris Conference—a matter in which the mere *point d'honneur* was the chief consideration for us—was opposed by Austria more persistently than by any other Power, with the object of lowering Prussia in the eyes of Germany by excluding her from the conclave of Great Powers. In the Neuenburg question, Prussia's opponents were Austria's natural enemies; but the desire to prevent Prussia from displaying her military strength in Southern Germany and from arriving at a satisfactory settlement of an issue of honour, proved stronger in Vienna than Austria's dislike to the Swiss Democracy and her apprehension of its possible effect upon Italy. The Vienna Cabinet strove to invoke Federal Decrees against the transit of Prussian troops through Southern Germany, and was aided in this endeavour by Saxony. Austria would unquestionably have obtained a majority in favour of her hostile demonstration against Prussia, had not the influence of France been brought to bear upon the Central States on behalf of Prussia. The Danish question was utilised by Austria (as long as she could do so) as a pretext for reproaching Prussia, in the German press, with lukewarmness, and, to the Cabinets of Europe, with violence.

"There is no prospect that Austria and her Confederates will consent, of their own accord, to change their policy towards Prussia; but, it may be asked, can Prussia, this

being the case, maintain for any length of time, the attitude she has hitherto observed? . . . . Austria can manage to belong to such a Confederation as this, because she disposes of its majority. Prussia does not possess that advantage. That she has not heretofore taken her stand openly against the hostile principles developed *in gremio* of the Bund, but has kept up a seeming of deference to it, is certainly attributable to her consciousness that, as a matter of fact, it is not so easy after all for a corporation of seventeen Federal Envoys to mediatise the monarchy of Frederick the Great. A far more imminent danger is that Prussia should come to a formal rupture with the forces of the Confederation without suffering prejudice to her independence. Federal pliability has its limits; and, in dealing with Austria, each successive concession is the parent of a fresh demand. The moment cannot be far distant, at which Prussia will accuse the Federal majority of overstepping its jurisdiction, and the Federal majority will accuse Prussia of rebellion against valid Federal Decrees. Each, therefore, will arraign the other of a rupture of League. Whenever matters come to that pass, the situation must become so unpleasant, that it would be as well to adopt precautionary measures against it; especially as those measures cannot but strengthen Prussia's independent prestige, as well as her influence upon Germany. She would not, thereby, become untrue to her German mission in any way; she would only free herself from the pressure exercised upon her by her adversaries' fiction that "Federal Diet" and "Germany" are convertible terms, and that Prussia's national (German) feeling is to be appraised by the measure of her submissiveness to the majority of the Federal Assembly. No German State has either the call or the opportunity to put its German

sympathies in practice, independently of the Federal Assembly, to the same extent as Prussia; and in this regard it is readily demonstrable that Prussia is of greater moment to the Central and petty States, than a majority of nine in the Diet is to Prussia. Prussian interests chime in perfectly with those of the Federal countries (except Austria) but not with those of the Federal Governments; and there is in reality nothing more thoroughly German than the development of rightly understood Prussian particular interests. It is just upon this account that these latter are opposed in the Federal Assembly by the majority of the Governments; for the functional existence of thirty-three Governments (without counting Prussia and Austria) is exactly the chief, though legally justified, impediment to Germany's vigorous development. Prussia will only obtain free scope for the fulfilment of her mission when she shall cease to attach any appreciable value to the sympathies of the Central States' Governments. All her efforts to gain them will ever prove fruitless, and any consideration on her part for their wishes or susceptibilities is only so much wasted self-restraint. . . . Prussia's position would perhaps be a better one if the Confederation did not exist at all; those intimate relations to her neighbours, of which she stands in need, could have been formed under her own superintendence. As the Bund, however, exists, and an abuse of its institutions is practised to Prussia's prejudice, it must clearly be Prussia's task, whilst faithfully fulfilling all her indisputable engagements to the Confederation in war and peace-time, to nip in the bud every attempt to augment the powers of the Bund at the expense of any individual State's independence—every attempt, that is, which exceeds the absolute letter of existing treaties. Those who see in Prussia's friendly attitude towards the Bund nothing but utter and abject submission to the will of her

fellow-Leaguers, expressed by their presidency and majority-votes, will doubtless be seriously put out when they find Prussia casting off her trammels, and regulating the measure of her voluntary self-control by the textual contents of the Federal Treaties. But peremptory interests—the only solid foundation for maintainable relations even between German States—will soon compel the malcontents to resign themselves to the inevitable; and those very Governments which now do all they can to outvote Prussia will make up their minds to seek her co-operation as soon as they shall have convinced themselves that her attitude is not the expression of momentary ill-temper, but the result of firm and definitive resolves, based upon a carefully thought-out recognition of her own interests."

"The practical consequences of such an attitude towards the Bund would be that Prussia would thenceforth have nothing to do with any agreements or decisions exacting absolute unanimity, and would frankly treat the first attempt at a majority-vote (unless Constitutionally justified) as a violation of the Federal Constitution, declaring herself to be only so far bound by the latter as it shall be observed by other members of the Bund."

"Opinions may differ as to whether or not a close alliance with Austria be desirable. But experience permits no doubt that pliancy and assurances of friendship are not the means by which Prussia can succeed in living upon endurable, not to mention secure, terms with Austria. Gratitude for favours received, patriotic sympathies—in a word, *feelings* of any description do not guide the policy of Austria. Her interests constrain her to fight against and detract from Prussia's prestige and influence in Germany to the best of her ability, but in case of war or any of the multifarious dangers by which Austria is surrounded becoming im-

minent, she desires to be able to count upon the fullest support on the part of Prussia's armed forces. In this twin necessity lies Prussia's only possibility of coming to a clear and satisfactory arrangement with the Southern German Great Power; she must give Vienna plainly to understand that her support, at a moment of peril to the Empire, will be languid and even doubtful, unless Austria shall observe greater moderation in her German policy, and make terms with Prussia. . . . Hitherto, Prussia's attempts to lead up to better relations with Vienna have only resulted in her being denounced to the Central States as aiming at Dualism. As long as Prussia shall shrink from such denunciations and lay the flattering unction to her soul that she is capable of competing against Austria for the favour of the German Central State Governments, so long will she lack a solid basis whereupon to found an understanding with Austria. As matters stand Prussia's only prospect is—as soon as her eyes shall be fully opened to the inutility of her friendly pliancy towards the Bund and to the fact that she is being tricked and fooled in every direction—to make up her mind to a rupture, perhaps at a moment extremely unfavourable to her."

"Very different would be the mutual relations of the German Great Powers should Prussia resolve to emancipate them from the conventional formula of disingenuous expressions of good-will and re-establish them upon the firm basis of respective interests; which would be done were Prussia to inform Austria that for the future she would limit her adhesion to the Bund (as long as its present Constitution and actual political tendencies of its members should endure) to a strict fulfilment of her incontestable duties; that she would decline to co-operate with the Bund beyond that limit, and to make any concession to the presidency or

majority: that she distinctly refused to enter into any Customs' Union with Austria: that, so long as others should also observe the treaties with equal exactitude, she would march to Austria's assistance with the Federal contingent whenever the *German frontiers* should be attacked; but that any further concession would depend upon Austria's behaviour towards Prussia, and upon the degree of community characterising their political aims. Only by such language as this and by acting up to it can Prussia secure honourable and tenable relations with Austria—possibly even a firm alliance with her; and in this manner moreover, the German Confederation may be saved from the danger of total dissolution with which it is at present threatened by the extravagance of the anti-Prussian Federal policy."

"Proportionately to the decisiveness with which the Prussian Government shall give Austria to understand that Prussia does not regard the Federal Diet as the exclusive organ of German interests, that she is resolved not to merge herself in the majority of the Federal Assembly, and that she will have nothing to do with the Bund beyond fulfilling her treaty-obligations, her outlines will reveal themselves to the eye of Germany in their natural grandeur and importance."

"The leading position occupied by Prussia before 1848 was not due to the favour of the Central States and Federal Assembly, but to the fact that she had gone ahead in every branch of State development—that everything specifically Prussian was recognised by the remaining Federal States as a model, and imitated by them as such. The overthrow of this state of affairs by the Revolution, and the mistrust thereby awakened in the German Governments necessarily resulted in a violent reaction against Prussian influence—

which reaction, as well as the novelty of Austria's appearance in the Federal field as her competitor, render it extremely difficult just now for Prussia to recover her lost ground. Nevertheless, that is the only way to achieve the position which is requisite to her for the fulfilment of her mission as a great State; and in this direction she possesses great advantages over Austria and other German realms. . . . The degree of political liberty held to be admissible without hampering the authority of the Government is much greater in Prussia than in the rest of Germany. Prussia is now able to accord much more elbow-room than heretofore, even with respect to purely political questions, to her Legislature and press—and without risk. Before 1848, under an almost despotic government, she succeeded in placing herself intellectually at the head of Germany, and can do so again, independently of her internal Constitution. It is only necessary that her home affairs should not be in such a condition as to disturb the impression prevailing abroad that all Prussian organs and forces work harmoniously together. If Prussia's actual Constitution be a definitive institution, the steadfast self-reliance of her administration, in accordance with the Legislature, must also be established in such sort that her collective power cannot be broken up by internal frictions; otherwise she will be unable—at least, in time of peace—to make that predominant impression upon Germany which, with unimpaired forces, she is certain to produce. The Royal power reposes upon such solid foundations in Prussia, that the Government can without danger utilise the Legislature's proceedings as a means of influencing German affairs. . . . If Prussia were to allow her German policy, her relations to the Bund, the difficulties she has to contend with in consequence of those relations, and the machinations of her adversaries to be openly discussed, in all proba-

bility a very few sittings of the Prussian Diet would suffice to make an end of the Bund's pretensions to rule by majorities."

"The Federal policy which is precisely and specifically necessary to Prussia can only gain in strength by publicity and frank discussion. In the press, truth will not come to light through the mists conjured up by the mendacity of subsidised newspapers until the material wherewith to expose all the mysteries of the Bund shall be supplied to the Prussian press, with unrestricted liberty to utilise it."

"If Prussia take up a position independent of the Confederation, she will become, by virtue of her intrinsic force, the natural centre of crystallisation for those connections of which her neighbours stand in as urgent need as herself. In such connections she will be backed up by the weight of her greatness and speciality as a purely German State, as well as by the similarity of her requirements and developments to those of the German people at large. The neighbouring Federal States will endeavour to come to an understanding with her for these reasons, as soon as they shall be firmly convinced that Prussia will not agree to any of the more favourable conditions they had theretofore expected to obtain from her through the agency of the Confederation. They will be all the more conciliatory and easy to manage when they shall have recognised that Prussia is resolved to bear, in every respect, with the inconveniences of an isolated position, rather than allow them to dictate laws to her for the regulation of her own behaviour and interests. Those inconveniences, for most of them—particularly for Saxony, Brunswick, both Hesses and Nassau, by reason of their smallness, land-bound situation and frontier conditions—are much harder to endure *à la longue*, than for Prussia, whether

they concern Customs' uniformity, railway-projects, common exchange and trade laws, postal arrangements, paper-currency, banking business or any of the other subjects which the Austrian presidency and the majority-States propose to submit to the Federal Legislature. Hanover alone, thanks to her sea-board and position between Prussia's eastern and western provinces, may advance some claim to consider herself independent of Prussia, compared with the other German States. . . . Being in accord with Hanover, Prussia may carry out any project she may entertain with respect to the territories above mentioned, without any considerable inconvenience to herself; Hanover, therefore, is the only German Central State upon which Prussia's German policy must be brought to bear, energetically and dexterously, unhindered by difficulties or partial failures, so as to gain her good-will and allay her mistrust."

"But, even if Prussia should not succeed in this enterprise, she has much more to hope from the independent exertion of her own strength than from protracted tolerance of her adversaries' Federal policy. In no part of Germany, and in very few foreign States, is the popular feeling of contentment with the Government and of willingness to meet it half way, trustfully and self-sacrificially, so dependent as in Prussia upon the conviction that an independent and dignified position is assured to the country at home and abroad; and the consciousness that Prussia is outweighed in Germany by Austria—that Bavarian, Saxon, Hessian and Wuertemberg majorities can claim to exercise any influence whatsoever upon Prussia against her will—would, even in this epoch of materialism, more certainly stimulate the Prussian people to angry discontent than would the majority of its real or alleged internal grievances; whereas, on the contrary, we know that any gratification of his *amour propre*

with regard to foreign nations renders the typical Prussian readily oblivious of his home-grievances."

Thus closes this remarkable document, the concluding sentences of which have only been convicted of error by subsequent events in this respect:—that the years of conflict (from 1861 to 1866) afforded so many exceptions to the rule therein propounded, viz., "that Prussians forget their own home-grievances, when ruled by a Government whose policy aims at increasing their country's prestige, and making it respected abroad," that the exceptions would seem to have constituted the rule. Prussia's prestige was to be augmented by the reorganisation and strengthening of her army, the object of which measure was plainly perceptible to any healthy vision; it was indisputably heightened by our successes against the Danes and the majority of Petty States in 1864, when it became palpable that a still further and mightier advance was in contemplation. What, however, was at that time the attitude of the large majority of the Lower House towards the Government which desired and had commenced to carry out that project? Did it, in view of gratifying Prussian *amour propre* with regard to foreign nations, forget its home-grievances, and cleave with high-hearted patriotism to the Minister who was striving energetically to vindicate Prussia's rights and interests and to save her from being hectored by Austria, or subjected to the will of a few ill-conditioned petty States? Did the Deputies exhibit any self-sacrificial disposition? Not a bit of it; exactly the reverse in every direction. Parliamentarism, of a sort unknown to the Constitution, was to be introduced; the power of the Lower House was to be augmented; the prerogatives of the Crown were to be curtailed; and, in their anger with the Government, because it would not consent to all this, they hampered and weakened

its action to the utmost of their ability, shamelessly took part against it, and for the Central States and the Duke of Augustenburg—eventually, even for Austria—and broke out into prophecies, of which it was difficult to say whether the unpatriotic feeling or gigantic stupidity that inspired them were the more amazing. Bitter hatred and utter blindness prevailed, prompting abuse and calumniation of the man who was engaged in promoting a genuine Prussian policy; animated by a spirit of pettifoggery and by faith in their democratic *Credo*, men closed their ears to the demands of patriotism; stuck in the mire of pseudo-progress, they assumed a Conservative attitude towards real progress; and the end of it all was that instead of displaying the power and dignity of a Representative Assembly to the spectators of this drama, they only showed its moral and material impotence, and, as far as history was concerned, rendered themselves immortally ridiculous.

True, the gentlemen on the Opposition benches were not genuine Prussians. It was with absolute correctness that one day—after one of Schultz's speeches, as absurd as it was pathetic—Bismarck exclaimed to these wrongheaded, petty and conceited politicians, whose utterances sound nowadays as though they had emanated from lunatics :—"You gainsay Prussian popular spirit, you gainsay the glorious traditions of our history by disavowing Prussia's position as a Great Power, acquired by heavy sacrifices of her people's blood and treasure; you stultify our splendid past by siding with Democracy and the petty States against the Prussian throne. By thus striving to mediatise Prussia under a Federal majority, you are doing the very thing you reproach us with *toto die;* you are setting your party-standpoint above the country's interests; you are saying 'Prussia may exist, after the fashion we prescribe; if not thus, why then she may go to pieces.'"

The quintessence of the "Little Book's" moral is as follows :—Austria derives great advantages from her position as the presidential Power in the Bund, from the fear of her experienced by most of the Federal Governments, and from the dislike of Prussia entertained by these latter. Hence she enjoys a preponderance over Prussia in the Confederation, which preponderance she cleverly and unscrupulously seeks to increase. This state of things will not change of itself or be altered by the most conciliatory behaviour on the part of Prussia, who, therefore, must vary her tactics if she desire to avert serious prejudice. She must forthwith adopt a policy altogether independent of the Confederation—that is, of Austria and her Central-German satellites. She must not allow her actions to be guided by feeling, but by her own well-weighed interests. The Confederation must be rendered innocuous; Prussia's engagements to it, as far as they are legally justified, must be strictly fulfilled; but everything required of her outside the treaties must be refused, or only granted in consideration of equivalent concessions on the part of Austria and the other members of the Confederation. Prussia must not renounce her right to absolute equality with Austria; she must not allow herself to be outvoted in the Bund; she must reject and denounce, as an unjustifiable innovation, the system according validity to the decisions of the majority of the Federal Assemby in all home and foreign questions. Whenever it shall become desirable to establish an understanding with neighbouring German States, Prussia must endeavour to do so independently of the Confederation.

It is worthy of notice that the memorial recommends no tortuous ways and artifices, such as Buol delighted in, but straight roads and fair play. Its programme, however, required completion, which its author supplied in a letter to

Minister von Schleinitz, dated Petersburg, May 12, 1859, *ut sequitur:*—

"The result of my eight years' experiences of official life in Frankfort was the conviction that the Federal institutions of that period fettered Prussia oppressively and, at critical moments, so much so as to imperil her very existence, without affording us the equivalents that Austria derived from them whilst suffering infinitely less restriction than ourselves. . . . We always found the same claim to pliancy on the part of Prussia, put forward by the same compact majority." . . . (A few lines forlorn of actual interest are here omitted. —Translator's Note).

"I am perhaps going too far in expressing the opinion that we should seize every fair opportunity offered to us by our Confederates, to achieve that revision of our relations with the Bund which Prussia needs in order that she may be enabled to get on permanently with the petty German States. I think we ought to accept their challenge readily, and regard it as a step forward towards improvement, not as a misfortune, if the majority in Frankfort should vote some measure in which we may recognise a transgression of its competency, an arbitrary alteration of the Confederation's purpose, or a breach of the Federal Treaties. The more plainly any such violation is made manifest the better. We shall not easily find the state of affairs in Austria, France and Russia again so favourable as now to an amelioration of our position in Germany; besides, our Confederates are doing their best to give us a justifiable opportunity for bettering ourselves without in the least stimulating their arrogance. To my mind, Prussia's connection with the Bund is an infirmity which we shall have to cure sooner or later *ferro et igni*, if we do not apply timely remedies to it at a favourable season of the year."

Ferro et igni. Seven years later it came to pass, and the cure was effected—the cure of Germany as well as of Prussia, which did good to Austria too, indirectly at first, and subsequently through the 1879 Alliance. In 1859 Schleinitz was neither clever nor resolute enough to profit by auspicious circumstances, and Bismarck, to use his own words, was "out in the cold on the Neva." He saw from afar how, at a certain moment, Prussia was on the point of lapsing into the policy of sentiment towards Austria against which he had so emphatically warned her, and how—forgetful of his reiterated counsels—she all but committed a grave error, for which she would have had to pay dearly.

When the Prince-Regent of Prussia had held a conference at Teplitz with the Emperor Francis Joseph (July 25, 1860), and the news had reached Petersburg that Prussia had verbally pledged herself to stand by Austria in case the latter should again be attacked in Italy by France (but, on the other hand, should Austria find herself compelled to take the offensive, she would have to solicit Prussia's consent to her so doing), Bismarck observed, in a letter dated August 22:—"This version of the agreement sounds more unsophisticated than it really is. Austria, being absolutely certain that we shall strike in for Venice, will contrive to provoke a French attack; it is already affirmed that, since the Teplitz affair, she has assumed a bold and defiant attitude in Italy. Since Garibaldi's expedition it has been the policy of Vienna to make matters as unpleasant as possible in Italy, so that when Napoleon shall find it necessary to guard himself against the Italian revolutionists, people shall interfere from every side, and the old state of affairs shall be approximatively restored. This may prove a deceptive calculation, as far as Napoleon is concerned; and, as it seems, it has therefore been abandoned since Teplitz, in the hope that the

same object may be attained in spite of Napoleon. Either way Austria's restless irritability endangers peace."

After Bismarck had been placed at the head of the Prussian Government he took action upon several occasions in the spirit expressed in the second part of the above-quoted memorial. (Here follow several instances thereof, recounted in elaborate detail, and of no essential importance to the main object of the book. They have therefore been suppressed in the English version.—Translator's Note.)

Shortly before the definitive failure of a project for extending the competency of the Bund, submitted by Austrian and the Central States to the Federal Assembly, and rejected on January 22, 1863, by nine votes to seven, Bismarck had taken steps to come to an understanding with Austria on behalf of Prussia alone, by means of conferences with Count Karolyi, the Austrian Ambassador in Berlin to whom (see Circular Despatch of January 24, 1863) he made the following communications :—

"I am convinced that our relations to Austria must unavoidably become better or worse. The Royal Government sincerely wishes that the former alternative may come to pass; but if we continue to observe that Austria steadfastly refrains from any attempt to meet us half-way we shall be compelled to keep the latter alternative in view, and to prepare ourselves for it. During decades prior to 1848 a silent understanding obtained between the two Great Powers, in virtue of which Austria was assured of Prussia's support in European questions, Prussia, on the other hand, exercising an influence throughout Germany that was in no way interfered with by Austria, as the constitution of the Customs Union demonstrated. Under those circumstances the German Confederation rejoiced in a measure of internal unity and external prestige which it has not

enjoyed since that epoch." Bismarck did not point out whose fault it had been that analogous relations had not been established after the revival of the Federal Diet, as his object was to bring about a practical arrangement in time present, not to indulge in recriminations anent time past. So he only referred to the circumstance that Austria had recently and with success exerted her influence in a sense adverse to Prussia precisely in those States with which the latter was specially called upon by her geographical position to cultivate friendly relations. He gave Count Karolyi to understand that "perhaps Austria acquired the sympathies of the Governments of those States in this manner, to the prejudice of the Bund's collective interests; but she certainly estranged from her the sympathies of Prussia. The Imperial Ambassador, upon this, comforted himself with the conviction that both Great Powers would revert to their old alliance, whatever might occur, should Austria find herself engaged in a perilous war."

In this assumption Bismarck recognised "a dangerous error, which, it might be, would only be cleared up at a critical moment and in a manner fraught with calamity to both Cabinets." He therefore entreated the Count to contend against this error in Vienna to the best of his ability, observing that "during the last Italian War Prussia's Alliance had not been so serviceable to Austria as it might have been if, during the previous eight years, both Powers had not been engaged in an energetic struggle upon German territory and for the benefit of others, which circumstance had undermined their mutual confidence. Nevertheless, the effects of former intimacy had been manifest, in that Prussia, instead of taking advantage of Austria's perplexities, had made military preparations to stand by her. But should the old friendly relations not be

renewed and revivified, it would be just as possible that Prussia, in a similar case, would contract an alliance with Austria's enemies, as that the two Great Powers should act loyally and steadfastly together against a common foe. He, Bismarck, at least, would never take it upon himself, under such circumstances, to recommend neutrality to the King. Austria could choose between prosecuting her present anti-Prussian policy, backed up by a Central-State coalition, or entering into an honourable connection with Prussia, as he earnestly hoped she would do.

Count Karolyi replied that, "The Imperial House could not possibly renounce its traditional influence upon the German Governments." Bismarck denied the existence of that influence, pointing out that "from the commencement of the Seven Years' War, Hanover and Hesse had been politically guided by Prussia, and that in Prince Metternich's time those States had been admonished by Vienna, in the interest of the Austro-Prussian understanding, to follow the same leadership; so that the alleged traditions of the Austrian Imperial House only dated as far back as the Schwarzenberg epoch, and the system to which they were attached had not hitherto furthered the consolidation of German alliances to any appreciable extent." He further observed that in 1851, after having conferred repeatedly with Prince Metternich upon this subject, he had hoped "that Austria herself would perceive it to be the purpose of a sagacious policy to obtain for Prussia a position in the Confederation which might make it worth her while to exert her whole strength for objects common to all the German States; instead of which Austria had successfully striven to injure Prussia's position in the German Bund, and to drive her to seek friends elsewhere. Her treatment by the Vienna Cabinet seemed to be prompted by the

assumption that Prussia was more exposed to foreign attacks than any other State, and must consequently put up with inconsiderate behaviour from those States to which she had to look for support. It would therefore be the duty of a Prussian Government, having at heart the interests of its own country and Royal House, to prove the error of that assumption by deeds, should no attention be paid to its words and wishes." (An unimportant paragraph is here omitted.—Translator's Note.)

Finally, the Prussian Minister requested the Austrian Envoy to report the purport of this conversation as exactly as possible to Count Rechberg, then directing the policy of Austria, and expressed his conviction that unreserved frankness was indispensable to any attempt that might be made to repair the damage that had accrued to Austro-Prussian relations.

With respect to the second Conference, which took place on Dec. 13, the Circular Despatch reports :—

"I called upon Count Karolyi in order to direct his attention to the gravity of the situation of affairs at the Bund, and did not conceal from him that any further action of the majority in what we regarded as an unconstitutional direction would render our position untenable; that we consequently foresaw a break-up of the Confederation; that Herr von Usedom had left no doubt as to our views in the minds of Baron von Kuebeck and Baron von der Pfordten, but had received replies from them which excluded any hope of a satisfactory settlement. Under these circumstances, I remarked, a sense of our own dignity did not permit us any longer to avoid the conflict brought about by our adversaries; I pointed out that we should regard the overstepping of the Confederation's competency involved in a majority-vote as a breach of the Federal Treaties, and

should act accordingly; viz.: we should recall the Royal Federal Envoy without nominating a substitute; and I indicated the consequences that must speedily accrue from such a situation, inasmuch as we could no longer recognise the operativeness (in relation to Federal affairs) of an Assembly in which we had ceased to play a part. We should therefore be unable, thenceforth, to permit the Prussian garrisons of Federal fortresses to obey any further orders emanating from the Federal Assembly."

A few days after this conversation the Prussian Foreign Office received the intimation that the Austrian Envoy in Petersburg, Count Thun, would pass through Berlin and talk over the pending difficulty with Bismarck. The following allusion to their interview is contained in the Circular Dispatch:

"When Count Thun arrived here, I received the communications he made to me in the most conciliatory manner, declaring myself ready to arrange the Frankfort difficulties by expedients agreed upon between us . . . Count Thun proposed to bring about a meeting between Count Rechberg and myself for further discussion of the matter." (The Despatch explains in detail why this meeting did not come off, a fact with which the author has already acquainted us in the foregoing chapter.—Translator's Note.)

The answer returned by Vienna to the Circular Despatch was couched in the language of calumniated innocence. It observed that, "The Prussian Cabinet's *exposé de faits* contains unmistakably plain-speaking testimony to the political notions of its author, as well as an embellished description of the occurrences so frequently discussed; a description chiefly consisting of complaints against us and reproaches anent what, in Berlin, is called our 'lack of

consideration.' Our lack of consideration! If our august monarch declines to sacrifice a position which—the outgrowth of centuries of history and hallowed by treaties—belongs to his Crown by right, and corresponds to the might and grandeur of his House, Austria is said to be lacking in the consideration she owes to her Prussian Ally: If the Imperial Court does not aid Prussia to gratify pretensions that have no legal basis, but seek to trespass upon the rights of other Confederate States, and which are indicated in indistinct outlines instead of in a definite form, Austria is accused of shutting her eyes to the consideration she owes to the other German Great Power! It was reserved for the Prussian Government to stigmatise our well-meant efforts to fulfil the German nation's wish for a liberal development of the Federal Constitution as a lack of consideration for Prussia! What is meant by saying that we ought not to prejudice Prussia's interests in Hanover and Cassel by our interference? Are we expected to keep Envoys in those places for the purpose of acting on Prussia's behalf instead of our own in questions with respect to which the two German Powers take up different standpoints? Do we complain of Prussia's influence at Karlsruhe? . . . If Berlin offers us the alternative of withdrawing from Germany, and transferring our Monarchy's centre of gravity to Ofen, or of finding Prussia in the ranks of our enemies during the next European conflict, public opinion throughout Germany will pronounce judgment upon such a proposition, and events will punish it, if it be ever put in practice. It is for us to give its right name to the pretext that has been thus got up at Berlin."

After Austria had again (in the spring and summer of 1863) distinctly manifested tendencies adverse to Prussian policy by interfering, in common with France and England,

on behalf of the Polish insurgents, and by encouraging the rebellion in Galicia to the best of her ability, whilst Bismarck had concluded a treaty with Russia for the suppression of that dangerous conflagration, the Vienna Cabinet reverted to its plans for a Reform of the German Confederation. Towards the end of July 1863 King William went to Gastein to take the waters, accompanied by Bismarck, and was visited there on August 3 by the Emperor Francis Joseph, who wished to discuss German Federal Affairs with him. A memorandum had been prepared for their Majesties' consideration, urgently recommending a modification of existing conditions. It observed :—"The more uncertain the state of Europe, the more imperatively does it become the duty of German Princes—in view of the internal and external dangers menacing the Fatherland—to secure to themselves a tenable position. It is obvious that such a position can no longer be simply based upon the actual Federal Constitution. . . . The very foundations of the Federal Treaties shake under the feet of him who stands upon them; the edifice of German order, as established by Conventions, exhibits gaps and breaches in every direction. . . . Neither Austria nor Prussia can rely with any degree of confidence upon the Bund in its present condition. Recognising this fact, they cannot but perceive how fully justified is the demand for such reforms as shall impart fresh vitality into the principle of Federation. . . . The Emperor has granted to his own realms institutions in keeping with the age. He recognises that the German nation in its entirety has a right to expect that its political Constitution shall be reorganised; and, as a Federal Prince, he deems it his duty to make his fellow-Princes acquainted with what he considers feasible in this direction, and what he, for his part, is ready to concede.

"Austria's plans of reorganisation repose exclusively upon

plain and positive adherence to the Federative principle. . . . Monarchical States, amongst them two Great Powers constitute the German League of States. Such institutions as an individual leader, or a Parliament resulting from direct popular elections, are unsuitable to this League and at variance with its nature. Whosoever demands them aims at nothing more than a mere nominal Confederation; or rather, his real object is the gradual extinction of each several State's vitality—a state of transition towards future nullification—a split in Germany, without which this transition connot be achieved."

The Austrian Government then set forth the fundamental idea of its plan of reform as follows;—"Austria will recommend the creation of a Federal Board of Direction, and the periodical convocation of an Assembly of members of the Diets of the different States. Well aware that a heavy counterpoise will be required to guarantee the monarchical principle against the latter institution and to protect the legal independence of the individual States against possible attack, she inclines to the belief that the best guarantee of this kind and most efficient means of safeguarding princely rights and the exalted station of German dynasties will be found in periodical meetings of the Sovereigns of Germany.

"Without Prussia's amicable co-operation the task of reorganising the Confederation cannot be definitively carried out. Her will can practically and legally impede the reform of Germany's collective Constitution. . . . But things have gone so far in Germany that an absolute standstill of reformatory agitation is no longer possible; and the Governments which recognise this fact will find themselves at last compelled to take part in a work that is become necessary. . . . Whatever experiences the future may have in store for us, the Emperor will always have the satisfaction

of knowing that he has plainly informed the King that, at the present time, it depends upon Prussia's decision to elevate the Confederation once more to the height of its mission—a mission of such incalculable importance to the nation, its Sovereigns, and the peace of Europe."

To this the Emperor added the verbal remark that the project had been mooted of a Congress of Princes, to assemble in Frankfort on August 16: that a Direction of five Princes should be appointed to lead the Confederation; that the Federal Diet should continue to transact current business; and that it was proposed to constitute an Upper House of Federal Sovereigns and a Lower House (endowed with consultative attributes) of Deputies belonging to the Diets of the several States. This conversation was succeeded by two others on the same day, in the course of which the King did not absolutely reject the Austrian project, but expressed several scruples, which he repeated (August 4) in a letter to the Chancellor, as follows:—

"In relation to a question so deeply concerning the interests of my people and of the whole German nation, two considerations present themselves, to which I subordinate my own personal conclusions. It is firstly necessary to avoid prejudicing such unity as actually exists by striving to effect a closer connection. In this respect I gather from Your Majesty's intention to maintain the essential foundations of the Federal Constitution a guarantee that whatever may be good therein shall not be sacrificed to an endeavour to attain something better, unless success shall be ensured to that endeavour. My second consideration is, that the achievement of our contemplated aim may be materially retarded or furthered by our choice of the means to that end. In my opinion our labours would not be lightened by commencing them with a Meeting of Sovereigns. It

seems to me imperative that so important a step (in order that it may lead to the desired result) should be preceded by exhaustive studies and conferences on the part of our Ministers, upon the outcome of which the Sovereigns may eventually pronounce their decision. On these grounds I deem it my duty to decline Your Majesty's invitation for the 16th of this month, and to propose that we allow the questions upon which the Sovereigns of all the Federal States will ultimately have to decide, to be previously discussed and formulated in Ministerial Conferences, to be held by the representatives of the seventeen votes of the Federal Assembly's Council."

When the two monarchs parted, the King remarked that "a Congress of Princes, making allowance for the needful business preliminaries, would not possibly be managed before October 1." He was consequently much surprised when, a few hours later, an Imperial aide-de-camp handed to him the official invitation, dated July 31, to appear in Frankfort on August 16th. This he answered in a letter dated August 4 (already quoted) and by a telegram of the same date, positively refusing the invitation for the 16th. On the 7th however, he received another, proposing that (in case his "cure" should not permit his attendance on the 16th) he would send a Prince of his House, duly provided with plenary powers in his stead. This proposal was also forthwith rejected. Austria's proceeding was especially painful to the King, by reason of the hurry and informality characterising its business portion in connection with the personal part taken in it by his friend the Emperor in paying him a visit. On the journey to Baden-Baden—during which, as was then the rule, he was accompanied by the Minister-President—he spent some days with the Queen of Bavaria (whose husband was already at Frankfort) at

Munich and Nymphenburg, and subsequently staid at Wildbad, where the widowed Queen Elizabeth was sojourning. The whole of that period, as well as that of his stay at Baden-Baden, was engrossed with negotiations, which culminated in the arrival of the King of Saxony, accompanied by his Minister, Herr von Beust, and bringing with him a renewed invitation on the part of the assembled Princes. Meanwhile, all the elements at our Court known by the name of the "Austrian party," and whose most industrious implement was Herr von Schleinitz, formerly Minister of Foreign Affairs, had done their utmost to pave the way for the King of Saxony's energetic endeavours to persuade King William to go to Frankfort. The widowed Queen, who had originally advocated the acceptance of the invitation, pronounced herself in favour of its refusal, having heard whilst passing through Wildbad, that, should it be accepted, Herr von Bismarck would deem it necessary to resign office. King John of Saxony—a gentleman of great ability and much respected by King William—aided by Herr von Beust, addressed himself to persuading His Prussian Majesty to visit Frankfort so energetically and with such vivacious arguments *ad hominem* that the aggravated nervousness of the latter monarch—at that time far from well—gave rise to considerable anxiety on the part of his medical attendants. Herr von Bismarck addressed vigorous reproaches to the Saxon Minister-President upon this subject, reminding him of the circumstances under which King Frederick William IV. returned from his last visit to Dresden, bringing with him the germs of a deadly malady; and very seriously required that consideration should be shown for his Majesty's state of health. It is even alleged that the Prussian Minister-President intimated to his Saxon colleague that he would ask the Prussian

Commandant of Rastatt for an armed force wherewith to protect his Sovereign against further annoyance, if it were not put a stop to at his request.

In a letter to the Emperor of Austria, dated August 20, the King based his refusal of the collective invitation upon the ground that he could enter into no binding engagements with his Confederates before the matter under discussion at Frankfort should have been thoroughly looked into by his councillors; wherefore his participation in the proceedings was impracticable. This consideration, he added, would not prevent him from examining, with the promptitude and care he had also displayed relative to the development of patriotic interests common to Germany at large, whatever communications upon the subject his colleagues might forward to him.

On August 21, Bismarck wrote to the Prussian Federal Envoy concerning the Austrian projects of reform, then before him in detail:—"In our opinion they do not harmonise with the proper position of the Prussian Monarchy, or with the interests of the German people."

The Congress of Princes discussed Austria's proposals and (at its final meeting on September 1) prepared a draft of a reform-measure which was forwarded with a second collective letter to the King of Prussia, but which, as its clauses were not approved of in that high quarter, has remained a draft to the present day.

(Here follows a lengthy report upon the Frankfort Reform-Measure, addressed by Herr von Bismarck to the King of Prussia on September 15, 1863, which, as it is mainly a reiteration in detail of statements and arguments already set forth more than once in this and the preceding chapter, has been suppressed in the English version of "Unser Reichskanzler."—Translator's Note.)

Bismarck's relations to Austria assumed quite another aspect when, in the autumn of 1863, the Schleswig-Holstein question entered an acute phase. He said to us at Varzin in 1877:—"That is the diplomatic campaign of which I am proudest." Baron von Holstein asked, "You wanted the Duchies from the very beginning?" "Yes," replied the Prince, "certainly I did, immediately after the King of Denmark's death. But it was a difficult job. Everybody was against me—several côteries at Court, Austria, the petty German States, and the English, who grudged us the harbour of Kiel. Crowds of the Liberals were opposed to it who all of a sudden discovered that the rights of princes were matters of importance—in reality, it was only their hatred and envy of me—and even the Schleswig-Holsteiners themselves did not want it. I had to contend with all these and I know not whom besides. One day we had a meeting of the State Council at which I delivered one of the longest speeches I ever spouted, and said a good deal that must have struck my hearers as inconceivable and impossible. To judge by their astonished countenances, they must have thought I had lunched too copiously. Costenoble acted as reporter; and when he shewed me his notes I found that the passages in which I had spoken most plainly and forcibly had been left out. I called his attention to this and complained of it. 'Yes,' he replied, 'that is right enough; but I thought you would prefer that they should be omitted.' I rejoined; 'Not a bit of it. I insist that the speech shall stand exactly as I spoke it.'"

In order to attain his object the Prussian Minister was compelled, firstly, to take his stand (over-against the great non-German powers and Denmark) upon the London Protocol of 1852, and, secondly, to make sure of Austria's co-operation. Prussia and Austria, not the Confederation,

had signed the Protocol, which prescribed that Prince Christian of Gluecksburg should succeed Frederick the Seventh upon the thrones of Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein, but also stipulated that Schleswig should never be incorporated in the kingdom, and should preserve its Provincial-Constitution. Two days after his accession, however, the new King signed a Constitution for Denmark and Schleswig, *de facto* incorporating the latter in the former. Consequently, the German Great Powers could not recognise him in the Duchies, unless, indeed, he should revoke his signature. All that the Bund had to say in the matter concerned Holstein and the rights possessed by that Duchy in common with Schleswig. The interest of the Central States, which influenced the Bund, prompted them to support Duke Frederick of Augustenburg, who—despite his father's formal renunciation of all his rights in the Duchies—regarded himself as the heir to Schleswig-Holstein. The idea was to create another Medium State, i.e. another adversary to Prussia. This appeared to be Austria's interest, too; but other considerations outweighed it with her. The London Protocol was binding upon Vienna as well as upon Berlin; Austria could not allow herself to be outvoted in the Federal Assembly, any more than Prussia; by taking up the matter herself, she wrested it from the hands of the resuscitated Democratic party; she was bound to go with Prussia, in view of the vehemently excited state of German patriotism, if the latter power should stand forth as the Champion of the populations of the Northern Marches; finally, by joining Prussia in the enterprise, Austria thought she would be better enabled to watch, hamper, and ultimately frustrate the projects of annexation attributed to the policy of Berlin. Bismarck therefore succeeded in separating Austria from the Central States and in conclud-

ing with her, for a short time, such an arrangement as had obtained in the days of Metternich, and as he, whilst a Federal Envoy, had often wished to see re-established. Speaking in the Upper House (January 24, 1865) upon this subject, he observed:—

"Had we not chosen the path which we have actually pursued, no alternative remained open to us but a Federal War. . . . Now it is obvious that in a Federal War Austria would have acted, not as a simple Confederate, but as the presiding Power, and that, with her, but much more decisively than she—the majority of the Federal Diet would have interfered, not only with the military management of the campaign, but with the ultimate organisation of the Duchies. That we could have looked forward to a more benevolent consideration of Prussian interests at the hands of that majority than at those of Austria, our friend and ally, I fancy even the gentlemen who disapprove of us will scarcely assert."

We shall only indicate the principal events resulting from the German Great Powers' common action. At first they proceeded in accordance with the Confederation, proposing in Frankfort (Dec. 7, 1863) that execution should be levied upon Holstein by 6000 Saxon and as many Hanoverian troops, and then exhorting the Bund to summon Denmark to revoke the Constitution incorporating Schleswig—that Duchy, in case of Denmark's refusal, to be occupied by Federal troops. The Bund rejected this proposal; whereupon Austria and Prussia took independent action in their capacity of European Powers. The Emperor Napoleon had been put into a good humour by the conclusion, a short time previously, of the Franco-Prussian Commercial Treaty; he had come to the front in Italy as the vindicator of nationality rights; he had visions of a profitable compact

with Russia, in times to come. Russia was grateful for Bismarck's conduct in relation to the Polish insurrection. England's jealousy had not the courage to stay the Allies on the path which rapidly led them to their goal.

On January 16, 1864, Prussia and Austria summoned Denmark to withdraw the November Constitution. Their summons was rejected; the Allies entered Holstein, and, soon afterwards, Schleswig; the Dannewerk was evacuated; the Dueppel works were stormed; all Schleswig and part of Jutland were occupied. Then came a brief interruption of operations by a Conference at London, in which Bismarck caused it to be declared that Prussia repudiated the London Protocol. Upon this followed the proposal, on the part of the two Powers, that the Duchies should thenceforth only be connected with Denmark by a personal union; then (this notion having been rejected by the Danes) the demand that Schleswig-Holstein should be altogether disconnected from Denmark, and amalgamated under the sovereignty of the Hereditary Prince Frederick of Augustenburg. The Conference broke up (June 25) having done nothing, and war recommenced, soon to conclude by Denmark suing for peace after the Island of Alsen and the whole of Jutland had been occupied by the Allies. The King of Denmark ceded the Duchies of Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg to the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria.

Thitherto the interests of Prussia and Austria had been almost identical. Thereafter they diverged more and more, in proportion as Austria harked back towards the Confederation. Prussia could not suffer the creation on Germany's northern frontier of a new medium State which would infallibly reinforce the anti-Prussian majority in the Federal Assembly. Its Duke, too (supposing he ever came to reign) would have had to submit to precautionary

measures and limitations to his sovereignty, which would not have suited him or the Central States or the traditional policy of Austria. When Bismarck intimated to the Duke of Augustenburg the conditions upon which Prussia would recognise him as Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, he encountered a positive refusal; after which it became Bismarck's primary object to strip the Central States of whatever influence they might hope to exercise upon a final settlement of the question. The first thing to be done in that direction was to remove the Confederation's "execution" troops from Holstein and Lauenburg. In this step Austria stood by Prussia at the Bund. The Duchies were now occupied in common by the troops of both Great Powers and administered by Austro-Prussian Commissioners. It soon became apparent that the Austrian Commissioner was fomenting an agitation in favour of establishing the Hereditary Prince as reigning Duke, whilst his Prussian colleague was bestirring himself on behalf of annexation. Soon these gentlemen began to protest against one another's proceedings. When Count Mensdorff-Pouilly proposed to hand the Duchies over to the Hereditary Prince, Bismarck returned a negative answer, and instructed the Prussian Crown-Syndics to draw up a memorial refusing the Duke of Augustenburg's claims, and attributing to the actual possessors of the three Duchies the right to administer and legislate for them quite independently of the Federal Assembly.

Bismarck now (Dec 13) made confidential enquiries in Vienna respecting annexation. Austria declared herself content, if compensated in Germany—for instance by cession to her of the county of Glatz. Of this Berlin, of course, would not hear. Then (February 22, 1865) Bismarck offered to recognise the Duke of Augustenburg

under conditions the more important of which were that the King of Prussia should dispose of the armed forces, postal arrangements and telegraph-lines of the Duchies; that these latter should enter the Customs' Union; and that they should cede to Prussia some territories near Kiel and abutting upon the projected canal between the North Sea and the Baltic. This offer Court Mensdorff declined; and on April 6 Austria voted for a motion brought forward by the South German Governments for the unconditional establishment of the Hereditary Prince as ruler of Holstein, and carried by a majority. It was not, however, recognised by Prussia and therefore took no effect. When Bismarck thereupon demanded that the class representatives in Schleswig-Holstein should be heard upon the question in dispute, Mensdorff would not consent; and when subsequently Vienna herself proposed that the class representatives should be convoked, Bismarck exacted the expulsion beforehand of the "Pretender," whose presence in the country rendered a free expression of opinion on their part impossible.

During the summer of 1865, as Austria did not give way, a settlement by arms appeared imminent. Whilst the King and Bismarck were in Karlsbad, the latter once more complained at Vienna of the Augustenburg agitation, and threatened that Prussia would deal with it on her own account. On his way to Gastein, the King held council at Ratisbon with his Ministers and Envoy at the Court of Vienna, and decided upon adhering to the February Conditions. Two days later (July 23), Bismarck had a conversation at Salzburg with the Bavarian Minister, Von der Pfordten, to whom he expressed his conviction that war between Austria and Prussia, had become inevitable, observing that the interests of the Central States urgently required that they should take their stand forthwith, in view

of that eventuality. It would be a duel between the two Great Powers, and fewer interests would have to suffer if the rest of Germany would remain passive, which was all the more feasible because Prussia had no thought of extending her territory beyond the line of the Maine. Besides, the affair would soon be settled. One great battle, and Prussia would be in a position to dictate terms to her enemy. Bavaria should bear in mind that she was the natural heir to Austria's position in Southern Germany.

Once more war was temporarily averted by negotiations that took place in Gastein between Bismarck and Count Blome, the Austrian Envoy in Munich. On August 14, these diplomatists signed an agreement, according to which the exercise of Austria's and Prussia's common rights (assigned to them by the Treaty of Vienna) was alloted to the King of Prussia in Schleswig and to the Emperor of Austria in Holstein, without prejudice to the continuance of both Powers' rights to the totality of the two Duchies; whilst Lauenburg was ceded to Prussia for a pecuniary consideration. The Convention was carried out; General Von Manteuffel was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Schleswig, Field-Marshal Lieutenant Von Gablenz of Holstein; and Lauenburg, at first by "personal union," was amalgamated with Prussia. This (as Bismarck wrote to his wife on the very day upon which the agreement was concluded) was only "pasting together the cracks in the building." The partition of the Duchies' Administration between Austria and Prussia did not improve matters, as the former continued to promote the Augustenburg agitation in Holstein. On October 16, the Hereditary Prince actually made his appearance upon Schleswig ground, and allowed himself to be received with royal honours at Eckernfoerde; whereupon the *Staatsanzeiger* stigmatised

his conduct as "the usurpation of an unjustified authority, and further remarked:—"Should the Prince, without permission from the King, again set foot upon Schleswig soil, and give occasion to fresh demonstrations, his arrest may be looked for." A mass-meeting of Associations directed by the Prince's councillors (at first prohibited by Gablenz, but afterwards authorised by the express command of the Vienna Cabinet) was held at Altona (January, 23, 1866), vehemently demanded the convocation of the Schleswig-Holstein *Staende*, and shouted "long live our lawful Sovereign, Duke Frederick!" Moreover, the Holstein press, with Austria's sanction, overflowed with abuse of Prussia.

In vain Bismarck remonstrated, through the Prussian Envoy in Vienna. "The press," he observed, in a despatch of January 20, 1866, "persists in treating the Prince of Augustenburg as a lawful and even reigning monarch. The Associations (still tolerated) get up demonstrations and ovations for the Prince and his family, unmistakably indicating him in the character of a Sovereign. All these circumstances make his mere presence in Kiel a chronic protest against the rights of both Sovereigns. The Imperial Government seems to forget that this protest is as much directed against the rights of the Emperor of Austria as against those of the King of Prussia. . . . We were prepared (in virtue of the Gastein Convention) that the Imperial Government should exert its own rights to the fullest extent, and have admitted those rights as an indisputable factor in all our plans and proposals touching the future of the Duchies. But we were not prepared that Austria should allow rights common to herself and us to be violated with impunity; and we protest against her doing so. . . . His Majesty the King has a right to demand

that this evil be remedied by the expulsion of the Prince, if the Imperial Government really feels itself unequal to putting a stop to the demonstrations in question. There is another point to be considered. I have already mentioned that we expected from the Austrian *régime* in Holstein a consolidation of Conservative interests as against the too-long tolerated disturbance of the country by a widely-spread democratic agitation, which looks forward to realising its plans under the shadowy reign of a powerless sovereign, and is already actively strengthening its influence upon the population—especially upon the youth of the country—by every means in its power. In this respect also, our expectations have unfortunately been disappointed. The democratic agitation, animated by hatred of Conservative Prussia, blossoms out luxuriantly in the Associations and the press. The Imperial Austrian Government may contemplate this demoralisation and corruption of the populace with comparative indifference. Not so we. Whatever may be the decision ultimately arrived at respecting the Duchies, their condition will always be a matter of importance to Prussia; and should they become a nucleus of democratic and revolutionary tendencies it will become Prussia's business to put them in order. . . . Let the Cabinet of Vienna remember that the greater our difficulties become (in Schleswig) the smaller will be the admissible claims upon Prussia for compensation. For our part, we have always clung to the hope of arriving at an understanding by peaceful means, and have resolved, in the mean time, to maintain the provisional arrangement in the spirit of friendly concord. But the Imperial Cabinet must not deceive itself to the extent of believing that its manner of working the Gastein Convention—one altogether too hostile to Prussia—is calculated to revive that hope, or to

enable us to deal with the provisional arrangement as above indicated."

This despatch was followed by one even more forcible and pressing, dated January 26. (As it is merely a recapitulation of the grievances above recited, couched in vigorous and menacing language, but containing no new facts, it has been omitted from the English version of this work.—Translator's Note.) But all these remonstrances proved fruitless. On February 7, Count Mensdorff replied to them in a despatch addressed to Karolyi, the leading idea of which is thus expressed:—

"The two powers have not shared between them the substance of the acquisitions resulting from the Treaty of Vienna, but only their temporary possession. They have reserved the definitive solution of the Sovereignty question for a future understanding. . . . The Imperial Government is not subject to any control in its temporary administration of Holstein. In virtue of the Gastein Convention, Austria is not only the sole proprietor of Holstein Sovereign-rights, but the manner of exercising those rights is left entirely to her own discretion. . . . She regards each separate question arising within the sphere of her administration in Holstein as exclusively pendant between herself and her Lord-Lieutenant, and exempt from interference from any other quarter." After having received this reply, Bismarck remarked to the Austrian Envoy that "Prussia's relations to Austria, despite the intimate character they had assumed during the past year or two, had now been thrust back to the stand-point they occupied before the Danish war—neither better nor worse than those obtaining with any other Power."

On February 28, a Council of Ministers was held at Berlin, attended by the Governor of Schleswig, the Chief of the General Staff, and the Prussian Envoy in Paris. It

came to the conclusion that any concession on the part of Prussia in the question of the Elbe-Duchies would offend popular feeling and affect the honour of the country; wherefore the line thitherto taken up must be pursued, even at the risk of war. Nevertheless, no military preparations were commenced. On March 10, a Council of Marshals assembled in Vienna, decided upon collecting troops in Bohemia and Moravia. Six days later, in a despatch addressed to Austria's representatives at the German Courts, Count Mensdorff, declared it to be the Imperial Government's intention, in case Prussia should bring about an open rupture, to invoke the interference of the Confederation, and at the same time to make over to it all further decisions concerning the regulation of the Schleswig-Holstein affair. The Presiding Envoy was instructed to inform the Federal Assembly that all Austria's efforts to settle the question of the Duchies in concord with Prussia had failed. Prussia was preparing for war, and Count Karolyi, had been directed to demand a positive declaration from the Prussian Minister Resident, whether or not the Court of Berlin intended to violently tear up the Gastein Convention. "Should the danger of a breach of the peace become still more imminent, it would be necessary to take measures, promptly and decisively, for self-defence. In view of Prussia's threatened attack, these measures could only consist of mobilising the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th Federal Army-Corps, and placing them in the field, side by side with the Austrian Army."

Bismarck "countered" this measure in a despatch (March 24) to Prussia's Envoys at the German Courts. He denied that Prussia had armed; pointed out that Austria was preparing for war and would soon have a powerful army stationed close to the Prussian frontier; and declared that

it would be necessary to take defensive measures. He then continued :—

"But this is not all exacted from us by the situation. Our experiences of the trustworthiness of an Austrian Alliance and of Vienna's real sentiments towards us compel us to look to the future. Prussia—through her position, German character and the German feeling of her Princes—is *avant tout* obliged to look for guarantees in Germany itself. . . . The Confederation, in its present form, is not equal to carrying on the active policy exacted by great crises. Its institutions were based upon the assumption that the two Great Powers should be always agreed ; they could last as long as that state of affairs was kept up by Prussian pliancy towards Austria ; but they cannot survive serious antagonism between the two Powers. . . . We have often pointed out to our Confederates that the Federal military arrangements were incompatible with the safety of Germany, and have in vain endeavoured to improve it within the limits of the old Federal organisation. As matters stand we cannot rely upon any real help from the Bund, should we be attacked, and shall consequently have to depend upon our own forces, unless special good-will, on the part of individual German Governments should place assistance at our disposal which —dealt with in the ordinary Federal method—would only become available far too late to be of any use to us. This consideration, and the abnormal position in which Prussia is placed by the hostile attitude of the other Great Power, force us to propose a reform of the Confederation in keeping with actualities. Through our geographical position the interests of Prussia and Germany are identical. . . . Unless we can be sure of Germany, our position, geographically speaking, is more hazardous than that of any other European State ; but the fate of Prussia will carry with it the fate of

Germany; and we doubt not that—once Prussia's strength shattered—Germany would thereafter only participate passively in the politics of European nations. All the German Governments should consider it their sacred duty to avert such an eventuality; to which end they should act with Prussia. If the German Confederation, in its present form, should attempt to face the great European crisis which may accrue at any moment, I much fear that it will succumb in the endeavour, and will not be able to save Germany from the fate of Poland." The despatch closed with a request for an answer to the question, "Whether, and to what extent, Prussia could count upon assistance from the Government addressed, in case she should be attacked by Austria or compelled to make war by unmistakable threats?"

Most of the Governments replied by referring Prussia to the Bund; whereupon Bismarck proposed to the Federal Assembly (April 9) that it should convoke a meeting of delegates directly elected by national universal suffrage in order to consider and discuss the several German Governments' projects for reforming the Federal Constitution. . . . Bismarck subsequently endeavoured to come to an understanding with the different Governments respecting the fundamental ideas of his own Reform Project; and when a Committee of the Bund had been appointed to look into it, the Prussian Envoy submitted to that body the following sketch of the project in question:—1. The introduction of a National Assembly to be periodically convoked, into the organism of the Bund, for the purpose of replacing the voting-unanimity at present exacted with respect to Federal Legislation. 2. Extension of this new Federal organ's competency to matters referred to in Art. 64 of the Vienna "Schluss-Akt" as "Dispositions of general utility." 3. Regulation of communications. 4. Free circulation and general German

rights of domicile. 5. General Customs' and Trade Legislation. 6. Organisation of the general protection of German trade and navigation abroad, and regulation of United Germany's Consular Representation. 7. Creation of a German Fleet and of the harbours necessary thereto. 8. Revision of the Federal Military Constitution.

The attitudes assumed by most of the Governments towards these proposals were respectively indifferent, mistrustful or hostile. They feared that their particular interests might be prejudiced by a National Assembly of the above description; they felt themselves sufficiently protected against external dangers by the two Great Powers; they believed that they could preserve their previous importance without putting themselves to any additional trouble. But the German people—or rather, those portions of it influenced by more or less Democratic tendencies—in their blindness and bitterness, were furious with the project of reform. What good thing would come from Bismarck? Rather let the detested Federal Diet endure than accept the long yearned-for Parliament from the hand of a Minister who refused to govern in accordance with the views and pretensions of the Party of Progress!

Meanwhile Berlin and Vienna were embarked in hot disputation about the alleged or real preparations for war; advancing and retreating, arming and disarming again, and even making another attempt to arrive at a peaceful solution of the Schleswig-Holstein question. On April 26 Count Mensdorff, in a despatch to Karolyi, proposed to the Prussian Court "to give to the Bund what was the Bund's," and to join Austria in making declaration at Frankfort that "Austria and Prussia had resolved to transfer their rights to whichsoever pretendant might be recognised by the German Confederation as supremely entitled to the succession in

Holstein." In exchange for this certain concessions, previously agreed to by the Cabinet of Vienna during the foregoing negotiations, should be made to Prussia. Bismarck's answer (May 7) was essentially as follows: "We stand upon the Treaties of Vienna and Gastein. The King of Denmark had a perfect right to cede the Duchies, and the two German Powers acquired them unconditionally. Therefore, the Confederation cannot decide upon the legal ownership of Holstein. We should regard it as a breach of the above Treaties were the Imperial Government, against our will, to treat a Federal decision concerning our common rights to the Duchies as valid. Just as little as we can leave the settlement of this question to the actual majority of German Governments do we intend to transfer our share of rights, acquired in battle and by treaty, to a third party, who can offer us no guarantee for an equivalent of the sacrifices with which we were obliged to purchase the acquisition of those rights. If, however, the Imperial Government wishes to make fresh arrangements with respect to its rights in our common conquest, we are ready to deal with her."

There was no question of any transaction of this kind in Vienna; and the possibility of war (Bismarck had meanwhile secured Italy as our Ally) became more and more a probability as week succeeded week. The Liberals in Prussia and Germany did what they could to avert it with highflown declarations and admonitions, denounced it as "a the war undertaken solely with dynastic objects," threatened Government with the nation's curse and with impeachment for high treason—in short, indulged in all sorts of pathetic antics. What was of more importance was the fact that one of our Ministers in Berlin was well-affected to Austria; still more so, that influence was brought to bear upon the King in exalted quarters at Court, and that his Royal kinsfolk

outside Prussia were also busy in the endeavour to turn him from his purpose. Most important of all was it, however, that the King's own feelings did not allow him, for a long time, to decide upon breaking with Austria and allying himself to such a power as Italy; and that his scruples only vanished when Bismarck abundantly proved to him that he must draw the sword to save Prussia's interests and honour from prejudice. The army was mobilised. Before taking the last step of all, however, Bismarck made another attempt to come to an understanding with Austria—this time on an entirely new basis. In 1869 he gave the Saxon Minister von Friesen an account of this endeavour, whilst chatting with him one day; and I am in a position to tell exactly what took place, having gathered the facts during a conversation held on January 28, 1883. They are as follows:—

"About a fortnight before the commencement of active hostilities, Bismarck sent the Austrian General von Gablenz's brother, a Saxon then living at Berlin, to the Emperor in Vienna with offers of peace on the basis of Dualism and common action against France. Gablenz was to tell His Majesty that we had six to seven hundred thousand men in the field, whilst the Austrian forces were also very numerous; we had therefore better come to terms, execute a change of front westwards (Prussia in the North, Austria in the South) against France, reconquer Elsass, and make Strassburg a Federal fortress. There was no just cause on hand for a war with France: but our excuse would be that the French had also done us a great wrong by seizing Elsass and Strassburg in time of peace. If we offered Strassburg to the Germans as a wedding-present they would put up with our Dualism fast enough. The Austrians were to rule the roast in the South, disposing of the 7th and 8th Army Corps; we in the North, with command of the 9th and 10th.

Dualism is as old as the hills in Germany; there have been Ingævons and Istævons, Guelphs and Ghibellines, High-Germans and Low-Germans. Well; Gablenz went off with his mission to the Emperor, who seemed not disinclined to entertain the proposal, but replied that he must first hear what his Foreign Minister, Mensdorff, had to say about it. Mensdorff was not the man for such ideas; he did not, however directly oppose the project, and said he must confer with the other Ministers. They proved to be, one and all, for making war upon us. The Finance-Minister—who thought we should be beaten—declared that he must have five hundred millions out of us as a war-indemnity, or else a good opportunity for declaring a State-bankruptcy. The War-Minister was by no means displeased with Bismarck's notion; but, said he, "first we must have a brush together; then we can make it up and pitch into the French with our united forces." So Gablenz came back unsuccessful; and a few days later the King and his Ministers started for the scene of war in Bohemia. It was a pity. The old union, or rather disunion, of the Frankfort Confederation would have been broken up, but there would have been no external rupture. The Northern and Southern Confederations would have entered into a close Alliance against foreign countries, with a mutual guarantee of their respective territories."

Thenceforth matters progressed rapidly. On June 1 Austria declared at Frankfort that she would leave the decision upon the Schleswig-Holstein affair to the Federal Diet, and had instructed her Statthalter in Holstein to convoke the local representative Assembly. Prussia protested against both these proceedings. In a Circular Despatch of June 4, Bismarck declared to the Foreign Courts:—"Vienna has resolved upon war; the next thing to

be done is to choose the most auspicious moment for beginning it."

Prussia's protest was promptly followed by appropriate action. On June 6 the Prussian Statthalter in Schleswig informed the Austrian Statthalter in Hosltein that, in the opinion of his Government, Austria had brought about a rupture of the Gastein Convention. The conditions obtaining previous to that Convention were therefore revived. By command of the King he would march into Holstein the next day; but (in order not to mar the peaceful character of this step) would not occupy places in which the Austrians were stationed. He hoped Baron Gablenz would readily agree with him respecting the new positions of affairs. Next day the Prussians entered Holstein, and Manteuffel established his head quarters at Rendsburg. Gablenz retired from Kiel to Altona under protest, taking with him the Pretender. On June 12 the Austrians gave up their positions in Holstein altogether, and withdrew through Hanover to Hesse. Prussia took over the administration of Holstein, and the meeting of the *Staende*, called by Gablenz, was prohibited.

On the tenth of June Bismarck issued a Circular Despatch addressed to Prussia's Confederates, submitting to them a project of a Federal Constitution and asking them to decide whether or not, if the actual Confederation should be broken up, they would join a new one founded upon his project, the chief dispositions of which were as follows:—"The Federal Realm to consist of those States hitherto belonging thereto, except the Austrian and the Netherland territories. Legislative power to be exercised by the Federal Diet in community with a National Assembly, the latter to be convoked periodically. The Federal States to constitute a Customs' and Commercial Union. . . . The

Federal Government to have the right of declaring war, of concluding peace, as well as alliances and treaties, and of appointing and receiving diplomatic envoys, for purposes connected with international representation. The Federal fleet to be homogeneous and under the command of the King of Prussia. The Federal land forces to consist of a Northern army, commanded in chief by the King of Prussia, a Southern army, commanded in chief by the King of Bavaria. The relations of the Confederation to the German provinces of the Austrian Empire to be regulated by special treaties, after an agreement respecting them shall have been duly arrived at between the Federal Diet and the National Parliament."

Bismarck, therefore, did not then contemplate a complete separation of Germany from Austria; and we shall see, that as soon as that separation had really taken place he addressed himself to the task of forming new relations to the Empire with the same patience and perseverance he had displayed in breaking up the old ones, so far as they were disadvantageous to Germany.

On the 11th of June Austria stigmatised Manteuffel's march into Holstein as "violent self-help" in the Federal Assembly, and moved for the mobilisation of the non-Prussian army-corps. The motion was passed (June 14) by nine votes against six, although the Prussian Envoy had declared its very discussion to be anti-Federal. He then, in the name of his Sovereign, pronounced the Federal treaty violated, null, and void. This was the final result of Vienna's efforts, extending over twenty years, to induce the Bund to take the field against Prussia.

Of the war which then broke out we will only say here that it was short, and that the battle of Koeniggraetz practically decided it in favour of Prussia. Thereafter no

great military difficulties had to be overcome; but other troubles arose in the shape of French meddling, invoked by the Emper of Austria. On July 4th Francis Joseph telegraphed to Napoleon that he was prepared to cede Venetia to France, and requested the latter's mediation with Prussia and Italy. Napoleon lost no time in coming forward as arbitrator. During the night of July 4–5 he despatched a telegram to the Prussian headquarters at Horitz, expressing the hope that so magnanimous a monarch as King William would, after having achieved such splendid successes, gladly welcome his endeavours to restore peace, and proposing an armistice. The Prussian answer was affirmative; but our Ambassador in Paris was instructed to inform the French Emperor than an armistice could only be granted under certain express conditions, and on the 17th Prince Reuss was sent off with a letter from the King to Napoleon indicating those conditions. An armistice was admissible if Austria would pledge herself, when peace should be concluded, to withdraw from the German Confederation, to consent to the creation of a Federal realm on a national basis, and to a territorial aggrandisement of Prussia that should connect the two sections of her monarchy, hitherto separated. At a consultation (July 10) to which the representatives of Austria and Prussia were invited, Napoleon made a counter-proposition to the effect that the two German great Powers should thenceforth stand alone, the remaining German States forming a Confederation of their own. It was obvious that he had in view a new Rhenish League; wherefore both the Prussian and Austrian Envoys refused his proposal, and Napoleon found himself compelled to give way in the direction of the Prussian conditions. In the hope of rendering his intervention abortive, Bismarck made another

attempt to come to terms with the Cabinet of Vienna by confidential means. He commissioned Baron Herring to convey to the Austrian Government the following proposals, whereupon peace negotiations might be founded: Austria not to cede any territory, except Venetia, nor to pay any war-indemnity; Prussia to adopt the Main as the limit of her hegemony; Southern Germany to be left to itself, Austria being allowed to enter into relations with it; all this however, upon condition that France was to have nothing to do with the conclusion of peace. These proposals caused agreeable surprise in high quarters at Vienna. But Prince Maurice Esterhazy, who had great influence upon the Foreign Minister, received their bearer very coldly, kept him waiting thirty hours for an answer, and finally dismissed him with a few evasive phrases, and the statement that Austria could only send a negotiator to Prussian head-quarters on receipt of an official invitation. Herring hurried off to Nikolsburg (where headquarters were by that time established), but arrived there a little later than Benedetti, Napoleon's agent, and was told: "If you had made your appearance an hour earlier the negotiations would have taken quite another turn. Having accepted France's intervention, we can no longer dispense with it."

Napoleon now proposed an armistice on the following terms; preservation of Austria's territorial integrity, her withdrawal from the League of German States, creation of a North German Confederation under the military leadership of Prussia, and permission to the Southern German States to constitute an international independent Union. There was no mention of any territorial aggrandisement to Prussia. This, however, had become a condition of the first moment to the King; since his victories; indeed he and his generals demanded more, in that direction, than Bismarck deemed

advisable. On the 9th of July he wrote to his wife from Hohenmauth :—"If we are not extravagant in our pretensions and do not fancy that we have conquered the whole world, we shall obtain a peace worth all our trouble. But we are as easily exhilarated as cast down, and it is my thankless business to pour water into effervescing wine, and to point out that we do not live alone in Europe, but have three neighbours to reckon with." Eager annexionists at headquarters favoured the cession of Austrian Silesia. Bismarck reminded them that that province was closely and warmly attached to the House of Hapsburg. They required that Austria's Central German allies should be "punished" by loss of territory. He replied that we must only take what we really were bound to have: that punishments should be left to God, and had nothing to do with politics. They were of opinion that Bavaria ought to hand over her ex-Hohenzollern territory as the prize of victory; for Anspach and Bayreuth still remembered that they had belonged to the Royal House of Prussia and were part of its inheritance. Bismarck informed them that those provinces had long since become reconciled to their position under the Bavarian Crown. Then the annexionists demanded the whole of Saxony, moderating their exaction subsequently to Leipzig, with its *entourage*, and the Lausitz, for strategical reasons. Bismarck replied that we must either take all, which Austria could not consent to, or nothing. Partitions gave rise to bad blood and caused a great deal of trouble. For him the chief thing was Federal Reform; next came an increment of Prussia's might, to be achieved by incorporating a few North German States. Ultimately, the King consented to restrict his claims to these limits; but as late as the third week of July he declared that "he would rather abdicate, than return home

without having obtained an important addition of territory to Prussia."

During the negotiations that now commenced Bismarck had to be guided by the King's above-mentioned resolve. Later on he demanded large cessions of territory—a slice of Bohemia, and all Bavaria northwards of the Main—but only with the object of withdrawing these demands in consideration of other advantages. The possibility of one day making friends with Austria, by letting her off cheaply, was worth a good deal more than so many square miles of a Catholic and chiefly Czechish territory; and Bavaria's tacit alliance, for the eventuality of a war with France, was at least as valuable as the possession of Franconia. On the 18th of July Napoleon's new proposal received answer, by telegraph, that it did not afford a sufficiently comprehensive basis for definitive peace, as Prussia's territorial aggrandisement at the cost of hostile States in North Germany had been rendered necessary by military events and the feeling of the nation. If Austria and Italy accepted the French programme, that would suffice to justify an armistice; but Austria and Prussia must negotiate their own peace together, and the other belligerent States would have to make terms with Prussia, each for itself. The King was ready to observe a five days' truce; if Austria did not accept the Prussian conditions within that term, war would be resumed.

Benedetti had gone to Vienna to recommend the French proposal. He returned to Prussian headquarters on the 19th, and informed Bismarck that Austria accepted it as the basis of an armistice. Next day Bismarck intimated to the Prussian Ambassador in Paris that the King had given his consent to the armistice, but with great difficulty, and only under the assurance that greater cessions of territory

would be made to Prussia in North Germany when peace should be concluded. "The French stipulations," he continued (the despatch was communicated to Napoleon), "would suffice us as preliminaries for a separate peace with Austria, but not for one with our other adversaries, especially in Southern Germany. With them we must arrange special conditions; and the French Emperor's mediation, which they have not invoked, applies exclusively to Austria. Though we are free, as far as Italy is concerned, through the cession of Venetia, we cannot set Italy free from her obligations to us before we obtain our equivalent for Venetia, guaranteed to us by our treaty with her."

On the evening of the 21st, Austrian plenipotentiaries arrived at Prussian headquarters in Nikolsburg in order to negotiate peace preliminaries with Bismarck. Count Barral, the Italian Envoy, was on the spot, but without instructions or powers; so he took no part in the proceedings, but was kept *au courant* of them. Italy, however, could not refuse to agree to the terms of peace, the possession of Venetia having been assured to her. Neither did Napoleon's envoy participate in the Nikolsburg Conferences, but he was also kept informed, and reported upon them thus to his government on the day (July 23) of their commencement.

"With his practical views and customary determination, Count Bismarck, during his first interview with the Austrian negotiators, made a point that they should accept all his conditions respecting the future organisation of Germany, and that Austria should frankly renounce participation therein. This agreed to, he made those questions which were not defined or even dealt with in our preliminaries, the chief subjects of the Conference. Finally he proposed to

settle the terms of peace forthwith, instead of the armistice, and induced the Austrians to treat respecting the war expenses and Prussia's territorial acquisitions. Then he informed the plenipotentiaries that the King insisted upon an increment of Prussia in North Germany, as a primary condition of peace. I hear that the Minister Resident, in this matter, has announced his firm resolve to break off the negotiations, unless assured of Austria's consent. He has told me himself that the Austrians have confined themselves to advocating the preservation of Saxony's territorial integrity. I believe that this question will be settled by Prussia agreeing to leave Saxony untouched, and Austria pledging herself to offer no hindrance to the annexation of Hanover, Electoral Hesse, and some other petty States."

And so it turned out. The preliminary peace with Austria was signed on July 26, and speedily followed by the definitive treaty. "A great object was attained," says the Prussian General-Staff's work on the campaign of 1866. "By this peace Germany's national development under Prussian leadership was ensured. Projects of conquest upon an extensive scale were not desired by the Government. Monarch and people alike had fulfilled the duties imposed by an exalted mission upon the State as well as the individual, and were bound to admit that no further urgent requirement for the safety and national development of Prussia and Germany was forthcoming. What Prussia had acquired in territory she might freely hope to see speedily and completely amalgamated with the organism of her theretofore existing realm. The conditions offered by Austria did not exclude the possibility of a future revival of friendly relations between the former confederates. No wound was inflicted upon Austria's honour or might that need necessarily result in irreparable enmity between both

States. Had more been exacted, a sting must have remained that Time itself would have been unable to extract. It could not be the interest of either Prussia or Germany to perpetuate the breach between Austria and Prussia."

The latter sentences might have been written by Bismarck himself; they breathe his spirit, and are reflected in his behaviour to Austria when New Germany was founded. Nevertheless as long as Count Beust was at the head of Austria's Foreign Affairs, Bismarck encountered no corresponding disposition at Vienna, but only scarcely disguised ill-will.

When the treaties of alliance concluded with the South-German States in 1866 were made public (in 1867, upon the occasion of the Luxemburg *imbroglio*), the Austrian Chancellor declared, through the Imperial Envoy in Berlin, that they were in direct contradiction of the fourth Article of the Treaty of Prague, which required "a South-German States'-Union with international independence." Bismarck did not repel Beust's remarks, but endeavoured to modify the significance of the treaties by calling attention to their purely defensive character.

Soon afterwards (early in April) the Bavarian diplomatist Count Tauffkirchen called upon the Austrian Chancellor, not only at the instance of his Government, but as the bearer of important proposals on the part of Prussia. He had been empowered by Bismarck to advocate an alliance between the North-German Confederation and Austria, to be joined by all the other German States. Beust reported as follows (April 19) to Count Wimpffen, then Austrian Envoy in Berlin:—"He spoke about a guarantee of our possessions, and gave me to understand that every desirable security against attack could be secured to us, even (temporarily) for our non-German provinces. He hinted at

Russia as the third party to the League, and observed that our safety would be ensured by a renewal of the Triple Alliance. Finally, he mentioned that a compact of friendship between Prussia and Austria would afford the South-German States a greater measure of independence, and that an international alliance of Austria with the North and South German Confederations might eventually lead to permanent and close relations, replacing the former Federal connections with advantage to Austria as well as to the German nation. A confidential despatch* communicated to me by Baron Werther stated that Count Bismarck had authorised the Bavarian Envoy to bring these propositions to Vienna."

How Beust received those propositions we learn from his despatch to Wimpffen. "I observed :—'You foresee, in an

* According to 'Alkotmányos Titkok' (a pamphlet published in 1883), this despatch was dated April 14, and dealt as follows with the basis of the proposed alliance :—"The North-German Confederation guarantees Austria-Hungary's security against any attack from abroad. Should this guarantee extend to the entire monarchy, the treaty of offensive and defensive alliance is only to be valid for a fixed period of time ; but with respect to the German provinces of the monarchy, a permanent defensive Alliance, having of course an international character, may be concluded. . . . The Prussian Envoy accompanied his Chancellor's note with important declarations to the effect that, if Austria should accept the above alliance, Germany would not only guarantee her safety from without, in every direction, but would undertake to support her Oriental policy against Russia. By proposing to guarantee to Austria the permanent possession of her German provinces, Count Bismarck desired to dispel the groundless suspicion that Germany aimed at their annexation. It was also aptly pointed out that Vienna could never become the capital of Germany, because it lies close to the limits of German-speaking territory, and because a different spirit prevails throughout Austria to that predominating in Germany ; let alone that many millions of Slavs inhabit Austria, who would incessantly protest against incorporation in Germany, and fight the battle of their nationality far more passionately there than in Austria."

Austro-Prussian alliance, the preservation of peace, at present endangered. But what would be Austria's position (which is in no way menaced just now) at the commencement of the new peace-epoch? She would have to face the enmity of France, doubly perilous to her because it would entail an almost unconditional dependence upon Prussia's good-will in Germany. We do not doubt this good-will; but can you deny that circumstances are frequently more powerful than the intentions of leading men, and that Austria—in view of the Unity movement in Germany, and of a still possible conflict with Italy—before incurring the hatred of France would require more solid guarantees than the promise that she shall not be mulcted of her possesions—at least, not too soon? But is not even proved that the offered alliance would really entail the preservation of peace. We have learnt not to appraise too highly our powers, or the fear of them in others, and it is probable—at least, just now—that the prospect of Austria's participation in a war would not restrain France from venturing upon such an enterprise, if she had once made up her mind to put forth the moral and material forces that would be required in undertaking a conflict with Prussia and Germany.' " Count Beust continued in this strain, according to his own account, for some time. Count Tauffkirchen and Baron Werther both expressed their regret that Austria should reject Prussia's friendly proposals. Beust's despatch to Wimpffen empowered the latter to read it to Bismarck.

(Here follows another lengthy anti-Prussian despatch from the pen of Count Beust, addressed to the Austrian Envoy in Munich for communication to Prince Hohenlohe, then Bavarian Prime Minister. As it merely goes over ground often traversed in this chapter, and is totally forlorn of

interest to English readers in general, it has been suppressed. —Translator's Note.)

Under Baron Beust's *régime*, therefore, Bismarck's advances to Austria encountered rejection, mental reservations and veiled threats. The Saxon statesman, moreover, was secretly on the look-out for an opportunity of taking vengeance, in league with some other Power. Early in January, 1867, Beust commissioned the Austrian Ambassador in Paris, Prince Metternich, to bring about a Triple Alliance of France, Italy and Austria; and shortly afterwards (January 22, 1867) he surprised the Petersburg Cabinet with a Note in which he—an Austrian Prime Minister—did not hesitate to assert that the 1856 Treaty of Paris had failed to attain its object and must therefore undergo revision; *i.e.*, that the Sultan must be compelled to grant his Christian subjects autonomous institutions, without distinction of nationality or religion. This was a plain offer to help Russia to shake off one of the heaviest fetters of the Paris Treaty as an inducement to counter-services on her part, which could only be intended to injure Germany. This attempt failed; whereupon Beust began to coquette with the Polish revolutionists. Another failure was the Austrian Chancellor's endeavour to prevent the South German States from drawing closer to the United North. These States, it is true, did not yet join the Northern Confederation; but they came into the newly organised Customs' Union; and the community of German defensive forces achieved by Bismarck with the offensive and defensive treaty of 1869, was thus completed by a Commercial Union. More success appeared to attend Beust's intrigues in the direction of an Austro-Franco-Italian alliance against Germany; indeed, this combination was only postponed on account of France's aversion to the annexation of the Papal States with Rome,

and finally knocked on the head by the German successes at Woerth and Spicheren; moreover, that Austria did not take arms against Germany during the later phases of the Franco-German war was mainly owing to the well-founded apprehension that Russia would seize the opportunity of taking her revenge for Buol's behaviour during the Crimean war, and thus annihilate Austria's hopes in the East.

Despite the ambiguous and even hostile policy of the Vienna Cabinet during the war of 1870–1, Bismarck endeavoured once more—shortly after the fall of Napoleon—to bring about a *rapprochement* towards Austria, and upon an entirely new basis, connected with the proclamation of the Republic in Paris.

On September, 12, 1870, Prince Luitpold of Bavaria had a long conversation with the Chancellor at Reims, in the course of which the latter (as he observed at tea-time the same evening) "read him a historical and political lecture."

I have reason to believe that this conversation was the preface or prologue to a series (frequently interrupted) of negotiations between Bismarck and the Courts of Vienna and Petersburg, which gradually led to an understanding, and finally—in all probability under the influence of considerations other than those at first discussed—to the so-called League of the Three Emperors. That "historical and political lecture" had the object of prompting Prince Luitpold to write a letter to his brother-in-law in Vienna, Archduke Albrecht, whose connection with His Royal Highness appeared one of the few available means of getting at the Emperor Francis Joseph *direct*, and of bringing to his knowledge certain unadulterate facts, upon which he might reflect. What follows was imparted to His Majesty in this manner.

"The turn which affairs have taken in Paris reveals, in

Germany's present war with France, the defence of the monarchico-conservative principle against that of Republican Socialism, which latter the present rulers of France have inscribed upon their flag. The proclamation of the Republic has been hailed with applause in Spain, and the same may be expected in Italy. In this lies a great danger to the monarchically-governed countries of Europe. As opposed to the solidarity of Republican and Revolutionary interests, the surest guarantee for the cause of order and civilisation would consist in a solid coalition of the elements which—as Germany, Austria, and Russia—still firmly sustain the monarchical principle. Austria, however, can only be classed in this category if she will recognise that the attempts she has hitherto made in Cis-Leithania, in the way of Liberal institutions, have been as utter a mistake as her national experiments in the direction of Poland. The summons of the Polish writer Claczko (a Jew, formerly one of the Emperor Napoleon's agents) to the immediate *entourage* of the Austrian Chancellor, who is very well acquainted with his position and tendencies, and the latest utterances of the Pole in question, must be regarded as symptoms of Beust's own views and intentions. This co-operation of Beust with the Polish revolutionists, and the manifest hostility to Russia involved therein, constitute a serious impediment, in the opinion of the German Chancellor, to the establishment of good relations with Austria, as he cannot but perceive in them a feeling and purpose hostile to Prussia and Germany. Besides this, there is to be considered the situation of the extra-Hungarian portions of the Dual Realm, which can only be dealt with by a Conservative policy. Only through a frank and confidential connection with United Germany and Russia can Austria regain the grip of the revolutionary and centrifugal elements in

her very midst, of which she stands in need, and which she has lost through Count Beust's calamitous policy."

Prince Luitpold's letter, based upon these representations, had no success in Vienna. The Archduke Albrecht showed it to the Emperor, and to Count Beust as well, and returned an answer inspired by the latter, to the effect that Austria would experience no desire for a *rapprochement* as long as her interests should not be favourably affected by an offer, on the part of Prussia, of exceptional political advantages. If, as it would appear, Prussia wished to draw nearer to Austria, the latter as yet failed to perceive what Prussia had to offer as a "consideration" to her, although her interests were multifarious. The Emperor would readily give his best attention to whatever might reach him through his government.

This attempt to achieve something in Vienna by means of the Bavarian Prince was reported to Czar Alexander, to whom at the same time was pointed out the manifest connection of the Paris *régime* with the revolutionary propaganda throughout Europe, as well as the desirability of a solid coalition there-against of the three Eastern Powers, and the necessity for Germany to avoid (in concluding peace with France) everything which, by neglecting the real requirements of the nation for the protection and security of its frontiers, might afford the revolutionary party in Germany itself a pretext for poisoning public opinion. The Czar expressed his concurrence in these statements, and his urgent wish that a firm coalition of monarchical elements, wherewith to contend against revolutionism, could be effected.

Again during the war Bismarck took a conciliatory step at Vienna, by instructing the Prussian Envoy there (Dec. 5, 1870) to inform Count Beust that Germany, newly con-

stituted by the Versailles treaties with the Southern States, wished to contract relations of unreserved friendship with Austria-Hungary. He repeated this on the 14th, with the formal notification that Germany was constituted anew; and this time Beust could not avoid replying that, in the unification of Germany under Prussian leading, he recognised an act of historical significance, an achievement of the first rank in the modern development of Europe, and politely expressing the hope that the two neighbour-States might get on amicably together.

After the revolt of the Parisian Communists, that event (as well as the apparition of the *Internationale*, to which great importance was attached by the press) was utilised to bring to pass a coalition of the Conservative Powers against the uprising Republican-Socialistic forces, and this time with some success; for Beust declared his readiness to join such a coalition within certain limits. Indeed, he sent in an elaborate essay upon the means of contending against the Socialist agitation, and a conference of Austrian and Prussian plenipotentiaries was arranged for the purpose of discussing the subject. But what Bismarck had chiefly in view when he mooted this question, namely, an alliance of Germany, Russia and Austria-Hungary against the revolutionary party and other adversaries, was not achieved. It came to pass, however, when Andrassy succeeded Beust, at least during the Emperor Francis Joseph's visit to Berlin, where he met the Czar; and thenceforth the relations between Austria and Germany improved gradually until they assumed a friendly character, leading eventually (when the connection of both Powers with Russia became troubled) to the alliance at which Bismarck had aimed for many years past.

The improvement above alluded to manifested itself in the

field of diplomacy during the Berlin Congress, at which Bismarck recommended that the mandate of Europe should be granted to Austria to occupy Bosnia and the Herzegovina; and subsequently in the agreement of October 11, 1878, by which the Cabinet of Vienna conceded the abrogation of Article V. of the Treaty of Prague, stipulating that certain northern districts of Schleswig should be restored to Denmark at the wish of the population, expressed by free and unbiassed suffrage.

Bismarck's impartial attitude at the Berlin Congress—in particular, his advocacy of the Austrian occupancy of Bosnia—gave great offence to an important political party in Russia. Even the Russian official journals openly accused Germany of ingratitude. Muscovite wrath waxed hot, and the press prescribed a new war, its recipe running thus: "Constantinople must be captured at Berlin." The Russian Government itself gave vent to its displeasure in very forcible terms. When the time came for carrying out the Berlin stipulations, Russia addressed warnings to Berlin, to safeguard her interests and support her claims, that were successively urgent, imperative, and menacing; the claims in question being, in more than one case, unrighteous and dangerous. At last it seemed as if the influential circles of Petersburg seriously contemplated a campaign in Germany. Russia began to arm. Masses of Russian cavalry assembled near the western frontier of Poland. Prince Gortchakoff sounded France respecting her disposition towards an anti-German alliance.

"Matters standing thus"—in this strain will have run the German Chancellor's thoughts in the presence of these phenomena—"we must look out for an ally; for, although France appears quite peacefully disposed just at present, we cannot be sure that she will not attack us should a favour-

able opportunity present itself for so doing. England is of but small account for a war on terra firma; it therefore is obvious whose alliance we must seek. Every intelligent and unprejudiced person of the forty-two millions inhabiting the German Empire would wish that we should be on good terms with both Russia and Austria at the same time. If, however, we are, as now, compelled to choose between our two neighbours, there can be no hesitation about our choice. Not alone national motives point unmistakably to Austria-Hungary, amongst whose populations may be reckoned ten millions of Germans; for the Magyars are also on our side, and have been so for years past, the Poles of Galicia have not the least desire to be Russianised, nor have the Czechs, if we except a dozen or so of *Intransigeants*, who make a great deal of noise, signifying nothing. And even were Austria altogether Slav, we should have to give her the preference. Russia is strong enough to take care of herself, and we cannot be of much use to her as Allies. On the other hand it is essentially Austria's interest to have us for friends. *Per contra*, she can materially aid us in carrying out a policy, the main object of which is the maintenance of universal peace. If Austria-Hungary and Germany unite with this object in view, and stand back to back with their two millions of soldiers, like a gigantic square in the centre of the Continent, before the eyes of those who desire to break the peace, the more exalted Nihilistic politicians in Muscovy will scarcely venture to attempt the fulfilment of their projects."

These were the Chancellor's reflections when—in the summer of 1879, during his sojourn in Kissingen—he observed the Eastern horizon growing cloudier and cloudier. They were also the views of the vast majority of intelligent Germans. But few of those amongst the Teutonic Princes

who were endowed with judgment thought otherwise. Several of the most exalted personages at the Prussian Court shared Prince Bismarck's appreciation of the situation.

There was only one thing which seemed incompatible with his projects. Russia continued to threaten us; and he could only account for that circumstance by the assumption that an understanding between Vienna and Petersburg had either been effected, or was under weigh. The existence of a Russian party at the Austrian Emperor's Court, a journey made by Andrassy to Petersburg, and several other matters justified this apprehension; and it was not without painful forebodings that Bismarck went from Kissingen to Gastein in August. For, should it come to an Austro-Russian Alliance against Germany, France's adhesion to such a League would, at the most, be only a question of time. In that case it would be doubtful that England would stand by Germany. Austria's interests in the East were directly opposed to those of Russia; but it was nevertheless conceivable that Petersburg and Vienna should come to an understanding upon the following basis: Russia, within certain limits, to have her own way in the Balkan Peninsula, and, in return for this concession, to aid Austria in recovering, extending and strengthening her influence in Germany. In a word, Bismarck had good cause to regard the political look-out in South-Eastern Europe as a somewhat gloomy one.

Andrassy's arrival at Gastein entirely dispelled these clouds. From what he had to say it was evident that none of Bismarck's apprehensions anent Austria's possible relations to Russia were founded on fact. So the German Chancellor took occasion to bring forward his old project of an alliance between New Germany and her south-eastern neighbour: and this time the long-desired understanding

was achieved—the German statesman's cherished wish, the positive purpose of his endeavours, as far as Austria had been concerned, the completion of his work of 1866. To recapitulate briefly, we find him entertaining that wish as far back as the year 1852 and throughout a full quarter of a century; but, every time he attempted to realise it, being frustrated by the opposition offered to him successively, with more or less vigour, by the policy of Schwarzenberg, Buol, Rechberg, Mensdorff, and finally Beust.

Bismarck's notion, as long as the German Confederation existed, was that Austria should forego her pretension to be the absolutely supreme power in Germany, and to govern that country exclusively in her own interest—that she should cease to restrict and snub Prussia, allowing her to take up a position in the Confederation which would enable her to put forth her whole strength abroad, if necessary, on behalf of objects common to all the members of the Bund. Prussia, thus placed in possession of her just rights and finding her requirements taken into consideration, would cordially enter into faithful and firm relations with both Powers (Austria and the Bund) and pledge herself to rebut whatever attacks Austria might be menaced with on the part of her neighbours.

The Viennese statesmen shrank from concluding so equitable and natural an arrangement, and adhered to the line adopted by Austria immediately after 1848, clinging to the delusion that Prussia had most to fear from foreign attack, and stood in greater need of friendship and aid than any other European State—consequently, that she must submit to be treated patronisingly, even insolently, by Powers in a position to assist her. Therefore, in order to obtain justice, to safeguard her own existence (with which that of Germany itself was bound up) Prussia found herself

compelled, in 1866, to furnish practical proof that the assumptions of Austria's German policy were erroneous, and that Prussia, too, was a Great Power by no means dependent upon extraneous assistance, but able to take by force what was her due, if refused to her when she asked for it civilly. Austria was expelled from the Confederation, and Prussia came to terms with the other Confederates upon principles of fair dealing, creating fresh relations, which time has improved and completed. This success, however, did not induce Prince Bismarck to give up his old idea, which had to assume a new form, and to be prosecuted by other means. The next combination that occurred to the Chancellor was "an open and Constitutional Alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary, brought about by the co-operation of all the Constitutional factors in both countries, that is, in Germany, by the unanimous consent of the Emperor, Federal Diet, and Imperial Parliament—in Austria, by that of the Sovereign and the Delegates of Cis-and-Trans-Leithania." The steps he took towards this end led to nothing as long as Beust was in power. Andrassy's succession to office gave rise to hopes which were realised at Gastein and Vienna. On the whole he entertained the Bismarckian project favourably; but it was his desire that the elements of publicity and Constitutionalism should both be omitted from the contemplated Alliance. The Austrians, indeed, had several objections to the latter element, consisting chiefly in the nature of their Parliament, the party relations existing in Vienna and Cis-Leithania, and the dispositions of a good many of their Deputies to fault-finding and bargaining without sufficient knowledge of the subjects they are called upon to deal with.

On September 20, Bismarck quitted Gastein and arrived in Vienna on the morrow. It was his fourth visit to Vienna;

and he met with an extremely friendly reception. From the Emperor and his chief advisers down to the crowds that lined the streets as he drove through them and thronged the approaches to his hotel, one and all displayed the greatest eagerness to honour and gladden their renowned guest by demonstrations of sympathy. In order to receive him in person, Francis Joseph had interrupted his shooting arrangements in Styria. His Majesty sent a special aide-de-camp to meet and welcome him at the station; he returned his visit immediately; and, at the diplomatic dinner which he gave at his Castle of Schoenbrunn in honour of the German Chancellor, he advanced to the threshold of the drawing-room, when Bismarck was announced, *á l'encontre* of his illustrious visitor—distinctions which constituted striking exceptions to the rules of that strict Spanish etiquette which regulates existence at the Court of Vienna.

On September 22 Bismarck's project was discussed during a long audience accorded to him by the Emperor, who emphatically approved of it. The two following days were passed by Andrassy and Haymerle (destined to succeed the former in office) in discussing and settling the details of the treaty with Bismarck. Its text is not yet known to the public; but we are aware that it is a Defensive Alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary, stipulating that in case one of those States shall be attacked by two or more Powers the other contracting party shall come to its assistance *vi et armis.*

Not so promptly as the Austrians—perhaps, even with some reluctance—did the Emperor William give his sanction to an arrangement that—although a necessary measure of precaution against Russia's ill-will and manifestly hostile projects—appeared to be inspired by mistrust of the personal friendship entertained by Czar Alexander towards his

venerable uncle. The German Chancellor probably never worked so hard in his life, before or since, as he did during those days at Gastein and Vienna, whilst endeavouring to overcome His Majesty's opposition to the Austro-German Secret Treaty of Alliance.

This achievement cost him great labour and pains; but it was worth them all. Lord Salisbury, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaking of it at a public meeting, said: —"To those who care for the peace of Europe and take an interest in the independence of nations, I would exclaim: A crowning mercy has been vouchsafed to the world!" He regarded the Alliance from the standpoint of the English Conservative party; but his exclamation found a hearty echo in Germany and Austria-Hungary. The alliance was a benefit and blessing to both these States—an event of the first class—the triumphant result of a long series of meditations and endeavours on the part of that great genius who, with a hand as sure as that of Providence, guides the political destinies of the German race—the seal upon a great and promising work of reconciliation, long yearned for by all the leading intelligences of Germany—the concrete expression of the identity of New-Germany's interests with those of New Austria—the strongest cement that could bind together, in amicable relations, two great States upon the *terrain* of foreign policy.

Had this Alliance not been formally concluded, it would be at the present moment an urgent requirement for both these Powers, whose chief aim is the maintenance of peace, and would therefore have to be effected without delay. In the second place, should the allegation be true that it has only been concluded for five years, nothing could be more desirable, for obvious reasons, than that it should be prolonged, and to a considerable extent. Thirdly (taking

example by the completion of the military union between the Northern Confederation and the South German States by means of their economic community, brought about in 1867), it would only be natural that, whenever the Alliance shall be renewed and elaborated, it shall also be strengthened by the insertion of certain national-economical paragraphs; in other words, "the interests of both States would permit them to fortify and consolidate their good political relations by Treaties establishing closer economic connections." The circumstance that Cis-Leithania is a manufacturing country, whilst Trans-Leithania is agricultural, would seem at least to oppose no insurmountable barrier to the conclusion of some such arrangement.

END OF VOL. I.

OUR CHANCELLOR.

VOL. II.

OUR CHANCELLOR.

CHAPTER I.

BISMARCK AND THE FRENCH.

On June 16, 1860, Bismarck wrote from Petersburg to a Prussian diplomatist:—"Augsburger & Co." (the diplomatists of the Central German States) "are still afraid that I shall become a Minister, and think they can hinder me in that direction by abusing me and railing at my Franco-Russian tendencies. I feel honoured in being feared by Prussia's foes. As a matter of fact, my political predilections were so carefully sifted this spring by the Court and the Ministry, that both know exactly what I think, and how entirely I look to our national feeling for strength and ability to defend ourselves. If I have sold myself to the Foul Fiend, it is to a Teutonic, not to a Gallic devil." Shortly afterwards (August 22) he complains in another letter from Petersburg of systematic calumnies in the press accusing him of having supported Russo-French proposals that Prussia should give up her Rhenish provinces in exchange for territory in the interior of Germany, and replies thereto:—"I will pay a thousand golden Fredericks down on the nail to any man who can prove that these Russo-French proposals have been brought to my knowledge by any human being. During the whole of my stay in

Germany I have never counselled any other course, than in case of war, to rely exclusively upon the national force of Germany."

Even later on libels of the above description obtained currency, and were credited, not only by Progressists and Ultramontanists, but by exalted personages at Court. They owed their origin either to mendacious party-spirit or to the misapprehensions of persons who heard the bell but not the knocker. What follows will enable the reader to get at the exact truth, if he will take the trouble to read it by the light of the fifth chapter (Bismarck and Austria) of the preceding volume, in reference to Austrian policy during the Crimean war and to the attitude of the German Central States towards France. The contents of that chapter demonstrate that for some considerable time Bismarck had been compelled to take a French alliance into his calculations, but had never even dreamt of purchasing France's friendship by a cession of German territory.

When he was Envoy to the Bund he wrote to Manteuffel (April 26, 1856) about the position Prussia would be placed in by a Franco-Russian League, which then appeared probable; and, after pointing out the comparative worthlessness of an alliance with England, the untrustworthiness of the German Central States, and the faithless selfishness of the Vienna Cabinet, concluded as follows:—"If a Russo-French alliance with warlike purposes should really come about, it is my conviction that we could not afford to be reckoned amongst its opponents. . . . In order to keep every chance open to ourselves, we can do little for the moment but display a little inexpensive friendliness towards Louis Napoleon and repel any attempt on the part of Russia to take us in tow gratuitously and prematurely. When the Paris peace shall be ratified, no doubt the

respective Monarchs will exchange decorations, and it would certainly do us no good to exclude ourselves from this amiable demonstration at Paris, or even to participate in it sensibly later than others. You may be sure that Louis Napoleon, with his brand-new Court and personal vanity, will think more of the performance or omission of this act of amity than would the wearers of more ancient crowns." A little later (May 10) he recommends his chief to cultivate friendly relations to France, in view of a possible alliance with her, to what immediate end appears in the following remarks. "We cannot arrange the mutual relations of other Great Powers as we could wish them to be, but we can take the liberty of utilising, in conformity with our own security and interests, arrangements made without our co-operation, and possibly in contrariety to our wishes. Our relations to Russia, England and Austria are such as to offer no hindrance to a *rapprochement* towards any one of those Powers, if circumstances should render that step advisable. I do not say that the contrary is the case in respect to France; but there are so many germs of mutual estrangement in our respective historical and dynastic circumstances that nothing short of the most careful nursing of our relations with that country can possibly enable us to join her as easily as we could join any one of the three Powers above alluded to. I am not recommending a Franco-Prussian alliance *à priori;* but I deem it beyond dispute that our position would lose weight, and that other Cabinets would begin to treat us with less consideration, as soon as the contingency of an alliance with France should be effaced from the category of Prussia's potential resolves; and we may be unavoidably forced into choosing the least of two evils. Admitting this, it follows that our relations to France, for the time being, must be such as will allow us at any moment to

drew nearer to her without injury or humiliation to ourselves; and that the other Courts may remain under the impression that such a course is open to us. . . . Travellers returning from Paris relate that the Emperor Napoleon has expressed to Prussian officers the wish and hope to be present at a review of Prussian troops. As he seldom says anything unadvisedly or without an object, it may be inferred that he would like to be invited to Berlin. How this may be Hatzfeldt will know better than I; if it be correct I should regard his visit to our capital as a triumphant conclusion to Prussian policy in the Oriental question, and a shining illustration of its correctness. The Autocrat of the French just now exercises so decisive an influence upon European policy, and his friendship—or even the mere credit of its outward seeming—is so eagerly sought for by the mightiest Monarchs, that it would not only be a formal proof of recognition on his part, but a fact of political moment, were he to aspire to the honour of visiting our most gracious Sovereign before calling upon any other reigning personage. We may regret that such is the case; but we cannot alter facts, though we can utilise them; and, as matters stand, in my opinion a visit of the French Emperor to Berlin would be a diplomatic victory for us—our omission to invite him, if he really has a fancy to come, a political mistake."

It would really seem that the Emperor of the French at that time was earnestly disposed to make friends with Prussia. On November 4 Bismarck reported to his Minister a conversation he had had with Prince Napoleon during an evening party at the French Ambassador's. "The Prince devoted himself to me with an exclusiveness that was rather distressing to the rest of the company, and told me *inter alia* that the Neuenburg affair would turn out a lucky

incident if it should bring about a *rapprochement* between King Frederick William and the Emperor Napoleon. An alliance between Prussia and France, 'the two most civilised peoples in the world,' would be the most natural of all Leagues, and equally advantageous to both. France only demanded territorial increment if other Powers sought to enlarge their possessions." When the question of the Neuenburg Royalists (1857) threatened to lead to a Prussian campaign in Switzerland, and—at the conference assembled in Paris to settle the dispute—England and Austria opposed Prussia's claims, Count Walewski, the representative of France, "endeavoured to baffle England's objections upon each successive point;" and the Emperor (with whom Bismarck had several conversations on the subject by the order of his Government) was "very nice and pleasant," as the Chancellor himself told us during the Franco-Prussian war. Napoleon however would not comply with the King's wish that the Prussian troops told off to attack the Swiss should march through Elsass and Lothringen, on the ground that their doing so would arouse too much excitement in France. In other respects he approved of the undertaking, observing that "he should like nothing better than to see that nest of democrats swept away." He also shewed himself very friendly and willing to oblige in another question, at that time discussed between Bismarck and himself, namely, the Schleswig-Holstein business; and when Bismarck explained to the Emperor what, in his opinion, Denmark should do and leave undone in this matter to content Germany, and mentioned how desirable he thought it that the foreign Envoys at Copenhagen (in particular the representative of France) should privily support German claims as put forward by a Federal Commissioner there, Napoleon promised him the required

assistance, provided the existence of the Danish Monarchy should not be called in question by Germany's claims. In the following year, too, Bismarck had no reason to anticipate that the Emperor would take part against Germany in the question of the Duchies. In a report dated June 30, 1858, he observed :—"As far as I can see there is no reason to fear that France will seek a quarrel with Germany over *this* question. It is just possible that (should England lend herself to such a step) she may, later on, take up a demonstrative attitude in favour of Denmark together with Great Britain. But if France be on the look out for a continental war, in which England would not stand by her, I do not think the Emperor Napoleon is so unwise as to pick out the Holstein affair to fight about; for, if there is a question which just now would stir up national feeling throughout Germany and unite German Governments against France, even despite themselves, it is this one. Hence it is far from probable that Napoleon—if he deems himself compelled to get up a war—will choose German territory for his attack. Whosoever asserts that he will select (as the pretext for that attack) a question which has been for years past flaunted on high as a symbol of German national honour, regarded by every Teuton as the soundest test of patriotism and the surest means of achieving popular favour, has special reasons of his own, either for creating a panic, or for impugning the sound common-sense of the French Emperor."

This appreciation of Napoleon was proved to be absolutely correct in January 1864. When Lord Russell proposed to France an "eventual co-operation with England, by which material support should be afforded to Denmark in her resistance to ambition," Napoleon declined the suggestion, and his refusal was thus explained in a

despatch of his Minister Drouyn de l'Huys:—"The Emperor recognises the importance of the London Treaty, so far as the latter aims at maintaining the equilibrium and peace of Europe. Fully approving of that object the French Government, however, opines that circumstances call for some alteration of the treaty. The Emperor has always been disposed to accord great consideration to the feelings and efforts of nationalities. It cannot be ignored that the national feelings and efforts of Germany are bent upon a closer union with the Germans of Schleswig-Holstein. Any step that would place him under the obligation to contend in arms against Germany's wishes would be repugnant to the Emperor. Schleswig and England lie far apart. But the territories of Germany and France touch, and a war between these Powers would be the most calamitous and risky enterprise the Emperor could possibly undertake. Besides, the Emperor cannot but bear in mind that he has been made the object of mistrust and suspicion in Europe on account of his alleged projects of aggrandisement upon the Rhine. To commence a war on his Rhenish frontier would lend still greater force to this baseless and unjustifiable accusation. . . . Should the balance of power be seriously menaced later on, the Emperor would be disposed to take fresh measures in the interest of France and Europe; but at present he desires to reserve full freedom of action to his government."

Napoleon's forbearance was based, as we shall see, upon the calculation that it would predispose Prussia to come to an understanding with him at some future period respecting certain enterprises, to be undertaken in common for his advantage. On the other hand, Bismarck took care to foster the Emperor's friendly feeling in every way compatible with the interests of Germany. Speaking on this

subject (February 21, 1879) in the Reichstag, he observed: "I had every reason for keeping up this good understanding, by means of which I succeeded—not only whilst I was Envoy in Paris, but throughout the difficulties of the Polish 1863 crisis, when France was opposed to us—in maintaining such a favourable disposition towards us, that, in the Danish question, France's friendly behaviour cut the ground from under the feet of other powers which had a fancy not to allow us to fight out our quarrel with Denmark single-handed. Still more, during our heavier struggle with Austria in 1866, France's self-restraint would certainly not have been carried so far as (fortunately for us) it was, had I not bestowed every possible care upon our relations with her, thereby bringing about a 'benevolent' connection with the Emperor Napoleon, who, for his part, liked to have treaties with us better than with others; but who undoubtedly did not foresee that the 1866 war would terminate in our favour. He reckoned upon our being beaten, and upon then according us his protection—benevolently, but not gratuitously. Politically speaking, however, it was lucky for us, in my opinion, that he remained amicably disposed towards us, and particularly towards me, up to the battle of Sadowa."

The Emperor's good-will was partly the result of Bismarck's conciliatory behaviour, and partly of the hope that—by exchanging favours with him in time of peace, or by effecting later on an alliance having for its purpose common action in the direction of a common goal, or by playing a double game of temptation and deceit—he might attain certain ends steadfastly kept in view by Napoleon throughout all his dealings with Germany. In this latter respect he misjudged the Prussian statesman with whom he had to do. Just as Bismarck (in the sixties) seems to have thought Napoleon more intelligent than, upon further experience,

he pronounced him to be (in Versailles he spoke of him to us as "lacking information," "stupid and sentimental" and "a Tiefenbacher") so it is manifest that Napoleon did not understand Bismarck's capacity and character, that he mistook his ease of manner for frivolity, his frankness for inconsiderateness, and was deluded enough to imagine him wanting in patriotic feeling. Napoleon regarded Bismarck as a person at once frivolous and simple. "*Ce n'est pas un homme sérieux*," he said of him, just after one of Bismarck's visits in Paris; and it is not impossible that the latter may have given him some cause to express that opinion. But he did not look deep enough. There was one amongst his *entourage* gifted with clearer sight and brighter intelligence than he, although not a professional politician. Prospère Merimée, writing to "Une Inconnue" (October, 14, 1863), after having made Bismarck's acquaintance at Biarritz, remarked:—"Another personage, M. de Bismarck, pleased me still better. He is a tall German, very polite and not at all *naïf*. There is no sentiment about him, but plenty of wit. He has quite captivated me." Later on (July 15, 1866) he wrote to his friend Panizzi:—"As for Bismarck, he is my hero. Although himself a German, he seems to understand the Germans thoroughly, and to take them for the blockheads they are." In a third letter (Dec. 1867), after stigmatising "Ollivier *et tutti quanti*" as "word-spinners and second-rate actors, who never take anybody in," he adds:—"We are getting more and more crumpled up every day. There is only one great man left; and that is M. de Bismarck."

We now come to Napoleon's successive attempts to gain Bismarck over to a compact that should prove profitable to France. Hints and proposals in this direction reached him even before he undertook the direction of the Prussian

Foreign Office; for, in his Circular to the diplomatic representatives of the North German Confederation (July 29, 1870), he expressly states:—"The French Government's endeavours to secure the aid of Prussia in carrying out its covetous projects with respect to Belgium and the Rhenish frontier were brought to my knowledge before 1862. . . . These tendencies of the French Government first became manifest (as producing a visible effect upon European politics) in France's friendly behaviour towards us during the German-Danish difficulty. Her subsequent ill-humour with us, anent the Treaty of Gastein, was caused by the apprehension that a lasting consolidation of the Austro-Prussian Alliance would deprive the Cabinet of Paris of the fruits of that behaviour."

The ill-humour alluded to, expressed itself in Drouyn de l'Huys' Circular Despatch of August 29, 1865, denouncing the Austro-Prussian action in the Elbe Duchies as arbitrary and violent—repugnant to a sense of justice and to the dictates of conscience. Napoleon indignant at violent proceedings! The Man of December a prophet of righteousness and conscientiousness! The truth was that the Gastein Convention crossed his plans and expectations. "France," continued Bismarck (Circular Despatch, July 29, 1870) "had reckoned in 1865 upon war breaking out between us and Austria, and drew nearer to us readily enough as soon as our relations to Vienna became troubled." In a declaration made by the French Government at Berlin (September 23, 1865), it was observed that the views expressed in Drouyn de l'Huys' Circular Despatch (August 29, 1863) need not be regarded as more binding than the Treaty of Gastein itself, and that France noticed with pleasure, according to the Berlin Cabinet's assurance, that the latter agreement was of a purely provisional nature.

The Gastein Convention was, in fact, only a time-bargain, postponing the definitive solution of the German question; and as that solution, in all probability, could only be achieved by a war between Austria and Prussia; as, moreover, it might be confidently anticipated that the great majority of the German States would side with the former; it became necessary for Bismarck to make sure of French non-intervention on the one hand, and, on the other, to secure an ally whose strength might counterbalance the support given to Austria by the German States. Such an ally was Italy, with whom Prussia had hitherto not stood upon the most friendly footing, but towards whom her Austrian difficulty compelled her to turn for assistance. Italy, however, was under obligations to Napoleon, and dependent upon his good will to boot. Therefore Bismarck had to come to an understanding with the Emperor of the French in this direction as well as others. The then Prussian Envoy in Paris not proving equal to conducting the needful negotiations, Bismarck himself (November 1863) went to see Napoleon at Biarritz, and talked the matter over with him *tête-à-tête.* Nothing positively authentic has transpired respecting the interviews that then took place; but it may be concluded from Napoleon's subsequent behaviour that the Prussian Minister—whilst avoiding any binding obligations on the part of Prussia—succeeded in inducing the Emperor to promise him benevolent neutrality in the case of an Austro-Prussian war, and furtherance of his projects with regard to Italy. We shall soon see that Napoleon entertained an *arrière-pensée*—that he hoped Prussia would be defeated, so that he might have an opportunity of offering her his assistance, to be paid for by a cession of German territory. But of all this nothing was said at Biarritz. Later on Napoleon repeatedly essayed, by offering his aid

against Austria, to persuade Bismarck to make concessions such as might satisfy French cupidity. In the often-quoted Circular Despatch of 1870 it is observed: "Before the War with Austria broke out, proposals were repeatedly made to me, sometimes by relatives of the French Emperor (Prince Napoleon), sometimes by confidential agents, all of which aimed at smaller or larger transactions in the nature of achieving territorial aggrandisement to both France and Prussia. Now Luxemburg was hinted at—then, the 1814 frontier with Landau and Saarlouis—again, matters of even more importance, including (for instance) French Switzerland and the vexed question where the language-frontier line was to be drawn in Piedmont. In May 1866 these suggestions took the form of a proposal for an offensive and defensive treaty, the following bases of which remained in my hands:—" 1. If the Congress comes off, the Allies are to negotiate in common for the cession of Venetia to Italy and the incorporation of the Elbe Duchies in Prussia. 2. If the Congress comes to nothing, a Franco-Prussian offensive and defensive alliance. 3. Ten days after the Congress shall break up the King of Prussia will commence hostilities. 4. Should the Congress not assemble, Prussia will attack thirty days after signing the present Treaty. 5. The Emperor of the French will declare war upon Austria as soon as hostilities between Prussia and Austria shall have begun. 6. Neither contracting party shall conclude a separate peace with Austria. 7. Peace shall only be concluded upon the following terms:—Italy shall get Venetia; Prussia, the hereafter specified German territories with seven or eight millions of souls, as she shall select them, and Federal Reform in the Prussian sense of the word; France, the districts between the Moselle and the Rhine, with 500,000 souls, from Prussia; the Bavarian territories on the left bank of the

Rhine; and Birkenfeld, Homburg and Darmstadt (Hessian territory on the left bank of the Rhine) with 213,000 souls. 8. A military and maritime Convention between France and Prussia, as soon as the Alliance Treaty shall be signed. 9. The King of Italy shall join the Alliance." Anybody who is acquainted with the secret diplomatic and military history of the year 1868 will perceive, flickering through the crannies of these clauses, the policy observed by France, firstly towards Italy (with whom she was also in negotiation) and secondly towards Prussia and Italy together. After we had (in June 1866) declined the above project of alliance, despite repeated and menacing warnings to accept it, the French Government could only reckon upon our defeat by Austria, and upon taking advantage of our eventual reverses. For this French politicians commenced making preparations to the very best of their ability.

These last words refer to the series of negotiations which resulted in the Franco-Austrian Secret Treaty of June 12, 1866. Napoleon played a double game, as was his wont. Whilst seeming to favour Prussia, and personally endeavouring to gain her over, he directed his Minister of Foreign Affairs (theretofore left in utter ignorance of the whole project) to negotiate with the Vienna Cabinet respecting the conditions of French neutrality, ardently wished and sought for by the Austrian Government. Drouyn de l'Huys was of opinion that war between Prussia and Austria must be prevented, and that, should this prove impossible, France must cast her influence into the scale on behalf of Austria. Later on he spoke very decisively in this sense to a Guelphic agent (see Meding's 'Memoiren zur Zeitgeschichte,' Part II., p. 54), as follows:—"Old France found the House of Hapsburg opposed to it everywhere—in Germany, Italy and the Netherlands—and it therefore became the object

of the Bourbon policy to contend against Austria in all directions, to shatter her power and undermine her influence. This is no longer the case. Wherever France formerly encountered the Hapsburg Empire in her path she now comes into collision with Prussia. Prussia aims at the political and military unification of Germany; Napoleonic France, therefore, is called upon to advance in every direction against Prussia and on behalf of Germany." Napoleon instructed his Minister to take action in conformity with this view of the matter; and, whilst he himself was striving to contract an alliance with Prussia, he took care to keep the alternative of a compact with Vienna open, should his endeavours at Berlin fail. Should the Austrians prove victorious, he thought he saw his way to make an arrangement with Prussia upon terms favourable to France. Should Prussia gain the day, he could plead Austria's cause, and at least be sure of taking a hand in the diplomatic rubber. Meanwhile he was in a position to cause all manner of hindrances to prudish Prussia. The Franco-Austrian negotiations were somewhat spun out, and only led to an understanding after Bismarck had rejected Napoleon's proposals in May. It was then that France pledged herself to remain absolutely neutral, in the case of an Austro-Prussia war, and to do her best to keep the Italians from taking part in the struggle. On her part Austria promised, should her arms triumph, to cede Venetia to France in case Italy should participate in the war and be beaten; not to alter the *status quo ante bellum* as far as Lombardy was concerned; and finally, to obtain France's consent, when peace should be made, before accepting any territorial change that might upset European equilibrium. The advantages accruing to Napoleon through these conditions are obvious; he might eventually put

the Italians, as in 1859, under an obligation to him by handing over Venetia to Victor Emmanuel, and, however matters might turn out, he secured a claim to take part in the peace-making transactions. To this latter privilege he acquired a further right by declaring that, should Austria win the fray, he would not oppose a territorial enlargement of the Empire, as long as such aggrandisement should not alter the balance of power in Europe, and as Austria should refrain from unifying Germany under her own hegemony.

The proposals made by Napoleon to Bismarck resulted as we have already mentioned, from the former's ignorance of German affairs and erroneous judgment of the man to whom he addressed himself. The 1870 Circular Despatch observes: "I scarcely need point out that the French Government's belief in the possibility of such a transaction with a German Minister, whose position is conditional upon his self-identification with German national feeling, can only be explained by the fact that French statesmen are absolutely unacquainted with the fundamental conditions of the very existence of other peoples. Had the diplomatic agents of the Paris Cabinet been ordinarily capable of taking stock of German conditions, the French Government would never have yielded itself up to the illusion that Prussia could ever consent to settle Germany's affairs with the aid of France. . . . I never for a moment doubted the impossibility of falling in with any of the proposals made to me; but I deemed it opportune, in the interests of peace" (before 1866, and during that year, in order to hinder France from contracting an alliance with Prussia's enemies) "to let the French statesmen revel in their extraordinary illusions as long as might be without promising them the least thing, even verbally."

According to a private letter from Benedetti to Drouyn de l'Huys, dated January 4, 1866, this was by no means

the case. The French Ambassador refers therein to a conversation he had had the previous day with Bismarck, as follows :—"I gather from his hints that the King persists in repudiating the very possibility of ceding any portion of the present Prussian territories. . . . In His Majesty's opinion (so, at least, says M. de Bismarck) the compensations he might feel disposed to offer to France would be selected from amongst those districts on his frontiers in which French is spoken. The Minister-President had observed to the King that these districts must be conquered before they could be disposed of. But he let fall the words 'If France were to demand Cologne, Bonn and Mayence, I would rather retire from the political stage than consent to their cession.'" Benedetti's report goes on to say:—"Without my urging him to make any further declarations he hinted that he did not deem it impossible to induce the King to give up to us the banks of the Upper Moselle, which—with Luxemburg, where union with France would be cheerfully accepted—would regulate our frontier in a manner quite satisfactory to us."

The Chancellor has publicly (in the Lower House) declared these last assertions, and similar ones put forward by La Marmora, to be false; and future historians will not hesitate a moment as to whether they shall believe him or the Frenchman who passed through the Oriental school of lying and intriguing in Egypt, the member of the Italian Consorteria, and those whom both appealed to as witnesses. On the 16th January, 1874, Von Mallinckrodt, referring to La Marmora's "Revelations" in the pamphlet "Un po' più di luce," then just published, vehemently reproached the Chancellor with having said, during his negotiations with General Govone in 1866, that he was less a German than a Prussian in feeling, and would not hesitate long to

cede to the French a slice of the Rhine's left bank—say the Rhenish Palatinate, and those portions of the Coblenz and Trèves Government Districts which lie to the right of the Moselle. As soon as he heard of this attack on the part of the Ultramontane Leader, Bismarck hurried down to the House, and there declared:—"I am compelled to stigmatise this assertion in the strongest terms, as a vile and lying invention, which the Deputy has, of course, not fabricated, but which has been fabricated elsewhere. Not a single syllable of it is true. I never held out the prospect to anybody of ceding a single German village, or even as much as a clover-field. Everything that has been alleged and circulated of that description I declare to have been, from first to last, what I have already said it is—a vile calumnious lie, invented to blacken my character."

With respect to the Govone incident the truth was that the Italian negotiator besought Bismarck to come to terms with France before the war, so that Italy might be safeguarded; that the Minister-President replied, "Such an arrangement is desirable, but very difficult to make, because France exacts conditions we cannot fulfil;" that Govone then inquired whether there were not some morsel of land across the Rhine, the inhabitants of which would be content to become French subjects; and that Bismarck gave answer, "There is nothing of the sort; even French agents, employed to sound popular feeling in such districts, report that no vote in favour of France could be obtained therein, save by fraudulent means; moreover, public opinion in Germany would sooner forgive Prussia for a second Olmuetz, *vis-à-vis* of Austria, than for ceding any German territory to a foreign Power."

The war between Prussia and Austria with her German

following was soon brought to a close by Prussian victories. How Napoleon claimed and exercised the right of mediation during peace-negotiations has been shown in the previous chapter. Prussia did not reject his proposal of an armistice (made at Austria's request), but did not unconditionally accept the offers resulting therefrom. The definitive peace was concluded between Prussia and Austria, without France's co-operation; and the latter's intervention proved of no practical advantage to her, except that New Germany was divided by the Main-Line into two portions, of which the Southern one might possibly become dependent upon France. Bismarck had scarcely got back to Berlin when Napoleon came to the front with new demands for compensation. Prussia, however, against his will, by annexations, and by the acquisition of North German military reinforcements of considerable magnitude, had become a first-class Power, strong enough to repel suggestions of this kind. Nevertheless the Emperor tried his luck. On July 26, 1866, Benedetti had had a conversation with Bismarck, at Nikolsburg, in which he acquainted him generally with the demands in question. On his arrival in Berlin he received from Vichy (where Napoleon was then staying) a telegraphic despatch containing the text of a secret compact which he was to submit for acceptance to the Prussian Government. It ran as follows:—"Article I.—The French Empire re-enters into possession of the territories which (now belonging to Prussia) were within the French frontiers of 1814. Article II.—Prussia pledges herself to exact from the King of Bavaria and the Grand Duke of Hesse the cession to France (against compensation) of the territories owned by them on the left bank of the Rhine. Article III.—The arrangements connecting certain territories belonging to the King of the Netherlands with the German

Confederation, as well as those which concern the right of garrison in the Fortress of Luxemburg, are hereby revoked." Benedetti wrote back at once that he would leave no stone unturned to bring about the unmodified acceptance of these dispositions, however stubborn might prove the resistance with which he expected to be encountered. "Convinced," he continued, "that the Imperial Government has kept within the bounds of equity by limiting itself to demanding the guarantees rendered necessary by Prussia's territorial aggrandisement, I shall not be easily induced to put up with alterations of any moment. In this matter I regard firmness as the best means—frankly speaking, the only argument—to be employed, and shall therefore resolutely reject any proposals lacking in consideration for us. I shall steadfastly point out that Prussia would ignore the dictates of justice and prudence, besides proving her ingratitude, were she to refuse to us the guarantee which the enlargement of her frontiers compels us to demand. But, to go cleverly to work, I am of opinion that I—taking the Minister-President's character into consideration—should avoid being a witness to the first impression that will be made upon him by the news that we require the Rhine-bank and the fortress of Mayence to be restored to us."

The French Ambassador, therefore, on August 5, forwarded the draft treaty to Count Bismarck with a private note requesting him to look over France's proposals carefully, and placing himself at the Chancellor's disposition in order to discuss them. Bismarck "did not hesitate for a moment about the answer, which could not be other than a positive refusal." On the 6th he had an interview with Benedetti, during which the latter warmly recommended the French demands, and threatened a declaration of war

should they be rejected. Bismarck replied: "Very well; let it be war then!" but advised the Ambassador to go to Paris, and avert that eventuality. Benedetti declared that he should certainly go to Paris, but only to urge the Emperor to maintain his demands; for he believed the very existence of the dynasty would be endangered unless public feeling in France should be tranquillised by some such concession on the part of Germany. Bismarck rejoined: "You had better point out to His Majesty the Emperor that, under certain circumstances, this war may become a struggle fought with revolutionary weapons; and that, as far as revolutionary dangers are concerned, the German dynasty would probably exhibit greater firmness than that of the Emperor Napoleon." With this message Benedetti went off to Paris, where he appears to have counselled withdrawal of the above demands. At any rate, Napoleon changed his mind, and Bismarck was informed that "Benedetti's instructions of the 5th had been extorted from the Emperor whilst he was unwell." About the same time (August 12) Napoleon wrote a letter to Lavalette which reminds one strikingly of the grapes pronounced sour by the fox when he could not get at them. It runs:—"In consequence of certain conferences between Benedetti and M. de Bismarck, M. Drouyn de l'Huys thought fit to send to Berlin a draft treaty concerning claims we might put forward to compensation. In my opinion this document ought to have been kept secret; but a good deal of noise has been made about it abroad, and the newspapers have gone so far as to say that the Rhine-Province has been refused to us. From my own conversation with Benedetti, I gather that, with but little profit, we should have the whole of Germany against us. It is of importance that public opinion should not be allowed to err upon this

point. Contradict all these reports energetically . . . . France's real interest is not to obtain an insignificant increase of territory, but to assist Germany to organise itself in a manner corresponding to our requirements and to those of Europe."

Bismarck's firm attitude had produced the desired effect. Mayence and the Franco-Prussian frontiers of 1814 were recognised in Paris to be unattainable, and thenceforth were asked for no more, or only *en passant*, as it were. On August 16, however, commenced another act in the drama of French compensation-claims; for one M. Chauvy, on that day, brought a letter from Paris to the Ambassador at Berlin, containing instructions for fresh negotiations. They were as follows:—"1. These negotiations shall be of a friendly character. 2. They shall be essentially confidential. 3. According to the prospects opened to you, your demands shall pass through three phases. In the first—having dealt with the 1814 frontiers and the incorporation of Belgium as one question—you will demand the cession of Landau, Saarbruecken and the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg by published treaty, as well as full authority to annex Belgium ultimately, on the basis of an offensive and defensive treaty of alliance, which must remain secret. If you find it impossible to obtain these conditions, you will renounce Saarlouis and Saarbruecken—Landau, too, an old, badly-fortified town, our possession of which would stir up German feeling against us—and limit your avowed arrangements to the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, your secret ones to the reunion of Belgium with France. Thirdly, if the pure and simple amalgamation of Belgium with France should encounter serious obstacles, you will content yourself with an Article making Antwerp a Free Town, which will certainly mitigate England's opposition to the annexation of the rest

of Belgium. To sum up :—First of all an avowed treaty, allotting to us Luxemburg at the very least; then a secret convention settling the terms of an offensive and defensive alliance and authorising France to annex Belgium at the first favourable opportunity; lastly, Prussia's pledge to stand by us *vi et armis.*" In compliance with these instructions, Benedetti drew up a treaty with Prussia which he forwarded to his Minister (August 23) with the remark :—"I need not tell you why Landau and Saarbruecken are not alluded to. I am fully convinced that we should get ourselves into insurmountable difficulties by insisting upon them, and have therefore confined myself to Luxemburg and Belgium." In reply Benedetti received a letter from Paris saying that his draft had made a good impression, and that time was required to think over it; treating, moreover, of the necessity of indemnifying the King of the Netherlands for Luxemburg with Prussian territory and of the pecuniary sacrifices possibly exacted by the treaty, and putting forward the views (pretty correctly) that the rights of garrison established by the former Federal Constitution had ceased to exist, wherefore their maintenance in South Germany would be incompatible with the independence of the Southern States stipulated by, and recorded in the Prague Treaty. Furthermore, Benedetti was repeatedly reminded that the annexation of Luxemburg was the immediate object of the Treaty; that the incorporation of Belgium was to be achieved, if possible; and that the latter project, as well as that of the offensive and defensive alliance, was to be kept absolutely secret.

That the Emperor knew all about Benedetti's draft treaty is demonstrated—as are his views upon another German matter—by one of his letters to Rouher, in which he writes :—"I send you the draft treaty with my own mar-

ginal notes. In addition to it we must verbally require that the fortresses formerly constructed with a purpose hostile to France must, after the dissolution of the German Confederation, no longer appertain to the new German League, but to the States in whose domains they stand; for instance, Luxemburg to France, Mayence and Saarlouis to Prussia, Landau to Bavaria, Rastatt to Baden, and Ulm to Wuertemberg. It seems to me that Prussia has a good deal of trouble with Saxony. Would it not be better that Prussia should annex a Protestant country and indemnify the King of Saxony upon the left bank of the Rhine—a Catholic territory? But all this must be only hinted at confidentially . . . The Luxemburg question will come to light of itself as soon as negotiations shall be opened about it. It is most urgent of all."

In his answer to Lavalette's letter of August 29, Benedetti for the first time expressed a doubt that Prussia was to be trusted in the matter, and remarked that Bismarck appeared to entertain some suspicion that the Emperor intended to utilise these negotiations in order to sow dissension between Prussia and England. "What confidence," he asked "can we repose in negotiators who are capable of such a calculation as this?" He alluded to General von Manteuffel's mission to Petersburg, and observed:—"I fear that M. de Bismarck has received assurances from other quarters which enable him to dispense with troubling himself about us. Prussia requires—as he is supposed to have told the King—an alliance with a Great Power; and if she rejects that of France it is because she has made sure of another, or is on the way to do so." In order to await an *éclaircissement*, the Ambassador went for a fortnight to Karlsbad. Whilst he was away, the Prussian Minister-President also went on a journey, and did not return until December, so that

Benedetti's draft treaty remained undiscussed during the interval.

Meanwhile Drouyn de l'Huys—whom the Emperor had disavowed in his letter to Rouher and elsewhere—resigned office (September 2); and Lavalette issued a Circular (September 16) to France's diplomatic agents abroad, expressing "the Emperor's views upon recent events in Germany, and explaining the motives of his policy." This document overflowed with statesmanlike sagacity, moderation, love of peace, benevolence and agreeable hopes; the Emperor, who unquestionably inspired its tone and ideas, declared himself quite extraordinarily satisfied with the results of the events in question. If one could only have put faith in his fine words! e.g. "France cannot practise an ambiguous policy. If she be affected in her interests or power by the important changes taking place in Germany, she must say so openly, and take the necessary measures to ensure her safety. If she lose nothing by these changes, she must admit that fact with equal frankness . . . . What do we see in the past? After 1815 the Holy Alliance united all the peoples of Europe, from the Ural to the Rhine, against France. The German Confederation, with Prussia and Austria, comprised a population of eighty millions; it extended from Luxemburg to Trieste, from the Baltic to Trent, and surrounded us with an iron girdle of five Federal fortresses; our strategical position was fettered by the most ingenious grouping of territories. The least difficulty that might occur between ourselves and Holland or Prussia on the Moselle, Germany on the Rhine, or Austria in the Tyrol, brought the whole collective might of the Confederation down upon us at once. Austrian Germany, impregnable on the Etsch, might be carried forward to the Alps at any opportune moment. Prussian Germany had an *avant-garde*

of those second-class States which were chronically agitated by the desire for political transformation and ever ready to regard France as the enemy of their being and endeavours. With the exception of Spain, no possible alliance was open to us throughout the whole Continent . . . Looking to the future of Europe, as recently re-arranged—what guarantee does it offer to France and to universal peace? The coalition of the three Northern Powers is broken up. The new principle governing Europe is that of liberty of alliance. All the Great Powers have fully recovered their independence and can mould their destinies as they please. Prussia, augmented and emancipated from any kind of solidarity, ensures the independence of Germany. In this, France need not see any shadow cast over herself. Proud of her admirable unity and indestructible nationality, she cannot oppose or condemn the work of fusion going on in Germany, or subordinate to feelings of jealousy the principles of nationality which she professes and represents. If German national feeling is satisfied, its agitation will subside, its enmities will be extinguished. In imitating France it takes a step nearer to us, not farther from us . . . If Austria, freed from her Italian and German liabilities, no longer wastes her strength in fruitless rivalry, but concentrates it in Eastern Europe, she still constitutes a Power of five and thirty millions, parted from France neither by animosity nor interest. Through what strange reaction of the past upon the future should public opinion recognise adversaries, instead of allies, in those nations which—enfranchised from past inimical to us—are summoned to new life, are guided by principles which are ours as well as theirs, and are inspired by ideas of progress, with which modern society is peacefully at one? An irresistible force prompts the peoples to gather together in massive conglomerations, causing petty States

to dissolve and vanish . . . The Emperor does not believe that the greatness of a country is dependent upon the debility of the peoples that surround it; in his opinion true equilibrium is to be found in the gratified wishes of European races. If these views be equitable and correct, the Emperor has done well to accept the rôle of a mediator, *non sine gloriâ*, to prevent useless and distressing bloodshed; to inculcate moderation in the victor; to mitigate the consequences of defeat by friendly intervention; and, in spite of all obstacles, to effect the restoration of peace. The Imperial Government has for a long time past put in practice its principles with relation to territorial aggrandisement. It understands—and has always understood—that annexations dictated by necessity should only connect with a realm populations akin to its own in manners and national feeling. . . France could only desire such territorial increase as should in no way affect her vigorous internal cohesiveness; but she must ever aim at her political and moral aggrandisement by making her influence useful to the main interests of civilisation. Nevertheless a justifiable sentiment prompts the agitation that thrills the country; a feeling we are bound to recognise and to direct into the proper groove. The successes of the late war teach us a serious lesson, which has fortunately not impinged upon our military honour; they show us the necessity of perfecting our army organisation without delay, so that we may be enabled to defend our territories. On the whole the horizon seems to be clear of menacing possibilities; dangerous problems, which had to be solved because they could not be got rid of, oppressed the spirits of the peoples; they might have forced themselves upon us in still more troublous times; they have found their natural solution without causing convulsions of too terrible a nature, and without the perilous

co-operation of revolutionary passions. A peace that rests upon such firm foundations will prove a lasting one." Yet the "perfectation" of the French military organisation was pronounced imperatively necessary!

The French Minister, Rouher, addressed the Legislative Body (March 18, 1867) in a similar sense when Thiers denounced the policy of the Government, declaring that, "France, in 1866, ought to have threatened the assailant of the German Confederation with war," and that "in the actual situation of affairs two courses were open to France; the first—a dangerous one—was to side with the ambitious (Prussia and Italy); the second, to place herself at the head of threatened interests, which would ensure peace." Napoleon's most trusted councillor admitted quite frankly in his speech that the victory of Koeniggraetz had alarmed "the highest circles" in Paris. "The 3rd of July," he said, "was a momentous day. In presence of that unexpected and improbable event the hearts of all the members of this Government were filled with patriotic anxiety."

On that very day the Luxemburg question—which Napoleon was then busy negotiating secretly with the King of the Netherlands—cropped up in the Parliament of the North German Confederation. On this occasion the Chancellor spoke as follows upon Luxemburg's position since the dissolution of the old Bund and formation of the new one:—"With respect to Luxemburg no wish has been expressed to us by the Sovereign of that country, its government or population, that the Duchy should join the North German Confederation. On our part we have neither asserted that Luxemburg or Limburg legally belong to Germany, nor have we declared that they do not. We cannot exercise compulsion or even constraint upon Sove-

reigns who do not choose to join the Confederation." In reply to Deputy von Carlowitz he observed:—"I fancy that the previous speaker has contradicted himself by asserting that one of the chief weaknesses of the former Bund was the circumstance that Sovereigns were members of it who owned large realms beyond its territorial limits, and by now recommending that the King of the Netherlands should be induced, as Grand-Duke of Luxemburg, to join the actual Bund, or, in default of his so doing, that we should deprive him of that Duchy, to which he has every imaginable right . . . If the previous speaker can manage to induce the Grand-Duke to come into the North German Confederation, he will be able to say that he has called an European question into existence; what more, Time alone could show."

Meanwhile Napoleon and the King of the Netherlands had come to terms about the sale of Luxemburg to the former; and the only question remaining unanswered was "How will they take it in Berlin?" On March 21 the French Minister, Moustier, wrote to the French Envoy at the Hague that the views of both Courts daily approached nearer and nearer to unanimity, and that new proofs of the population's desire to become united with France reached Paris continually. "We believe," he continued, "that the Grand Duke possesses the unrestricted right to dispose of Luxemburg, with the consent of its inhabitants, and that we have as indisputable a right to acquire that country under similar conditions. But we, as well as the King of the Netherlands, entertain the sincere wish to maintain good relations with the Court of Berlin; and it is impossible not to take into account the presence of a Prussian garrison, although no longer justified by any legal right . . . We have no objection to the Cabinet of Berlin being made ac-

quainted with these negotiations, but wish that the information may reach it through ourselves. Careful consideration of the question will, we hope, convince the King that, despite his natural desire to take the initiative in this confidential communication, it is necessary to leave to us the exclusive management of and responsibility for such a step. We will at once open confidential negotiations with Prussia in the matter, which cannot lead to any unpleasant result, it being our object to make this question a vehicle of *rapprochement*, not a cause of quarrel . . . I need not remind you that the persons admitted to this exchange of ideas must observe absolute silence with respect to it."

On March 28 the Prince of Orange telegraphed to the Emperor Napoleon that the King of the Netherlands consented to cede Luxemburg to France, and requested him (Napoleon) to come to an understanding with Prussia. Two days later Moustier expressed his regret to the French Envoy at the Hague that his Dutch colleague at Berlin had officially broached the affair to the Prussian Government without France's knowledge or co-operation. The next day Benedetti informed his chief in Paris that the Luxemburg business had created an excitement throughout Germany which appeared to agitate Bismarck considerably. The Chancellor had been apprised that the Liberals intended to interpellate him upon the matter, and therefore deemed it expedient that the conclusion of the compact between France and Holland should be postponed. On April 1 Benedetti received a telegram from Moustier, to this effect. "The new state of German affairs will obtain all the earlier recognition if the new Confederation conscientiously confines itself within the limits of its jurisdiction. M. de Bismarck's language has always led us to believe that he regarded matters from this point of view. The Minister-

President has surely influence and courage enough to indicate to German patriotism the boundaries within which it must contain itself in order not to wound the patriotism of other peoples."

On the same day Bennigsen asked the Chancellor in Parliament whether the daily multiplying rumours of negotiations between the French and Dutch Governments anent the cession of Luxemburg were founded on fact, and whether the Prussian Government were in a position to assure the Reichstag that it was resolved, in concord with its Confederates, to permanently ensure the connection of that ancient German province with the collective Fatherland (and in particular to vindicate the Prussian right of garrisoning the Fortress of Luxemburg) against any danger.

Bismarck replied as follows :—" After the dissolution of the Bund the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg and its Grand Duke enjoyed a sovereignty of the same European character as that of the Netherlands and their King. The great majority of the former Confederates utilised their liberty forthwith, as did Prussia, to form a new League for mutual support and protection of national interests. The Grand Duchy of Luxemburg did not think fit to follow their example. Through the organs of which we could dispose within the Duchy and upon its frontiers we learnt that a decided disinclination to join the North German Confederation was manifested by all classes of the population. In the higher—especially in the highest—circles" (this refers to the Queen of Holland, a Wuertemburg princess, who was an eager opponent of Prussia and Prussian policy, as her correspondence with Napoleon shows) "it was attributable to a strongly pronounced dislike of Prussia and her successes; in the lower strata of society, to a repugnance to those burdens which are inevitably imposed upon a people

by a serious system of National Defence. The sentiments of the Luxemburg Government found expression in a despatch addressed to us last October, endeavouring to prove to us that we had no right to maintain a garrison in Luxemburg. The Prussian Government and its Confederates were compelled to ask themselves whether, under these circumstances, it would be expedient to exercise influence, or even pressure, in the direction of inducing the Grand Duchy—which belongs to the Customs' Union—to join the North German Confederation as well. This government, after due reflection, answered that question in the negative, regarding it as a doubtful advantage to own as a member of so intimate a League the Grand Duke of Luxemburg, who—as King of the Netherlands—had his centre of gravity and chief interests outside the Bund. . . . This Government further considered that the treatment of this question required a high degree of prudence, by reason of Luxemburg's geographical position and peculiar circumstances. No more than justice has been rendered to Prussian policy by the declaration, made from an exalted quarter" (Moustier's telegram to Benedetti), "that it seeks to take account of the French nation's susceptibilities—naturally as far as is consistent with its own honour. This Government is and has been prompted to pursue that policy by its just appreciation of the importance which friendly relations to a mighty neighbouring people cannot but possess for the peaceful development of the German question. . . . We have no reason to believe that an absolute decision has been arrived at with respect to the future destiny of the Grand Duchy; we cannot allege the contrary with certainty; nor can we know whether or not, if such a decision have not been yet arrived at, it be on the point of completion. The only incidents which have enabled the Government to

take official cognizance of this matter are the following. A few days ago His Majesty the King of the Netherlands verbally asked the Prussian Envoy at the Hague to inform him what the Prussian Government would have to say if he (the King) were to part with his sovereignty in the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg. Count Perponcher was instructed by us to reply that this Government and its Confederates were in no way called upon to offer an opinion upon that question; that they must regard His Majesty as responsible for his own actions: and that the Prussian Government, before expressing its views, must ascertain those of its Confederates of the co-signatories of the 1839 Treaties, and of German public opinion, at present fitly represented by this exalted Assembly. The second incident was that the Dutch Government, through its Envoy here, offered us its friendly services in the negotiations it assumed were about to take place between Prussia and France with respect to the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg. To this offer we replied that we were not in a position to avail ourselves of the services in question, because no negotiations of that kind were on hand." Referring to the second part of the interpellation, the Chancellor said :—" It is couched in language highly appropriate to a Parliament inspired by national feeling—not in the terms employed by diplomacy, for the discussion of international relations, when these latter are to be maintained upon a peaceful footing. You cannot expect me to state publicly—as might be permissible to a representative of the people—at this moment what the views and resolves of the Government and its Confederates are in this case or that. The Confederate Governments are of opinion that no foreign Power will interfere with the indisputable rights of German States and German populations; they hope to be able to vindicate and protect those rights by

peaceful negotiations, without prejudicing the friendly relations which Germany has hitherto entertained with its neighbours."

There could be no question in Berlin of consenting to the cession of Luxemburg to France, in view of the general excitement aroused in Germany by that project. Impressed by the Fatherland's determined attitude, and mindful of the treaty concluded on March 19 with the South-German States by Bismarck (ensuring their support to the North German Confederation against France), Napoleon, who was not prepared to risk a war against United Germany, swiftly drew in his horns. On April 8 he made Moustier state in the Corps Législatif that the Emperor of the French and the King of the Netherlands had only "exchanged ideas" upon the Luxemburg question, and that their discussions "had not yet assumed an official character." The French Minister continued :—"True to the principles which have ever guided our policy, we never regarded the acquisition of this territory as possible, save under three conditions, viz.: the free consent of the Grand Duke, full consideration for the interests of the Great Powers, and the wish of the population, expressed by universal suffrage. We therefore propose (in concord with the other European Cabinets) to examine the clauses of the 1839 treaty, and shall proceed to do so in the most conciliatory spirit."

Although Napoleon renounced the annexation of the Grand-Duchy, he still demanded the withdrawal of the Prussian garrison from the fortress of Luxemburg, on the ground that "circumstances in Germany had entirely changed. The old Confederation's objects were purely defensive; its machinery was complicated, its action slow. Its forces were now concentrated in the hands of Prussia, and Luxemburg—held by a Prussian garrison—would no

longer be a mere position of defence for Germany, but of offence against France." Bismarck declined to accede to this demand of the Emperor, declaring that Prussia (in the actual state of German affairs) could not consent to any separation whatsoever of Luxemburg from Germany, or to the evacuation of the fortress. In reply, Moustier stated—through the representatives of France in London, Vienna, Florence, and Petersburg—that France sought for no territorial aggrandisement, but only to safeguard her frontiers, and therefore felt justified in anticipating that Prussia would allow none but friendly sentiments to govern her relations to France and would recognise the necessities of the latter's defensive position; *ergo*, that she would not insist upon continuing to garrison Luxemburg. France wished to establish amicable relations with Germany, and was therefore far from intending to make a *casus belli* of Prussia's refusal. The despatch concluded with these words:—"As our only anxiety is to ensure the safety of our frontiers, we will not beforehand reject any combination that may afford us sufficient guarantees in that direction." Lord Stanley telegraphed to the British Envoy in Berlin (April 17) that the British Government declined to pronounce judgment upon the question pending between Prussia and France; but, taking into account France's maritime preponderance, advised Prussia to give way. Beust proposed that Luxemburg should either be left in possession of the King of the Netherlands or handed over to Belgium, which, in return, should cede a portion of its territory to France; in either case the Prussians should evacuate the fortress. Bismarck favoured the second alternative; he wished to see Luxemburg re-united to Belgium. "By so doing," he observed to us in Versailles (January 25, 1871) "we should have amalgamated it with a country for the neutrality of

which, as was then believed, England would have taken action; moreover, we should have strengthened the German element in Belgium (the Flemings) against the Fransquillons, and gained a good frontier to boot. But I found no support in the Council." Public opinion in Germany was also unfavourable to this transaction; so the *status quo* was adhered to. Belgium would not cede anything to France; France wanted nothing from Belgium; so Beust's suggestion came to nothing. The British Cabinet recommended one of the three following courses:—1. Unreserved transfer of the fortress of Luxemburg to the King of the Netherlands. 2. Transfer of the same to the same after razing the fortifications. 3. Transfer of the same to Belgium, with or without ceding the Luxemburg Duchy to Belgium. Russia recommended a Conference for the settlement of the question upon the bases of the Grand Duchy's neutrality, to be guaranteed by the Great Powers; and Bismarck agreed to this, answering the British enquiry whether or not he were prepared to declare beforehand that Germany would forego her actual demands, if required to do so by the Conference (a question also addressed to France) that Prussia could not pledge herself to anything by anticipation. After the French Government, however, had declared that it would send a representative to a Conference and comply with the latter's decisions—provided it should be beforehand privately and confidentially settled that Luxemburg should be evacuated by the Prussians—the Chancellor expressed his willingness to do the like, observing that Prussia would consent to evacuate and raze the fortress, should that be the Conference's desire, and should the Conference at the same time accord a guarantee for the neutrality of all Luxemburg, similar to that securing the neutrality of Belgium. These conditions were accepted by all the Great

Powers as a basis for the transactions of the Conference, which subsequently adopted them as decisions. Luxemburg remained so far connected with Germany that it did not cease to be a member of the Customs' Union; and in 1872 Bismarck took care to arrange by treaty that the government of the German Empire should get the administration of all the Grand Duchy's railways into its own hands, thus binding it still more closely to Germany. He had not chosen to fight over the question, because (as he said in the Reichstag on September 24, 1867) "our independence was not menaced by it, nor was any unquestionable right disputed." War was honourably avoided, and Prussia's renunciation of her right of garrison in Luxemburg was fully balanced by the Powers' guarantee of that Duchy's neutrality.

The Luxemburg question seemed to have vanished for ever, when France again began to tout most energetically for an alliance with Prussia, having conquest for its object. Benedetti, as we have seen, had had no opportunity during the year 1866 of submitting to the German Chancellor the draft treaty which he had prepared in conformity with instructions brought to him by Chauvy, and had subsequently laid before the French Emperor. In the spring of 1867 he brought it to the Foreign Office in Berlin, discussed it with Bismarck, and committed the imprudence of leaving the original draft (written by himself upon official paper of the French Embassy) in the hands of the Chancellor. It ran as follows:—

"Their Majesties the King of Prussia and Emperor of the French, deeming it desirable to tighten the bonds of friendship that connect them, and to strengthen the relations of good neighbourship happily existing between their respective countries; convinced, moreover, that in order to attain this end, and to guarantee the maintenance of

universal peace, it is incumbent upon them to come to an understanding upon questions affecting their future relations, have resolved to conclude a Treaty with that object, and have therefore nominated —— and —— as their Plenipotentiaries, who have agreed upon the following articles:—Art. 1. The Emperor of the French admits and recognises the acquisitions made by Prussia during her recent war with Austria and the latter's Allies, as well as the creation of a confederation in North Germany, to the maintenance of which he pledges himself to lend his support." (When this article was read to him Bismarck at once observed to the Ambassador that its concluding sentence presupposed France's right to interfere in Germany's internal affairs—a right which he could not allow of, even in a secret document—whereupon Benedetti set a pencil mark against the sentence)." Article 11. His Majesty the King of Prussia promises to facilitate the acquisition of Luxemburg by France." (France having but just publicly renounced her pretensions thereto!) "To this end the Prussian Monarch will open negotiations with the King of the Netherlands in order to induce the latter to cede his sovereign rights in the Grand Duchy to the Emperor of the French against an adequate indemnity, or otherwise. In order to facilitate this transaction the Emperor, on his part, engages to take upon himself the pecuniary burdens it may entail. Article 3. The Emperor of the French will not oppose a Federal Union of the Northern Confederation with the Southern States of Germany—Austria excepted—and this Union may be based upon a common Parliament, safeguarding equitably, however, the Sovereignty of those States. Article 4. In case the Emperor of the French should be induced by circumstances to occupy Belgium with his troops, or to conquer

that country, the King of Prussia will lend him armed support, and stand by him with all his land and sea forces against any Power that may declare war upon him in that case. Article 5. In order to ensure the complete fulfilment of the foregoing stipulations, their Majesties conclude, by the present treaty, an offensive and defensive alliance, which they solemnly pledge themselves to maintain. Their Majesties, moreover, expressly engage to observe this alliance in every case in which their respective States (the integrity of which they reciprocally guarantee) may be menaced by attack; holding themselves bound, under such circumstances, to take (without hesitation or refusal upon any pretext whatsoever) the military measures dictated by their common interest, in conformity with the above clauses and dispositions."

In his book 'Ma Mission en Prusse,' Benedetti seeks to deny this, saying:—"It will be remembered that on August 5, 1866, I submitted to M. de Bismarck the project of a treaty concerning Mainz and the left bank of the Upper Rhine; and I need not say that M. Rouher referred to this communication in the second part of his letter of the 6th.* The project proves (a fact which it is desirable to establish in view of M. de Bismarck's allegations) that nobody in Paris even dreamt of making Belgium serve as

* It ran as follows:—"I pointed out to Herr von der Goltz that this question (of France's immediate official recognition of the Prussian annexations) appeared to me closely connected with that of the rectification of our frontiers, and that he would probably be instructed to deal with them both simultaneously. My prevision was correct; yesterday the Prussian Envoy communicated to me the reply of our colleague, which explains that Benedetti has spoken to M. de Bismarck in the above sense, and deems it expedient to await an answer to his proposals before proceeding to further negotiations. Herr von der Goltz finds our demands justified in principle."

the compensation required by France and designated as her just due by the Prussian Envoy himself." When the ex-Ambassador published his statement he was unaware that certain secret papers, distinctly contradicting it, had fallen into the hands of the Prussian troops during the war. With these documents the Prussian Foreign Office replied (October 29, 1871) as follows to Benedetti's *démenti*:—"Benedetti attempts to mix up two phases of the dilatory negotiations carried on with him by the Prussian Minister-President throughout several years. He amalgamates his demand for a cession of German territory with Mayence—which he addressed to the Minister-President on the 5th and 7th of August, 1866—with his subsequent demand for Belgium, and strives to show that the letters discovered in the Tuileries and since published have reference to the former exaction, which, however, was finally disposed of by the Emperor's letter to the Marquis de Lavalette, quoted by Benedetti at p. 181 of his book. That both phases were quite distinct from one another, even from his point of view, is manifest from his own official reports, which are in the hands of the German Foreign Office. When Benedetti asserts (p. 185) that Herr von Bismarck is mistaken in saying that the negotiations about Belgium were carried on in 1867, whereas they took place in 1866, all that can be observed is that the French Ambassador renewed in 1867 (limiting them to the question of Belgium) negotiations that, having completely failed with respect to Luxemburg, had been broken off in 1866; and which, as a matter of fact, had only been carried on at all by the Prussian Minister-President with a view to postponing a French attack upon Prussia."

What Bismarck thought about the Belgian question, when he regarded it from Napoleon's point of view, may be

gathered from some remarks he made to the Duke of Bauffremont (1867) in the Tuileries garden, upon which remarks he subsequently enlarged to us at Versailles (November 5, 1870). They were to the effect that the Emperor had not understood his advantages in 1866, when he might have done a good business, although not upon German soil. The Versailles commentary ran thus:—"In the summer of 1866 Napoleon had not the pluck to do what was the right thing from his point of view. He ought —well, he ought to have taken possession of the subject of Benedetti's proposal, when we were marching against the Austrians, and have held it in pawn for whatever might happen. At that time we could not stop him, and it was not likely that England would attack him—at least he might have waited to see. If we proved victorious he ought to have tried to work with us, back to back, and to encourage us to commit excesses. But he is a Tiefenbacher, and always will be."

Indications are not wanting that the endeavours of the French (failures up to spring of 1867) to obtain compensation for the alleged loss of power caused to them by Prussia's increase of power in 1866, were renewed in the shape of negotiations with Bismarck. Paris, at any rate, clung to its delusions, which were kept up by the fact that the German Chancellor, in all confidential discussions of the subject, committed himself to no positive declarations, either in the affirmative or negative, but expressed himself in general terms, hoping to achieve his ends by peaceful means.

His motives for this pursuing "a dilatory policy" have already been pointed out. Let him characterise them himself. In his circular of July 29, 1870, he said, "I opined that the annihilation of France's hopes would

endanger the peace which it was the interest of Germany and Europe to preserve. The various phases of French vexation and bellicoseness which we passed through from 1866 to 1869 coincided pretty exactly with the degrees of inclination or disinclination for negotiations of this kind which the French agent believed he detected in my behaviour. When the Belgian Railway dispute was terminating in March, 1868, Prince Napoleon (who was acquainted with the negotiations in question) observed to me that, should France occupy Belgium, "nous trouverions bien notre Belgique ailleurs," by which he perhaps meant South Germany, but still more probably Holland. It had been mentioned to me on previous occasions (during the Crimean War) that France would seek her share of war-booty immediately upon her own frontiers, not in the far East. I am under the impression that nothing short of the definitive conviction that France could not possibly achieve any territorial aggrandisement by our aid induced the Emperor to make up his mind that he would effect that object in defiance of us. I did not share the opinion of those politicians who advised me not to do all I could to avoid war with France, because it was inevitable. Nobody can exactly foresee the purposes of Divine Providence in the future; and I regard even a victorious war as an evil from which statesmanship should strive to preserve nations. I could not exclude from my calculations the possibility that chances might accrue in France's constitution and policy which might avert the necessity of war from two great neighbour-races—a hope in connection with which every postponement of a rupture was so much to the good."

To these concluding sentences a few commentaries may be added which the author of this book has gathered during his personal intercourse with the Chancellor. After the

debate in the Reichstag upon Baden's accession to the North German Confederation (February 23, 1870) my chief instructed me to explain his attitude towards the question in the public press, referring to the speech in which he had endeavoured to throw light upon the nature of the matter to Lasker and other importunate persons. "I would beg you," he said, "to give prominence to the circumstance that the National-Liberal journals have either not comprehended my chief purposes or have purposely ignored them. The incorporation of Baden would exercise pressure upon the King of Bavaria, and therefore be dangerous; besides, we have to consider the actual position of France, her Constitutional development, which has been in every way furthered from Berlin, and, as it means peace for us, must not be exposed to a spring-frost. The Arcadians are only waiting for an event in Germany. Napoleon is all right up to now, but weathercocky. We could fight France and beat her; but that would lead to four or five other wars, and would therefore be a folly—if not a crime—when we can get what we want by peaceful means. Bellicose or revolutionary situations may crop up in France when metal that is hard now shall have become softer. There was a movement forward in my speech, which the good folks did not notice, viz., the hint that, under certain circumstances, we might not adopt the Austrian view—that South Germany may not be taken into the Northern Confederation—or the French one, extending that prohibition to any and every single southern State. That was a feeler. I shall only know what to do further when I shall have heard how they have taken the hint in Vienna and Paris."

A few days later, by his order and at his dictation, I wrote a "correspondence" for a Rhenish paper, purporting to emanate from a Parisian Liberal, and to express his views

of the German question and of the struggle between the National-Liberals and the Chancellor. The second part of this article, reproducing the Chancellor's utterances verbally, ran as follows :—"Whosoever, here in Paris, has been in a position to observe with what difficulty the actual Constitutional phase has been attained, what difficulties it has to overcome in order to achieve a healthy growth, how mighty are the influences which are only awaiting any pretext for smothering the babe in its cradle, will regard the horizon abroad with anxiety, and feel his hopes of a certain and tranquil development of the new system depressed by every black spot thereon. The urgent desire of every sincere supporter of Constitutionalism in France may be thus summed up ; let us have no diversion abroad just now, no new phenomenon cropping up in the foreign political horizon which may be turned to account, not as a real motive, but as a pretext for howling down the youthful existence of Constitutionalism in France, or for turning public attention to foreign complications. The Emperor, as we believe, is in earnest with his experiment, but the people in his immediate *entourage*, and the tools he uses—who are all greedily yearning for some event that may give them a chance of diverting the Emperor from a groove they hold in abomination—are very numerous, and, in virtue of the roots they have struck into his eighteen years' past, much more powerful than people fancy abroad. Whosoever has Constitutional development at heart can only wish just now most earnestly that not the least change may accrue in the foreign relations of France which may in any way lead to the reaction wished for by the opponents of any and every Constitution in France."

The Chancellor, therefore, desired that Germany's friendly relations to France should be maintained and consolidated

by promoting and strengthening the new French Constitutional *régime*, which could not but render warlike experiments less easy and probable than that of Absolutism. Possibly he hoped that Liberalism would advance by strides to Parliamentarism, Revolution and the Republic, which would be bound to weaken France at home, and make it impossible for her to contract alliances with Monarchical Governments abroad. It was upon this account that, on the one hand and for the time being, he abstained from a further *rapprochement* to Southern Germany, and on the other observed a hesitant and postponing policy towards the recurrent touting of the Tuileries Cabinet for an alliance with Germany, having for its object the territorial aggrandisement of France through the annexation of Belgium, or some other extra-German territory. Another of his motives for this "dilatory policy," was his opinion that New Germany did not then seem quite strong enough to fight France with the certainty of success. "I remember," he said to us one evening at Versailles, "when I was at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, I thought to myself 'how would it have been by now, if we had fought out the Luxemburg quarrel? Should I be in Paris, or the French in Berlin?' We were not nearly as strong then as we are now. The Hanoverians and Hessians of that day could not have supplied us with so many good soldiers as to-day. As for the Schleswig-Holsteiner—who have lately been fighting like lions—they had no army at all. The Saxon army was broken up and had to be entirely reconstructed. And there was but little to be expected from the South-Germans. What splendid fellows the Wuertemberger are now, quite magnificent!—but in 1866 no soldier could help laughing at them, as they marched into Frankfort, like a civic guard. Nor was all well with the Baden forces; the Grand Duke

has done a great deal for them since then. Doubtless public opinion throughout Germany was with us, if we had chosen to make war about Luxemburg. But that would not have made up for all these shortcomings."

In 1870 this scruple was effaced: Germany was armed to the teeth, and the Chancellor, moreover, had come to the conclusion that the Constitutional *régime* in France, far from preventing war, would not even postpone it for any length of time. The Arcadians wished for it; the Ultramontanists, with the Empress at their head, loudly clamoured for it. France waxed visibly stronger, in military respects, and was arranging alliances. If delay had been hopeful up to that time, it then became dangerous; consequently the leading statesman found it necessary to hasten the inevitable, instead of endeavouring any longer to postpone a crisis. In the interest of Germany and Europe he was compelled to devise some method of provoking the French ere they should be completely ready for the fray. It was high time to make sure of being beforehand with them in attack, and to avert,—if possible, for ever—the dangers with which their illwill and covetousness threatened their eastern neighbour. The means to effect this salutary end were supplied, in the first place, by their irritability, and supplemented by their extravagant conceit, imperfect acquaintance with their adversary's resources and consequent presumption.

Let us look a little closer into the situation. Soon after the Luxemburg quarrel had been hushed up the French Government thought fit to meddle in the negotiations pending between Prussia and Denmark respecting Article 5 of the Prague Treaty. Bismarck disposed of this interference by intimating that Prussia had concluded peace with Austria at Prague, and with Austria only; consequently

that she had no need to discuss the matter with anyone else. The French Government took the hint to keep quiet: but, in order not to incur the displeasure of public opinion in France for so doing, published (July 27) in its official organ a statement to the effect that no "Note" had been handed to the Berlin Cabinet on the Schleswig or any other question; an assertion which was so far correct, that the communication really made by Moustier to von Thile, through the French Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin, was a despatch, which the latter "read aloud." The public, unversed in the gibberish of diplomacy, accepted this tergiversation as a satisfactory assurance. But Napoleon had acquired fresh cause to be dissatisfied with the part which he—once the universally respected mediator and arbitrator of his neighbours' differences—found himself called to play in connection with the German Chancellor. At every minute (whenever German interests were concerned) the latter, always with studious politeness, crossed the plans of the importunate Emperor, who—discovering too late what sort of man he had to do with—exclaimed about that time:—"M. de Bismarck has hoodwinked me; a French Emperor cannot allow himself to be hoodwinked!" That being his state of feeling, he prepared, by constructing a powerful army, to take his revenge. Marshal Niel was entrusted with that task, and felt himself justified, as early as December, 1867 (during the debate upon the new Military Law in the Corps Législatif), in referring to the "advanced" degree of efficiency which the army had attained under his Ministry. Napoleon complacently announced in his Speech from the Throne on January 18, 1869, that "the Military Law, and the supplies voted by your patriotism, have strengthened the confidence of the country, which is now proudly conscious that it is in a

position to encounter whatever may betide. . . Our perfect armaments (Chassepots and mitrailleuses), our replete arsenals and magazines, our trained reserves, our mobile National Guard, our reconstructed fleet and our powerful fortresses impart an imperative necessary development to our might. The permanent object of my endeavours is attained; our military resources will henceforth be adequate to their mission in the world." Napoleon had also kept in view alliances with foreign powers. His visit to the Emperor Francis Joseph at Salzburg (18–23 August, 1867), was undertaken with this object; although according to Moustier's Circular of the 25th, "It had been solely inspired by the wish to give a proof of heartfelt sympathy to the Imperial Family of Austria, recently stricken with so terrible a misfortune" (the execution of the Archduke Maximilian, in Mexico); and Bismarck, in his Circular Despatch, appeared to rejoice over this declaration, which gave him an opportunity to point out that the reception accorded throughout Germany to the intelligence that the German question had been discussed at Salzburg 'had demonstrated anew how ill German national feeling could endure the mere notion that the development of the Fatherland's affairs should be carried on under the tutelage of foreign interference, or of any considerations other than those imposed by Germany's national interests." Moustier however, admitted that the two monarchs "had communicated their views to one another and exchanged ideas upon questions of general interest." It was patent that those ideas were in no way suggested by sympathy for Prussian policy.

The following year (as Prince Napoleon stated in the April number of the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' for 1878) Napoleon and Victor Emmanuel commenced secret nego-

tiations for an Alliance. Count Beust knew of this, and was kept thoroughly *au courant* of all that took place by Prince Metternich, acting "not only as Austrian Ambassador, but as a person in the confidence of the Tuileries." A draft treaty was the result, contracting a Franco-Austro alliance, hostile to Prussia. France's two allies were to commence operations by diplomatic intervention, and, should that prove ineffectual, were to take the field. The Cabinet of Vienna proposed that Prussia should be summoned to pledge herself to strictly observe the state of things established by the Treaty of Prague. Should she refuse, Austria and Italy would avow their alliance with France and proceed to attack Germany. King Victor Emmanuel offered to supply 60,000 men at once, and 40,000 more a few weeks later. Austria's troops were to commence action after those of Italy. The Italians were to cross the Austrian frontier, invade Bavaria and occupy Munich; the Austrians were to take up a position in Bohemia and thence effect a junction with the Italian army. As Italy exacted the evacuation of Rome by the French as the price of her co-operation, and was backed up by Austria in so doing, whilst Napoleon—influenced by the bigoted Empress and her Jesuit advisers—declined to agree to that stipulation, the alliance was not definitively concluded. However, autograph letters upon the matter had passed between Napoleon and Francis Joseph, on the one hand, and Victor Emmanuel and Napoleon on the other, the contents of which led the Emperor of the French to believe that the alliances he desired to effect would encounter no obstacles so soon as France should declare war against Prussia, or, at least, should gain her first victory. The French Cabinet also believed that it could count upon the South German States, whose Government, truly, were bound to North

Germany by treaties of alliance; but Napoleon thought he saw his way to bringing about a rupture of those bonds.

A large proportion of the population in Bavaria disliked Prussia, chiefly for confessional reasons; in Wuertemberg the roast was ruled by unpatriotic democrats who hated and feared Prussian "militarism;" in Hesse the majority of the people was favourable to union with Prussia and her North German Confederates, but the Grand Duke and his Minister Dalwigk made no secret of their sympathy for France; finally, in Baden, Government and people were alike thoroughly German in feeling, but they had been no less so in 1866, and yet had been compelled by the geographical position of their country, to take part against the champions of the German cause. The hope remained unfulfilled that the German Customs' Parliament (which assembled for the first time on April 27, 1868) would further an union between North and South.

Keeping these facts in view, the German Chancellor continued to avoid taking any step which might have justified France in feeling herself insulted or injured. In the Union question especially, he proceeded with extreme caution and reserve. Without omitting anything which might advance a *rapprochement* on the part of his Southern fellow-countrymen, he refrained in every respect from putting pressure on them, or overstepping the limits of the treaties concluded with them. But he let every one know in the plainest terms that his behaviour was not dictated by fear of any foreign Power.

In the spring of 1870 the St. Gothard Railway question caused great excitement in France. It was proposed to connect Germany and Italy by a line which should neither touch French nor Austrian territory, and that the North German

Confederation should contribute 10,000,000f. to its cost. Switzerland had long hesitated between the St. Gothard and the Spluegen; but when Bismarck declared in favour of the former, as well as Italy and Baden, the Helvetians also adopted it. The enterprise encountered some difficulties in the Reichstag, but Bismarck removed them by his speech of May 26, setting forth the political advantages of the railway as follows:—"The Confederate Governments must surely be convinced that our political interests render it desirable to establish a line of communication between Germany and Italy, which shall be exclusively dependent upon a neutral country, instead of being in the hands of any great European Power. The considerations must have been of unusual weight that have moved this Government to so extraordinary—I may say unprecedented—a proceeding as that of asking you to undertake a considerable pecuniary outlay for a railway outside the frontier, not only of the Northern Confederation but of Germany itself. . . . It is a matter of paramount interest to us to possess a means of direct communication with Italy, a country friendly to us, and, as we believe, likely to remain so." These words afforded food for reflection in Paris, and the French Government was questioned upon the subject on June 9 in the Corps Législatif. The new Foreign Minister, Duc de Gramont, asked for time to consider his reply. He and the Emperor appear to have hesitated for a few days whether or not they should make the treaty between North Germany, Italy, and Switzerland a pretext for war, and to have come to the conclusion that Europe would regard such a proceeding as unjustifiable. Gramont, therefore, informed the Assembly on June 20 that France was not called upon to interfere in the matter. Soon afterwards, however, he found in Spain what he had vainly sought for

in Switzerland; and availed himself of his discovery with equal precipitancy and clumsiness.

As early as July, 1869, the notion (it was originally Salazar's) of filling the ex-Queen of Spain's throne with Leopold, Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern, had been discussed in Madrid; and Benedetti had spoken on the subject in Berlin, first to the Secretary of State, Von Thile (March 51) and then to Bismarck himself (May 11), who pointed out to him the critical position in which the Prince would place himself by consenting to such a project, expressed the confident expectation that the King as well as the Hereditary Prince's father would advise him not to run any such risk, and added that Prince Frederic Charles might perhaps be disposed to undertake the adventure, did not religious obstacles—his necessary conversion to Roman Catholicism—stand in his way. During the following autumn Prince Leopold was confidentially sounded on the part of Spain as to his disposition to accept the Iberian crown; and he declined it. Fresh negotiations with him were opened in June 1870; this time he accepted, and on July 3 the European Courts were telegraphically apprised of that fact. King William visited Czar Alexander at Ems that very day, accompanied by Bismarck, the Czar also having his Berlin Ambassador with him. The inference is plain. The Hereditary Prince's decision produced the effect in Paris that a red rag does upon a bull. On the 4th, by Gramont's order, the French Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin asked Von Thile what was the real state of the case, and was informed that "the Prussian Government knew nothing of the matter, which, as far as it was concerned, did not exist." "He endeavoured," wrote Le Sourd to Gramont, "to put the responsibility of his government out of the question; but Your Excellency will observe that he refrained from a

categorical assurance that the Berlin Cabinet ignored the existence and result of the negotiations." Gramont himself (also on the 4th) requested the Prussian Ambassador in Paris—who was on the point of joining his Sovereign at Ems—to inform the King that France expected him to command Prince Leopold to revoke his acceptance, and would consider his refusal to do so a *casus belli.* On the 5th, Deputy Cochéry (officially instigated) questioned the Foreign Minister upon the Hohenzollern candidature in the Corps Legislatif; and, on the following day, received answer that the "rumour in question" had been confirmed, to which Gramont added: "We do not think that respect for a neighbouring nation's rights obliges us to tolerate that a foreign Power, by seating one of its Princes upon the throne of Charles V., should derange to its own advantage the European balance of power, thereby endangering the interests and honour of France. We hope this eventuality will not be realised; should it, however, come to pass, we shall fulfil our duty without hesitation or weakness, strong in the support of yourselves and the nation." It would have been difficult, one would have thought, to proceed more impetuously or to threaten more insolently. But worse remained behind. King William was to be offered the alternative of yielding to intimidation or entangling Germany in a serious war upon purely dynastic considerations, as the cause of quarrel would certainly be represented. On the 9th, Benedetti, who had thitherto been staying at Wildbad, was sent by Gramont to Ems to demand of His Majesty that he (the King) would restore peace to Europe by commanding Prince Leopold to withdraw from his candidature. The King replied that he had in no way encouraged the Prince to accept the Spanish Crown, nor forbade him to do so, and that he could not compel him to

renounce it; the French had better ask the Madrid Government to give up its project. On the 11th the French Ambassador renewed his demand, and next day a telegram reached Ems announcing that the Prince had revoked his previous consent. This appeared to end the quarrel; but Gramont then (through the Prussian Ambassador in Paris, who had meanwhile returned to his post) required that the King should write an apologetic letter to the Emperor (Baron Werther personally recommended compliance with this demand!) and on the 13th Benedetti had the audacity to further exact from the King that he should expressly approve of the Prince's renunciation and pledge himself, moreover, never to give his consent to a renewal of the Prince's candidature for the Spanish throne.

Throughout the whole transaction the King had done all that was in his power to avert the horrors of war from Germany; but he could not comply with this shameless demand without prejudicing his own honour as well as that of his country. He replied that he neither could nor would undertake any such obligation. Benedetti applied for another audience. The King answered that he could not consent to discuss future guarantees with him again. On the 14th Benedetti saw him for the last time. He was at the railway station a few minutes before the King left for Coblenz, and the latter observed to him upon that occasion that "he had nothing further to impart to him; any negotiations that might be requisite would be conducted by his (the King's) Government." A telegram was despatched from Berlin to the Prussian Envoys at foreign Courts, relating all these occurrences, which were also published in an extra sheet of the *Nord Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung.* Next day a Ministerial Cabinet at St. Cloud decided upon war. Gramont and Ollivier stated in the Chambers (July 16) that

the telegram in question was a "Note" injurious to French dignity; and on the 19th Le Sourd delivered the French Declaration of War in Berlin.

At the commencement of this episode Bismarck was at Varzin; but seeing, from the turn matters took on the 9th, that the French were bent upon fighting, he returned to Berlin on the 12th, where he found the telegraphic announcement (transmitted by the French Ambassador in Paris) that Prince Leopold had withdrawn his candidature. This determined him to remain at Berlin, and Count Eulenburg, the Home Minister, went off to Ems in his stead. The news from Paris did not please him; still less so did the telegrams reaching him on the 13th with the intelligence of Gramont's latest demands and Benedetti's proceedings in Ems. He replied to the Ambassador in Paris that the latter must have misunderstood Gramont's verbal communications; that he, the responsible Minister, could not lay such a report before the King for official consideration; and that, if the French Government had such communications to make, it must do so through its Embassy at Berlin. With respect to the occurrences at Ems, the Chancellor received a full report by wire from Privy Councillor Abeken, then in the King's suite, with the Royal permission to publish its text. When this telegram arrived, Counts von Moltke and von Roon were dining with Bismarck, who read Abeken's report aloud to them. Both Generals regarded the situation as still peaceful. The Chancellor observed, that would depend a good deal upon the tone and contents of the publication he had just been authorised to make. In the presence of his two guests he then put together some extracts from the telegram, which were forthwith despatched to all the Prussian Legations abroad, and to the Berlin newspapers in the following form:—

"Telegram from Ems, July 13, 1870. When the intelligence of the Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern's renunciation was communicated by the Spanish to the French Government, the French Ambassador demanded of His Majesty the King, at Ems, that the latter should authorise him to telegraph to Paris that His Majesty would pledge himself for all time to come never again to give his consent, should the Hohenzollerns hark back to their candidature. Upon this His Majesty refused to receive the French Ambassador again, and sent the aide-de-camp in attendance to tell him that His Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the Ambassador."

Lord Loftus, then English Ambassador in Berlin, congratulated the Chancellor (July 13) on the apparently proximate solution of the crisis. Bismarck informed him that, according to information from Paris, that solution of the Spanish difficulty would not suffice to satisfy the French Government, which was putting forward fresh pretensions, clearly proving that the Spanish Succession question had only been a pretext, and that France's real purpose had been "revenge for Koeniggraetz." The German nation felt itself in every way equal to coping with France; "but," added the Chancellor, "we do not wish for war; we have proved our desire for peace, and shall continue to do so; only, as far as armaments are concerned, we cannot allow the French to get ahead of us. I am positively informed that France has been and is now arming. If this go on, we shall be compelled to ask the French Government for explanations. Moreover, if France do not forthwith assure the European Powers that she considers the question definitively settled and does not intend to put forward any more claims—if she do not withdraw Gramont's threatening language, and give satisfactory assurances, we shall be

obliged to demand them." Loftus concluded his report of this interview with the words:—"It appears to me certain that, in view of German public opinion, Count Bismarck and the Prussian Ministry deem it necessary to take very decided measures for safeguarding the national honour."

Arrived at the turning-point and very apogee of the crisis which had been developing ever since 1866, let us glance backwards for a moment. In his anxiety to establish his dynasty upon the throne of France, Napoleon had unsuccessfully striven to obtain German territory on the left bank of the Rhine, to bring about the cession of Luxemburg, and finally to effect the conquest of Belgium, endeavouring repeatedly to secure Prussia's friendship and support in the fulfilment of his projects. Bismarck had never held out any distinct hopes to him, nor conclusively refused to acquiesce in his wishes, but had kept him in play, in order to give New Germany time to gather strength, and to see whether or not changes in France herself might render it possible to evade a war. The Emperor had to recognise the fact that, in each of his successive enterprises, he performed a new version of "Love's Labour Lost," and to be more and more oppressed by the consciousness how small a person he was in comparison to the German statesman. Then he bethought him of seeking assistance from other Powers; and he succeeded in acquiring a good friend in Beust, who, when in Paris, had advised him to utilize a dynastic question for the attainment of his purpose. The transfer of the Spanish throne to a Hohenzollern—although Prince Leopold was only distantly related to the Royal House of Prussia, and indeed by extraction stood nearer in blood to the Emperor Napoleon than to King William—was available, as an "outgrowth of Prussian ambition." It was believed in Paris and Vienna that the South-German Princes and peoples would

remain neutral at first; and then—after a great French victory, deemed as inevitable as Austrian triumphs had been considered in 1866—would become Napoleon's allies, with or against the grain. Irresolute, as he had ever been, the Emperor wavered for a long time, until at last his *entourage*, the Arcadians and Jesuits, induced him to adopt a fatal decision. The fault only cleaves in part to his memory. Far guiltier than he were the French upper classes, with their ignorance, mental opacity, and sinister insolence. Scarcely less blameable than they was the Gladstone Ministry, which at one moment, had it in its power to avert a struggle between the two great Continental nations, but—guided by its ill concealed hatred and envy of rising young Germany—refused to send an earnest warning to Paris, and recommended humiliating behaviour to Prussia.

Let us see what the French press and parliamentary orators of that time had to say in the matter.

The *Moniteur* of July 8 delivered itself in the following terms:—"Our policy towards Spain must be a moderate one; but we are upon quite another footing with Prussia. This Power, self-deluded by its first successes, seems to think it can acquire preponderance, and even rule, throughout Europe. The time has come to put an end to such pretensions. The question must be enlarged; Prince Leopold's renunciation is no longer sufficient. The least we can demand, the least that will now satisfy us, will be the formal recognition and enforcement in word and spirit of the Prague Treaty; viz.: freedom for the South-German States, evacuation of the fortress of Mayence, which belongs to the South, renunciation by Prussia of any military influence beyond the Maine, and regulation of Article V. with respect to Denmark." The *Pays* vociferated:—"The Caudine Forks are awaiting Prussia; she will have to stoop and pass

under them, vanquished and disarmed without a struggle, if she does not dare to accept a combat the issue of which is in no way doubtful. Our war-cry has hitherto remained unanswered. The echoes of the German Rhine are still dumb. Had Prussia used the language to us that France has used to her, we should have been on the march long ago." Girardin's *Liberté* impetuously demanded that the matter should be settled at once by taking the left bank of the Rhine and driving the Prussians to the other bank with the butt-ends of French muskets.

In the Corps Législatif, when Gramont declared that negotiations with Prussia were still proceeding, the Arcadian Jérome David responded with an interpellation commencing thus:—"Considering that the firm and patriotic Ministerial utterances of the 6th are in flagrant contradiction of the laughable tediousness characterising the diplomatic negotiations . . ." The Minister thereupon proposing to discuss the interpellation two days later, Kératry—also eager for war with Germany, though no Bonapartist—shrieked out, "It is too late! You are playing Prussia's game! As a Frenchman I protest against such policy!"—speeches which afforded to the Chauvinistic journals an opportunity of raving even more wildly, and declaring:—"This Ministry will be known in the future by only one title—the Ministry of shame!" Ollivier elicited tempestuous applause from the majority of the Second Chamber on July 15, when he uttered the silly boast: "Certainly a grave responsibility rests upon us; but we accept it with a light heart—yes! with a light heart!" There was no lack of orators who disapproved of the Government's conduct. Deputy Choiseul said:—"It is impossible to declare war upon such grounds." Arago exclaimed:—"When this shall be made known, the civilised world will say that you are

in the wrong; and if you then declare war, everybody will know that you were resolved to do so at any price." Gambetta insisted that the "Note," which the Government had suppressed and thereafter continued to suppress, should at least be submitted to the Chamber. Thiers and Favre asseverated that "the honour of France was not at stake," and that was no ground whatsoever for making war. The debate closed with the grant, by 543 votes to 101, of the credit asked for by the Government.

The English Government made one attempt to settle the quarrel peaceably, but was anything but impartial in its action. It asked—in compliance with Gramont's request—the Prussian Ambassador in London (July 14) to urge King William to give a positive assurance to France that he approved of Prince Leopold's withdrawal, and would not permit such a candidature to recur. Count Bernstorff rejected this proposal, observing that Prussia, openly threatened by France, had displayed a tranquillity and moderation that would render any further concession humiliating; and that public opinion in Germany plainly demonstrated that war, even under the greatest difficulties, would be preferable to any yielding on the part of the King to France's unjustifiable demands. England again offered her good offices at Berlin (July 17) on a similar basis; and the next day at Paris. In both capitals she met with insurmountable objections to further negotiation. Bismarck replied to Lord Augustus Loftus that "negotiations could only be resumed if the French Cabinet should declare its willingness thereto beforehand. It had taken the initiative in the war, and adhered to that initiative even after the first complication had been materially got rid of. An initiative on our part," he continued, "would now be misunderstood by German national feeling, which has been

deeply wounded and violently excited by France's threats. Our strength lies in the patriotism, justice, and honour of our nation; the French Government has proved that it does not, to the same extent as ourselves, require support of that kind in its own country." Gramont answered the English Ambassador's offer of mediation with the remark that the Prussian Government's latest steps had rendered further negotiation impossible. Prussia, by publicly declaring that the King had broken off intercourse with the French Ambassador in a rough and discourteous manner, which statement was not founded on fact, had offered France a grave insult. Lord Lyons remarked that "the British Government had not been able to take the same view of this disastrous difference as that adopted by the Imperial Cabinet; but, be that as it might, the friendly feeling which was the happy outcome of many years' hearty concord between the two governments had suffered no abatement."

On July 16 the German Federal Council met to hear Bismarck's report upon the development of the quarrel, which concluded as follows:—"The Duke of Gramont's speech in the Corps Législatif rendered all further confidential negotiations impossible." ("If you want to make a bargain, never threaten," the Chancellor observed to me about that time.) "From the reception accorded to that oration, as well as the subsequent attitude of the French Government, it can only be concluded that the latter had from the first resolved to give us the choice between humiliation and war. We could not accept the former alternative; nothing was left to us but war." Upon this the Saxon Plenipotentiary declared his Government's full concurrence with every step thitherto taken by the Presidency of the Confederation; and the other members of the Federal Council endorsed his declaration.

In a Circular Despatch (July 18) to the Envoys of the Confederation, the Chancellor observed:—"All the endeavours of the French Ministers to prove that war is unavoidable are manifestly futile; we are under the melancholy necessity of seeking their real motives in the worst traditions—stigmatised for half a century past as infamous by the peoples and governments of the civilised world—of Louis XIV. and the First Empire, still inscribed upon the banner of a powerful party in France, which, however, we had believed Napoleon III. capable of withstanding. Unfortunately we are compelled to recognise the evil instincts of hatred and jealousy of Germany's independence and well-being (as well as the French Government's effort to repress freedom at home by warlike complications abroad) as the real motives that have prompted France to its present regrettable action."

On the 19th July the King opened the Reichstag with a speech recapitulating the circumstances above narrated and appealing to the patriotism of the country. The Reichstag replied next day by an enthusiastic address, to the following effect:—"One thought, one desire causes German hearts to throb in this momentous conjuncture. From the shores of the sea to the foot of the Alps the people has arisen at the call of its Princes, unanimous and firmly leagued together. It will regard no sacrifice as too heavy."

All the South German States commenced their warlike preparations on the 16th, and three days later the King of Bavaria (in virtue of the Treaty of August, 1866) placed his army under the command of the King of Prussia, an example forthwith followed by all the other Sovereigns of South Germany. Napoleon's hopes of Austrian and Italian support melted away likewise. When Gramont applied to Beust for aid, the latter returned a discouraging answer,

his French predilections being heavily outweighed by Hungarian feeling and the fear of Russian attack. On July 11, Beust wrote to the Austrian Ambassador in Paris: —"I consider it paramountly important that the Emperor Napoleon and his Ministers should not entertain the erroneous impression that they can, at their own good pleasure, drag us with them beyond the limits of our engagements, to the disregard of our own vital interests. They make much too bold in talking confidently about a Corps of Observation, to be stationed by us in Bohemia. The Duke has no right whatsoever to count upon any such measure on our part. All that we have undertaken is not to ally ourselves to any other Power without giving France due notice. We shall strictly fulfil that engagement. Moreover, we openly declare that we are friendly to France, and that she may rely upon our diplomatic support. I need not remind you that, in canvassing the possibilities of war, we have always declared ourselves ready to take action, should Russia side with Prussia, but resolved to remain neutral as long as Prussia should have to fight France unaided. . . It is alleged that Prussia will provoke war unless she shall withdraw the Hohenzollern candidature. On this point I will speak quite frankly. If war be inevitable, it is above all owing to the attitude assumed by France from the very inception of the difficulty. Her first announcements do not in the least partake of a diplomatic character, but practically constitute a declaration of war against Prussia, couched in terms that have aroused amazement throughout Europe and justified the conviction that she had made up her mind beforehand to war at any price. As Paris persists in displaying mere passion with respect to the whole affair, we cannot desire to sail in the same boat with her under such auspices. . . I will not say positively

that circumstances may not accrue which would dispose us to take part in the struggle now about to commence between France and Prussia; but Austria-Hungary is most assuredly not prepared to join in the war at its commencement. Up to a certain point our services are assured to France; but not beyond that point. Talk as emphatically as may be to Napoleon about our engagements and fidelity in fulfilling them, so that he may not precipitately come to an understanding, at our cost, with some other Power."

Another confidential despatch (July 20), addressed by Beust to the Austrian Ambassador in Paris, contains instructions to the latter concerning the proposals made a short time previously by Napoleon anent a treaty between France, Italy, and Austria:—"You will repeat to the Emperor and his Ministers that—true to the engagements defined in letters that passed between both Sovereigns last year—we regard France's cause as our own, and shall, within the limits of possibility, contribute to the success of her arms. These limits are prescribed by foreign considerations and our domestic condition. We have reason to believe that Russia adheres to her connection with Prussia, so that the intervention of Russian forces, under certain eventualities, may be regarded, not only as probable, but as certain. Our participation in the struggle would be immediately followed by that of Russia, who threatens us on the Pruth and Lower Danube, as well as in Galicia. The ostensible aim of our policy, for the present, must be to keep Russia neutral until the advanced season of the year shall no longer permit her to think of concentrating her troops, and to avoid giving her any offence or pretext for armed intervention. . . . As I frequently remarked during last year's conferences, we cannot ignore the fact that our ten millions of Germans regard this war, not as a

duel between France and Prussia, but as the commencement of a national struggle; nor can we disguise it from ourselves that the Hungarians would be extremely reluctant to sacrifice their blood and treasure for the re-establishment of our former position in Germany. Under these circumstances the word neutrality—which we do not pronounce without regret—is an imperative necessity, as far as we are concerned. But this neutrality is only a means to the attainment of our policy's real object, namely, to complete our armaments without exposing ourselves to a premature attack from Prussia or Russia. Whilst proclaiming our neutrality we have not lost a moment in negotiating with Italy respecting the joint intervention desired by the Emperor Napoleon . . . I have already referred by wire to the necessity of evacuating Rome. Whenever the French quit Rome the Italians must enter it, that very day, with the full consent of France and Austria. We shall never get the Italians to act with us unreservedly until we extract the Roman thorn. By one act of indisputably magnanimous policy, France would deprive her enemy of an important weapon and raise up a solid dam against the flood of Teutonism which Prussia, a Protestant Power *avant tout*, has evoked in Germany, and which is doubly formidable to us by reason of its contagious vigour."

This was prettily said, forsooth, when we come to consider that it was a German Protestant who gave utterance to the above estimable sentiments! However, "we would if we could, but we can't," was no help to Napoleon.

The French Emperor's fresh negotiations with Italy led to no result. General Tuerr, who conducted them, wrote to Paris on July 27, that the Italian Ministers had told him "Italy could only stand by France in her struggle with Prussia on condition that the French should give up Rome;

the Emperor snould at least give his secret promise that Italy should have Rome, so that Victor Emanuel might hold out the solution of the "national question" to his people as the prize of war. But on the 29th, Tuerr, who had meanwhile travelled to Vienna, found at the French Embassy there a despatch from Gramont, answering his letter curtly and concisely: "We can do nothing whatsoever with respect to Rome. If Italy does not choose to march she can stay at home." Still, as Victor Emanuel was favourable to France, she had some prospect of obtaining Italy's support. On August 2, Count Vimercati, in the quality of Special Envoy, presented himself to Napoleon at Metz with a new edition of the Alliance-Treaty, in which Italy insisted upon the evacuation of Rome by the French. The Emperor again refused his consent to that stipulation, and suggested alterations in the Draft-Convention, hoping to be able to hold his own with the Germans for a time, and then—after a victory or two—to get the Italians and Austrians to take his part. But his expectations were not fulfilled. The Italian Plenipotentiary left for Florence on the 3rd, and three days later the French were beaten at Wœrth and Spicheren. Napoleon then volunteered to meet Italy's wishes; "she might do what she pleased with Rome, if she would promptly come to France's aid in arms." From Châlons, whither the Emperor had betaken himself after his defeat at Saarbruecken, Prince Napoleon went off to his father-in-law, King Victor, with this concession, decided upon without Gramont's knowledge, and arrived in Florence on the 20th. But the Italian Cabinet hesitated, alleging that it must consult Austria before adopting any definitive resolve; and as Austria took several days to consider the matter, the opportunity for rendering military assistance to France was lost. The battle of Sedan put an end to all

these intrigues. After that Napoleon himself was a prisoner, and, a little later on, ceased to be Emperor. What help was subsequently afforded by Italy to the Republic through Garibaldi and his red-shirted crew, did not signify anything to speak of.

In his report upon these occurrences Prince Napoleon remarks :—" An important fact is taught us by this episode, viz. : that the Clerical party was powerful enough to dominate Napoleon III. It directed the policy of France against the will of the Emperor and his chief councillors ; and that policy was the leading cause of our disasters. The Pope's Temporal Power cost France Elsass and part of Lothringen."

It was now time for Bismarck to consider what Germany should demand as the prize of victory. In all probability he entertained the notion of recovering possession of Strassburg and Elsass when war was declared. That project was hinted at in a despatch from Saarbruecken, and was openly talked about by his suite in Herny, whence a telegram referring to it was sent to Prussia ; and we know from the foregoing chapter that the reunion of Elsass to Germany had been contemplated by Bismarck as far back as 1866. In Commercy (August 23) during conversation at the dinner-table he indicated as his ideal solution of the question (one, however, that he deemed unattainable), "a sort of German colony in Eastern France, a neutral State, free from conscription, the taxes levied upon which should —so far as their local expenditure might not be requisite— flow into Germany. Thus France would lose the territories from which she obtained her best soldiers, and would be rendered inoffensive. As for the rest of France—no Bourbons, no Orleans ; perhaps Lulu, perhaps the fat Napoleon, perhaps the old Bonaparte again." Shortly

afterwards—even before Sedan—the plan subsequently carried out was developed and recommended in the press, by the Chancellor's orders. It was first avowed in a State document shortly after Napoleon's dethronal by the Revolution of September 4. Favre, the new French Minister of Foreign Affairs, in a Circular Despatch addressed to France's agents abroad (September 6), had declared that the Republic wished for peace, but that if Prussia should prosecute a war of conquest, Frenchmen would do their duty to the last. "We will not give up," he added, "an inch of our territory, or a stone of our fortresses. A dishonourable peace would speedily lead to a war of extermination. We will only treat for a lasting peace." That was also Bismarck's resolve; but he took another view of durability. In his Circular Despatch (Rheims, September 13) he informed Favre and the Powers who might be disposed to support that person's policy, that "the all but unanimous majority of the Legislature, the Senate and the organs of public opinion in France proclaimed a war of conquest against us so loudly and uncompromisingly that the isolated advocates of peace lacked courage to protest thereagainst; and the Emperor Napoleon did not tell our King an untruth when he assured him (as he still does) that public opinion compelled him to make war. In the face of this fact we cannot accept French feelings as our guarantees for the future. We must not deceive ourselves, but must make up our minds to fresh attacks from France, not to a lasting peace, as the consequence of this war. The French nation will never forgive its defeats or our victorious resistance to its unprincipled onslaught. Were we now to withdraw from France without exacting a cession of territory, a war-contribution, or any advantage but the glory won by our arms, the same hatred of us, the same desire

to avenge their wounded vanity and frustrated greed, would endure in the spirit of the French nation . . . The German people must not be again exposed to such a tremendous ordeal as the present one. Therefore, we can only be guided in our dictation of the terms of peace by the necessity of rendering it more difficult for France to attack us next time, and more especially to overrun the hitherto defenceless South German frontier, by advancing that frontier, thereby thrusting back the starting point of French attack, and by utilising the fortresses (with which France threatens us) as defensive bulwarks of Germany . . . As long as France remains possessed of Strassburg and Metz, her offensive force—as far as the entire south and the north on the left bank of the Rhine—is stronger than our defensive force. Strassburg, held by France, is an ever open sally-port against Germany. In the hands of Germany, Strassburg and Metz assume a defensive character. In more than twenty past wars with France we have never been the assailants; nor do we demand anything from her now but that security, upon our own soil, which she has so often endangered. France, on the contrary, will regard any peace she may make now as nothing more than an armistice, and will attack us again, just as unscrupulously and savagely as this year, in order to avenge her present defeat, as soon as she shall feel strong enough, either by herself or with foreign Allies to do so. By placing obstacles in the French aggressiveness, which has hitherto originated every disturbance and trouble in Europe, we are acting in European interests, which are those of peace."

Bismarck's interviews with Favre (September 19 and 20), at Haute Maison and Ferrières, led to no result, as the French Minister, although ready to concede a pecuniary indemnity to any amount, sentimentally repelled the notion

of territorial cession as one incompatible with the honour of France. In his report upon these interviews Bismarck remarked :—" I was unable to convince him that conditions which France had obtained from Italy and demanded of Germany without having been at war with either country—conditions which France would undoubtedly have imposed upon us, had we been vanquished, and which had been the natural outcome of every modern war, could involve no dishonour to a country conquered after having gallantly defended itself; or that the honour of France differed in any essential respect from that of other countries." Upon the occasions referred to the conditions of peace were only discussed, as it were, *en passant* and "academically." The immediate subject of discussion was an armistice, which should give the French an opportunity to elect representatives who, in their turn, should legitimise the Provisional Government, thus enabling it to conclude an internationally valid peace. Bismarck pointed out that an armistice is always disadvantageous to an advancing and victorious army; that, in this particular case, it would involve a most important gain of time to France for the reorganisation of her forces; and that Germany must therefore exact a military equivalent, such as the surrender of the fortresses hampering the communications of the King's armies with Germany. With respect to Strassburg he observed that it was on the point of surrender. In case the "Constituante" Assembly should meet in Paris, Bismarck stipulated for the following alternatives: "Either Paris shall be placed in our power by the surrender of a part of the works commanding it, in which case we are prepared to open communications with that city and allow it to be provisioned; or we must base the armistice upon the maintenance of the military *status quo* before Paris, as otherwise the result of a suspension of

hostilities to us would be that we should find ourselves sitting down to reduce a city that had been provisioned and armed anew." Favre rejected the former alternative, but promised to submit the latter to the other members of the Provisional Government. The conditions arranged between them and carried back to Paris by Favre were refused by the latter's colleagues; and Bismarck made the following communication to the neutral Governments, of which the British and Austrian still manifested warm sympathy for the cause of France. "By refusing to avail itself of the opportunity offered to it to elect a National Assembly (even within the portions of French territory occupied by us) the French Government proves its determination to prolong the difficulties hindering it from effecting an international conclusion of peace, and to close its ears to the voice of the French people. That general and free elections would have led to peace is an impression strongly entertained by ourselves, and one which will not have escaped the authorities in Paris." The Tours branch of the Parisian crew pitchforked by popular tumult into the position of shaping the destinies of France declared however (September 24), in a pompous proclamation addressed to the country:—"Prussia is resolved to continue the war, and to reduce France to the rank of a second-rate Power. To such shameless pretensions our only possible reply is 'War to the knife!'"

To these extravagances Bismarck replied in a Circular (October 1):—"The cession of Strassburg and Metz, which we demand, involves a territorial diminution of France nearly equivalent to the increment she acquired by the annexation of Savoy and Nice; and a loss of population exceeding that of the provinces she obtained from Italy by about three quarters of a million. If we consider that,

according to the 1866 census, France counted 38 millions of inhabitants without, and 42 millions with Algeria, it becomes obvious that a diminution of three quarters of a million in population can in no way lessen her importance with respect to other countries, as it will leave this great realm in possession of exactly the same elements of power that enabled it to exercise so decisive an influence upon the destinies of Europe in the Eastern and Italian wars."

The neutral Powers continued to show sympathy for France; and Lord Granville as well as Count Beust, lost no opportunity of displaying their sentiments, but neither of them felt bound to assist France otherwise than by diplomatic suggestions. Thiers' round of calls at the leading European Courts missed its aim, which was to bring about an European armed intervention. He reported from Petersburg that the Czar, as well as Prince Gortchakoff, had expressed themselves warmly as "opposed to the imposition of extravagant conditions of peace, and had declared that Russia would never give her consent to unfair pretensions; but he could not get them to say what they considered "extravagant" and "unfair," nor to make any positive declaration in favour of maintaining French territorial integrity.

In October France's military prospects became worse and worse. Toul and Strassburg had fallen, Paris was closely invested, at Metz Bazaine was treating for the surrender of his forces, and the German troops had pushed their way as far as the Loire. Bismarck was still ready to conclude an armistice upon equitable conditions. Through the American generals Sheridan and Burnside he once more offered to the authorities in Paris the means of delivering the country from a state of anarchy which rendered peace negotiations impossible. His propositions met

with so unfavourable a reception in Paris, however, that the mediators themselves were compelled to renounce the hopes they had entertained of bringing the war to a close.

On the first of November, after Metz had capitulated, Thiers made his appearance in Versailles at the instigation of the neutral Powers in order to negotiate for an armistice. Upon this episode the German Chancellor reported in his Circular of November 8 :—"I proposed to him to fix the relative positions of both armies, as they stood on the day of signing the armistice, by a line of demarcation ; to suspend hostilities for a month; and, during that time, to effect the elections and the constitution of a National Assembly . . . With respect to the elections in Elsass I was able to assure him that we would not insist upon any stipulation calling in question the appurtenance of the German Departments to France before the conclusion of peace, nor would we call any inhabitant of those Departments over the coals for having represented his compatriots in a French National Assembly. I was amazed when he rejected these proposals, and declared that he could only agree to an armistice if it should include a thorough provisioning of Paris. I replied that this would involve a military concession so far exceeding the *status quo* and every reasonable expectation that I must ask him what equivalent, if any, he was in a position to offer for it. M. Thiers declared that he was bound to demand the provisioning of Paris without offering anything in exchange but the readiness of the Paris Government to permit the French nation to elect a Representative Body, probably resulting in the constitution of a recognised authority with which we could subsequently treat for peace. The inconceivable demand that we should give up the fruits of all the exertions we had undergone during two months, and restore

affairs to the condition in which they had been when we commenced the investment of Paris, was a fresh proof that the Parisian authorities were only seeking pretexts for preventing the nation from electing its representatives."

At the close of his last interview with Thiers, the Chancellor requested him to inform his Government that, if it should wish to proceed with the elections without concluding an armistice, he (Bismarck) would give orders that no hindrance whatsoever should be offered to the elections in any of the districts occupied by the German army. But on November 6 Thiers received orders from his Government to break off negotiations and forthwith quit the Prussian head-quarters.

A very curious claim was put forward by the French with respect to the contemplated Conference for taking into consideration the Russian Circular of October 31. As France had signed the 1856 Treaty (which this Circular proposed to alter) she was invited to send a representative to London, where the Conference was to be held; and the Paris Government chose Favre, who, however, as he avowed with quaint frankness in a Circular Despatch (January 12), was not so much intended to assist in the discussion, at London, of the Russian Circular, as to protest against the bombardment of Paris, and to exhort the Powers to come to the aid of France. When, however, he applied to Bismarck (January 13) for a pass, he was informed that his request could not be granted, seeing that in it he had described himself as "the representative of France at the Conference," whereas the Paris Government had not yet been acknowledged by the French nation; and further, that he could not be permitted to go to London with the purposes avowed in his Circular of the 12th. To this refusal was appended a polite hint to the effect that those

who brew broth must help to eat it. Favre had sense enough to appreciate the justice of this suggestion. He stayed in Paris, and the Duc de Broglie went to London in his stead.

On Jan 20, 1871, the British Government instructed Odo Russell to ask the Chancellor whether he were inclined to treat for peace, and if so, upon what conditions. A change of feeling had taken place in Paris; the last sortie had proved a failure, the Communists were becoming dangerously active within the city, and what was still worse, famine was imminent. There was nothing for it but to capitulate; and the task was entrusted to Favre. On January 28, he and Bismarck signed an Armistice-Convention, empowering the authorities in Paris to convoke a freely-elected National Assembly which should decide whether France should continue fighting, or conclude peace—if the latter, upon what conditions. The advantages which Favre was compelled to yield to the Germans were considerably greater than those which Bismarck had asked for at Haute Maison and Ferrières or during his first interview with Thiers. All the forts of the outer line of defences had to be surrendered with their war materials, and the *enceinte* was stripped of its guns. The garrison (troops of the line, mobiles and marines) laid down their arms and became prisoners of war, all but 12,000 men, employed to keep order in the town. The National Guard retained its arms at Favre's request—a shortsighted one, as the civilians of which it was composed were for the most part infected with Radicalism. Paris was to be provisioned and was to pay a war-contribution of 200,000,000 francs. It was proposed that the German army should enter Paris, but Favre vehemently opposed the idea; and the Chancellor, believing the Parisians would offer violent resistance to such a proceed-

ing, and wishing to avert further bloodshed, agreed that the victorious hosts should not enter the town during the three weeks' armistice.

A frantic attempt on the part of Gambetta to frustrate all the hopes attached to this Convention having proved abortive, matters went on pretty smoothly. The National Assembly, of which Conservative and peaceful elements constituted the majority, assembled on February 12 at Bordeaux; next day the Provisional Government resigned its powers; on the 16th Thiers was elected Chief of the Executive; and three days later he declared to the Assembly that "the only possible or comprehensible policy was to make peace, reorganise, raise the national credit and re-animate labour." On the 21st he came with Favre to the Chancellor at Versailles, in order to open negotiations for peace in accordance with the policy in question. The French consented, although with difficulty, to cede Elsass with Strassburg, but stubbornly refused to part with Metz and a portion of Lothringen. Bismarck was not disinclined to give way on this point. On the 21st he said to us at table: "If they would pay us a milliard more perhaps we might leave them Metz. We could then devote 800,000,000f. to building a fortress a couple of miles further back, somewhere by Falkenberg, or in the direction of Saarbruecken, and gain 200,000,000 by the transaction. I do not want such a number of Frenchmen in our country against their will. . . . But the soldiers will not forego Metz, and perhaps they are right." Later on he seems to have become convinced that Metz was indispensable, for he insisted upon its retention, and rejected Thiers' proposal that it should be razed as "insufficient." Upon this point the negotiations came to a standstill. The Chancellor—as he then told those about him—was much exercised lest a refusal on the

part of the National Assembly at Bordeaux to ratify the stipulations should give the Neutral Powers occasion to meddle with the peace-negotiations, and compel Germany either to renounce the fruits of her victories, or engage in new wars. One day, after the preliminaries were signed, he said: "I feared that each successive postal delivery would bring me some communication from one of the neutral Powers, like that we received from Napoleon at Horsitz in 1866; if any one of them had belled the cat we should have had them all about our ears." When Thiers declared that he could not assume the responsibility of settling matters unless he obtained Metz or Belfort, but must return to Bordeaux, in order to elicit a decision from the Assembly, Bismarck again consulted the military authorities, who attached less importance to Belfort than to Metz, upon the cession of which latter they insisted. He therefore forewent Belfort, and the bargain was struck. He had originally demanded eight milliards as a war-indemnity, whilst Thiers would only concede two; five was the amount eventually fixed upon, England's mediation (invoked by France) having proved ineffectual. The Chancellor remained invisible to Odo Russell (who had been instructed by his Government to plead on behalf of France) until Thiers had agreed to the German demands.

Peace was to be definitively concluded at Brussels in accordance with the principles laid down in the preliminaries; but the matter dragged so vexatiously that the Chancellor had serious grounds for doubting the Frenchmen's good faith. They were lax in fulfilling their actual obligations, and obviously disposed to wilfully misinterpret stipulations already in force. Even as late as the end of April the French Government was behindhand with the main amount of the sums due for the maintenance of the German Corps of

occupation, with the deliverance of the German prisoners-of-war, and with clear, peremptory orders to the Governors of colonies and commanders of naval squadrons stationed in far-eastern waters to cease hostilities. The disposition of the French to evade their engagements, was manifested by their concentration (after the outbreak of the Commune *emeute*) of 140,000 men between Seine and Loire, where they had only a right to 40,000; by their attempts to depreciate the War-Debt by payments under par; and by unfounded pretensions with respect to the commencement of the evacuation of French territory by the German troops. The result of these tergiversations and frivolous claims was that Bismarck (April 27) instructed General von Fabrice (who was then keeping up diplomatic intercourse with the Versailles Government at Soissy) to demand clear and categorical explanations from the French authorities, and made up his mind to advise the King to withhold any further assistance from the French against the Commune (to overthrow which *régime* a large number of French prisoners-of-war had been set at liberty) and to require the French Government to instantly reduce its armed forces to the numbers prescribed in the Treaty, under pain of immediate renewal of hostilities.

Favre replied that France was ready to conclude peace without delay, meanwhile recognising the preliminaries already agreed to as decisive, and requested permission to attack Paris from St. Denis and Epinay, asking, moreover, that the Germans should summon the Commune to evacuate the *enceinte* of Paris. He was informed that Germany was bound by no agreement to assist the French Government, but, on the contrary, was entitled to demand from it the disarmament of the *enceinte*, and even to enforce the same should she consider it in her interest to do so—which would certainly not be the case as long as France should persist in

endeavouring to alter the preliminary peace to Germany's prejudice. The Chancellor proposed a meeting with the French Minister of Foreign affairs in Frankfort or Mayence; Favre accepted the invitation, and a conference was arranged for the first week in May.

What the Chancellor thought of the Parisian insurgents may be gathered from an article published by him on April 29: "Many letters from Paris indicate that the rising in Paris and establishment of the Commune constitute an achievement of cosmopolitan Revolution—an attempt to realise Socialistic and Communistic fancies. As a matter or fact, cosmopolitan Revolution, with which our Imperial members of Parliament Bebel and Schraps sympathise so deeply, has rallied Messrs. Dombrowski, Stupny, Okolovich, Landuski, Burnaki, and other Polish barricade-heroes, as well as the Fenians, Garibaldians and countless Belgian and English members of the International, round the red flag of the Commune. It is communism of the grossest description which has tempted from fifteen to twenty thousand released criminals and other scum and dregs of modern society to lend their aid to these champions of cataclysm. In this resolution however, bad as it is, may be detected a movement founded upon reason and supported by orderly and intelligent social elements; viz. the effort to obtain a sensible municipal organization, and to emancipate the communes from vexatious and unnecessary State tutelage; an effort finding its explanation in French history, and its exact converse in Haussmann's tyrannical proceedings, so injurious to the interests of the Paris Municipality. Were the Parisians endowed with a municipal Constitution like that possessed by Prussian cities ever since the days of Hardenberg, many practical thinkers in Paris who now hold aloof from the Versailles Government would be satisfied, and no longer support the revolution by passive resistance."

Bismarck's interviews with Favre at Frankfort resulted in the signature (May 10) of a Treaty of Peace, which was accepted by the National Assembly on the 18th and ratified on the 20th. In his report to the Reichstag upon the matter, the Chancellor observed, *inter alia*:—"We were in a position, had an understanding proved unattainable, to terminate our incertitude by taking possession of Paris—either with the consent of the Commune or by force—and then requiring the Versailles Government to withdraw their troops beyond the Loire (in conformity to the stipulations of the preliminary peace) in order that we might resume peace negotiations, each party occupying the respective position thus attained. . . . When I went to Frankfort I did not hope to settle matters finally, but to obtain an abridgement of the terms fixed for payment of the war-indemnity, and an improvement in the nature of the guarantees for that payment. But, in the prospect of a definitive settlement which became manifest at Frankfort I recognised an enormous advantage to both countries concerned therein, being convinced that such an arrangement will not only materially lighten the military burdens Germany has hitherto had to bear, but will contribute in no inconsiderable measure to the consolidation of affairs in France. . . . This settlement will probably not please everybody; but I think it realises all that we could demand from France in reason and conformably to the traditions connected with transactions of this class. We have secured our frontiers by territorial annexation; we have, so far as it is humanly possible, ensured payment of our war-indemnity. I feel confident that the present French Government intends to carry out the treaty honestly, which it is perfectly able to do, and that there is no foundation for the assumption that the amount of the war-indemnity is extravagantly large. I

sincerely hope that this peace will be a lasting one, and that we shall not be called upon, for many years to come, to utilise the additional means of protection against a renewed attack with which we have now provided ourselves.

Subsequent events have justified the Chancellor's anticipations in this respect. The Frankfort Treaty supplemented by conventions of Oct. 12, 1871, June 29, 1872, and March 15, 1873, was fulfilled in every particular. When the vengeful feelings of France expressed itself in deeds of violence, and German soldiers were murdered by fanatics in Melun and Paris, Bismarck demanded that the assassins, Tonnelet and Bertin, should be given up, but, relying upon the French administration of justice, did not insist upon their transfer to German custody. As the juries, however, pronounced verdicts of "Not Guilty" in both cases, he brought crimes committed against the troops within German jurisdiction by declaring a state of siege in the occupied districts, and instructed the representative of Germany at Versailles (Dec. 7, 1871) to inform the French Minister of Foreign affairs that for the future, should the perpetrators of such crimes not be given up, "French hostages would be conveyed to Germany and further reprisals enforced." He also remarked:—"Although France attacked us last year without the least provocation, the bitterness with which the circumstance that we defended ourselves victoriously has inspired the classes of French society to which jurymen, State prosecutors, barristers and judges belong is of so passionate a character, that we shall be compelled—in our still pending negotiations with France—not only to provide guarantees for the fulfilment of our peace-conditions but for the protection of our positions in the occupied Departments." Thiers, at that time President of the Republic, warned his compatriots against "inconsiderate acts" in his Message of

Dec. 7, adding: "To those who may believe that killing a foreigner is not murder, I must observe that they are abominably in error," and imploring French judges to remember that "thousands of Frenchmen would be exposed to terrible reprisals if such an assumption were acted upon."

To a despatch of Count Arnim (then German Ambassador in Paris) mentioning that the German Empress had asked Guizot to advise her how the French hatred of Germany might be abated, and complaining of the intensity and generality of that feeling throughout France, the Chancellor replied (February 2, 1873) *inter alia*:—"If it be correct that Her Majesty the Empress has asked M. Guizot's advice as to how French hatred of us may be modified, a feeling innate to feminine sensibility doubtless dictated that step. But it does not lie within Your Excellency's province to soothe the unjustifiable ire of our neighbours so long as any such endeavour shall continue to be as manifestly futile as it is inconsistent with our national dignity. We did not desire war; but we are quite ready to wage it again whenever fresh aggressions on the part of France shall compel us to do so. *Oderint dum metuant* . . . The feelings of the French people were well known to those Germans who went to France after the war in order to seek their livelihood there; they were bound to be prepared to undergo persecution and humiliation, and should have possessed peculiar personal capacities for enduring such unpleasantnesses for pecuniary considerations. If they attached primary importance to respectful treatment they would have done better to devote their talents and working abilities, not to our enemies, but to their own country, where both would have earned the recognition and recompense they might have deserved. Although I hold it to be the invariable duty of His Majesty's Govern-

ment to protect the interests of our fellow-countrymen abroad, I cannot sympathise with the 'Parisian of German extraction,' who is only so far German as he may happen to require our protection and assistance." The persons of this class who made the most fuss were nearly all journalists or clerks of Semitic origin.

The French Ultramontanists, in their press organs and episcopal Pastoral Letters, passionately supported the agitation got up by their colleagues in Germany. Their most violent utterance emanated from the Bishop of Nancy (it was published in the *Univers*) who asserted that Germany was conspiring with Italy and Switzerland to persecute the Roman Catholic Church, and then broke out into coarse invective against the German Emperor and Government. French law was competent to deal with these excesses; but the Minister of Justice refrained from enforcing it. Bismarck, however, could not put up with them, and so Count Arnim was instructed (by Decrees dated January 3 and 11) to address the Duc de Décazes upon the subject of these illegal proceedings, and to demand their suppression and punishment, which was effected in due course. At the same time a despatch was transmitted to Germany's representatives abroad pointing out that Germany was sincerely desirous to live at peace with France; but that, should a collision become manifestly inevitable, Germany would not be able to reconcile it with her conscience or duty to her people to await the moment that might appear most favourable to France. Germany's immediate antagonist was ecclesiastical Rome. Whenever France should identify herself therewith, she would become Germany's sworn foe. The surest guarantee for European peace and for the tranquil development of popular political life on both sides of the Vosges would be the sepa-

ration of the French Government from the Ultramontane cause.

In the years 1876–7 French hatred of Germany displayed itself in formidable proportions, upon which account the Chancellor strongly advised his fellow-countrymen not to contribute to the Paris Exhibition of 1878, as the President of the French Republic, Marshal MacMahon, wished and entreated them to do; and Bismarck's advice was followed, although the Empress, in her anxiety to further the prospects of peace, eagerly advocated the Marshal's desire. When the latter's invitation was declined, he sent the Marquis d'Abzac, an exceptionally agreeable gentleman, to make a last appeal. The Marquis was a skilled performer upon the shawm of peace and produced extremely melting tones from that instrument. He declared that, with the invitation in question, France was stretching out the hand of reconciliation towards Germany; that the Exhibition itself would be a Congress of Peace; why should Germany roughly reject the offered hand of her former foe, now become her friend and loyal neighbour; and so on, in flattering and moving terms, most gracefully expressed. The immediate result was another application to the highest quarter on behalf of unsophisticated, benevolent, and sweetly-supplicating France. But it was all of no use. Bismarck stood fast, the Emperor resolutely backed him up, and Monsieur le Marquis finally obtained nothing but—one of the most exalted decorations of Prussian chivalry. Supposing it had been otherwise; that the highest authority had disregarded an insight into the nature of the actual circumstances clearer than its own; and that the President of the Republic's messenger had returned to Paris with an acceptance of France's invitation to the *soi-disant* peaceful festivity. What would probably have happened then?

Germany would have put in an appearance at the Exhibition, and her exhibitors would, at the very least, have been placed in a very uncomfortable position and exposed to all sorts of dangers; in short, occurrences would most assuredly have taken place which would have engendered bitter feeling, perhaps would have led to a paper-war, and possibly even to something worse.

The Chancellor's views with respect to French parties, and to the form of government in France which would be most advantageous to German interests, are made plainly manifest in his instructions forwarded to Count Arnim in the year 1872, when the French Monarchists were preparing the overthrow of President Thiers and the "restoration" of one of the three pretenders to the throne; when Count de Chambord all but regained possession of the crown lost to his House in 1830; and when Gambetta's influence began to make itself felt in the Republican camp.

On May 6, 1872, Arnim sent in a report to the Chancellor upon the situation in France, in which he asserted that, "according to a widely spread conviction, universal suffrage could only produce one of two results—Gambetta or Napoleon. It is indisputable that the former gains ground daily in the provinces, particularly in the south of France. Socialism and Red Democracy are rapidly recruiting adherents amongst the country-folk, and nowadays the peasants are more out and out Radicals than the Parisians themselves. In Marshal Bazaine's opinion the army is favourable to Gambetta and the Red Republic. The only existing influence capable of counterbalancing the exorbitant power of Democracy (which, by the way, will only find its transitory expression in Gambetta) is that of the name, Napoleon . . . I opine that we should not reject the relations now sought to be established with us by the

Bonapartists; the less so as, on the one hand, they are not hatching any intrigues against the present Government, and, on the other, because of all the parties here they constitute the only one which openly seeks our support and inscribes reconciliation with Germany upon its programme, whilst all the others scrupulously avoid any intercourse with us and are vowed to a war of revenge upon Germany. In the Duc d'Aumale's candidature I recognise as great a danger as in that of Gambetta; and the so-called 'respectable Republic,' represented by Casimir Périer or Grévy, can be nothing more than a state of transition, leading to Gambetta. Even Thiers' own system has become impossible by reason of his increasing intimacy with Gambetta. Therefore the most desirable development of the political situation appears to me to be that which, on the one hand, will give us time to make arrangements with the actual Government for the speedy payment of the three milliards, and, on the other, shall so hasten the inevitable change of administration that the presence of our troops in France shall give us an opportunity of exercising a decisive influence upon the crisis." Bismarck replied (May 12) to this communication:—"Your observations only confirm private intelligence reaching me from other quarters to the effect that the Orleans Princes are rapidly losing ground in France, chiefly through their conduct with respect to money-matters; and I quite agree with Your Excellency that Germany has no cause to desire their accession to rule, and that the Bonapartist party—of all those which are struggling to achieve power—is the only one from which endurable relations between Germany and France may be hopefully anticipated. It naturally remains our duty, however, to sustain the present Government as long as it shall continue to represent the resolve of France to carry out the Peace

Treaty loyally. Whatever may succeed, it will have to legitimize itself anew in that direction, as far as we are concerned; we are not called upon to lean exclusively towards the Bonapartist party, nor, on the other hand, to do anything to weaken it or damage its position in the eyes of the French nation. To take its part and favour it, departing from our accustomed attitude of reserve, would certainly produce those results."

In November, General von Manteuffel confidentially informed Prince Bismarck that Count de St. Vallier had told him "Arnim had recently observed in his presence that he considered the actual French Government to be untenable; that Gambetta would succeed Thiers, the Commune Gambetta, and that the Commune, in its turn, would be followed by a military *régime*, unless France should fancy the reintroduction of monarchy, *ápropos* of which the Ambassador (Arnim) had referred to the Count of Paris and to the Emperor Napoleon's son." The Chancellor requested Arnim to acquaint him with what really had taken place, to the best of his remembrance, and received answer that Manteuffel's communication was founded upon misapprehensions. But his despatch showed that he regarded the Republic in France as a danger, likely to prove contagious, and opined that Thiers himself looked upon it as a "means towards revenge;" he believed, moreover, that the monies owing by France to Germany would be paid, no matter what form of government might be in power. Replying to him on November 23, the Chancellor's representative, Von Balan, wrote: "Prince Bismarck is by no means of opinion that no French government would think of failing to discharge France's pecuniary obligations to Germany. On the contrary, His Highness deems that our interests require us, before all else, to obtain a full

settlement of the war indemnity and fulfilment of the Peace-Treaty, and that, henceforth as heretofore, we should leave French home affairs to develope themselves, or at least not assume towards them an attitude dictated by foregone deductions and projects. Under certain circumstances, of course, we may favour those elements which suit our interests; but we must wait until they appear openly upon the stage, not utilise them like conspirators. France, if monarchically constituted, would threaten us with greater dangers than those which Your Excellency apprehends from the contagious influence of Republican institutions, the spectacle presented by which is more likely to appal than to attract. . . . It would be quite out of the question for us to get on with the Legitimists, as their convictions will always remain papistical. . . . It would be going too far to assume that any other form of government in France but the Republican would be unacceptable to us. . . . But on the other hand, were we to support any other government, we should necessarily inherit its enmities, and should put France into the position of being able to contract alliances, which she is at present incapable of doing."

On Dec. 20 the Chancellor again addressed to Count Arnim a refutation of the latter's views respecting German policy towards France, giving expression to ideas which have guided his actions in that direction up to the present day, and which, as their correctness has been proved by events, may here be reproduced at some length:—

"The state of affairs in France is such as to render it difficult, if not impossible, for the most experienced diplomatist to form a sound judgment upon the condition of the country, the importance of individual political parties, and the probabilities of the immediate future. This difficulty s aggravated by the unappraisable passionateness

which is peculiar to the French character, and from which even the riper French statesmen are less free than the majority of German and English statesmen. It is, however, supremely important for the Imperial German Government not to judge the situation in France and its consequences erroneously, nor to accept false premises as correct and sound bases for its own policy. In such a situation as the present I deem it the duty of the German Empire's official representative to carefully test and sift his impressions before reporting them to me. For, considering of what fatal importance to the future of Germany and Europe any decision of His Majesty may be, it would be extremely perilous to both were the essential anticipations adopted in exalted quarters to turn out incorrect, although deemed indubitable, and announced as such, by the Imperial Embassy in Paris. My recognition of this danger constrains me to tell Your Excellency that I consider your confidently expressed conviction, viz., that the arrears due to us are certain to be paid, whatever form of government may prevail in France, to be quite erroneous, and the assurance given by Your Excellency to that effect, an extremely audacious one. I deem it probable that the payments will be effected if Thiers shall remain at the helm, or if governmental affairs shall observe a regular and legal development. But I fear that we shall again be compelled to enforce the satisfaction of our claims with the sword if a Republic, led by persons of a different description, should be violently substituted for the present one. In view of this possibility it behoves us not to weaken the existing Government, or contribute to its fall. Were one of the monarchical Pretenders to obtain possession of power before the war contribution shall be paid and French territory evacuated by our troops, matters would take quite another turn, and

I fear, one highly unsatisfactory to us. We should then be politely requested to foster the growth of the young monarchical germ by making concessions to the Monarchy, with respect to payment and evacuation, which we had refused to the Republic. Of course we could decline to do so; but that, I apprehend, would be rendered difficult by the action of other Cabinets—especially of those with which we stand upon terms of close friendship"—(the Chancellor had Petersburg in his mind) "which would more or less urgently recommend us to show some consideration to the monarchical element in France. Although people in London, Petersburg and Vienna are too clever to believe that Monarchical France would be less dangerous to us than the accidental rule of Republican fractions in France, the assumption that they entertain that belief is too convenient a screen for endeavours in other directions not to be utilised to mask the vexation inspired by our position and by the transfer of the milliards from France to Germany, which no doubt causes great inconvenience to everybody except ourselves. In this manner a highly inconvenient European group might be rapidly formed, which would exercise pressure upon us—friendly pressure at first—in order to induce us to forego some part of the advantages we have gained. Later on, probably, analogous phenomena would accrue; anyhow it is certainly not our business to make France powerful and alliable (*buendnissfaehig*) for our whilom friends by consolidating her internal affairs and helping her to re-establish a well-organised monarchy.* France's enmity compels us to desire that she should

* This probability occurred to Prince Bismarck during the war with France. On August 23rd, 1870, I wrote at his dictation the following article for the German Press:—"It is now positively certain that the Orleans Princes, expecting to see the Napoleonic star pale and sink still

remain weak; and we should be acting too disinterestedly did we not resolutely and vigorously oppose her in any endeavour to establish consolidated monarchical institutions so long as the Peace of Frankfort shall not be fully carried out. . . Your Excellency believes and has verbally expressed to His Majesty that the actual endurance of Republican institutions in France is dangerous to monarchical institutions in Germany. I conceive that Your Excellency would not have formed this apprehension had not foreign affairs chiefly occupied your attention for some years past, and had a protracted sojourn in Germany put you in a position to arrive at a competent judgment. Your Excellency states in your last report that connections exist between French Democracy and Southern Germany. This can hardly be less of a novelty to Your Excellency than it is to us here; for forty years the archives of all our offices at home and abroad (including, as I have

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lower, consider their time is come. Calling attention to the circumstance that they are Frenchmen, they have placed their swords at the disposal of France during the present crisis. The Orleans Family lost its throne chiefly through its indolence and careless *laisser-aller* with respect to developments in neighbouring countries. It seems to desire to regain that throne by a display of energy, and would endeavour to retain it by yielding to the lusts of Chauvinism, the thirst for glory and the ambition to patronise the whole world which are such conspicuous French characteristics. We have not yet finished our job. A decisive victory is probable, but not certain; Napoleon's fall seems to be near, but has not yet taken place. Should it occur, can we be satisfied with that result of our enormous exertions, keeping the above facts in mind; can we believe that we shall really have attained our object—a firm and durable peace? A peace concluded with an Orleans, restored to the throne of France, would doubtless be a less genuine peace than one effected with Napoleon, who has at least accumulated glory enough. Sooner or later we should again be challenged by France, who would by that time probably be better armed and *sure of powerful Alliances.*"

reason to believe, that of the Paris Embassy, readily available to Your Excellency) have contained voluminous and deplorable particulars of the connections alluded to, which have existed since the Revolution of July, and longer still, not only with Southern Germany, but with Switzerland, Belgium, England, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Hungary and Poland. Their intensity has been proportionate with France's prestige in Europe; for no monarchical government in France, however severely it may persecute French Democracy, disdains to employ Democracy as a weapon against other States, particularly against Germany. It is always the same thing over again, as it was in the case of the oppression of Protestants in France and their protection by Germany, or in that of the philo-Turkish policy of His Most Christian Majesty Louis XIV. I am convinced that it would never occur to any Frenchman to aid us in recovering the blessings of a monarchy had it pleased God to afflict us with the curse of a Republican anarchy. To carry out in deeds that sort of benevolent sympathy or hostile neighbours is an essentially German peculiarity. But the Government of his Majesty the Emperor is all the less called upon to take this unpractical proclivity into account because it can have escaped no impartial observer how vigorous and general—since the Commune made its *experimentum in corpore vili* before the eyes of all Europe—has been the reaction in Germany from extreme to moderate Liberalism and from the latter to Conservatism; from doctrinary Opposition to a feeling of interest in and responsibility for the State. Were France to perform yet another act of the Commune's interrupted drama, it would contribute materially towards still further demonstrating the advantages of a monarchical Constitution and towards developing attachment to monarchical institutions. What we want is

to be left in peace by France: and, if she will not let us alone, to prevent her from obtaining allies. As long as she has none, she is not dangerous to us; and as long as the great European Monarchies hold together, no Republic is dangerous to them. On the other hand, a French Republic will not readily find a monarchical ally against us. This being my conviction, it is impossible that I should advise His Majesty the King to encourage the French Monarchical Right, a proceeding which would involve the strengthening of an Ultramontane element which is hostile to us."

Since that time the Chancellor's whole policy towards France has been one of prescient benevolence. The last characteristic utterances of his views and intentions anent our Western neighbours related to his attitude in the Tunisian question, and were expressed in the declaration published by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* when Italy's accession to the Austro-German Alliance was being discussed in newspapers and Parliaments.

When the Sultan transferred the occupation and administration of Cyprus to the English by Convention (June 4, 1878) that proceeding gave umbrage to the Mediterranean Powers, France and England, to which their representatives gave vent at the Berlin Congress; whereupon Lord Salisbury remarked to the French Plenipotentiary, Waddington:—"Do what you like with Tunis; England will raise no objections." If, however, Oppert (the 'Times' correspondent) has told the truth, the German Chancellor was no less favourable to the French enterprise. Oppert wrote at that time:—"Bismarck himself said to me, 'When I first saw Lord Beaconsfield I told him he should make arrangements with Russia instead of quarrelling with her; should let her have Constantinople and take Egypt in exchange; France

would not prove inexorable—besides one might give her Syria or Tunis!' I thought he was jesting; but he had previously spoken in the same sense to Lord Salisbury and Waddington. As Bismarck did not then know of the Cyprus transaction, Salisbury made no answer; but Waddington replied that France had no views upon Tunis herself, but would not permit any other Power to establish itself there to the injury of her Algerian possessions."

Later on (April, 1881) the French forewent this abstinence (if it had ever existed), sent an army to Tunis, occupied the country, and coerced the Bey into signing a Treaty which conferred the Protectorate upon France. The Chancellor was consulted respecting the undertaking, and replied encouragingly to the questions addressed to him from Paris. But the motives assigned to him by the press were founded upon incorrect hypotheses. It was asserted that he reckoned upon France (by reason of her aggressive disposition) involving herself in a quarrel with one or more European Powers; that he had advised the Italian Government to take up the cause of the oppressed Bey energetically; and that he hoped, should this be done boldly and persistently, to see the official good understanding thitherto obtaining between Germany's oldest enemy and youngest friend finally broken up. Should France treat Italy's representations with contempt, thereby giving her occasion to take offence, Germany would stand by Italy in a war between the two Powers.

More trustworthy than the above appears to us information reaching us from another source, to the effect that the Chancellor expressed his views upon the matter as follows:—"It is ridiculous to attempt to discover secret motives and *arrières-pensées* in Germany's attitude towards the Tunisian question. But it does not surprise me. Just

because Germany's policy in this affair is so manifestly dictated by the nature of things, those who hatch political *canards* and peddle with national idiosyncracies are eager in their search after malicious *arrières-pensèes.* The so-called Tunisian question has been up to the present moment a purely French concern, of no importance save from the standpoint of France's internal policy, i.e., as a lay-figure upon which she may experimentalise with her new civil and military organisation. Nothing is more natural than that she should do in Tunis whatever her military and political interests may require. Every French success in Tunis must necessarily be advantageous to the interests of the rest of Europe, which are constantly being prejudiced by the disorder prevailing in such abortive States as the Regency. French successes in that direction are welcome to Germany because they keep France in a good humour. The preservation of peace cannot be more effectively achieved than by contenting those who were formerly our enemies for reasons that belong to the past and have nothing whatever to do with the present. Every former enmity becomes in time a political *chiffre* which may be exactly appraised and utilised in a peaceful calculation, such as is far preferable to a calculation with an untrustworthy factor, neither friend nor foe."

It was obvious who was meant by this "factor." Tunis in French hands could not be agreeable to England, any more than France's whole new colonial policy; which first took action in the annexation of that portion of the Mediterranean coast and subsequently awakened English jealousies in Madagascar and Tonkin and on the Congo. Apart from this, the German Chancellor's standpoint in the Tunis question was the following. "In this matter French statesmen alone are competent to judge and act, and they

have no disfavour or interference to apprehend from Germany. German interests prescribe no meddling on our part, if France looks to her own advantage in North Africa. On the contrary, her doing so will be doubly agreeable to us; in the first place, because whatever satisfaction she may obtain there and elsewhere across the seas will modify her discontent with respect to losses nearer home; in the second, because a country which once flourished exceedingly, and then was ruined through falling into the hands of savages, will be regenerated by a civilised people, and thus enabled to flourish once more and contribute to the general prosperity of mankind."

As a matter of fact Germany's attitude towards France in the Tunisian affair was and has remained a favourable one. When the Cabinet of Rome expressed the wish that France's treaty with Mohammed Es Sadok should be submitted to the approval of an European Congress, Bismarck declared that he would not raise any difficulties for France in the matter; and, as Austria-Hungary endorsed his declaration, no further attempts were made to disturb France in her new possessions. The French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Barthélémy St. Hilaire, in a private letter of May 12, 1881, expressly recognised the benevolent sentiments manifested by Bismarck, in these words:—"We can only praise Germany's behaviour throughout this important question, and I gladly express the gratitude we owe to the German Chancellor."

As in the Tunisian question, so did Bismarck act with respect to that of Egypt, when the latter cropped up; and if French politicians omitted to safeguard the interests of their country by taking part in the overthrow of Arabi it was in no way attributable to Germany. Their irritation against us was therefore groundless and unjustifiable. The

coolness supervening between France and England was a result of events for which not Germany, but an erroneous appraisement of her intentions, was to blame.

During the Tunisian difficulty Italian journals complained that Germany had not uncompromisingly taken Italy's part. The answer to these reproaches was obvious: Had Italy's behaviour, since 1866, always been such as to impose upon Germany the obligation to take up the cudgels for her, even diplomatically, every time the sphere (enlarged at the bidding of Italian caprice) of her interests should be impinged upon by any neighbouring Power? Were Italy's relations to our ally on the Danube sincerely friendly? did she not rather entertain dishonest projects of territorial aggrandisement at Austria's cost?

Later on Italy began to understand in which direction her true interests lay, and by degrees an understanding became feasible. In April, 1883, Mancini, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, delivered a speech in the Chamber upon Italy's relations to her neighbours, immediately followed by a Reuter telegram containing the sensational intelligence that a formal offensive and defensive Treaty, aimed against France, had been concluded between Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy.

Mancini had only repeated in other words portions of a speech pronounced (October 31, 1882) by Count Kalnoky to the Delegation at Pesth, viz.:—"King Humbert's visit to Vienna was prompted by two motives; firstly, to give expression to Their Italian Majesties' friendly feeling for our Imperial House, and secondly, to let the world know that Italy desired to identify herself with the peaceful and Conservative policy of the Austro-Hungarian Cabinet." To this Kalnoky added (November 9, 1882):—"The foreign relations of the Monarchy are in the highest degree

satisfactory. The intimate relations existing between the two Empires constitute a guarantee of peace acknowledged by the other Powers. The Czar also, despite many occurrences, announces his desire for peace. During the past year Italy signified her wish to adhere to our policy. Our friendly relations to England have been strengthened by events in the East. As far as human forecast can prognosticate the future, peace is assured."

Mancini spoke still more clearly in the Italian Senate, where he had to do with enemies as well as friends, and with adherents to France, such as Senator Alfieri. His remarks were led up to by Senator Caracciolo, who expressed the wish that the differences of opinion then obtaining between Italy and France might be arranged, and the expectation that Italy's excellent relations with Germany and Austria-Hungary might contribute materially to the success of a peaceful and Conservative policy. Mancini thanked him for acknowledging the Government's endeavours to heighten Italy's prestige abroad, and more particularly for endorsing its efforts to render her relations with the Central European Allies more cordial and intimate. The success of those efforts had already made itself manifest in the understanding arrived at by the three Governments with respect to important questions, as well as in the increase of Italy's influence in the European Areopagus. He must refrain, at the dictates of prudence, from further declarations upon this theme. Italy, however, was no longer isolated; she was co-operating with the other Powers in consolidating the tranquillity of Europe and the peaceful progress of civilisation, whilst guarding her own independence and dignity. Her understanding with those Powers would possess the great advantage of impeding every kind of aggressive policy. It was unnecessary

to indicate the designation and form of that understanding. Caracciolo had been in the right to say that no feeling hostile to France had prompted Italy to affect a *rapprochement* to the Central European Powers. It was the unanimous desire of the members of the Cabinet to avoid any pretext for misunderstanding with France, and to constantly improve Italy's relations with that country. But feelings of true regard for France were not incompatible with watchful care of Italy's interests, which would prevent still greater inconveniences from being occasioned by accomplished facts (the annexation of Tunis) and could not possibly remain indifferent should a Mediterranean Power embark in an elaborate colonial policy.

The Reuter despatch above alluded to aroused a noisy and heated discussion in the European press. It was remarked by certain English and Austrian journals (credited with official inspiration) that if there were any truth in the announcement Austria must have made a sacrifice in deference to the German Chancellor's wishes. Other journals doubted the existence of any such alliance, and complained of the attitude theretofore observed by Italy: the *Standard*, for instance, whose Vienna correspondent notoriously derived some of his political opinions from the Literary Bureau of the I. R. Foreign Office, and who, therefore, was what is called "a well-informed correspondent." The *Standard* was convinced that Europe need not fear that Germany and Austria would attempt to induce Italy to adopt a policy hostile to France. It opined that those Powers required no support from a third Power, and that the German Chancellor was too clever a politician to trouble himself about getting up coalitions against France, so long as the latter should conduct herself peacefully. German and Austrian policy had hitherto been of a peaceful

nature, and had therefore earned everybody's good will. As much could not be said for Italy, who had for a long time past displayed considerable restlessness. She appeared, however, to have changed her mind, to have drawn closer to Germany and Austria, and thereby to have furnished a guarantee that she would thenceforth pursue a peaceable and Conservative policy. French statesmen at the head of affairs in Paris must have lost all comprehension of foreign affairs should they intend to give Austria and Italy a pretext for assuming a threatening attitude towards the French Republic.

There was a good deal of truth in this reasoning; but the gist of the question—whether or not the Triple Alliance announced by Reuter really existed—was only touched upon therein, and denied rather than confirmed. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* spoke out much more plainly in an article emanating from the most authoritative source, declaring that neither the Allies nor Italy could experience any desire to form alliances against any other Power, seeing that the policy of those three States aimed exclusively at the preservation of peace. Least of all was the assumption justified that any one of the three felt called upon to take hostile action against France, alone or in concert with the others. It was obviously the interest, individually and collectively, of the three States to maintain the peace of Europe, and consequently possible—nay, even probable—that they would act in common to withstand any wilful breach of that peace, from whatever quarter it might be threatened. Apart from this motive of co-action, none of the three Powers had any reason to entertain projects disadvantageous to France, or any cause for apprehension that their tranquillity was menaced by that country. "If"—and in this paragraph lay the article's chief significance—

"rumours arise leading to the impression that the three Powers' common purpose, viz. : the maintenance of peace, is bound up with an *arrière pensee* having relation to France, those rumours can only be ascribed to the anxiety lest peace should be disturbed by France in consequence of some change in her form of government. Such an apprehension could only be justified should convulsions, subversive of the existing State Laws of France, place a personage or principle in power which should endeavour to consolidate an uncertain rule at home by appealing to the warlike proclivities of the nation. Should such an event accrue, the question would have to be considered whether or not each one of the three Powers, whose alliance is alluded to, would be certain of retaining its present measure of independence and security after France should have conquered any one of them. Let us suppose that France, impelled by some internal convulsion, should attack Germany; Austria and Italy would have to ask themselves what their position would be should France (with or without allies) overcome Germany and break up or paralyse the newly-founded Empire. That position would certainly be one diplomatically restricted, and possibly, soon afterwards, threatened from a military point of view. Again, were Italy attacked by France, German and Austrian politicians would have to consider whether they could suffer France to push to frontiers further eastwards by annexation, or in the form of a Cisalpine Republic, or that Italy should become dependent upon France through the results of a disastrous war. A direct attack upon Austria by France is only feasible nowadays by the latter's co-operation with Italy, thanks to frontier conditions; but Austria has no interest in giving such an eventuality another chance, like that which France and Italy availed themselves of in 1859. Nor

could it be a matter of indifference to Germany to see the security of Austrian's western frontier lessened by an extension of the French boundaries, accruing upon Italian soil. The strength and safety of Austria are a necessity for Germany; no intelligent German politician could think with complacency of the situation that would accrue were Austria to be paralysed or hostile to us because she had been thrown over by Germany. We are convinced that the logic of history is itself strong enough to prove to these peace-loving Powers that they do well not to wait until their turn shall come, but to take every precaution against isolation in the peace question through allowing their colleagues to be injured."

People acquainted with the diplomatic tongue inferred very correctly from the above sentences that a Triple Alliance for the maintenance of peace—i.e. a defensive league between Italy and the Allied Empires in view of certain indicated potentialities—had been concluded; and there was reason to believe that it was several months old at the time when it came to be publicly discussed. If we read between the lines of the Berlin official paper, we find it expressing the conviction that any attempt on the part of the French to disturb the peace of Europe on France's eastern and south-eastern frontiers would be encountered by three Powers resolved to keep that peace. That part of the article in which the Chancellor expressed his apprehension lest monarchy might obtain victory over the present Constitution of France gave extraordinary offence to the French press. The *Temps*, at that time an official organ, wrote on the 8th April: "Merciful Heavens! what vulgar fellows these Germans are, and how little national dignity they possess! Probably the *Norddeutsche* fancies that it will gratify the supporters of our institutions by offering

them its assistance. It would be difficult to exhibit a greater lack of tact. Is it, then, a matter of course that France should ask Germany's advice before deciding what she shall do at home—that her political parties should enquire how far they may go without drawing down the German Chancellor's remarks upon their heads? The *Norddeutsche* is quite right in saying that France does not exhibit any desire to break the peace; but it is gravely in error if it believes that all parties in France are not at one in the resolve to be masters in their own country, and to maintain the independence of the French nation."

Paul de Cassagnac, the clerical Bonapartist, bitterly lamented in the *Pays* that "It is the foreigner who watches over and supports the Republic in France. What a disgrace for the Republic! If we required any further proof how fatal the Republic is to us, we should find it in this German article, which so correctly explains the motives of the Triple Alliance formed against our unfortunate country!"

The Gambettist organ, *La République Française*, was quite beside itself, to the extent of becoming irefully sarcastic and regrettably personal, e.g.: "M. de Bismarck has rallied from the painful throes of his neuralgia or gout to dictate an article for the *Norddeutsche Zeitung*. He condescends to acquaint us with a fact which was never unknown to us, namely, that Germany, Austria and Italy have concluded an offensive alliance against us. He is so good as to admit that none of these Powers considers its tranquillity menaced by us. Is it possible to be more gracious? It is therefore certain that the *Fraeuleins* of Berlin and Vienna and the Roman *signorine* need not fear that General Gallifet will forthwith sound to boot and saddle on the Meuse or Var. The Spring of 1883 will not have to wrinkle its brows

over war-rumours. All renown to Prince Bismarck and his prophet the editor of the *Norddeutsche*, for having proclaimed this message to the universe! Our constitutional laws are quoted as the chief guarantee of European peace, and it is observed that nothing short of a cataclysm could revive our warlike dispositions, by bringing a man or principle to power, whose position would have to be strengthened by turning Frenchmen's attention to foreign matters. We are happy to inform M. de Bismarck that no man in the world is capable of dragging our nation into a war of conquest. (!) If he imagines that our existing institutions would cause us to hesitate if called upon to defend our rights and honour, he is most abominably misinformed. The Republic will attack nobody, but will know how to make itself respected by everybody. To recommend our form of government to European benevolence as the only preventative against the warlike proclivities of the nation, is to insult France as well as the Republic. There is no Frenchman, be he Republican or Monarchist, who does not feel this insult. We are not accustomed (!) to blame or praise the institutions of our neighbours. We do not side with either Herr von Bismarck or Herr Richter; we let the Germans, Austrians and Italians govern themselves as best pleases them. Watch us, if you like; conclude defensive alliances against us, if doing so strengthens your feeling of security. It is all one to us, for we shall require no allies when summoned to defend ourselves. But for Heaven's sake spare us your advice concerning the constitution best suited to us."

Did this "peaceful Republic" promise to be durable, it would be scarcely necessary to take any precautions against it. But we have reason to doubt its durability, firstly, on account of the French character, which loves change, and secondly, by reason of the very nature of a democratic

Republic, or Parliamentary Despotism, which hitherto—at least amongst peoples of Latin origin—has always sooner or later led to exaggerations of principle, thence to reaction, to a military *régime* and finally to an absolutist Monarchy. Provision has therefore been made for putting a stop to these extravagances, should the case in question accrue, bringing with it the necessity of war. France would then find herself faced to the south and east by a formidable Triple Alliance. It may perhaps be doubted that a written Treaty to this effect exists; but it is beyond a doubt that a clear understanding has been arrived at by the three Powers, in the sense that France shall not be able to attack any one of them without finding the two others arrayed in arms to resist her. This is the exact converse of the state of Europe during the reign of Napoleon III. He (unwisely enough in the interests of England, not of France) attacked Russia in the Crimea whilst Prussia remained inactive, and Austria was only able to lend him a half-hearted assistance. He made war upon Austria whilst Prussia and Russia "stood at ease." He fell upon Germany in 1870, who fought him unsupported. If the Republic be wise, it will not play the old game over again; nor, in all probability, will any Emperor or King of the French who may reveal himself as the outcome of the Republic. If France wants, as matters now stand, to pick a quarrel with one of her neighbours, she will have to fight three at once—an undertaking to which she will never be equal. She will scarcely be so insensate as to dash her head against the wall of a new Coalition which, unlike its predecessors, is and will most likely remain a purely defensive one.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHANCELLOR AND RUSSIA.

JUST before and immediately after the last Russo-Turkish war it was a standing allegation in the columns of the Muscovite Press that Prussia (and even all Germany), owed a debt of gratitude to Russia and was not inclined to pay it. A retrospective glance at the history of the last eighty years—that is, up to the date of Bismarck's accession to Ministerial office—will enable us to judge what is the exact state of our debt and credit account with that country, as far as thankfulness is concerned.

Stein, at the Vienna Congress, wished to ensure lasting peace and tranquillity to this quarter of the globe by arrangements calculated to augment Germany's strength and permanently consolidate it. A neighbour, however, who should be able to dispense with the patronage of Russia and to decline foreign interference in its affairs did not suit Czar Alexander's plans, and so he quashed Stein's projects by his veto. Prussia's indemnity-claims were at first supported by Russia; but when the latter had ascertained to a certainty that no one intended to interfere with her designs upon Poland, that the efforts of Austria and the Western Powers were exclusively directed against Prussia, and that peace could be preserved without any further sacrifice on Russia's part, the Czar and his advisers

cooled towards this country, and eventually required Frederick William III. in plain terms to forego certain claims which would have procured for Prussia far larger compensation than that with which she was compelled to content herself.

During the Russo-Turkish war of 1829 Prussia did good service to Russia, chiefly by General von Mueffling's mission, which materially contributed to bring about the peace that extricated the Russians from grave embarrassment. In the Spring of 1830 Russia contracted an anti-German alliance with France, by which the latter was to acquire the left bank of the Rhine; nothing but the revolution of July prevented our two loyal neighbours' plan from being carried out.

The notorious "July Declaration" of 1848 reckoned amongst Russia's proofs of friendship for Germany, her readiness to stand by the latter against the projects Rhinewards disclosed by our Western neighbours in 1840. But Russia never even thought of arming at that time; and if she withstood Thiers' demonstrations by diplomatic action, it was only because she had reason to anticipate a national rising throughout Germany which would have endangered Russian influence in that country, whilst a *rapprochement* to France was in many respects desirable for the Muscovite Empire in 1840. Through the death of the Duke of Nassau an important point in Western Germany was left forlorn of relations to the Court of Petersburg, whose former connection with the Royal House of Wuertemberg had ceased to exist, whilst its relations with Baden were considerably slackened. A visit to London paid by Czar Nicholas had not produced the desired effect. In Russia itself there was trouble with the peasants and discontent in the highest circles; fresh conspiracies had been detected

in Poland; the Russian arms had made but little way in the Caucasus. English policy prevented the Russians from following up their advantage in Persia; the Quadruple Alliance hindered them from making any progress in Turkey; in the Balkan provinces Panslavism had begun to make a distinction between its relations to the Russian people and its attitude towards the despotic governing principles of the Czar. Under these circumstances Russia was bound to regain a firm footing in the West; and her best means of so doing was to contract an alliance with France. It was on the point of being concluded when the Revolution of February broke out, promptly to be followed by political storms in Germany and Austria.

Here we must interrupt our "statement of account" in order to interpolate a few facts required to make it comprehensible.

King Frederick William III. was a person of sober, mistrustful and highly critical disposition, tempered by a certain tenderness and sensibility which particularly expressed themselves in his relations to Czar Alexander I. On account of the vows of friendship exchanged between the Czar and himself by the grave of Frederick the Great during the lifetime of Queen Louise, and of the impressions made upon him throughout and after the War of Emancipation by his intercourse with his Russian fellow-monarch, he forgot all that had taken place at Tilsit, at Erfurt, and at the Congress of Vienna. He loved and honoured Alexander I. warmly and sincerely, and his affection influenced his foreign policy, even after the Czar's death, for he continued it to his deceased friend's successor, who, moreover, had espoused his daughter, the Princess Charlotte of Prussia. There were also sentimental traits in the character of Alexander I., but they lacked depth, and never

induced him to lose sight of his own interests. His feelings were changeful and contradictory; in reality, he was false to the core; consequently his friendship to the Prussian King was wanting in consistency, and much more a matter of calculation than of sentiment; frequently a self-delusion, still oftener a comedy performed with the intention to work upon the King's feelings or to tempt him, and always imbued with a sense of patronage. Czar Nicholas was a man of another kidney; but although, during his father-in-law's life, he subdued his pride in deference to the latter's age, he always knew how to manage matters so that the advantages of the good relations prevailing between himself and the Prussian Court were invariably more remunerative to Russia than to Prussia. The camp at Kalisch was a mere spectacle, calculated to display Russia's power in the East rather than her friendship to Prussia. The restraints imposed upon the Prussian press were dictated by consideration for wishes expressed on the banks of the Neva. It repeatedly occurred that Russia conducted her transactions with the minor German Courts in such sort as to prejudice Prussian interests. The Russian tariffs of 1830 inflicted very serious injury upon Prussia's eastern provinces. The King, however, appeared to consider all this perfectly natural, and to fall in with the Czar's pretensions to any extent. The circumstance that he entertained no Liberal predilections, and had no thought of extending Prussia's sphere of power in Germany contributed to the maintenance of his warm friendship with Russia. A change supervened upon the accession to the throne in 1840 of Frederick William IV. who *did* entertain Liberal predilections, and in whose mind constantly hovered a notion of some sort of German unification under Prussian leadership, which was as repugnant to his Imperial brother-

in-law (who meanwhile, upon the ground of his successes in Turkey and Poland, had persuaded himself that he was the chief guardian of order upon the European Continent) as were the King's very moderate Constitutional tendencies. "My brother-in-law in Berlin will come to grief," Czar Nicholas prophesied in 1841; and seven years later he declared; "I will not have any Constitutional Assemblies on my skirts at Berlin and Vienna." In 1848 he seems to have seriously thought of bringing about a counter-Revolution in Prussia by the agency of Russian troops. He was just as strongly opposed to the establishment of intimate relations between Prussia and the petty German States as he was to the awakening of Constitutional life in Prussia. It was due to Russian threats that, in the first Schleswig-Holstein War, the Prussian troops were withdrawn from Juetland and the armistice of Malmoe was concluded. Russia laboured quite as eagerly as England to produce a state of affairs which subsequently received sanction from the London Protocol. In May 1849, the Czar, in an autographic letter, declared himself opposed to Prussia's endeavours to obtain the consent of the German Sovereigns to proceed to the election of an Emperor at Frankfort; and, during the following autumn, he informed the Cabinet of Berlin that he should regard any reconstruction of the German Constitution, undertaken without Austria's co-operation, as a violation of the 1815 Treaties, and should treat it as such. Finally (Oct. 26, 1850), the Czar—who had by that time come to the front as Europe's only arbitrator, but had ineffectually striven to convert his Royal kinsman to the Union policy—spoke to the Prussian Plenipotentaries in such terms about German affairs and the aspirations of Prussia that the dismal journey to Olmuetz came to be regarded in Berlin as inevitable. He

talked about "bandits, who constituted his brother-in-law's *entourage*," and said that the Hessians (who, faithful to their Constitution, had been taken under Prussia's protection) "ought to be cut to pieces, as all rebels deserved to be."

During the Crimean war Austria—only five years previously supported and rescued from destruction by Russian arms—lent her aid, to the utmost of her ability, to Russia's adversaries; whilst Prussia—despite the evil usage she had had from Nicholas in 1848–50—observed a benevolent neutrality. This was a great advantage to Russia, although as a policy, it was not dictated by any liking for her; for, as we have seen in Chapter V., Prussian policy was then already influenced by a statesman whose actions were not prompted by sentimental impulse but by regard for the interests of his country. He has declared as much in public; i.e. in the Reichstag on February 19th, 1878. "I was," he observed, "not a Minister at the time; but, owing to the confidence reposed in me by the late King Frederick William IV., I was enabled to take part in the more important and momentous questions then pending, and I know exactly what happened. I know what persuasions and threats were brought to bear upon Prussia to drive us like bloodhounds into a foreign war; and it was only the King's personal resistance that prevented us from committing the grave error of engaging in a struggle which would have become exclusively our own as soon as we should have fired the first shot, whilst those associated with us would have been relieved of their embarrassments, and would have told us to stop fighting, as soon as they should have had enough of it. Ought we not to be thankful that we then withstood the temptation of forbidding Russia to make war, or even of enhancing her difficulties:" Russia had good reason to deem herself

fortunate that the Cabinet of Berlin observed the attitude above indicated; but she in no way acknowledged her obligation, if even she felt it—which may be doubted, for a Russian official pamphlet, "La Politique du Présent," published in 1864, stated that "Germany throughout the War in the East, had not been able to withstand the pressure of the Western Powers, and had left Russia in the lurch." As a matter of fact the Russians were not content with friendly services on our part, compatible with the safeguarding of Germany's interests; what they expected from us was slavish devotion at no matter what risk to ourselves.

This feeling still prevailed throughout Russian high society when Bismarck took up his appointment as Prussia's representative at the Court of Petersburg, where Prussian Envoys had theretofore not occupied a very distinguished position. Nothing but the relationship between their Sovereign and the Czar (which entitled them to admission to the Imperial family circle) raised them in any respect above the standing held by the diplomatic representatives of the German petty States. Under the reign of Czar Nicholas they did not rank as Intermediaries between the Russian Cabinet and that of a State equal to Russia in dignity, but as friendly servants of the Imperial House—a position which, owing to the masterful nature of the Muscovite Monarch, was often far from an agreeable one. Under Czar Alexander it was so far modified that the Prussian Plenipotentiary was no longer exposed to haughty and insulting treatment. But a fundamental alteration only accrued after Bismarck had presented his credentials to the Czar, to whom he came with excellent recommendations as an admirer of the late Emperor, and as an opponent to Berlin anti-Russian Liberalism and to Austria's policy at

Frankfort. The Russian Court was favourably predisposed towards him; and within a few weeks of his arrival at Petersburg he had won all hearts by his pleasant, easy manner, unpretentious distinction, frankness and sparkling wit. In "New Sketches of Petersburg Society," it is said of him:—"Here, at last, was a German with whom we could associate as easily and pleasantly as with other people; who gave himself the rein, being certain of his ability to pull himself up; who dictated the tone to society instead of mimicking it; who had self respect enough never to bore himself or others with superfluous pretensions. Our overweening aristocracy, accustomed to look down upon everything German, and to consider itself superior to all others, joyfully recognised him as one of its own caste. M. de Bismarck maintained unaltered the confidential relations to the Imperial Family enjoyed by his predecessors, freeing them, however, from all *inconvénients* as far as he was concerned, and establishing himself on the same footing as that occupied by the Ambassadors of the Great Powers. He was at once an Imperial family-friend and the representative of a powerful, independent State whose dignity could not be sacrificed under any circumstances whatsoever. Everybody knew that the Prussian Envoy was unable to compete with his French, English, and Austrian colleagues in splendour and display; but this drawback could not have been more happily and gracefully dealt with than it was by M. and Mme. de Bismarck. The little dinners and evening receptions at their house soon became more sought after than the wearisome *fêtes* with which other diplomatists ruined themselves; and the most exacting critics were obliged to confess that no embassy entertained so agreeably as the Legation in the Stenbock Palace. As we had theretofore had to do with German statesmen who either repudiated

their national morals and language in favour of French manners and speech, or else were obtrusively and fulsomely ultra-German in their behaviour, we welcomed in M. de Bismarck a diplomatist who combined the Prussian-German, proud of his country, with the gentleman in a natural and elegant manner that was admirably suitable to the forms of intercourse obtaining in Court and Diplomatic circles."

When Bismarck quitted Petersburg, after a three years' sojourn there, everybody belonging to the Russian Court agreed that he was destined to play an important part in the history of the Fatherland; and, perhaps unconsciously, he had accustomed the Russians to the notion that a mighty Prussia, emancipate from the influence of Petersburg, might prove a valuable friend and ally to her eastern neighbour. Soon afterwards events occurred eminently calculated to strengthen that impression.

On October 8th, 1862, Bismarck assumed the presidency of the Prussian State Ministry. He attempted and failed to persuade the opposition in the Diet to take a reasonable view of affairs. The Russian Press which had sprung up under the Liberal *régime* of Alexander II. took part (in common with the majority of German newspapers) against the "reactionary Junker in the Wilhelmstrasse" during the first few months of the Constitutional Conflict. Then—in January 1863—broke out the great insurrection in Poland, which held Russia breathless for several months, and overwhelmed the Czar's government with diplomatic and military embarrassments. The Western Powers were favourably disposed towards the insurgents; the Cabinet of Vienna seemed inclined to assist them; the Party of Progress in the Prussian Diet, as well as the Liberals throughout Europe, eagerly adopted their cause. Bismarck however, was not led astray; he forthwith made proposals

at Petersburg for common action against the revolution, and (even when the danger threatening Prussian provinces was averted by the proclamation of the Revolutionary Central Committee in Warsaw, to the effect that the exclusive object of the rising was to vanquish the "Moscow Czar, Poland's terrible hereditary foe," and effect the emancipation of Russian Poland) he persevered in the negotiations which led to the well-known Frontier-Convention of February, 1863. The attacks made upon him by the Opposition in the Lower House when this Convention was published were vexatious, but unimportant. Not so the probability that France would summon Prussia before the judgment-seat of Europe, to answer for her assistance to Russia in this matter. Drouyn de l'Huys wrote (February 17) to the French Envoy at Berlin:—"As Prussia mixes herself up more or less directly in the conflict she not only assumes responsibility for the repressive measures taken by Russia but suggests solidarity between the populations of the different parts of Poland—in a word, that the insurrection is a really national one." Four days later the French Government invited the Cabinets of London and Vienna to join it in taking steps at Berlin; and, although that proposal came to nothing, Bismarck's position became unpleasant, as he found it necessary to refrain from formally carrying out the Convention.

Nevertheless, the February Convention was of material assistance to Russia. In the first place it made a deep impression upon the Russian public, which was somewhat doubtful about the insurrection at the outset, but gave its unqualified support to the Government as soon as the Convention was made known. From that moment, also, the authorities took up a firm position, and the philo-Polish party in Russian upper circles of society lost ground. Besides this moral sustention material aid was promptly forth-

coming. The strictness with which Prussia kept guard upon the western frontier of Russian Poland relieved the Czar's forces of half their work, and enabled them to concentrate their attention upon the southern part of the province, as well as to overpower the bands of insurgents cropping up here and there in the northern and north-western districts with scarcely any effort.

Prussia's behaviour throughout the Polish insurrection gave general satisfaction in Russia at the time, and resulted in achieving Bismarck's chief object, viz.: that Prussia's great Eastern neighbour should look with a favourable eye upon his future undertakings in Germany. In certain strata of Russian society these undertakings were disapproved of and even denounced; but, judging by Russia's behaviour from 1864 to 1871, there must have been a powerful party at the Court of Petersburg which disbelieved in the expediency of an anti-Prussian policy. Doubtless Czar Alexander remained under the impression made upon him by Bismarck personally and by the 1863 Convention. We may assume that the German statesman was well aware of this fact, and that he utilised it to reassure the Czar (who was moreover, strongly influenced by his relationship and especial attachment to his venerable uncle at Berlin) with respect to the extent of his (Bismarck's) projected enterprises, to hold out prospects of advantage to him, and thus to enlist him durably in the cause of Prussian interests.

When—during the Danish War—an entreaty for help was transmitted from Copenhagen to France, England and Russia, and the British Ambassador at Petersburg asked Gortchakoff (Feb. 16, 1864) what Russia meant to do in the matter, he received an evasive answer, to the effect that the Imperial Cabinet had no doubt the question would be peacefully solved; that it could not assist the Danes

materially, but would lend them its moral support; that it could not investigate mere rumours concerning secret projects alleged to be entertained by Prussia and Austria; and that the best thing to do would be to convoke a Conference. When Prussia (May 15) repudiated the London Protocol, Russia did not protest, but let that Convention drop, and declared herself ready to forego her own claims upon Holstein and Oldenburg. Later on, 1866, when the Austro-Prussian war was on the point of breaking out, Benedetti wrote (April 10) to Drouyn de l'Huys: "Whilst upon the subject of Russia, permit me to remark that for a long time past I have observed, not without astonishment, the indifference displayed by Russia from the very first to Prussia's pretensions and to the probability of a collision between the two German Powers, as well as the confidence evinced by M. de Bismarck with respect to the attitude and intentions of the Northern Empire." As the dangers of war became more imminent the Czar put forward representations in favour of peace at Vienna and Berlin alike, but without attempting any interference in the questions at issue. Russia subsequently joined France and England in inviting Prussia and Austria to attend a Conference in Paris for the purpose of arranging their differences; but Vienna advanced stipulations that were inadmissible, and the war commenced. Whilst it was still going on, early in August, the King's General aide-de-camp, von Manteuffel, went to Petersburg on a special mission, with the object of confidentially explaining the Prussian Government's views and resolves to the Czar, in relation to certain Princely Houses in Germany with which His Russian Majesty was connected by family ties. His explanations must have proved satisfactory; for Russia offered no opposition to the settlement of German affairs subsequently effected by Prussia. For

this Germany is certainly indebted to her. But it was by no means exclusively owing to her goodwill towards Prussia that Russia "stood at ease," watching the course of events and leaving unutilized the opportunity presented to her for attacking Germany. Prussia was regarded by her as "the avenging instrument of Russian wrath," which Austria had drawn down upon herself by her "ungrateful conduct" during the Crimean War and Polish Insurrection. Secondly, Russia regarded Austrian hegemony in Germany as an eventuality far less advantageous to her interests than the unification of Germany under Prussian leadership.

The same motives inspired Russia's attitude throughout the Franco-German War. But there were others as well. She could not, in 1870, possibly tolerate that Austria-Hungary should participate in the subjugation of Germany, and that a Franco-Austrian army should approach the frontiers of Poland—a country traditionally favoured by France and, of late years, by Austria, always, of course, at the expense of Russia. The Muscovite Government, moreover, hoped that the war would paralyse France, whereby Gortchakoff would be enabled to shake off the fetters of the 1856 Paris Treaty. It did not, however, reckon upon the utter defeat of France that ensued. The Emperor Alexander was influenced by his regard for his Royal uncle and his dislike for Napoleon; and if Prussia had to thank Russia for her behaviour at that time, she cleared off her obligation by recovering, in 1871, for Russia the right to navigate the Black Sea, which, but for Bismarck's intermediatory efforts, France and England would not have granted.

The transaction in question took the following course. Prince Gortchakoff instructed the Russian Agents abroad (Oct. 19, 1870) to inform the respective foreign governments

that the Czar of all the Russias declined to be bound any longer by the Treaty of 1856, as far as its stipulations restricted his sovereign rights in the Black Sea; that he proposed to revoke his special Convention with the Sultan respecting the number and size of their respective warships in those waters, and to resume possession of all his rights in the same. The English Government, according to Granville's Circular Despatch of Nov. 10, regarded this declaration with "deep regret" as "an arbitrary repudiation of a solemn engagement" to which England "could not possibly give her sanction." Count Beust also (*vide* his Despatch of Nov. 16) was "painfully affected" by Russia's behaviour, and found it "impossible to conceal his extreme astonishment thereat."

How the German Chancellor dealt with the question may be gathered from some remarks he made in private at Versailles (Nov. 17). Having read over Granville's despatch, which had arrived on the previous day, he observed, with a laugh: "Future complications! Parliamentary orators! They have no confidence in themselves. The word future is strongly accented. That is the way people talk when they mean to do nothing. No; there is nothing to fear from *them* (the English), just as, four months ago, there was nothing to be hoped from them. Gortchakoff in this matter is not pursuing the true Russian policy; he is acting like a Varangian, impetuously and violently. It has always been imagined that Russian policy is exceptionally cunning and subtle, full of windings, traps, and dodges; but it is nothing of the kind. If the Russians were dishonest fellows they would forbear from making declarations of this kind, quietly build their men-of-war in the Black Sea, and wait till they were questioned on the subject, then replying that they knew nothing about it; and spin the thing

out in that way till at last people would get accustomed to it."

On Nov. 22, the Chancellor had an interview of three hours' duration with Odo Russell, England's representative at German Headquarters in Versailles, the result of which was that he empowered that gentleman to inform his Government that the Russian Circular had surprised him, (Bismarck); that, although he had been of opinion at the time that the Treaty of 1856 was unjustifiably oppressive to Russia, he could not excuse Russia's present conduct or choice of a moment whereat to extort a revision of the Treaty; that he regretted his inability, on account of the actual war, to interfere in the matter or even to answer the Russian Circular; and that he should recommend a Conference at Constantinople, with the object of averting the outbreak of another war. During a second conversation with Russell the Chancellor indicated Petersburg as still more suitable to the Conference, as the presence there of Czar Alexander would facilitate an understanding. When Granville objected to Petersburg, Bismarck proposed London, to which Gortchakoff consented. After several postponements the Conference met on Jan. 17, 1871. The Representative of the North German Confederation forthwith took occasion to state that his Government had proposed a Conference for purposes of conciliation, equity and peace. With those objects still in view he was instructed to recommend to earnest consideration Russia's desire for the alteration of those clauses of the Paris Treaty which affected the neighbourly relations of the two riparian Powers on the Euxine. After some discussion Granville declared his readiness to sign a Convention in the sense of Russia's wishes, provided that equivalents for the Neutrality Clauses should be forthcoming. The Representatives of

Austria and the Porte endorsed this declaration, and ultimately an understanding satisfactory to all parties was arrived at, which found expression in the two first Articles of the Treaty of March 13, 1871.

The Russian press was all but unanimously unfavourable to the unification of Germany by Prussia, and therein faithfully reflected public opinion, which regarded the concentration of Germany's peoples into one mighty force as seriously injurious to Russian interests. Nearly all the Russian newspapers complained that the Germans kept their eyes greedily riveted upon Russia's Baltic Provinces. General Fadejeff, in his book "Russia's Fighting-Strength" designated Prussia as "a historical accident," and stated that "the disastrous consequences of the European cataclysm of 1866 weighed upon Russia alone." When the Franco-German War broke out all the Russian press-organs except the *Journal de St. Petersburg* took part with France, and stuck to that line throughout the whole campaign, in direct opposition to their government's attitude. Even after peace had been concluded, and after the signature of the London Protocol, which gave the Russians free elbow-room in the Black Sea once more, the leading Russian journals kept up their anti-German demonstrations, and reproduced every lie to Germany's prejudice that was invented by Austrian Federalists, Belgium Clericalists, French Radicals and Italian Mazzinians.

The politicians of Petersburg had long and vainly sought for an ally, who (in exchange for the privilege of doing as he pleased in Western Europe) should enable them to realise their plans in the East. This ally they believed they had found at last in New Germany, which they therefore strove to attach to Russia and to estrange from Austria—who, for her part, was still sulking over her 1866

reverses. They proposed, indeed, to divide the Danubian Realm between the two Allies, Russia's share being the predominantly Slav provinces, and indirectly at a later date, the Turkish Balkan territories. Prince Bismarck, however, was by no means disposed to fall in with this arrangement. He perceived clearly that Germany would not gain by further territorial aggrandisement, but by the maintenance of peace, to which end the first thing needful was to reconcile Germany with Austria, and the second, to bring about friendly relations between Austria and Russia. Consequently he set on foot the negotiations that led to the Imperial Triple Alliance of 1872. Gortchakoff agreed to Bismarcks' proposals, but with the *arrière pensée* that as soon as Russia's Oriental projects should be ripe, Germany would lend herself to their furtherance. Those plans might have taken a considerable time to mature had not the rapid spread and heat of the Panslavistic agitation, as well as Gortchakoff's craving to achieve popularity and appear to the world at large as a star of the first magnitude upon the political firmament, hastened the march of events.

The precursory symptoms of a renewed Russian attack upon Turkey made themselves manifest in 1875 in the Herzegovina, and soon assumed a serious character calling for diplomatic action in order to avert a general war. In December, 1875, the three Eastern Powers came to an understanding anent a programme of reform for the Ottoman Empire on the basis of placing the Christian religion *de jure* and *de facto* upon an absolute equality with Islam. This programme was communicated to the other Great Powers by Count Andrassy in a Note, dated Dec. 30, 1875. In May, 1876, the Czar came to Berlin, and Bismarck, Gortchakoff and Andrassy held consultations upon the

question; the chief object in view being that the two last-named statesmen should come to terms, wherefore Germany's representative declared himself only prepared to give his moral support to the contemplated arrangements, as they would concern Germany indirectly. The result of these negotiations was the Berlin Memorandum of May 13, proposing that Europe should endeavour to bring about an understanding between the Porte and the insurgents, and recommending two months' armistice. The Memorandum was accepted by France and Italy, but rejected by England. However, it had led—as Andrassy informed the Austro-Hungarian Delegations (May 18, 1876)—to "complete unanimity of the Three Powers in the matter at issue, and to a resolve on their part to renew their present agreement from time to time."

From the 14th to the 18th of June the German and Russian Emperors were together at Ems, the Czar and Francis Joseph having previously met (June 8) at Reichstadt; and the result of these meetings was a resolve that the three Powers should refrain from intervention. Thus the danger that war might overstep the boundaries thitherto confining it seemed to be averted; but this hope was speedily put an end to by the sanguinary suppression of the Bulgarian insurrection, and by Servia's rebellion against Turkey. During the autumn darkness obscured the horizon in south-eastern Europe. The Servians were repeatedly and thoroughly thrashed by the Turks. A conference, with the object of averting further bloodshed in the Balkan Peninsula, was arranged to be held at Constantinople; but the Porte objected to some of the concessions exacted from it, and so the conference was put off. Russia then began to arm, and on Oct. 31, her representative at Stamboul handed in an Ultimatum to the effect that the Czar could

no longer tolerate Turkish operations in Servia, but must insist upon an effective and unconditional armistice; otherwise, the Russian Embassy would quit Constantinople. Soon afterwards Czar Alexander stated to Lord Augustus Loftus at Livadia, that "the Porte, by a series of manœuvres, had frustrated all Europe's efforts to terminate the war and secure general peace; and that, if the other Powers chose to put up with such behaviour, he could not reconcile it with Russia's honour, dignity and interests to do so any longer." At the same time he pledged his word of honour that he had no design upon Constantinople, and that, should he find it necessary to occupy Bulgaria, he would only hold it until the conclusion of peace. Meanwhile he had caused the proposal to be made to England that Austria should occupy Bosnia, Russia could hold Bulgaria, and a Naval Demonstration should take place at Constantinople, in which England should play the leading part. The Czar then summed up his demands as follows: an armistice; immediate convocation of a Conference to introduce reforms in three Turkish provinces for the benefit of their Christian populations; material guarantees from Turkey that those reforms should be carried out.

The German Chancellor's attitude towards the whole affair may be gathered from some observations addressed by him to his guests at a dinner he gave on Dec. 1, to the President of the Reichstag, i.e., "Germany's duty *avant tout*, is to keep the peace, which need not yet be despaired of. If war should supervene, which seems probable, Russia and Turkey will get tired of it in time, and Germany will then be more likely to mediate successfully than she is now. It would be inexpedient to give Russia advice just at present. Such a step would put the Russian nation out of temper, which would be more prejudicial to us than a passing

difference with any Government. It is unlikely that England will go to war with Russia." He expressed sincere sympathy for Austria, observing that should she be compelled to fight in defence of her territory it would devolve upon Germany to take her part—and, indeed, to stand up for the map of Europe, as then defined. Germany would prove her absolute disinterestedness. Besides, Austria possessed greater vitality than people imagined, as he had told Lord Salisbury a few days previously, and would be made manifest if the Emperor Francis Joseph should take occasion to appeal personally to his peoples.

During the Reichstag Debate of Dec. 5, Prince Bismarck, in reply to an interpellation of Eugene Richter, explained at some length his view of the situation and of Germany's interests and duties in connection with it. He said, *inter alia:* 'If, at an ill-timed moment, you put a spoke in the wheel of a Power which happens to be in difficulties, it is quite possible that you may upset the coach; but the driver will have noticed who it was that inserted the spoke. The previous speaker, like many other people, labours under the error that Russia is just now soliciting great favours and services at our hands. That is by no means the case. He has hinted that Russia is bent upon conquest and territorial annexations. We have the Emperor Alexander's solemn assurance that he will refrain from the one and the other. Russia asks us for nothing that we can bargain about; she only seeks our co-operation in a peaceable Conference with an object which is ours as well as hers, namely, the safeguarding of the Porte's Christian subjects against treatment which is incompatible with existing European legal conditions, and upon the abolition of which Europe is entirely at one, although she has not yet hit upon the right way of giving effect to her unanimity. It would appear that, should the

Conference prove fruitless, Russia will very shortly proceed on her own account to obtain by force that which the Porte refuses to concede peaceably. Even in that case Russia asks nothing from us but neutrality, which it is in our interest to observe. We cannot possibly send our troops to the Russian frontier at a moment in which Russia is putting forth her strength in a cause common to us both. Some of our political parties are hostile to Russia by habit, inheritance and tradition (the Progressists); others, because the Russian form of government does not suit their confessional interests (the Clericalists). But, whatever these gentlemen may think, say, or do, I can assure them that as long as I stand upon this floor they shall not succeed in breaking up our good, intimate and solid relations to Russia. Those who yearn to see those relations destroyed are very far from the realisation of their wishes; for the League uniting the three Emperors for a long time to come is in full force; and I can tell them, moreover, that no clouds whatsoever intervene between Russia and Austria. . . It would be erroneous to infer that the Imperial Triple Alliance is adverse to England, with whom, as well as with Russia, our relations have been cordial for a century past. . . . I shall not advise our participation in the war as long as no German interest shall be called in question that may be considered worth the healthy bones of a single Pomeranian musketeer. . . . We have as little to do with the matter as France. This cannot be said of the other Powers, inasmuch as circumstances may accrue that will convert Turkish interests into Austrian, English or Russian interests. My duty, as prescribed to me by His Majesty the Emperor, is, to take such diplomatic action as may preserve our relations with the three Powers concerned in this struggle undisturbed or as little disturbed as may be. This duty would be

rendered extremely difficult were any one of our foreign friends to ask us to prove our amity towards him by dealing inimically with another of our friends, who has done nothing to us, and asks no better than to retain our friendship. But I do not believe that any such request will be addressed to us. . . . We shall endeavour, in the first place, to maintain peace and friendship with those who have hitherto been our friends, and, in the second, to keep the peace between the European Powers by localising the war, should it break out in the East. Should we be unsuccessful, a new situation will present itself, respecting which I cannot indulge in any conjectures, nor will you at this moment ask me for any information."

That situation was destined to accrue speedily. Meanwhile efforts were made in different quarters to divert the Chancellor from his prudential policy. In January, 1877, the *Times* exhorted him to insist upon the maintenance of peace, and a little later addressed an entreaty, in the same sense, to the Emperor William. In April, when Bismarck had asked His Majesty's leave to retire from office, the *Czas* (a journal generally kept well informed upon occurrences in Court circles and high society by its patrons, the Radziwills, Czartoryskis, &c.) announced that Queen Victoria, a short time previously, had written direct to Bismarck, urging him to protest against an attack upon Turkey by Russia, and had received an evasive answer; that Her Britannic Majesty, thereupon, had addressed a second letter to the Chancellor on the same subject, couched in still more pressing terms, to which a more definite reply had been returned. This reply not proving satisfactory to the Queen, she had then (according to the Polish journal) written to the Emperor, holding him and Germany responsible for the coming war.

We have reason to believe in the trustworthiness of the above report; and we may add that this most extraordinary request—viz.: that, without being called upon to do so by our own circumstances and requirements, but simply to oblige England and prevent her from over-exciting herself on behalf of her commercial and political interests on the Bosphorus, we should compel our Russian neighbour to keep quiet—was also otherwise conveyed (in a manner that may easily be divined by any one acquainted with the leading personages of the Prussian Court) to the King, who, being by nature of a peaceable disposition and animated by the sincere desire to avert new wars from his people, might have been inclined to give ear to wishes and counsels calculated (in the opinion of those proffering them) to serve the cause of peace. Such counsels, however, unless inspired by a lofty intelligence and keen perception of all the actualities and potentialities of the case they refer to, may readily lead to war. Supposing the Emperor and his Chancellor had allowed these London letters to determine their conduct; that Germany had put her foot down and ordained peace; and that Russia, disregarding Germany's commands, had given her troops the order to march. What would have happened then? Either we should have been compelled, in order to enforce peace, to undertake a dangerous war—in which, even if we proved victorious, we shall have had to sacrifice our blood and treasure for England—or Germany's commands, unsupported by action, would only have demonstrated her impotence to encounter Russia. In the latter case we should have suffered crushing humiliation, and all to serve the interests of a Power which has never sincerely wished the Germans well, and most assuredly only tolerates their actual European importance because it may possibly be

utilised to further the objects of England's shopkeeping policy.

The Conferences, which lasted from December 23, 1876, to January 20, 1877, led to no result, because Turkey felt unable to accede to the demands addressed to her by all the other Powers. Thereupon the Cabinet of Petersburg issued the following circular:—"The refusal of the Turkish Government touches Europe in her honour and peace. It is our desire to learn the intentions of the Cabinets with which we have hitherto co-operated, in order to reply to that refusal and to ensure the fulfilment of their will." General Ignatieff's journey to Berlin, Paris, and London gave occasion to further confidential negotiations, throughout which the German Government sought to preserve a good understanding amongst the Powers (particularly between Russia and England), and which resulted in a Final Protocol, embodying the demands upon Turkey agreed upon by the Christian Powers at Constantinople. This Protocol was imparted to the Porte as the expression of Europe's collective requirement; it was abruptly rejected by Turkey, and forthwith the Czar declared war upon the Sultan. On April 24 his troops crossed the Turkish frontiers, and a campaign commenced, at first teeming with disasters and defeats to the Russians, but subsequently effecting the all but total annihilation of the Turkish forces, and terminating (February, 1878) by bringing a Russian army to the very gates of Constantinople. An armistice ensued, after Russia had coerced the Porte into accepting the extremely unfavourable peace preliminaries of San Stefano. England brought up her fleet to within sight of that place; and a collision of the two Powers appeared almost inevitable. Austria invited the Powers to a Conference in Vienna, with the object of ascertaining "the

unanimous view of Europe respecting the alterations in the Treaties of 1856 and 1871 that might be rendered necessary by the conditions of the peace to be concluded between Russia and Turkey."

About that time (February 19), in reply to an interpellation of the combined Liberal and Conservative parties in the Reichstag, the Chancellor gave utterance to his views on the situation, somewhat to the following effect: "The establishment of Bulgaria, its division into two provinces, and the independence of Montenegro, Servia, and Roumania do not affect German interests sufficiently to justify us in risking our relations with our neighbours upon their account . . . I consider the question whether or not men-of-war shall pass through the Dardanelles in peace-time not altogether unimportant; but certainly not worth setting Europe in flames about . . . That the Dardanelles should pass into fresh hands is quite another thing—an eventuality and conjuncture with which, in my opinion, the actual situation has nothing to do . . . Our paramount interest in the East is that the waterways—not only the Straits, but Danube, from the Black Sea upwards—should remain free, which is certain enough . . . The Christian peoples in Turkey will be better governed than heretofore, and this is also Germany's interest; a secondary one, of course, but dictated by humanity . . . Russian politicians say, 'We don't want to be exposed every ten or twenty years to the necessity of a Turkish campaign;' but neither do they wish to substitute for that calamity a periodically recurring quarrel with Austria and England. It is Russia's interest to settle matters now, instead of putting off her arrangements to a later day, perhaps more inconvenient than the present one. I do not believe that Russia is inclined to fight the other Powers in order to obtain their recognition

o her conquests. The question is, are the dissatisfied Powers prepared to compel Russia to give up part of what she has gained? Were they to succeed in doing so the responsibility would devolve upon them of settling what is to be done with these provinces of European Turkey, which will not, in all probability, be restored to the Ottoman Empire; nor is it likely that Austria-Hungary, considering the number of her own Slav subjects, would desire to take over the entire heritage of recent Russian conquest, and become responsible for the future of these Slavonic countries by annexing them to Hungary, or ruling them as vassal-states."

"The choice of place for the Conference was indifferent to us; all I said about it was that if it took place on German soil, it would have to be presided over by a German . . . We have been told by different people that we ought to define our policy beforehand and impose it upon the others in one way or another. I think that would be press policy, not State policy. Supposing we were to proclaim a fixed programme, officially pledging ourselves to adhere to it; we should set a premium upon its intolerableness to all those who might be favourably disposed towards it, and should render our mediatory rôle at the Conference, upon which I set the very greatest value, almost impossible; for every one, with the German *menu* in his hand, would be enabled to say to us:—'Germany can go thus far and no further; she can do this thing, but she cannot do that' . . . I don't picture to myself a peace-mediator playing the part of an arbitrator, and saying, 'It must be so, or so, and behind me stands the whole might of Germany;' but a more modest one, something like that of an honest broker, who really wants to transact business. We are in the position to save any Power, entertaining secret wishes, from the

embarrassment of encountering refusal or even a disagreeable rejoinder from its opponent in the Congress. If we are equally friendly with both, we can first sound one, and then tell the other, 'Don't do this or that, but try to manage it thus!' I have many years' experience in these matters, and have often observed that in discussions between two people the thread is frequently dropped, and each party is ashamed to pick it up. If a third party be present he can do so without hesitation, and even bring the other two together again, if they have parted ill-humouredly. That is the part I want to play; it tallies with our friendly relations to our two frontier-neighbours and to England, with whom we have no difference beyond trifling and transitory ones, connected with trade rivalry—not such as could possibly bring two industrious and peace-loving nations into hostile collision—so that I flatter myself we can just as well play the mediator between England and Russia as I am sure we can between Russia and Austria . . . In differences between the latter Powers we have always avoided forming a majority of two to one by taking part for either, even when we have inclined more to the one side than to the other; fearing that our influence might not be strong enough to induce one of the said Powers to forego its indisputable national interests in order to oblige us. That is a sacrifice which no State will make *pour les beaux yeux d'un autre;* but only when the strength of that other is hinted at. Then such a State may say to itself, 'it is extremely disagreeable to have to make this concession, but still more so to quarrel with such a great Power as Germany; but I will make a note of the circumstance and keep it in mind.' I do not think we ought to follow the Napoleonic course of setting up as the schoolmaster, if not the arbitrator of Europe . . . I have no doubt that Russia

will sacrifice to the peace of Europe whatever may be compatible with her national feeling and with the interests of eighty millions of Russians; but were we to inform her, in the politest and friendliest manner, that although we have been in amity with her for a century, and she stood by us when we were in trouble, we have become a sort of policeman in Europe, and can no longer allow this European claim to be disregarded, there are influential parties in Russia which are not fond of Germany (fortunately they are not in power, though they would dearly like to be so), and what would they say to their fellow-countrymen in such a case? They would say: 'With what a sacrifice of blood, human life and treasure did we attain the position that has been the ideal of Russian ambition for centuries past? We were able to keep it against those whose interest it was to eject us from it. It was not Austria—with whom we have long been on only moderately intimate terms—nor England, whose interests were manifestly opposed to ours, but our close friend, from whom we had reason to expect service for service, Germany, who has no interests in the East—it was she who brandished the dagger, not the sword, behind our backs.' We will never assume the responsibility of sacrificing the sure and approved friendship of a great and mighty neighbour to the whim of playing the part of a judge in Europe. To risk the amity of one friend in order to please another in connection with questions in which we Germans are not directly interested—to purchase the peace of others with our own—well, I might do it were I myself alone imperilled by such a proceeding; but, having to direct the policy of a realm situate in the centre of Europe and containing 40,000,000 inhabitants, I cannot do it, and make a point of publicly stating, here, in this House, that nothing will induce me to do it."

In the course of the debate Deputy Windhorst had spoken against the Chancellor's policy, and had expressed the wish that Bismarck's "ingenuity might succeed in preserving the general peace, and also in making sure that German interests should not come off second best in the transaction. German interests, however, meant Austrian interests." Bismarck replied:—"I can assure this gentleman that he has no occasion to represent the interests of Austria, as far as we are concerned. Our relations to Austria are characterised by frankness and mutual confidence; which is a remarkable fact, considering what took place in former times, when other political parties were more powerful in Austria than they are now. This is not only the case between the two Monarchs and the two Governments; no, I am glad and proud to say that my personal relations to Count Andrassy are of so friendly a character as to permit him to put any question openly to me, in the interest of Austria, and to feel as certain that I will answer it truthfully as I do that he tells me nothing but the truth with respect to Austria's intentions. . . . . In former times, which probably suited the previous speaker better than these, it was otherwise. Then I had Austrian colleagues at the Confederation to whom I said: 'It is all the same to me whether you are speaking or the wind is whistling in the chimney-pots, for I don't believe a single word you say.' But Count Andrassy believes me and I believe him; and we do not in the least require any intermediation in our relations on the part of the previous speaker; the only thing he could do would be to spoil them."

On March 7, 1878, Austria proposed to the Great Powers that they should send their respective Prime-Ministers to a Congress, to take place at Berlin. Objections were raised

thereto on the part of England and Russia; or rather, conditions were stipulated for by the former, to which the latter refused to agree. Towards the commencement of April the English Government asked Parliament for a credit in order to call out the Reserves, and a war between Russia and Great Britain appeared imminent. Bismarck energetically strove to avert it, in which endeavour Count Schouvaloff (who was also peaceably inclined, and who paid the Chancellor a visit on his way to St. Petersburg) cordially supported him. The result of their representations to the Russian Cabinet was a favourable one; on May 30, a Convention was signed between Schouvaloff and Lord Salisbury in which the clauses of the San Stefano Treaty respecting which England and Russia had come to terms, as well as the questions to be settled by the entire Congress, were indicated; and at length the German Chancellor was enabled to issue his invitations to the Congress, which was opened on June 13 and continued to function under the Presidency of Prince Bismarck until July 13. At first the discussions were somewhat lengthy, and all sorts of difficulties had to be surmounted; which, but for the adroit intermediation of the President, would probably have caused the assembly to break up without having achieved any result. The chief subjects of negotiation were the Bulgarian question and the cession to Russia of Batoum. When a hitch occurred with respect to these matters, Bismarck received the *Times* correspondent and held a conversation with him which the latter published. Upon that occasion, the Prince remarked that England had achieved a great success in limiting the Bulgarian frontier, and therefore should not exact further concessions from Russia, whose love of peace was not boundless. Should there be war, Germany would take no part in it.

It was not the mission of the Congress to find means for the complete solution of the Eastern question; but to reconcile the provisional Peace of San Stefano with the requirements and claims of the European Powers and with the Treaties of 1856 and 1871; and this was effected. The Treaty of San Stefano had created a huge Slavonic State in Bulgaria, subjected to Russian influence, swallowing up a Greek population in Thrace and Macedonia, and possessing ports on the Euxine and the Ægean. The Berlin Treaty replaced two-thirds of the territory in question under the direct political and military rule of the Sultan; Bulgaria was restricted to the Danube Valley, obtained no port in the Archipelago, and was only allowed to reach a point some twenty-five miles distant from the Ægean. In the Black Sea the valuable port of Burgas was restored to the Ottoman Empire; Bulgaria merely retaining the roads of Varna. Through these arrangements and the conversion of Batoum into a Free Port, the menace to the freedom of the Black Sea embodied in the San Stefano Treaty was materially weakened, to the manifest advantage of the English. The mandate granted by the Congress to Austria-Hungary, to occupy and administer Bosnia and the Herzegovina gave that Power an important position, from which it commanded the western portion of the Balkan Peninsula and ruptured communications between the Slavs on the Adriatic and those on the Danube and Drina. Russia had, no doubt, been compelled to disgorge part of her booty; but she retained quite enough to render her content with the results of the war and grateful to the German intermediator who brought about this settlement. Russia had asked for the Congress, and obtained it through the agency of the German Chancellor, who had never combated Russia's demands throughout the negotiations; but, on the

contrary, had supported them to the best of his ability. More than once the German and Russian representatives had constituted a minority together in the Congress; but for the most part German influence was successful in obtaining the fulfilment of Russia's wishes. The Chancellor experienced great difficulties on several occasions in settling questions involving cession of territory to Russia, and only surmounted them by plainly intimating that, if Russian requirements should be denied, Germany would renounce her participation in the Conference. We happen to know positively that Germany would have carried her support of Russia even further, had the latter put forward still larger claims. That she refrained from doing so was not due to any backwardness on the part of Germany, but to the fact that Russia did not want to fight England, chiefly because the Russians had forborne from seizing Constantinople and the Straits at the right moment. Having failed to do this, they committed a grave political error in concluding such a Treaty as that of San Stefano. In possession of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus, Russia could have looked forward calmly to a naval war.

Proper consideration, therefore, was shown towards Russia's equitable interests. Prince Bismarck had adhered to the declarations made by him in the German Parliament; he had rendered every service to Russia that was compatible with the safety of Austria-Hungary; he had opened up a path between humiliation and a perilous war with England and Austria to his old ally, exhausted by its desperate struggle with Turkey. That he could not well do more without causing Germany to incur the enmity of the rest of Europe was perfectly clear; but not to the apprehensions of Moscow and Petersburg. He had approved of the diminution and division of Bulgaria, and of the occupation

by Austria of Bosnia and the Herzegovina (proposed by England). To Russian covetousness this was treason to former friendship, and ingratitude for Russia's behaviour in 1866 and 1870.

Very shortly after the Congress the Russian press gave utterance to its discontent with Germany; but Russia's hatred of Austria and the Fatherland broke out with full violence in January 1879, and was chiefly poured forth upon Prince Bismarck, whose home and foreign policy was furiously attacked by the Petersburg and Moscow newspapers. Some of the articles then published represented the Radicalism which had become the fashion in certain classes of Russian society. Others had their origin in higher circles; we do not refer to the Czar himself, but to those about him. Especially hostile to Germany were the *Journal de St. Pétersbourg*, the *Russki Mir* and the widely-circulated *Golos*, which last named journal missed no opportunity of denouncing Prince Bismarck, of exhibiting German affairs in an unfavourable light, and of coquetting with other countries—more particularly with France.

(A lengthy and abusive article, condemning the Chancellor's domestic and economic policy, which the author has reproduced from the columns of the *Golos*, is here omitted in the English version of "Unser Reichskanzler," as unlikely to instruct or interest the English readers of that work.—Translator's Note.)

From whom did these reproaches, attacks, and prophecies really emanate? Who was it that recommended an alliance with France, aimed manifestly at Germany as well as at England? The *Golos* had theretofore been a press organ notoriously honoured with Prince Gortchakoff's confidence—the official speaking-trumpet of his views and wishes. That was no longer the case, people said. But those who

were well-informed doubted the genuineness of all the manifestations of displeasure with which the *Golos* was, for a time, assailed by the Russian Chancellor, and felt convinced that its anti-German utterances were dictated at the Foreign Office in Petersburg, and by no less a personage than Baron Jomini, Gortchakoff's right hand. As a matter of fact, Prince Gortchakoff had not been able to make Germany as dependent upon Russia as he had hoped to do; he had not, at the Congress, obtained the support from Prince Bismarck to which he considered himself entitled; he had always cherished a sneaking kindness for France; finally, the contrast between his own mediocre achievements and the greatness of the statesman who had guided Germany's policy with such splendid success, angered and annoyed him.

Even more vehemently than in January, 1879, did the Russian press, official and unofficial, attack Germany when (in the course of the next few ensuing months) the clauses of the Berlin Treaty had to be carried out—first and foremost the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Turkish territory—and Russia found herself forlorn of the unconditional German support to which she thought she had a right. This journalistic onslaught was supplemented by diplomatic intimations, successively couched in urgent, dictatorial and threatening terms. At the same time the Russian army was greatly strengthened, and large concentrations of troops—chiefly of cavalry—took place in the Western provinces, whilst authentic information reached Berlin to the effect that a Russian General had sounded the leading personages in Paris respecting a Franco-Russian Alliance. Germany and Austria alike were menaced by the gathering storm, and it appeared to them both high time to take measures to prevent it from bursting npon them. Thus, at the initiative

of the German Chancellor, the Austro-German Alliance of 1879 came to pass, and was substituted for the Russo-German League that had theretofore existed. This Alliance has endured ever since, with undiminished vigour and intimacy, and has triumphantly proved itself (throughout all the complications arising out of the Berlin Treaty) to be an effective guarantee for the peace of both Empires and of Europe. It has regulated Russia's subsequent attitude towards the Central European Powers; firstly it caused her to draw in her horns, and then to change front, as far as was compatible with public feeling. Meanwhile Nihilism, a natural outgrowth of Muscovite civilisation, continued to undermine society and compelled the Russian Government to concentrate its attention upon home affairs. Alexander II. fell a victim to the dynamite projectiles of Nihilistic assassins. His successor is credited with Panslavistic tendencies and French predilections—whether or not correctly so remains to be seen. One thing is certain, viz.: that he has recognised the unconditional necessity of peace to Russia, and has hitherto acted conformably to that necessity. His meeting at Danzig with the Emperor William, who was on that occasion accompanied by Bismarck, was the first public testimony to his desire to reinstate the friendly relations between his Government and that of Germany which had been broken off in 1879; and he has also more than once displayed an amiable and conciliatory spirit towards Austria. No doubt, the strong and active party in Russian upper circles of society, whose wishes and projects were proclaimed in General Skobeleff's Chauvinistic speeches, had striven with might and main to disturb the amicable understanding revived by the Czar between Russia and her Western neighbours, and to instigate a struggle for the realisation of its Panslavistic

dreams. But the Imperial will has proved stronger than this agitation. Ignatieff, one of the chiefs of the party alluded to, only remained a short time in office as Minister of the Interior; and Gortchakoff's successor, de Giers, the present chief of the Foreign Office at Petersburg, signified by his visit to Varzin that it was his Sovereign's desire to keep up the connection revived at the Danzig meeting, and to improve the good understanding that thereafter prevailed amongst the three Imperial Courts. During the autumn of 1883, M. de Giers again visited the Chancellor at Friedrichsruhe. Since that time nothing has occurred which could give us reason to doubt the peaceable intentions of the Russian Court and Cabinet, although the Russian Chauvinists continue, at every convenient opportunity, to give vent to their dislike of the Germans and yearning for the unification of all the Slavonic tribes under the flag of Holy Russia.

CHAPTER III.

BISMARCK'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS POLISH PRETENSIONS.

DURING the summer of 1882 the *Czas* (a journal described in the foregoing chapter) published an article purporting to contain the German Chancellor's views respecting the possible restoration of Poland, and stating that he had invited an illustrious Polish patriot to Varzin in order to hear what he had to say upon the question, and that a conversation had ensued from which it might be gathered that Prince Bismarck would not be averse to the transformation (after a war in which Germany should have vanquished Russia) of Russian Poland into an independent State, His Highness deeming that such a State—by reason of the gratitude its inhabitants would experience towards Germany and their ineradicable hatred of their former oppressors—would serve Germany as a bulwark on her eastern frontier.

This whole story was contradicted, and in very strong terms, by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, which designated it "a miserable stopgap for the summer-season, invented by an unreasoning feuilletonist. The alleged visit of a Pole to Varzin and the alleged conversation have never taken place at all; and the alleged letter of the Chancellor, with which this swindle is commenced, is a forgery of no interest to anybody except a criminal judge."

Thus the official newspaper; a more vigorous and con-

clusive *démenti* could scarcely have been pronounced, nor one better calculated to settle the matter for good and all. Nevertheless, several German journals reproduced the *Czas*'s article in full, without expressing any doubts of its correctness; and *semper aliquid hæret*, however ridiculous such a calumny may appear to well-informed persons. Besides, the *Czas* is the organ of the aristocratic Czartoryski party, often correctly posted up in the sayings and doings of exalted political circles.

A similar myth was published in an account (compiled from official materials) of the 1863 Polish insurrection, produced by N. W. Berg in the *Russkaia Starina* of 1879; e.g.—"Early in 1865, when we were busy crushing the then subsiding revolt, and industriously striving to re-establish public order, Prince Bismarck sent the King's General Aide-de-Camp, Von Treschkow, to Dresden to inform the Polish National Plenipotentiary Klobukowski, there residing, that he (Bismarck) was about to visit Petersburg, where he would have an opportunity to discuss the destinies of Poland in the highest quarters. He wished to know if the Poles would deem it expedient to make a demonstration in favour of Prussia and to announce their solemn determination not to remain under Russian despotism, but to submit themselves to German rule. If he could rely upon such a resolve on their part, Prince Bismarck would propose a political combination in Petersburg, in accordance with which Russia would probably cede to Prussia that part of the Polish kingdom lying on the Vistula. Bismarck, at least, would propose that she should do so. Thereupon Klobukowski betook himself to the celebrated Polish author Kraszewski, whom he besought to get up a demonstration on behalf of Prussia, which would not have been difficult just then, so bitter was the anti-Russian feeling in Poland.

Kraszewski, however, replied that he held no mandate from his compatriots to undertake any such enterprise; that he was not even a party-leader; and that he could do nothing of the sort. But he advised Klobukowski to visit Czartoryski in Paris, and consult him and his friends upon so highly important a proposition. Armed with a letter of introduction from Kraszewski, Klobukowski called at the Hôtel Lambert; Czartoryski read the letter and exclaimed, without a moment's hesitation, 'To the Germans! Not for the world!' which put an end to the whole business."

This narrative has been categorically denied by the Polish as well as the Prussian official press. Klobukowski publicly called its author a liar, and threatened him with an action for libel. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* wrote: "It is not true that General von Treschkow was sent in 1865, or at any other time, to Dresden, or to any other place, as an agent of the Polish National Government. The Prussian Government has never conducted or wished to conduct any negotiations with any agent of the Polish National Government; and nobody in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has ever known of the existence of a person named Klobukowski. Ignorance of facts has never attained such a depth in the Prussian Ministry as to justify it in believing in the expediency of soliciting the co-operation of the Polish Revolutionary party in order to bring about the cession of any portion of Russian Poland to Prussia. The possibility of such a cession has been, it is true, mooted here several times since the death of Alexander I.; but invariably at the initiative of Russia and in an anti-Polish sense, with a view to facilitating the subjugation of Poland."

Lies of this sort—perhaps fabricated with more ingenuity and *connaissance de cause*—may, however, sooner or later be

revived. It may therefore not be superfluous to demonstrate that such plans as those attributed to the Chancellor by Berg and the *Czas* could not possibly be ever entertained by him.

That a large proportion of the Russian people dislikes the Germans, and that Russia may one of these days cause us great inconvenience and danger, are undeniable truisms. But it would be difficult to prove that the restoration of Poland would do away with or even diminish the perils to which our Eastern Marches are exposed. It may be said: "Europe can declare Polonia Rediviva a neutral State, and solemnly guarantee its neutrality." We answer: "Solemnity may be had cheap; but the 'bulwark' erected by the neutrality in question would be no better than a paper one." For Prussia and Germany to create a new Poland out of Russia's share of the old one would be to call into existence two troublesome Oriental neighbours in the stead of one. The Poles hate Russia; but no less do they detest Germany, on account of her great power of assimilation, by means of of which she has peaceably Germanised Posen and West Prussia. Poland—or, more correctly speaking, her nobles—would be indebted to us, were we to restore a portion of the former kingdom; but they would certainly not be grateful, or at best would regard our gift as an instalment, like the Irredentists with respect to United Italy in 1866, the Greeks with regard to the augmentation of the Hellenic Kingdom by Thessaly, and the Omladina anent the creation and enlargement of Servia. In other words:—By the formation of a Polish State about a third as large as the former kingdom of Poland, all the pretensions that animate every class of Poles would resuscitate and acquire a real nucleus and solid point of departure. A Poland of this kind would soon manifest a leaning towards France and

utilise its army and diplomacy for the recovery of the 1772 frontier—for which it would scarcely be to blame, considering that it would stand in need of a coast for its imports and exports.

If the *Czas* had reported that an illustrious Pole, in 1854, had communicated his ideas in connection with the Restoration of Poland to Count Buol, and had secured that statesman's approval, the story would have been a credible one, even if it had described Buol as prepared to give up Galicia and Lodomiria. Austria was then extremely thick with the Western Powers, which might very well have regarded the restoration of Poland as a convenient weapon in their struggle with Russia, and she would probably have contributed her share thereto, for a handsome consideration.

Since then, circumstances have materially altered. Hungary is content. The Danubian Principalities, Roumania and Servia, are become Kingdoms. Above all, the old rivalry between Austria and Prussia has ceased to be, and is replaced by a close alliance founded on their mutual interests. Nowadays, Austria-Hungary can think no more of a Polish Restoration. She leaves that notion to the conspirators in Cracow and Lemberg, who busy themselves with preparing new revolutionary outbreaks by way of shewing her their gratitude for the favour shewn to the Polish nationality under the actual *régime.*

In Prussia the idea of transforming Russian Poland into an independent State has always been and always will be out of the question, at least amongst persons endowed with political sagacity. It was once entertained by His Excellency Josias Bunsen (who gave vent to it in a diplomatic document), and was inscribed upon the creed of the Old Liberals; but all these gentlemen were forlorn of statesmanlike ability, as, most conspicuously, were the Democrats of

the *Volkszeitung* category, who so vociferously and verbosely preached "Justice to Poland." The days when Germans overlooked their own rights whilst manifesting deferential respect for those of foreigners are past and gone. We no longer dissolve in sentimental emotion over the "Finis Poloniæ" of the mythical Kosciusko (the real one never said anything of the kind) nor do we excite ourselves about the rhymes which state that "Poland is not yet lost." To Macaulay's allegation that the partition of Poland was the most shameful achievement of European policy, we reply:—"Nothing of the sort; the Polish Republic owed its destruction much less to foreigners than to the inconceivable worthlessness of those persons who represented the Polish nation when it was finally broken up."

Prussia and Germany have great need of their share of Poland. During the debate on the Address of Sept. 24, 1867, the Federal Chancellor declared:—"I do not consider that German rule over disaffected nations—I will not even say rule, but co-existence in the relations of every-day life of Germans with disaffected aliens—is desirable; but sometimes it is necessary. For instance, it is so in Poland, as a glance at the map will demonstrate."

On another occasion, during the same year, he gave his reasons for the above *dictum* in a historical retrospect, the leading passages of which are subjoined:—

"How did the province of West Prussia and the rule of the Knightly Orders originate in Prussia? Duke Conrad of Masovia, to defend his realm against the inroads of the Prussian heathen, called in the German Knights and bestowed upon them a small Polish territory, the Dobriner district, also promising them all of the land they could redeem from the adjoining wastes and conquer from the savage Prussian tribes. Thus the whole country eastward

of the Vistula (comprehending a considerable portion of the present East and West Prussia) became a purely German territory, colonised by Germans; and the Order of German Knights subsequently acquired that part of West Prussia which is situate on the left bank of the Vistula by legal Treaty; for when the dynasty of the Nether-Pomeranian Dukes died out in the 13th century, that territory with its capital, Danzig, reverted to the feudal lord (Margrave of Brandenburg), and Margrave Waldemar at once took possession of it. His successors, unable to defend these possessions (Nether Pomerania), ceded them to the Order, from which the Kingdom of Poland subsequently took them by conquest when the Order had been weakened and the Germans had been beaten at Tannenberg; finally, after many *pourparlers*, an arrangement was concluded between the West-Prussian *Staende* and the Polish Crown in virtue of which the former were to be connected with the latter by "personal union." Thus Poland—by conquest, subsequently sanctioned by Treaties—became possessed of West Prussia, and proceeded to colonise it; not, as we have been accused of doing, to "Germanise it with culture," but to Polonise it with fire and sword. Contrary to Treaty, it sent Polish officials into West Prussia, who enriched themselves by expropriating the local nobility. The towns were also restricted in their liberties; later on, religious freedom was granted and maintained in theory—but the Protestant churches were closed, confiscated and made over to Catholic communes which were constituted of the landowners and officials imported from Poland. Many citizens lost their heads on the scaffold through protesting against these proceedings. Of nineteen thousand villages in West Prussia, only three thousand escaped destruction during the Polish ravages perpetrated after the battle of

Tannenberg, and even these were done away with during the wars between Poland and Sweden, when disbanded Polish armies repeatedly colonised the devastated German villages . . . Gentlemen, if you appeal to history in the face of these facts, I fail to understand you. As far as the Grand Duchy of Posen is concerned, we acquired that province—inhabited at present by 1,500,000 Prussians, 800,000 of whom speak Polish, and 700,000 German—by hard fighting. We wrested it a second time (1813) from an enemy superior to us in strength; and our conquest was sanctioned by international Treaties. It is thus that States are formed. We have the same right to Posen that we have to Silesia. If you contest the right of conquest, you cannot have read the history of your own country . . . The beginnings of Poland were small. The districts on the Lake of Goplo and on the Warthe (now known as Great Poland) became united by agglomeration with Little Poland in the neighbourhood of Cracow. The whole territory, at that time, did not extend farther than the present frontiers of Western Galicia, and was not as large as the so-called Kingdom of Poland. When it became more powerful, through matrimonial alliances with the Lithuanian Princes, its passion for conquest was directed against the German Order . . . Poland annexed the territorities now constituting Eastern Galicia and inhabited by the same Ruthenes who populate Volhynia, Podolia and the south-eastern provinces of the Kingdom of Poland. Crossing the Dnieper, Poland took Kieff, the ancient Russian capital, Tchernigoff, Smolensk and countries much larger than those acquired by Russia through the first partition of Poland. The previous speaker called the partition of Poland a crime. It was no greater malefaction than the partition of Russia in the 14th century, which you Poles effected when you were strong

enough to do so. Look into your own hearts, and confess that you have committed the crime of conquest an hundred-fold—in fact, as often as you could."

"The participation of the Germans in the mutilation of Poland was a necessary compliance with the law ot self-preservation. Before the first partition Berlin was barely three days' march from the Slavonic western frontier. The Great Elector had freed Prussia from Polish feudality; Frederic the Great, by recovering possession of West Prussia, then inhabited by a large number of German colonists, connected it solidly with Pomerania and Brandenburg, thus securing it provisionally against hostile irruptions from the east. Whoever wishes to see that arrangement revoked also desires to hand over the mouths of the Vistula, Elbing, Thorn and Danzig—aye, the whole of East Prussia, which in that case would be untenable—to the heirs of Peter the Great, or to a patrician Republic of the most miserable description, having the Jesuits for its steadfast allies. Opinions may differ about the details of the subsequent partitions; but they were both indispensable. Prussia could not insure the life of a corrupt and decaying Republic, which would indubitably have been divided between Russia and Austria; and she only fulfilled a duty to herself in restricting the increment of her neighbour States by claiming a share in their spoil. Besides, a frontier extending her lines of defence as far eastwards as possible was requisite for the adequate protection of Berlin and the very heart of the Monarchy. The second partition achieved too much in this direction; for the vast amount of intelligence, physical force and capital expended by Prussia in securing and utilising the annexed Slavonic territory did not suffice to effect those objects. The third partition did too little. It was no great evil that only the smaller moiety of South

Prussia was reunited to the Prussian State as the Duchy of Posen by the convention of 1815; but the territory in question did not sufficiently connect the extensive and naturally open frontiers of Silesia and East Prussia, and—but for the formidable fortresses now nearly completed—would but incompletely cover the capital of the German Empire; meanwhile the Germanising of the province has made satisfactory progress; by which we do not only mean the dissemination of the German language, but that of German morality and culture, and the upright administration of justice, the elevation of the peasant-class and the prosperity of the towns. The peasant, from being a despised, ill-used and mercilessly plundered vassal of some noble tyrant, is become a free man, the owner of the soil he cultivates. Nobody plunders him now but the usurious Jew. German farmers, machines and manufactories have promoted agriculture and husbandry. Railways and good roads have increased the general well-being of the province. Schools organised after the German pattern inpart elementary instruction to Polish children; gymnasia teach the higher sciences, not by the hollow mechanical methods of the Jesuit Fathers, but in that solid German way which enables people to think for themselves. Army service completes whatever is left unachieved by the popular schools. In the army the young Polish peasant learns to understand and speak German. Through what he is taught in his company or squadron, and through intercourse with the German inhabitants of his garrison-town he acquires ideas which enrich and emancipate his poor and fettered intelligence. His notions of *meum* and *tuum* become clearer; he adopts cleanly and orderly habits and for the most part, retains them. When he loses them, and other more intellectual boons, it is generally because the clergy wish to keep up the old ruinous

routine, as a part of good old Polish patriotism; ignorance and helplessness being, in the opinion of these reverend persons, excellent servants of the Church."

"This method of Germanisation has been furthered by the Government, which has never practised any other, despite its many opportunities for so doing. When, shortly after its acquisition by Prussia, the province fell into distress through bad harvests, the administration could have easily relieved the Polish nobles of half their property by a comparatively small pecuniary outlay. It preferred however to assist them by founding a Credit Institution in Posen with advantages such as had not been accorded to any similar establishment in other provinces. No political conditions were attached to the assistance thus afforded, nor was any favour shown to persons of German nationality. Of the landed proprietors who settled and carried out the Provincial Ordinances sixty-seven were Poles and only seven Germans. The province was administered by a committee, exclusively composed of Poles, nor did the State alter these arrangements by reason of the events of 1830; it was only after the conspiracy of 1846, in which several provincial officials had taken part, that a royal officer was appointed as chief of the institution; and this nomination was revoked in 1848. The period above referred to had afforded ample opportunities for Germanisation. In 1830 fourteen hundred persons were condemned to suffer confiscation and imprisonment, and twelve hundred of them were pardoned. Only twenty-two landowners were deprived of their estates, which however they were permitted to redeem by paying one-fifth of their value into the State Exchequer. The disturbances of those days shook the Polish provincial nobility's hold upon its landed property very seriously. Had the Government simply shut its eyes to that fact, the greater portion

of the land, depreciated in value, would have fallen of itself into German hands; but the State came forward as a buyer, in order to save the sums lent upon the estates, raise the price of land, and attract to the province men who might further its agricultural development. The estates thus purchased were sold, entire or in parcels, to buyers under conditions highly beneficial to the peasants inhabiting them. Had the State had mere Germanising in view it would have excluded the Poles from these transactions, and imposed restrictions as to re-sale upon the German purchasers. It did nothing of the kind. That a good many estates have passed from Polish into German hands during the last few years is not attributable to Government instrumentality, but to the frivolity, extravagance and slovenly administration of the Polish nobles."

"But the language?" people ask, as emphatically as though the Polish-speaking Prussian were persecuted, in this respect, as oppressively as formerly the German Schleswiger under the Danish *régime*, or nowadays the Transylvanian Saxon under Magyar tyranny. No assumption could be more groundless. The Polish language is free, and frequently predominant, in the market-place, drawing-room, school and church. In the two latter, until very lately, German was even at a disadvantage because the Catholic clergy strove against it with all their might, and very successfully, as has been pointed out in Chapter II. Vol. I. Polish is the language taught in all the Catholic schools of the mixed districts, and in the four lower classes of the higher educational institutions of all confessions, as well as in all the provincial schools. The Polish Church-Service is performed in Latin and Polish, to which tongues stray Germans must conform in church. The municipal discussions in the smaller towns are carried on in Polish; both languages have equal play at the elections. With respect

to legal proceedings, the laws are translated into Polish from the German text, which is, of course, appealed to whenever any difficulties accrue. The tribunals correspond with one another and other authorities in German. In trials, the plaintiff's idiom is adopted; if he be acquainted with both languages or neither, the case is tried in German. Interpreters are sworn to assist the Court. Mayors of small towns and clergymen are allowed to correspond with the authorities in Polish if they do not understand German. Private persons, not known to be familiar with German, receive German official communications accompanied by Polish translations."

"The Poles cannot fairly ask for more than this, and their Deputies and press-organs in Posen, instead of perpetually grumbling, should look about them and gratefully acknowledge all that has been done for their country and its population under the Prussian *régime*. They could not fail to recognise a long series of benefits conferred upon them (despite the resistance thereto of the Polish nobility, clergy and communes) which they would be sorry enough to lose now. Imprimis, since 1815 the Government has increased the number of schools fifteen-fold and of teachers seventeen-fold in the predominantly Polish and Catholic districts of the province. There are eight gymnasia instead of two; three Catholic seminaries, five *Realschule*, four pro-gymnasia, an agricultural school, a deaf and dumb asylum, a madhouse and a school for gardeners have been founded. Through its wealth of elementary schools (2162 with 2965 teachers and 220,000 scholars) Posen occupies an extremely honourable position amongst the eastern provinces of the Prussian Monarchy. Great things have been done for it by the Government in the way of constructing railways. For twenty years past the province has possessed a comprehen-

sive system of lines, traversing it from north to south and east to west. In 1830 it could only boast of four miles of turnpike road; in 1862 it was provided with 332. Especial care has been bestowed upon cultivating the soil of. Posen, draining its morasses, &c.

"I can proudly say" observed the Chancellor, in the speech already quoted (1867) with which he brought Deputy Kantak to his bearings "that the portion of the whilom Polish Republic now under Prussian rule enjoys a degree of well-being, loyal security and popular attachment to the Government such as never existed, nor was ever even dreamt of, within the limits of the Polish Realm since the commencement of Polish history. Despite all the efforts to agitate public feeling in the province during the revolutions that have accrued every fifteen years or so, the Polish-speaking subjects of Prussia have not been tempted to take part in those demonstrations, got up by a minority composed of nobles, land-stewards and labourers. The peasant has invariably taken up arms with the greatest energy to resist every attempt to resuscitate conditions of existence of which he had heard his parents talk—with such energy, indeed, that the Government was compelled in 1848 to employ other than Polish troops against the insurgents, in the interests of humanity. Polish soldiers have repeatedly proved their attachment to Prussia in time of war: on Danish and Bohemian battlefields they have testified their devotion to the King with their blood and with the valour peculiar to their race."

The elections in Posen seemed to cast doubt upon the attachment above referred to, for they sent up to the Diet and Parliament alike a group of exceedingly stiff-necked opponents to the Government. They were, however, merely the result of an all but unexampled agitation in which

the Polish clergy had played the leading part; and the deputies who were their product received an ecclesiastical, not a national mandate. They were elected to represent their constituents as Catholics whose faith was menaced—not as Poles. Bismarck, in the Reichstag as well as the Landtag, repeatedly pointed out to them that their opposition to the Government was naught, being based upon erroneous foregone conclusions. In his speech of March 18, 1867, he proved to them that they had been elected to protect their constituents from the perils with which (according to the representations of seditious priests) their Catholic consciences were menaced by Germany; not in the least to represent yearnings for a Polish Restoration. A priest whom the Chancellor mentioned by name had addressed a meeting of peasants as follows:—"The elections are at hand; we must pull ourselves together, or we shall be forbidden to speak Polish, to sleep in Polish, to pray, sing and weep in Polish, even to preach a sermon in Polish. Our children will all be turned into Germans," (synonymous with Protestants, to Poles of the lower classes) "and then Germany will treat us just as Russia does; that is, we shall be hanged for calling ourselves Poles." Another priest recommended himself as a candidate by assuring his Polish hearers that the Government meant to rob them of their native language and their faith, and to make Protestants of them. The peasants of one Polish village told their landlord that no doubt he meant them well, but they must vote for the anti-governmental provost, their salvation being at stake; for the provost had told them they must not look for absolution at Easter if they did not elect him. Any number of priests delivered electioneering speeches from the pulpit, announcing to their flocks with floods of tears that, unless they should elect Poles, they would inevitably be compelled to give

up the Catholic religion and the Polish language. At the conclusion of these discourses the beadles, standing by the church-doors, distributed voting-tickets to the panic-stricken electors.

Thus matters stood in 1867; and such has been the action of the clergy in Poland and West Prussia at every subsequent election. Bismarck, in his speech against Kantak, ironically remarked that the sanctity of the priestly profession forbade him to doubt the sincerity of these ecclesiastics. "But," he added "such a dead level of ignorance respecting secular matters prevails amongst them as to justify the Government's earnest desire that it may be put an end to by the higher clergy, if the latter should retain the superintendence of the education of youth." This desire, rendered more urgent by the seditious behaviour of Polish priests in 1870, has not been fulfilled. Laws regulating the inspection of schools, etc., and bearing especially upon Posen and West Prussia were passed. They became the subject of bitter complaint in Parliament from the Polish and Clerical Deputies; and as the agitation aroused by them did not abate, it became necessary to modify, and even to suspend them in those provinces.

Are these Polish deputies entitled to speak in the name of the Poles and to demand privileges for these latter? The Chancellor's repeatedly quoted speech, as much to the point to-day as it was sixteen years ago, says No. Of 2,800,000 inhabitants of Posen and West Prussia, 1,150,000 are Poles, whilst 1,450,000 are Polish and German Catholics. There are consequently about 300,000 German-speaking Catholics who are in great part led away by clerical intrigues to vote with their Polish co-religionaries for the candidates of the Opposition. Bismarck was in the right, therefore, when he said to the Polish Parliamentary fraction in 1867: "You are not justified in speaking in the name of the

3,000,000 of people inhabiting these provinces; you may be justified in speaking on behalf of the Catholics, but not on behalf of the Poles; that is to say, you are not justified in representing the nationality of persons who have voted for you in the fear that their faith—the holiest thing they carry in their hearts—may be interfered with; a fear which has been awakened in them by disingenuous and lying representations." On April 1, 1871, when the Polish fraction moved the House not to incorporate Posen in the German Empire, giving itself all the air of being empowered to represent the Polish nation, the Chancellor exclaimed:—"The twenty or so Deputies who bear themselves here as though they were an entire people—the Polish people—are not a people, do not represent a people, and have no people at all behind them; indeed they have nothing behind them but illusions and errors, one of which is that they have been elected to Parliament to represent the Polish nationality. I know why they have been elected. . . . You were elected, gentlemen, to represent the interests of the Catholic Church; and if you do that, whenever those interests shall be called in question, you will fulfil your duty to your electors. That was what you were elected for, and you are fully entitled to do it; but you have received no mandate to represent the Polish people or nationality in this House. Nobody has confided that mission to you—least of all the people of the Grand Duchy of Posen. That population does not believe in the fiction which you promulgate, viz.:—that the Polish rule was a good one, or rather 'not a bad one,' as the previous speaker expressed it. With all imaginable impartiality and desire to be just I can assure you that it was an infamously bad one; and that is why it shall never be revived."

"One need only think about a restoration of Poland

with its 1772 frontiers," observed the Chancellor in 1867 whilst explaining the actual circumstances in question, "to become convinced of its impracticability. It is absolutely impossible, for the simple reason that there are not Poles enough. People talk about sixteen millions of Poles. The territory owned in 1772 by the whilom Polish Republic is inhabited at the present time by 24,000,000 human beings. Of these 7,500,000 are Poles (that is all the whole wide world contains) and 1,500,000 of them are scattered about the vast territories that constitute the western governments of the Russian Empire, amongst populations which are not Polish, do not want to be Poles, and would not relapse into subjection to Polish rule for all the world. Look, in Galicia, at the enmity of the Ruthenes to the Poles, who formerly governed them as well as the West Prussians. I point to this particular example because it is familiar to everybody; by it you may judge what are the feelings of the 10,000,000 or more of people, not Poles, who, in common with 1,200,000 Poles, inhabit Western Russia. The population of the West-Russian provinces consists of ten per cent. of Poles, strewn about upon their surface—either descendants of former conquerors, or renegades of other races who have adopted the Polish tongue and morality—and ninety per cent. of mostly Ruthenes and White Russians, who speak nothing but Russian, pray in Russian, weep in Russian (when under Polish domination), are Russians, mean to remain Russians, and stand by the Russian Government in combating the Polish nobility; the rest are Lithuanians, Letts, Germans and a vast number of Jews. There, of your 24,000,000, you have at once 12,000,000 of whom it would be the greatest conceivable injustice to subject ninety per cent. to the feared and hated rule of ten per cent.

In Galicia as I have already mentioned, you have 2,000,000 of Ruthenes against 2,000,000 of Poles in West Galicia; in the Kingdom of Poland 3,400,000 Poles, as well as 250,000 Russians in the Lublin Government, 250,000 Lithuanians between the Niemen and Suwalki, 300,000 Germans and 600,000 Jews. I have already stated that we have 800,000 Poles in the Province of Posen, and 350,000 in West Prussia. Reckon all these together, and you will make up a total of 6,500,000 Poles. It is, therefore, in the name of these six and a half millions that you claim the rule over twenty-four millions, in a tone and with an emphasis indicating that it is the most profound and abominable tyranny and humiliation that you are no longer allowed to oppress and ride roughshod over those people, as, unfortunately for them, you did throughout five successive centuries. If we look a little closely into the matter, we see at once that such a pretension does not deserve the consideration of Europe for a second ; it is simply Utopian to dream of breaking up three great realms; Austria, Prussia and Russia—three of the five European Great Powers—in order to build up out of their fragments a fantastical dominion of 6,000,000 Poles ruling over 18,000,000 of human beings who are not Poles. Why it is not even credible that the 6,000,000 Poles would put up with a Polish Government; their experiences of such a *régime* have been too dismal. Why did the Polish agitation in Western Galicia come to a stand-still? Because the Polish nobles were aware that the peasant had found out what they were aiming at, *i.e.* the Restoration of Poland. That discovery so appalled the Polish yokel that he turned his back upon the movement; and the nobles were frightened too, remembering the fearfully atrocious deeds of blood perpetrated by the peasants in 1846 (when they

slaughtered 2000 Polish aristocrats and priests with scythes and flails), and thought it wiser to put up their swords—since which they have lived at peace with the Austrian Government. I think I need only mention that fact—the Polish gentlemen present know all about it better than I do—to prove that 6,500,000 Poles do not intend to be ever again domineered over by a couple of hundred thousand Polish noblemen. This is moreover demonstrated by the course of the insurrection in Russia. I do not wish to vaunt the exceptional mildness of Russian rule; but the Polish peasant has more confidence in it than in the domination of his noble fellow countrymen. As soon as the hanging gendarmes had vanished, the Russians—wherever they made their appearance three years ago—found the peasants ready and willing to back them up, as far as was consistent with the timorousness of a terrorised population. I would therefore request you, gentlemen—you, I mean, who pretend that you represent the Polish people—to refrain from keeping Europe, Prussia and your own province in hot water by continuing to pursue an unattainable object. . . . That the Polish nobility should experience a sort of nostalgia for its former conditions and privileges I can readily understand; but I earnestly exhort you to give up phantom-hunting and unite with us. Unite with the majority of your Polish brethren in Prussia and with the Polish peasantry in participating in the benefits of civilisation offered to you by the Prussian State; in the peaceful security guaranteed to you by the North German Confederation. Take your share honestly in our common work; you will find us open-handed, and we will joyfully welcome you among us as brothers and compatriots! To this august Assembly, however, I would specially point out the example of Poland as illustrating how a great and powerful State.

governed by a valiant, warlike, and clear-sighted aristocracy may come to ruin through setting more value upon personal liberty than external security, and sacrificing public interests to individual freedom. . . . The most energetic efforts of the Polish nobility to regain its lost authority, the greatest devotion and most brilliant bravery displayed by patriots in their cause, have not availed to remedy the faults of the past."

Let us finally cast a glance at the Treaties and Proclamations upon which the Polish fraction of the Prussian Diet bases its claims to an exceptional position for Posen in our Monarchy. Bismarck confuted these claims in the Diet, and what follows will be found to correspond to his refutation.

The complaint of the Poles, addressed to our Parliament may be briefly summed up thus :—" In the Vienna Treaty of June 1815 and the Patent of Possession, as well as in the Proclamation accompanying this latter, a Personal Union is created between Posen and Prussia. Moreover, special privileges, with respect to preserving their nationality, language, religion, &c., were granted to the Poles at that time. All this, however, has been disregarded, and still awaits fulfilment."

Let us test these assertions by facts.

The action of Frederick William II. in connection with the partition of Poland may be open to condemnation; but his successor acquired Posen in 1815 by good honest hard fighting. The public respect and sympathy which the Poles had won under Kosciusko's leadership they deservedly lost by their servile attachment to Napoleon, under whose command they fought against nobler and more freedom-loving peoples than themselves. They were never more despicable than in 1814, when Talleyrand wrote, "The Polish affair is merely a question of partition

and frontier definition, to be settled amongst themselves by the States interested in it, and possessing no importance for France or Europe." Lord Castlereagh also wrote that he "did not see why Prussia should not be indemnified at the cost of an enemy who, according to the principles of international law, had lost the totality of its political rights." Nobody but Czar Alexander of Russia shewed the least sympathy for the Poles; not only did Baron von Stein, but his own Minister, Pozzo di Borgo, disagree with him. "If the Poles," observed the latter, "are so fit for a free Constitution, why did they not assert themselves as a nation towards Bonaparte? Why were they content to remain a French military Department? Why did they raise no objections to attacking and slaughtering the Spaniards? Why did they feast and carouse when ordered to march upon the Pyrenees? The Poles do not want emancipation, but independence, after having sacked Madrid and burnt Moscow. They declaim dramas about their misfortunes; but their lot is no worse than that of every other people which has behaved itself as they have." It was in this temper that the Vienna Congress addressed itself to its task.

The first Article of the Treaty of June 9, 1815, says: "The Polish subjects of Russia, Austria and Prussia will obtain national institutions, regulated by the description of political existence which each of the Governments to which they belong may deem fit and expedient for them." This promise was fulfilled in Prussia by the creation of Provincial Diets in 1823. Article 23 of the Vienna Treaty goes on to say: "Inasmuch as His Majesty the King of Prussia, through the results of the late war, has become repossessed of several provinces and territories which were ceded by the Peace of Tilsit, it is hereby acknowledged and declared that

His Majesty, his heirs and successors, resume full sovereignty and ownership of the following countries, i.e. his old Polish provinces, the town and territory of Danzig, the Kottbus District, &c., &c.; with all the rights and claims of whatsoever kind appertaining to him before the Tilsit Peace, and never renounced by him in any other Treaty, Convention or Agreement." There is no mention here of any Personal Union. Before the Tilsit Peace the relations of Prussia's Polish provinces to her German ones never bore the character of a Personal Union. The King appointed a Lord Lieutenant for Posen in the Patent of Possession; but the old provinces (Pomerania, for instance,) were also administered by Lords Lieutenant. In the same document he spoke of the new acquisition always as a "Province": and a conclusive refutation of the Personal Union theory is afforded by the arrangement, prescribed by the Patent, that parts of the new province should be incorporated in West Prussia, and *vice versâ*.

The King's Proclamation said: "You will be incorporated in my Monarchy without being compelled to repudiate your nationality. You will participate in the Constitution I intend to grant to my subjects, and, in common with the other provinces of my Kingdom, will be endowed with a Provincial Constitution. Your religion shall be maintained, and its Ministers provided with a suitable endowment. Your personal rights and property will be protected by the laws, with respect to the enactment of which you shall be consulted. Your language shall be used, as well as German, in all public discussions, and every one of you, in proportion to his capacities, shall be eligible for appointment to office in the Duchy, as well as to all posts, honours and dignities in my entire Realm."

On August 3, 1815, the hereditary homaging took place,

after the Lord Lieutenant, Prince Anthony Radziwill, had pronounced an address, in which he congratulated his fellow-countrymen upon being "embodied in a State whose renown and might are based upon wisely-limited freedom, impartial justice, and a Government comprehensively careful of its subjects' interests." Upon this the officials, ecclesiastics and landowners all took the oath of fealty according to the form established in 1796, without any reserve or limitation.

In 1816 the Old-Prussian legislation was re-introduced into Posen in its full force and to its fullest extent. In 1823 the province was endowed with a provincial organization identical with that established in the other Prussian provinces. In dissolving the Diet of 1841, King Frederick William IV. pointed out that the Grand Duchy of Posen was "a province in the same sense as and in every respect identically with the other provinces subjected to our sceptre. . . . The Polish nationality is entitled to consideration and protection by the Vienna Treaty, &c. . . . The praiseworthy attachment of this noble people to its language, manners and historical traditions shall obtain recognition and favour under our Government. But our promises and intentions in this respect must be dependent upon the condition appended to every gift, viz., that it must not be abused. The national feeling of the Posen Poles must for the future develope itself in the direction of their infrangible connection with our Monarchy. Race differences, and the contrast between the designations "Pole," and "German," must be blended in the name of the State—Prussia—to which they all belong in common and for ever."

The Constitution has yielded nothing more to the Poles than was conceded by absolute Monarchy in Prussia. Its first Article says: "All the territories of the Monarchy in their actual dimensions constitute the Prussian State." The

Polish deputies at first proposed to resign their seats, in order not to be obliged to take the oath of adhesion to the Constitution; but they thought better of it. However, in 1850 they again desired to take the oath "with a reservation," and "to safeguard their country's rights by Constitutional means." Naturally the President of the Diet would not permit anything of the sort, remarking:—"If these gentlemen take the oath, they must do so exactly and unconditionally," which they accordingly did; and all the Polish Deputies have done the same ever since. When the North German Confederation was established, Deputy Kantak protested against its comprehension of Posen; i.e. he protested, as the Chancellor proved to him, against the Constitutional Unity of the Prussian Monarchy. His protest, however, was of no more avail than the motion brought forward by the Polish deputies in 1871, that the province of Posen should not be taken into the German Empire; upon which occasion Prince Bismarck exclaimed:—"I dispute your right to appeal to any treaty concerning the exceptional position of individual provinces in the Prussian State, for you have always yourselves scrupulously forborne from carrying out such treaties textually. The very existence of Posen and West Prussia in the Prussian State, as it has obtained for half a century, would have been impossible had anything like what you repeatedly proposed been formulated in those treaties. The provinces of Posen and West Prussia are therefore—according to the Treaties and Proclamations of 1815, the old laws of the land, and the Constitution repeatedly sworn to by their Polish Parliamentary representatives—an integral part of the Prussian Monarchy and German Empire, and whosoever attempts to alter their position in that respect is guilty of high treason."

Summing up the foregoing paragraphs we may reiterate the Chancellor's views upon this matter thus: "Prussia is the legal proprietor of that portion of the former Polish Kingdom incorporated in her realms. The Polish provinces, like all the others, are not mere appendages of the Prussian State organism. All the protests raised against this fact and educed from the Treaties, are null and void, baseless and illogical, and the Deputies who advance them have no authority from their electors to do so. The possession of these provinces is necessary to Prussia. Not to recognise in it the right of conquest is to be oblivious of Polish history in the time of the Republic's power, a history which records a string of conquests, effected with gruesome oppression and plundering of the vanquished. By reason of its constitution, which set individual liberty above State welfare, Poland could not exist in modern times. Its resurrection is absolutely impossible, as involving the domination of six or seven million of Poles over three times that number of human beings belonging to other nationalities, as well as the disintegration of three European first class States. As far as the vast majority of Prussia's Polish populations is concerned, its adoption into her State entity and into the German sphere of culture has proved a blessing to it, which is gratefully acknowledged by many Poles and would be still more so did not their priests inflame their minds against the Government and German institutions by representing the latter as fraught with peril to the Catholic faith. Nevertheless, the people in Polish Prussia would regard a revival of their former condition as a heavy misfortune. Only the nobles and clergy know what they really desire to achieve by agitating for the restoration of the Polish Republic. To them the past is what the fleshpots of Egypt were to the emigrant Jews. They want to be enabled

once more to hector the peasantry to the top of their bent; German discipline, to please them, should give way to Polish liberty. A massive stumbling-block, however, lies in the way of the realisation of their wishes. It is fortunate for Polish "patriotism" or—let us give it its right name—for egotism flaunting the national cockade, that it has not the power to put its whims into execution; for it would inevitbly ruin its people and country over again. We shall not in any way assist it to "materialise its phantoms." To do so would be to sin against ourselves, and against our neighbour, who knows what he wants, but "knows not what he does."

CHAPTER IV.

BISMARCK AND THE PRESS.

WHETHER the press, or let us say, periodical literature as it is conducted in Germany, does more harm than good in the political world, and whether it really makes or expresses public opinion, are questions respecting which many people differ. But all well-informed persons are agreed that, with all its short-comings, it is a Power.

The hurry with which newspapers must necessarily be prepared for publication renders it impossible for their editors or contributors to deal fundamentally with any subject, and compels them to think hastily. They are obliged to form judgments upon insufficient evidence. They are precluded from maintaining a steadfast attitude by the variability of the intelligence reaching them by wire and from their correspondents, one item of news sometimes confirming, sometimes refuting another. As a rule a newspaper represents a party, from the standpoint of which it either unwillingly takes an incorrect or oblique view of events, or willingly casts a too favourable or unfavourable light upon them. Moreover, these "organs of public opinion" are not unfrequently started or supported by banking-houses or syndicates, interested in emphasising or ignoring political occurrences—in colouring or even inventing them—with the object of bringing about a rise or fall on 'Change. Consequently, the instruction derived by the

public from the results of journalistic activity are frequently of doubtful value, and sometimes of none at all. Leaving intentional misdirection out of the question, the reader profits but little by what the newspapers teach him. He learns many things, but not much. He retains a very small portion of what he has read; he is sure of nothing, and accustoms himself to "ready writing" and superficiality, as well as to taking his opinions daily from some one else, instead of forming them by personal reflection, contemplation of the actual world and verbal exchange of views with other people. He ceases to be reproductive and remains merely receptive, falling, through forgetfulness, into the error of mistaking the thoughts of others for his own convictions, and sustaining them with ardour as such. On the other hand, public opinion, as fashioned by leading journals, compels its fabricators to stick to their perversions, even when they know better, on pain of losing credit with their subscribers. Reverence for the wisdom of a great newspaper must not suffer abatement; its staff must strive to effect party-objects, and to live by it as well.

At one of his parliamentary evening parties (December, 1875) Bismarck delivered himself as follows upon the subject of the German press. "Too much stress is laid upon the sensational in our papers, as if something astounding were bound to happen every day. Each number must contain a novelty—if possible, an important or extraordinary one. Thus the public is spoilt; it gets to expect and exact such matters from its newspaper, which is driven to require them from its correspondents. These persons are thereby put in a very awkward position. They must send some special item of news in each of their reports; if they fail to do so, their employers either consider them neglectful and too lazy to look about them, or forlorn

of useful connections. Knowing this, a correspondent sits him down and takes counsel with his imagination, or hies away to the Foreign Embassies, which readily furnish him with information such as suits their own purposes. For instance, just now everything is quiet, except that scrap of a Herzegovina, which concerns us not at all. . . . Again, our papers busy themselves far too much with foreign countries, with French affairs, questions asked in the British Parliament, English meetings, elections, appointments and such like. These are matters only now and then possessing any real interest for us. What Paris newspaper troubles itself whether —— or —— is elected to the Diet for Trakehnen or Kaukehmen, or what sort of a speech Herr —— has spouted to his political friends, or what is the family name of the new Governor of Koenigsberg? It would be far better and more useful to do as the English press does, that is, to deal almost exclusively with home affairs in a practical and thoroughgoing spirit. Thus the public is really kept well-informed, and is enabled to form an opinion upon matters of some importance to it."

During the debate on the Penal Laws (February 9, 1876) the Chancellor called attention to the prejudice frequently caused to public welfare by the press, and with reference to the evil effects produced by the dissemination of fabricated and distorted news, observed:—"I refer particularly to the perversion of facts in connection with peace and war. Permit me, in a few words, to recall the war-lies which, for twelve years past and even longer, have troubled anxious spirits and materially contributed to the injury of trade. In 1863 a Belgian journal reported that the talk of Berlin was a new Quadruple Alliance of Prussia, France, Italy and Sweden, ultimately to be joined by Denmark at the price of Schleswig-Holstein's definitive cession to that kingdom.

Sweden was to obtain Finland; Poland her 1772 frontiers; Italy, Venice; France, Mayence, Cologne and perhaps Brussels; Prussia the whole of Germany and perhaps Holland. That report was the origin of all the worry we have since undergone upon the subject of Holland, a country extremely friendly to us. The lie in question was served up again and again, year after year, by a great many newspapers. But that was not all. In 1871, to the best of my remembrance, the Polish journals (which have always gloated over the prospect of war between Russia and Germany) averred that we were resolved to deprive Russia of her Baltic provinces. Shortly afterwards we were calumniously accused of intending to make war upon Austria; and the culminating point was reached last spring by warlike clamours, prompted by a few newspaper articles, which were listened to with an amount of credulity surpassing the limits of the marvellous. . . . I ascribe the present slackness of business in great measure to the misrepresentations of the newspapers with relation to the probabilities of war. But the chief fault lies with the gullibility and sensational proclivities of the German reader, who declines to peruse serious, practical and instructive articles upon home subjects, which ought to be of paramount interest to him. Nobody wants to read such articles, and the editorial staffs of journals do not want to write them, because they have to be written with care and pains. German newspapers are bound to be amusing reading, to be glanced over whilst drinking a mug full of beer, and to furnish topics of lively conversation, more especially about something that has taken place a long way off, in foreign parts. To my mind, the papers busy themselves far too much with foreign affairs."

"Credulous people on 'Change suffer prejudice by these

false reports, which is bad enough; but war is never brought about by newspaper articles. In modern times polemics have not led to wars; and even the 1870 war, with which the press appeared to have a good deal to do, was not the outcome of journalism, but of the Imperial Camarilla. Anybody who holds the articles that appeared in non-official papers—I refer more particularly to the *Post*—responsible for the panic affecting the Bourse here last year, is in error. I never knowingly caused an article to be written for the *Post;* least of all the one headed 'War in Sight.' But I did not object to that article; for I hold that when it is generally felt that a minority is egging the country on to war, people cannot make too great a noise, in order to attract the majority's attention; for, as a rule, the majority does not incline towards war, which is brought on by minorities, or, in Absolutist States, by the Sovereign or the Cabinet. He, however, who first shouts 'Fire!' cannot be suspected of incendiarism. Were a Minister bent upon urging the country to war in an utterly groundless cause, he would scarcely begin by kicking up a row in the press, for that would be to summon the Fire-Brigade. Last spring circumstances occurred highly illustrative of the public credulity which I so emphatically condemn; amongst others, that certain diplomatists, in the habit of supplying newspaper correspondents with intelligence and ideas, drew their water from dirty wells, and, for lack of experience, were convinced of its limpidity; and that persons of sufficiently high social standing to be brought into contact with political circles, made statements which were incorrect, because those persons were not well-informed enough to have formed a political judgment, or impartial enough, possibly, to entertain a favourable opinion of the German Empire. . . . There are persons in very high positions

who pass for political oracles, without being officially qualified for that character, and who conduct their correspondence with a seeming of officiality and credibility, having no right whatsoever to do so. . . . Business suffers from another variety of the press, which I may designate as journalism working in obscurity, or by the light of a dark lantern. The weekly paper supplied to poor and ignorant people who have no means of testing the barefaced lies printed therein—the paper which is read by the impoverished and discontented classes of the population—finds it easy enough to work upon the common man (who knows only too well that he is badly off) in such sort that he fancies he can mitigate his own need permanently by labouring less and relying more upon the assistance of his fellow-citizens; that it is feasible, in fact, to work less and enjoy more than is prescribed by the common law of supply and demand. This sort of journalism has materially harmed us and thrown us back; the Social-Democratic agitation has largely contributed to the creation of the business depression under which we are suffering; it has undoubtedly raised the price and lowered the quality of German labour, and is responsible for the fact that the German working day is not so productive as that of France or England. The French operative does more work in a day, and better than the German; we have fallen off in our workmanship, and have consequently ceased to be capable of competition."

That the press has its merits, despite the above and other shortcomings; that it does a great deal of good in exposing wrongs and pointing out the means of remedying them; that it supplies prompt intelligence, and is an excellent medium through which, in case of conflicts with foreign countries, to give expression to and stimulate national feeling, cannot be denied; and that it is a political

power, for good and evil, is demonstrated by the fact that every Government utilises it to enlighten or correct public opinion. To this rule the greatest of living Statesmen is no exception. The chiefs of the Roman Church are fully aware what influence is exercised by newspapers, and there are political journalists of strongly marked vocation and talent amongst the more exalted Catholic clergy. The late Bishop von Ketteler was an industrious writer in the press; he once remarked:—"If St Peter were on earth nowadays, he would certainly found a newspaper."

Bismarck, besides utilising the press vicariously, used to write for it himself before he took office. He supplied articles for many years to the *Neue Preussische Zeitung*, which he partly founded. "How often," says Hesekiel, "has he occupied a place at that huge circular table round which so many distinguished men used to sit, and written down his thoughts in the firm large and close characters peculiar to him."

During his sojourn in Frankfort, he busied himself eagerly with press work; according to Hesekiel he did little else there, until he was appointed to the rank of Minister. Poschinger states that Bismarck was instructed by Manteuffel to utilize the Frankfort papers in connection with commercial questions then pending. Later on, also, he devoted a portion of his leisure to writing in the newspapers. On Nov. 7, 1851 he wrote to Manteuffel:—"I shall not fail to watch Herr Hock's doings, and to expose the real state of the case in the press, quite unreservedly and in various forms and directions." Later on, (Dec. 22) he requested the Minister "to supply the home press with more material for throwing light upon the policy of the Federal Diet, and to give Prussian newspapers the rein." During the summer of 1852, he prepared a pamphlet intituled, "Shall the

German Customs' Union be destroyed? A Voice from the South," of which 1000 copies were printed and sent to the most influential manufacturers, farmers and tradesmen in Southern Germany. On the 6th Sept. 1852 (*àpropos* of a newspaper dispute about the Zollverein) he announced to Manteuffel that he had forwarded letters to the *Frankfurter Journal* and the *Schwaebische Merkur*, as well as to seven other journals appearing in Hesse, Nassau, Baden, Bavaria and Wuertemberg. "Should contradictions appear in the South German press," he continued, "I will take care that they are properly answered." (Here follow several further illustrations of his journalistic activity in Southern Germany, which may be omitted without any prejudice to the interest of this work.—Translator's Note).

In January 1854 accident put the Prussian Government in possession of Prokesch's autographic correspondence with agents of the press respecting the organisation of an anti-Prussian agitation in the German press, as well as several drafts (also in the Baron's handwriting) of vigorous anti-monarchical newspaper articles. Manteuffel asked Bismarck how this discovery might be most advantageously utilised. The latter replied:—"My plan of operations would be to publish these documents in some independent journal, as if they were in private hands, summing up their actual contents in one or more articles. Perhaps the *Preussisches Wochenblatt* would be the most suitable paper, should your Excellency think fit to trust any one of the members of its editorial staff. The publication of Herr von Prokesch's transactions with his agents cannot fail to produce a powerful reaction in public opinion against philo-Austrian articles. . . . I am decidedly of opinion that the Government should feign to have had its attention called to the documents in question for the first time by

their publication in the manner above suggested, and to have subsequently acquired official cognizance of their original source. They may then be further utilised to make Prokesch feel insecure in his position, by confidentially acquainting our other Confederates with the whole matter in such a way as to exhibit our patience and long-suffering in the most favourable light. It would also be advisable that the Cabinet of Vienna should learn (indirectly and extra-officially) that we have in our hands convincing proofs of the attacks—hitherto steadfastly denied—which Austria has made upon us in the press, and of the animosity towards the august person of His Majesty the King which has inspired those attacks."

How watchfully Bismarck observed the utterances of the Prussian press whilst he was at Frankfort may be gathered from the concluding paragraph of his report of July 25, 1854. "I cannot forbear from pointing out that of late Austrian views have been set forth to a greater extent than was formerly the case in Prussian newspapers, whose Austrian correspondents have obtained insertion therein of statements distinctly hostile to Prussia. This is the more to be deplored because there is not a single journal in the whole Austrian press that represents Prussian interests. I may observe with respect to the *Zeit* that its correspondent here is in the service of Herr von Prokesch, and writes his articles at the dictation of that gentleman's agents." On Sept. 30 Bismarck wrote a report upon the anti-Prussian *Frankfurter Postzeitung*, of which Prokesch and the Austrian Councillor of Legation, Braun, were *collaborateurs*, and which, rejoicing in the protection of Austria and the Prince of Tour and Taxis, was altogether reckless in its utterances. A week later he forwarded to Manteuffel an article of the *Frankfurter Journal* "justifying Count Buol's

policy in the Eastern Question and vehemently attacking the German Governments and Statesmen. I am assured" he added "upon absolutely trustworthy authority that this article was sent to the editor by the Austrian Chancellerie under its own official seal."

In a private letter to Manteuffel (Dec. 8, 1854) Bismarck subsequently complained of the unpatriotic attitude of Prussian newspapers, observing:—"The utter lack of honour-loving patriotism evinced by a portion of our home press in this crisis is humiliating to every Prussian. If I had anything to say in the matter I would allow greater freedom to the newspapers with respect to internal affairs, but would inexorably insist that the foreign policy of the Government should not only not be attacked but should be supported by every Prussian journal, and that any newspaper printing a single comma against it should be suppressed without further notice. This method of enforcing patriotism would not, I believe, be disapproved of by public opinion." Later on (Feb. 3, 1855) he wrote to his chief: "I cannot leave unnoticed the painful impression made abroad by the circumstance that (in such a crisis as the present, and considering Austria's behaviour towards us) Prussian newspaper, such as the *Spenersche* and *Koelnische* should lend themselves for money or party objects to support Austria's cause against our own. I am sure that it would be welcome to all loyal people at home were the Government to check so dishonourable a lack of patriotism." He subsequently urged his chief to officially request the Frankfort Senate to exercise stricter supervision over the local press of that city and even to take proceedings against it; and subsequently (Oct. 29, 1857) called attention to the agitation got up by the *Frankfurter Zeitung* against Prussia and the Evangelical Church, recommending the prohibition of that journal in

Prussia as a measure approved of even by moderate Catholics who regarded the preservation of confessional peace as paramountly desirable.

Shortly before his recall from Frankfort Bismarck wrote a report upon the *Postzeitung*, a journal inspired by the Austrian Press Bureau, to the Prince Regent, as follows:—"The argumentative articles in this paper (no matter from what place they are stated to have reached it) are either written in Vienna by Baron Max von Gagern and Herr von Biegeleben, or here under the direction of the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, Braun—by the Liechtenstein Federal Envoy D. von Linde and the ex-priest Juergens, an agent of the Vienna Press-Bureau. These two last-named persons hold conferences almost daily with other press-men, and during these meetings the matter for the *Postzeitung*, *Journal de Frankfort* and other Southern German papers dependent upon Austria is prepared. The *Postzeitung*, whatever it may say to the contrary, is an immediate and exclusive organ of the Vienna Cabinet. The recent polemic between it and the Vienna papers concerning Your Royal Highness's Government was merely a presentment of the double aims of Austrian policy, in the form of dialogue, throughout which the articles for and against, i.e. the attacks of the *Postzeitung* upon your Royal Highness, and your defence by the Vienna papers, all emanated from one and the same source.

As Premier and Chancellor, no less than as Federal Envoy, Bismarck turned his attention to the press, and utilised it when he thought fit. How he did so I do not propose to illustrate by any further examples. Suffice it to observe that the hammer and tongs method which is so dear to official writers was as little to his taste as the fidgetiness displayed for several years by that portion of the press

entrusted with the vindication of Government interests. How he wished his relations to the newspaper world to be generally viewed may be gathered from a passage in his speech of Feb. 9, 1876, to which reference has already been made. Having openly pronounced his condemnation of the abuses practised with the word "official," he proceeded as follows:—

"It cannot be denied that every Government—particularly that of a great country—desires the support of the press in its foreign as well as home policy. Nothing, therefore, is more natural than that governments should keep a certain amount of space at their disposal in journals well-affected to them, wherein to put forward views which they do not exactly want to publish in their Official Gazette. Formerly the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* was rendered available to the Prussian Government for this purpose by its proprietors, acting upon their convictions and not asking for any remuneration. The Government took advantage of their offer, and the paper profited largely by its official connection. But what was the consequence? Most people believed that every article appearing in that paper was either written by the Prime Minister or read over by him before publication, so that he could be held responsible for every word of its text; and it was this which compelled me to forego the pleasure of promulgating my opinions extra-officially in the press. The Minister gives instructions to his secretary, who imparts them to the newspaper: and the result of the connection thus established is that items of intelligence are sometimes communicated to the journal in question, not at the immediate instance of the Minister, but quite permissibly and correctly. Thenceforth, no matter what editorial padding may be inserted in such a newspaper—even if it should only have received a single

official *communiquè*—it is spoken of as 'an organ closely related to Government circles' 'a journal notoriously supplied with official intelligence,' and, in the French papers, as '*la feuille de M. de Bismarck*'—which lends its statements as much authority as if they had appeared in the *Staatsanzeiger*. Serious inconveniences, however, accrue from attributing an official character to announcements which really possess none; a proceeding sometimes the outcome of error, but more frequently of sheer ill-will and desire to cast discredit upon the governmental policy. Very often it is the writer's chief object to impart extra weight to his own views by describing as 'official' the statements he contradicts; but for which, the reading public would fail to understand why he takes the trouble to refute a mere invention. But by signalising that invention as 'official' he enters into a personal controversy with the Chancellor and adds to his own importance. There is no conceivable piece of stupidity which has not been imputed to me in this manner by the simple word 'official'; wherefore I take this opportunity of positively declaring that the Foreign Office does not own an official paper, and does not impart official communications to any paper. I admit the inconvenience of being unable to make known my views to public opinion otherwise than through the *Staatsanzeiger*, or sometimes through a recognised official organ, the *Provinzial Korrespondenz*; but thus, at least, I am sure that no cuckoo's eggs will be laid in my nest, and that I can only be held answerable for what I myself (or one of my colleagues) have said."

"It is extremely easy to impart an official aspect to an article containing statements which everybody knows a newspaper editor or correspondent could not possibly have got at on his own account, inasmuch as they could

only have emanated from an official source. If statements of this kind appear simultaneously in two or three papers, it becomes obvious to every outsider who knows nothing about the business that they must be the outcome of an official *communiquè*. Neither is that assumption altogether incorrect; only the statements in question are not official as far as the German Empire in concerned—they emanate from foreign correspondents and diplomatists. It is a great convenience to a Legation in any country to have a newspaper correspondent, or several such, in tow, who says: 'If you want anything put into the newspaper, tell it to me. I want no money; all I ask for is news.' If such a correspondent is upon really intimate terms with a Legation, obliging it from time to time by defending or advocating some matter which it has at heart, the Envoy (when not supplied with funds for these purposes, or when the correspondent declines to take money) is ready enough to furnish him with news—the material, in fact, for an apparently 'official' article, of which everybody who reads it will naturally say 'The Government must have dictated this, for no one else could know it; besides, were it not official it would not appear in three or four papers at once;' the truth being that a smart correspondent, connected with diplomatic circles, can easily obtain employment on several newspapers simultaneously. There would be no objection to such an arrangement if the news thus disseminated were always correct. As the Envoy, however, never tells a person of that sort all he knows, but only what he wishes to to be publicly known and believed, this sort of 'official' journalism is frequently very prejudicial to a government."

(Some lengthy and severe diatribes pronounced by the Chancellor with relation to Socialism and the local Berlin press are here omitted as possessing no interest, even of a

retrospective character, for the English reader.—Translator's Note.)

In the course of a debate in the Reichstag on the Press Laws (June 16, 1873) Prince Bismarck propounded his standpoint as follows :—" The last speaker very justly called attention to the services rendered by the press. But there are two sides to every question. All sorts of views, shades of opinion and convictions are entertained by the population of a country. There are perhaps a hundred thousand people whose interest and desire it is that the press should be as independent, free and easy as possible. But there are also, maybe, many more than a hundred thousand who regard the further emancipation of the press with mistrustful anxiety. But these classes have an equal right to consideration, as well as to express their views in the form of projects of law. It is, moreover, the Government's duty to contemplate the question in both its aspects, and to give the general public the opportunity of deciding in favour of one or the other system. Above all I would beg you not to lay down the hard and fast rule that it is a virtue to advocate an unrestricted press, and a vice to oppose it: and not to stigmatise every governmental attempt to protect those who are of a different opinion as an outrage upon the people's rights. To me the question of how far press freedom may be developed and encouraged on the one hand, and of what protection shall be accorded to persons attacked by the press, on the other, appears of no greater gravity than that of Free Trade v. Protection. Let us, therefore, not begin by hurling reproaches at one another as though it were disgraceful or contemptible to take either view of this particular question."

Upon that occasion, Deputy Lasker observed that " the rights of the people were in question," and Bismarck

replied :—"All the gentlemen who sit in this House are representatives of the people. I, too, participate in the rights of the people. We are all the people—not those gentlemen exclusively who represent pretensions traditionally reputed to be Liberal, but which sometimes are far from being so. I do not see why one law should have the credit of concerning the people's rights, and another not. I maintain that we all are the people, and so is the government, too; why should I allow the government to be excluded from the privileges of the people, and to my disadvantage? This practice of attributing a specially popular character to some special aim, and of ascribing hostility or even indifference to the people to everything that the Government does, is a subversive tendency, gentlemen, and one which I was by no means prepared for in Deputy Lasker, or the party to which he belongs, judging the latter by the part it has hitherto taken in founding and consolidating the Empire."

To obtain still more accurate cognizance of Bismarck's views with regard to the freedom of the press, we must go back to his Press Regulations of July 1, 1863. They were strongly condemned at the time, but were absolutely necessary in order to protect State welfare against a class of journalism which assailed it with unmeasured violence. The Government was being attacked daily, in the bitterest and most vehement terms, because it did not accede to the unjustifiable demands of the Liberal Party. The Democratic press stimulated the prevailing agitation unremittingly; and the prescriptions of the 1851 Press Law were inadequate to the situation, as they did not enable the tribunals to deal effectively with journalistic demagogues, who, on their part, conducted their campaign in such sort that the magistrates could not pin them to any overt breach

of the law. In this manner several papers widely circulated amongst the lower classes daily disseminated statements and views which embittered public feeling and undermined political morality. The Government's means of contending against its journalistic assailants were insufficient, inasmuch as the organs devoted to it were not so generally read as the Democratic press. It could only check the excesses of the Opposition journals if empowered to call them to account for their behaviour in general, and thus compel them to alter it.

The report made to the King by the Ministry collectively upon the measures called for under the circumstances, indicated those measures as "fully justified by the Constitution of January 31, 1850," and pointed out that they would "in no wise restrict the free expression of opinion thereby allowed to His Majesty's subjects. The condemnable extravagances of an unbridled press will be restrained; and the liberty of the press will be re-established upon the basis of morality and self-respect, in which alone it can strike root firmly and flourish."

This opinion was endorsed by equitable and impartial persons; even the Liberal Prussian Annuals, although they opposed the Press Regulations, admitted the Government "had the welfare of the country most earnestly at heart," and that ministers were steadfastly keeping in view Prussia's honour, happiness and greatness. There could be no doubt that the measures taken against the press were dictated by a sincere desire to serve the Crown and country, and that their main object was to restore agitated and mislead spirits to order, legality and moderation.

The Press Regulations had been decreed without the co-operation of the Legislature, which was not assembled at the time. But Ministers were perfectly justified by law in

promulgating them, for the Constitution expressly provided that, in any extraordinary emergency, the government was entitled to take such measures, in the absence of the Diet, as should not be manifestly unconstitutional, upon condition that it should submit them to the Legislature for approval, when the latter should again be convoked. This condition the Government conscientiously fulfilled. Many were of opinion that it was only under the obligation to lay the regulations before one Chamber at a time (as in the case of other Draft Bills), and would be justified in consulting the other Legislative Body after obtaining the verdict, say, of the Upper House. But the Government submitted its measure to both Houses, simultaneously and without delay, although it knew by the result of the elections that the Lower House would unhesitatingly vote for the revocation of the Regulations. It did so. A large majority of Deputies refused its sanction to the measure in question, and declared that, in promulgating the Press Regulations, the Government had violated the Constitution, no emergency having accrued which justified it in acting independently of the Diet. The Upper House, however thought differently, and declared, by 77 votes to 8, that the Regulations had not only been justified by circumstances, but had produced a highly salutary effect by tranquillizing the country; and that it thanked the Government for enacting them. They were, however, revoked at once; having, meanwhile, to some extent effected their object.

It is, of course, obvious that the Prime Minister of a great State stands in need of representation and support in the press. It is no less clear and indisputable that, in a more or less bureaucratically organised State entity, journalism favourable to the Government must be carried on, at least partly, by officials, its cost being defrayed out of the

public purse. The Prime Minister, therefore, must have at his disposal at least one influential journal besides his official press-organ. As matters stand, however, it also appears desirable and allowable that information and views emanating from Governmental circles should reach public cognizance through the medium of the independent press. The Government is only doing its duty by exercising as much influence as possible upon public opinion; and no journal is compelled to assist it in so doing, but is acting in accordance with the dictates of its own free will when it accords a place in its columns to any official article. Inspiration and information, however, should not (as has often been the case) reach newspapers from several different quarters, independent of and sometimes opposed to one another; but from one central point in the immediate vicinity of the leading statesmen. The action of the governmental press must be as uniform as that of diplomacy. Unless it be so it produces bewilderment, and leaves the public in a state of uncertainty, save in one solitary respect; viz.: that dissension prevails amongst the chiefs of the different State departments.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHANCELLOR AND STATE-SOCIALISM.

THE ideas, projects and measures which are customarily spoken of as "the Chancellor's State-Socialism" are the results of experience. They were suggested and developed by the degeneration of the German working-men's agitation into Social-Democratic hostility to the State; and they propound two means, namely, repression and reform, of obviating the danger to society of a movement which, at its commencement, was by no means inexplicable or unnatural. Their objects are, on the one hand, to put down the machinations systematically carried on with a view to destroying the State and society; on the other, to improve the condition of the working-classes in such sort that the operative shall recognise the State as his friend.

German Social-Democracy flows in two currents, which ultimately amalagamate, though their sources are wide apart. One of these streams took its origin in Lassalle and Von Schweitzer; the other in Marx, Liebknecht and Bebel. The former recognised the State and craved its assistance; the latter was resolved upon its destruction, and desired to establish an entirely new order of social affairs, more or less Communistic. This is the party which, by reason of its readiness to go any lengths, gradually gained the upper hand of the other, and finally took possession of every

variety of the German operative—of all the working-men, in fact, who take an interest in public life.

Lassalle's championship of the working-classes was due to the circumstance that the Party of Progress, to which his original views had inclined him to belong, failed to understand his ideas or to gratify his ambition. In that political clique he—a man of vast learning, a profound thinker, in every way an extraordinary being—had to do with a crew of mediocrities, as ignorant as they were pretentious. They were afraid of his impetuous efforts to obtain recognition; when he treated Constitutional questions as questions of might, and advised them to act accordingly, they did not know what he meant. So he turned his attention to the operative masses, with the project of organizing them as a party and leading them himself into the Constitutional fray. The working-men's enormous numbers appeared to him to constitute a power which must eventually carry all before it; and the sound common-sense which he attributed to that class of the people, leagued with and led by men of higher intelligence and culture, was in his opinion destined to open up a new future to the people. The first item in his programme (addressed to the Committee of the Leipzig Operatives' Club in March, 1863) was the so-called "Inflexible Wages-Law," in virtue of which (and guided by the influence of demand and supply) the standard of wages was to be regulated by the minimum of popular requirements for supporting and propagating human life; the attempt being made to prove, with the aid of statistics, that the law in question would bear upon about 90 per cent. of the population of Prussia. Lassalle also asserted that self-help, as recommended by Schultze-Delitzsch, was inadequate to ameliorate the condition of the working-man, and demanded a State subvention

for the establishment of productive-associations, which by degrees should comprehend all the operative classes, and indicated universal suffrage as the only means of legally attaining that object. He took up this enterprise with his accustomed energy; but its result did not fulfil his high-flying expectations. He accepted the presidency of of the Workmen's General Association in the hope that his programme would produce as great an effect as did Luther's doctrines in 1517, and that the Association would speedily become an irresistible power. He yielded to the illusion that it would give rise to a movement as mighty as that which had caused the abolition of the Corn-Laws in England. Nothing of the sort came to pass. It is true that, amongst the working-men, he found a few thousand enthusiastic followers, who revered and worshipped him as if he had been the Messiah; but the vast majority of the operatives either treated him with coldness or absolutely repelled him. The Liberal papers, then almost without exception in the service of the Manchester school, attacked him and his doctrines with their sharpest weapons; the well-to-do classes and the scientists would have nothing to do with his enterprise, although such men as Rodbertus were not averse to his programme. He suffered disappointments even in the circle he had formed around himself, for it lacked the intelligence and disinterestedness with which he had credited it.

His attitude towards the doctrines and actions of the Party of Progress, which wielded considerable influence during the period of conflict, had no doubt a great deal to do with his failure. He was a fervent partisan of the State, an eager opponent of individualism, and an uncompromising Prussian patriot; he had recognised Bismarck's importance early in his career. In March 1864 he said: "The most

vigorous diplomacy is that which does not need to make a secret of its justifiability, being founded upon iron necessity. I predict to you that a year will not pass before Herr von Bismarck shall have played the part of Peel, and universal direct suffrage will be granted to us." He designated the Frankfort Congress of Princes "a Federalistic intrigue." When he held a review of his Rhenish disciples in September, 1863, he exclaimed, "The Progressists are coquetting with the Princes in order to alarm Herr von Bismarck; such are the manœuvres of those wretched creatures! Even should we exchange musket-shots with Herr von Bismarck, common justice would compel us, whilst firing at him, to admit that he is a man, whilst the Progressists are old women. And old women have never yet cowed a man, especially by casting sheep's-eyes in other directions." About the same time he wrote angrily to one of his envoys, who wanted to raise volunteer corps for Duke Frederick in Kiel: "We cannot possibly fight for the legitimate succession of the House of Augustenburg. Is it national to add a thirty-fourth to the existing thirty-three German Princes?" Is that your yearning for German Unity? He added that the only sensible solution of the Schleswig-Holstein question was the incorporation of the Elbe Duchies in Prussia.

These utterances caused Lassalle to appear to his Progressist adversaries as a Government agent and instrument of reaction; although his incessant persecution by the Prussian State Attornies should have sufficiently proved the groundlessness of that view, it was ultimately adopted by Lassalle's own followers. He was a friend of Lothar Bucher, who had also turned his back upon the Party of Progress and entered the Prussian Foreign Office. He was also in correspondence with such Conservative writers as

Huber. Wagener took occasion to speak, in the Diet, of the new movement as a "sign of the times" and to open the columns of the *Kreuzzeitung* to its leader. These were the only incidents which could have given rise to the assumptions above alluded to.

But no, people said—they were not the only ones; Lassalle had been received by Bismarck in person, had been made acquainted with his projects, had served him and been supported by him in return. How much truth there was in all this, and how much error or invention, let the Chancellor himself tell us. Deputy Bebel informed the Reichstag on Sept. 16, 1878 that in 1862 a certain Eichler, commissioned by the Prussian Government, and in particular by Herr von Bismarck, had offered to the Committee of the Leipzig Workmen's Association a considerable sum of money in aid of its objects. The Chancellor replied:—"The elder members of this House know that I accepted office on Sept. 23, 1862—in the last week, therefore, of the month during which I am supposed to have entrusted Eichler with this mission. I had just returned from abroad after an absence of I know not how many years, during which I had no opportunity to occupy myself with home politics, far less with a man so insignificant as Eichler. At that time I did not even know of his existence; and yet it was then—when I had just been transferred from the comfortable calm of diplomacy to a hot contest with the Diet, when I had to attend Committees every evening, when, so to speak, I was glad if I could keep up my Ministerial life, when I had to enlist colleagues, and to return to Paris in order to take my leave of the French Court—then it was I say, that I am supposed to have instructed Herr Eichler to undertake a special mission on my behalf. Eichler lied if he said he had received instructions from me; such a

thing at any rate was absolutely impossible during the very week in which I became a Minister. All I remember is that he subsequently preferred claims to me for services which he had never rendered . . . It just occurs to me that Herr Eichler was employed by the police, and in that capacity made some reports which came to my knowledge, but police matters were not in my special department, and I never held any direct intercourse with people of that sort. None of his reports, however, related to the Social-Democratic party; they had to do with the secret transactions of the Progressists and, if I be not mistaken, of the National Association. That was the only affair with which I ever heard of the man's name being connected. Furthermore, I can assure you that I had never had any business transaction with a Social-Democrat in my life, nor a Social-Democrat with me; for I do not reckon Lassalle as belonging to that category—his was a much nobler character than that of any of his satellites—he was a remarkable man, with whom one could converse . . . With respect to the fabulous statement that I was at that time inclined to enter into a league with the Socialists against the Party of Progress, anybody who remembers those days will recollect that it was my policy, during the winter of 1862-3 to come to terms with the Diet, not to combat it . . . And about the sixty or eighty thousand thalers I am supposed to have supplied to Eichler, where should I have got them from, seeing that we have no Secret Service Fund? The whole Eichler business never existed at all; and I request Deputy Bebel to inform the person who crammed him with it that he is simply a liar."

"Then Lassalle made his appearance, and again the Government made strenuous efforts to enter into relations with him—not he with them—the negotiations being

undertaken by a Prince of the Blood Royal and Countess Hatzfeldt." This made me laugh when I read it; even in Democratic circles they cannot make up a story without a certain amount of padding filched from aristocratic society. In this particular narrative are introduced a Royal Prince, a Countess and an Ambassador; they give an air of reality to the piece, like scenery and decorations, and emphasize its importance to the spectator, who is too ignorant to test its authenticity. I am sorry that the Royal Prince (there are plenty of them) was not pointed out to Deputy Bebel somewhat more clearly. If he would just mind asking his informant for more details on that point, it would be historically interesting to learn which Prince it really was of the six or eight who were alive at that time. Until he shall do so, however, I must take leave to deny the incident. I, at least, required no princely assistance to get at Lassalle, or bring him to me; and I have not the honour to be acquainted with Countess Hatzfeldt, whom I last saw in the year 1835 at the house of her brother-in-law. All the assertions, therefore, are pure inventions *in usum* of silly people, but which should not have been brought forward in an assembly of this character. Lassalle himself was extremely desirous to know me personally, and, if I had time to rummage amongst my old papers, I believe I could find his letters begging me to gratify that desire, which I made no difficulty about doing. I met him and talked with him for an hour, and have never regretted doing so. I did not see him three times a week, as has been stated, but perhaps thrice altogether. It was out of the question that our intercourse should assume the character of a political negotiation. What could Lassalle have offered to me? He had nothing behind him . . . In all political negotiations the *do, ut des* is an essential feature, even if kept in the

background and not alluded to by well-bred negotiators. But when one of them is obliged to say, 'Poor devil that I am, what have I to offer?' He had nothing to give me in my Ministerial capacity. But he had something which was extremely attractive to me as a private person; for he was one of the cleverest and most agreeable men I ever met —a man of lofty ambition, by no means a Republican, but animated by strongly marked national and monarchical feelings. His ideal, which he strove to realize, was the German Empire. This was a point of contact between us. Possibly he was in doubt whether the German Empire should be swayed by the Hohenzollern dynasty or the Lassalle dynasty; but he was a Monarchist to the back bone. He ought to have thundered out a "Quos ego" to his pitiful satellites, who now claim to have been his equals; he ought to have contemptuously hurled them back into their original nullity and put it out of their power to take his name in vain. Lassalle was an energetic and singularly intelligent man, to converse with whom was highly instructive; our conversations lasted for hours at a stretch and I was always sorry when they came to an end. There was no question at all of negotiations, for I had but little to say during these interviews; he alone kept up the conversation, and did so in the delightful manner which all those who knew him will remember. I regret that his position and my own did not permit me to associate with him more intimately; I should have been delighted to have a man of such gifts and *esprit* as a neighbour in the country." . . . .

"It is extremely difficult to discuss this subject," (the Social-Democratic "Realm of the Future"), "while we are groping about in darkness, like the ordinary audience at a Social-Democratic meeting, who know nothing at all about the matter, but are assured that 'better times are

coming,' and that 'there will be more to earn and less to work.' Where the 'more' money is to come from, nobody knows; I mean, when every well-to-do person shall have been robbed of his property in order that it shall be divided amongst his despoilers. Then, in all probability, the laborious and thrifty will again wax wealthy, whilst the lazy and extravagant will fall into poverty; or if everybody is to be supplied with the needful by an administration, people will come to lead the lives of prisoners, shut up in gaols, none of whom follow occupations of their own choice, but work under the compulsion of the warders. In gaol, too, there is at least an official in charge, who is a trustworthy and respectable person; but who will play the warder in the Universal Socialistic House of Correction? Probably the speechifyers, who gain over the masses by their eloquence. There will be no appeal against them; they will be the most merciless of tyrants, and all the others will be their slaves. . . . I do not think that anybody would care about living in such a state of things. None of these gentlemen has frankly put forward a positive programme; were they to describe the future as they really wish to organise it, every perspicuous operative would laugh in their faces. They do not want to make themselves ridiculous; hence we hear nothing of a definitive programme, but only of the negation of whatever actually exists. But all this has never prevented me from keeping a warm heart and an open ear for the intelligent aspirations of Social-Democracy, and for the amelioration of the lot of the working classes. What Lassalle told me on the subject was most interesting and instructive; for he knew a great deal about it."

"Our conversation turned upon Universal Suffrage; but its realization by State authority was never mooted. Such

a monstrous idea never occurred to me in my life. I accepted Universal Suffrage, but with repugnance, as a Frankfort tradition. I have little faith in the practicality of any particular electoral system; nor is it easy for anybody to believe in one more than in another, for we have seen them work side-by-side in our own country. Here we have, for instance, a Parliament elected by Universal Suffrage, and a Diet which is the outcome of quite another electoral system. Many of you, gentlemen, are members of both Assemblies, and can consequently form a judgment respecting the working of the two systems in one country. . . . I do not propose to draw any conclusion, not wishing to make myself disagreeable to the Diet or to flatter the Reichstag; but I prefer having to do with the results of Universal Suffrage here, in spite of the excrescences we have to thank it for. . . . Perhaps, too, our electors will become more judgmatical in time and will cease to accord implicit credence to whatever their deputies or candidates may asseverate to the disadvantage of the Government. Perhaps the elector will then read more than one newspaper, and will acquire confidence in leading men whom he now despises. I have as yet nothing to take back in this matter, although I give due consideration to all the arguments that attribute all our ills to Universal Suffrage. I only say that I am not convinced, though willing to be so; and that I do not consider it a crime to have talked about Universal Suffrage with a clever man."

"Similarly, I am by no means yet convinced that the notion of subventioning productive associations by the State is an objectionable one. It has seemed to me—perhaps the impression was conveyed to me by Lassalle's reasonings, or perhaps by my experiences in England, during my stay there in 1862—that a possibility of im-

proving the working man's lot might be found in the establishment of productive associations, such as exist and flourish in England. I have talked over the subject with the King, who has the interests of the working classes closely at heart, and His Majesty paid a sum of money out of his own pocket in aid of an experiment in that direction connected with a deputation of operatives from Silesia, who had lost their employment through differing from their employer in politics. . . . To attempt anything of the sort upon a large scale might entail an expenditure of hundreds of millions; but the notion does not seem to me intrinsically an absurd or silly one. We make experiments in agriculture and manufactures; might it not be as well to do so with respect to human occupations and the solution of the social question? . . . I may be reproached with not having achieved a satisfactory result; but the matter was not in my department—I had no time to attend to it—warlike complications accrued and our foreign policy became abnormally active. The merits or demerits of the notion cannot be judged by an experiment made upon a small scale; perhaps on a larger one it could not be carried out at all. Such establishments as that of Krupp, for instance, could not possibly exist under a republican *régime*. . . . It may be that the confidence of German workmen in one another and their employers is not so great as the English associations prove it to be in England. But I cannot understand why I am reproached for making the experiment above alluded to, not with public money, but with funds supplied by His Majesty out of his Privy Purse."

"I now come to the question when and why I gave up troubling myself about these matters, and chiefly when my attitude changed towards the social, or rather, Social-

Democratic question. It was at the moment when Deputy Bebel or Deputy Liebknecht—I do not remember which of the two—in a pathetic appeal to the Reichstag held up the French Commune as the model of political institutions, and openly avowed the creed professed by the Parisian assassins and incendiaries. Thenceforth I clearly perceived the extent of the danger threatening us. In the meantime I had been away at the scene of war and had paid no attention to things of that kind; but the invocation of the Commune opened my eyes to what we had to expect, and I instantly recognised the fact that Social-Democracy is an enemy against whom the State and society are bound to defend themselves."

These remarks prompt us to consider the second division of German Social-Democracy; from the amalgamation of which with the first (hitherto dealt with in this chapter) the actual Social-Democratic Party resulted. After Lassalle's death (August 31, 1864) the Association founded by him was managed for some time by a set of incapable and discordant people, and would probably have died out quietly had it not been kept alive by its cleverly edited press-organ, the *Sozialdemokrat.* Universal suffrage, which followed our national victories hard on heel, imported new life into the operative agitation; and when the Association (May, 1867) acquired an energetic and intelligent president in the person of Herr von Schweitzer, who had a special talent for organisation, it made manifest progress. Not that the number of its members increased; on the contrary, it had diminished from 4600 to 3000; but round this nucleus a party grouped itself which had supplied 40,000 votes to Socialist candidates at the September elections. This party grew rapidly, and by degrees succeeded in converting a great many Berlin workmen to Lassalle's

programme who had thitherto (with few exceptions) adhered to the Party of Progress.

Meanwhile a fraction of this party—led by persons who were under the influence of Countess Hatzfeldt—had quitted it; an event of no great importance, as the secession was not due to any new political creed, but to motives connected with Countess Hatzfeldt's domineering disposition and bad temper, which soon rendered the female line of Lassalle's dynasty utterly ridiculous by reason of its representative's incapacity and vanity.

Of far greater moment was a clique of Social-Democrats made up of Communists who had for some time followed Lassalle's flag, and of anti-Prussianists converted to Communism. The headquarters of this organisation was the Communist Club in London, chiefly composed of Germans, which had published a manifesto to the workmen of all countries in 1848, and was at the head of the International Operatives' Association founded in 1862. The *spiritus rector* of this club was Karl Marx, a man of comprehensive economic knowledge, penetrating intellect and strict consistency in his views—a cold, bitter, insidious fanatic. His apostle in Germany was Wilhelm Liebknecht. The profession of faith of this sect is contained in the 1848 manifesto drawn up by Marx, and runs as follows:—"Modern State-power is only a committee that administers the affairs of the *bourgeoisie* in general. The *bourgeoisie* has played a highly revolutionary part in history, having destroyed all feudal and patriarchal relations, and left no bond existing between man and men but bare interest—insensible ready-money transactions (*baare Zahlung*). It has substituted a conscienceless Free Trade for countless recorded and well earned liberties. The workman's outlay is well-nigh restricted to the necessaries that are indispen-

sable to his mere existence and reproduction of his species." (Here we see that Lassalle borrowed his "inflexible Wages-Law" from Marx.) "The Communists are distinguished from all other Operative Parties by the facts that they defend the common interests of the working-class, independently of nationality, and that they represent the interests of the general movement throughout the successive stages of development through which the struggle between operatives and capitalists must pass. "The Communists' immediate object is that of the other proletarian parties, namely, the overthrow of the capitalists' domination by the acquisition of political power." The means to this end, according to Marx, were: 1. The abolition of private property in land; 2. The concentration of credit and means of communication in the hands of the State; 3. The establishment of national workshops; 4. The cultivation of all agricultural districts upon an uniform system; 5. The gratuitous education of all children, also upon an uniform system. The manifesto concluded with these words:—"Let the ruling classes tremble before a Communistic Revolution, in which the proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains, whilst they have the whole world to win. Proletarians of all countries, unite!"

The Communist League, which subsequently formed the nucleus of the *Internationale*, is further characterised in the address issued to the world at large by the "Central Board" from London in March, 1850, e.g.:—"In opposition to the democratic petty *bourgeoisie*, which desires to bring the Revolution to a close, to procure better wages and more certain employment for the working-man, and to do so partly with State assistance, it is our interest and duty to make the Revolution permanent, until all the more or less well-to-do classes shall be deprived of power, the State

authority shall be in the hands of the proletariate, and the Association of Proletarians shall have made such progress in all the leading countries of the world that competition with proletarians shall have ceased in those countries, or at least that the predominating productive forces shall be concentrated in the hands of the proletarians. We do not aim at altering the conditions of private property, but at annihilating it—not at hushing up class-contrasts, but at abolishing classes—not at improving existing society, but at founding a new one."

In order to disseminate these views and further these objects Liebknecht came to Berlin, where he frequented the disciples of Lassalle, but acquired no influence. Expelled thence in July 1865 he settled down in Leipzig, where he gave vent to his hatred of Prussia and Particularism in the *Mitteldeutsche Volkszeitung*. In this line of business he was assisted by Bebel, who had theretofore been an opponent of the Socialist movement and an adherent of Schultze-Delitzsch, but belonged to the Democratic "Party of the People." Bebel was president of the Leipzig Workmen's Educational Association, which—in concert with other societies of the same class—constituted a League, the committee of which was permanently established in Leipzig. The consequence of the Liebknecht-Bebel partnership soon became manifest, although neither of those persons as yet ventured upon a direct recommendation of the Marx doctrines. In September, 1865, the League of Workmen's Associations (Bebel being one of its committee-men) declared in favour of universal suffrage at its general meeting in Stuttgart. In May, 1866, the majority of the Associations renounced Schultze-Delitzsch and the Party of Progress. In August, a particularistic-popular programme was adopted at a monster meeting of Saxon workmen in

Chemnitz, and Bebel was elected to the Constituent Reichstag. Next year he and Liebknecht were elected to the first Parliament of the North-German Confederation. They still kept silence as to their Communistic projects; but the cosmo-political revolutionist Liebknecht played the part of a sorrowful patriot with remarkable vigour. "Since your glorious re-organisation was effected," he exclaimed, "foreign countries have rent morsel after morsel away from Germany's body. Every German patriot is plunged into profound grief when he reflects upon the events of last year. But the day will come when you will have to measure your forces against the greater ones of France. The history of the world does not stand still; it will advance over your masterful achievement, the Northern Confederation, which means nothing but the partition, subjugation and weakening of Germany; it will advance over this North German Parliament, which is nothing more than the fig-leaf of of absolutism." Schweitzer answered him: "We do not intend to join Herr Liebknecht, his friends the dispossessed Sovereigns, and envious foreign countries in ruining Prussia and the North-German Confederation. Although we are dissatisfied with our home affairs and wish to see them fundamentally changed, we propose to remain where we are, i.e., within the reconstructed Fatherland; those who stay outside it may do as they choose. That is the difference between them and us; and it is as well that it should be clearly understood in this place."

The Social-Democratic fractions now had five representatives in Parliament, not very active or influential, truly; still, their presence in the House served the purposes of their party amongst the operatives, the majority of whom are accustomed to accept phrases for truths, especially if loudly and harshly uttered. Several other circumstances,

moreover, contributed to further the Social-Democratic cause; amongst others, strikes. The number of members of the German General Workmen's Association, presided over by Schweitzer, was doubled; on the other hand the Communistic agitation gained ground and even invaded the ranks of the Lassalle faction, then led by Frau von Hatzfeldt. At the Association's Diet held at Nuernberg in 1868, in which 111 societies counting 14,000 members were represented, Liebknecht and Bebel ventured to show themselves in their true colours, and the majority of that Assembly adopted the principles of Marx's *Internationale.* On August 7, 1869, the Social-Democratic Workmen's Party met (at the Eisenach Congress, in which 262 delegates represented 150,000 members) and put forward a programme which was a mixture of Radical and Communistic principles. This new party, which subsequently became totally subjected to the influence of Liebknecht and Bebel, demands the "establishment of a free People's State," and binds every one of its members to advocate "the suppression of existing political and social conditions, the achievement of equal rights and duties, the abolition of actual methods of production, the payment to the operative of the full profits upon his work, and political liberty in a democratic State." The "next demands" of this programme are:—"Universal, equal and direct suffrage; direct legislation; abolition of all privileges appertaining to rank, birth and religion; a people's host instead of a standing army; separation of the Church from the State and the schools; obligatory and gratuitous education; independence of the tribunals; establishment of jury and technical arbitrator Courts; public legal proceedings by word of mouth; gratuitous administration of justice; abolition of all press, association and coalition laws; introduction of the normal

working-day; restriction of women's and children's labour; abolition of all indirect taxes; adoption of one progressive Income and Inheritance Tax; State Subvention of Associations, and State credit for free production-associations under Democratic guarantees." This programme was only a provisional one; but, as Liebknecht wrote to a person in his confidence, "it contained the final consequences of Communism." Very few of Lassalle's disciples joined the party at first; but their efforts to break up the Communistic organisation proved unsuccessful.

The year 1870 was not propitious to German Social-Democracy. Its propaganda was paralysed, and national enthusiasm created broad gaps in its ranks. When the elections to the first German Parliament took place in March, 1871, the only Social-Democrat returned was Bebel; and when his fraction held its Congress in August 1871 the number of members had shrunk from 14,000 to 6000. Schweitzer resigned the leadership of the Lassalle section, which was subsequently absorbed into the Communistic faction. The latter consequently gradually augmented, and was materially recruited by the economic conditions that had meanwhile accrued. "The swindling episode of 1872," (writes Nehring) "with its high wages and successful strikes—the *Krach*, with its results of misery and starvation, both reinforced the Social-Democratic ranks very numerously." In the spring of 1874 steps were taken to amalgamate the Lassalle and Communist factions; and they came together at the Gotha Congress (May, 1875) on the basis of a programme avowing pure Communism.

The leaders of the eventually victorious Marx fraction knew very well that they could not attain their aims by legislative means, and only availed themselves of their right to speak in Parliament in order to propagate their projects

among the masses outside. Liebknecht's *Volkstaat* declared in 1874:—"The Social-Democratic party is a revolutionary party. We participate in the elections exclusively with the object of agitating. We only ascend the tribune of the Reichstag in order to speak to the people." "Nothing short of a complete turning upside-down of society as it is," wrote the *Neuer Sozialdemokrat*, "can alleviate the misery of the masses. Our party-press must be the burning torch hurled into the powder-magazine of social suffering, in order to ignite whatever is combustible in the working-class." The *Volksstaat* greeted "the immortal deeds of the Paris Commune as the first glow of the dawning terrible Revolution." "Here, also," prophecied the *Neuer Sozialdemokrat*, "will the naked giant one day crush the panoplied dwarf with his fist." Bebel announced in the Reichstag (April 24, 1871):—"The Paris Commune has displayed a moderation which we should scarcely manifest under similar circumstances in Germany," and a month later, in the same Assembly, he said: "Although Paris is subdued for the moment, let me remind you that the struggle there was only an affair of outposts, and that, ere a very few decades shall have elapsed, the battle cry of the Parisian proletariate 'War to palaces, peace to hovels, death to want and idleness!' will have become the watchword of the whole European proletariate." About that time Marx published a pamphlet containing a fanatical defence and laudation of the Commune. One of the songs sung by the Socialists at their gatherings, "The War-Lay of Mankind," ran thus: "Happy we! the tinder is piled up, the world-torch flares skywards! The battle-sword is brandished, the bullet whistles, all around us is the savage clamour of battle. Hi! see how the thrones tumble down and the holy stools tremble!" Another of these poems says: "I will lie quiet

and wait until other times shall come, when the Germans shall take their destinies into their own hands with vigorous deeds; until, fired by sacred wrath, they shall smite thrones into splinters and drag off the whole brood of tyrants to the guillotine; until the whole pestiferous German swamp of hangmen, sycophants and ruffians shall be rooted out to its last stump with cudgels, knives and daggers."

The Social-Democrats of Liebknecht's party did not care about ameliorating the working man's lot, but about destroying the ruling and proprietary classes with fire and sword. Above all, they were Nihilists, and therefore it became necessary to put them down, in sheer defence of the State and of society at large. A step in that direction was taken in the spring of 1871, when the German Chancellor communicated with all the European Cabinets respecting the necessity of adopting measures to suppress the agitation organised by the *Internationale*. To encounter this coalition of destructive forces it was desired to form a coalition of Governments. Austria and Russia readily agreed to the proposal; England declined it, and the other Cabinets manifested no special anxiety to carry it out. Consequently there accrued an exchange of views amongst the three Eastern Powers, resulting in their joint admission that mere repression would not suffice, and that the evil must be dealt with more fundamentally—in other words, that an attempt should be made to remedy it by supplying the real necessities and granting the equitable demands of the working-classes. It was pointed out that the circumstances materially giving rise to the agitation prevailing amongst factory hands, were the result of a free economic development, the factors of which—increase of means of communication, improvements in machinery, &c.—could not be hampered by State interference, and that the State

must abstain from meddling with the standards of wages and prices, or with founding or managing productive associations. Recognition was accorded to the adequacy of recent legislation in connection with savings' banks, workmen's dwellings, the protection of children and youthful operatives against overwork and educational neglect, and of the working-class in general against the truck-system. The State, it was admitted, could do nothing to regulate working hours and wages, the critical question of the whole agitation; but some improvements in this direction might be effected by the Arbitration Courts, constituted by Art. 108 of the Trade Regulations. How true this was, we may infer from the general approval accorded to Herr von Itzenplitz's Decrees of Oct. 4, 1870, and July 31, 1871.

Bismarck's view of the whole question, differing essentially from the above, may be summed up as follows: "The new Socialist doctrine, as far as it depends upon the *Internationale*, will have nothing whatever to do with existing States, and absolutely repudiates on principle any Governmental assistance. It heads its programme with a demand for the transformation of the actual State into the Socialistic People's State. Governmental interference with the Socialist movement has nothing in common, therefore, with the furtherance of Socialistic aims; it would appear, on the contrary, to be the only available means of arresting the advance of that movement in a wrong direction and guiding it into salutary paths—of realising those Socialistic aspirations which are justifiable and compatible with the maintenance of public and social order. Judging by acknowledged facts, the Socialist movement here is not deeply or extensively influenced by the *Internationale*. Marx's teachings and organisation are repugnant, rather

than sympathetic, to Prussian operatives, as is demonstrated by the dissidence of the Lassalle Party with that of Bebel and Liebknecht. Not only is a practical understanding still achievable with the former, but it is still in the power of the authorities, by prompt and judicious action, to reconcile the majority of the working-men with existing institutions, and to restore unison to the relations between operatives and employers. Besides, Socialistic theories and postulates have already been so widely disseminated amongst the masses that it would be idle to ignore the dangers with which they threaten society. On the contrary, it is urgently necessary to ventilate them frequently and publicly, in order that the misguided masses may not only always hear the voices of agitators, but may listen to the for as well as to the against, and learn what is really justifiable and unjustifiable, practicable and impracticable, of their demands."

At that time the Emperor of Austria took a strong personal interest in the question, and further investigations, to be undertaken in common by Germany and Austria, were contemplated as a means of *rapprochement* between the two still estranged States; but they were not carried out. The Chancellor was busied with questions of more urgent importance, and, a little later on, the *Internationale* broke up, never having been in reality as momentous as it had pretended to be, and had been esteemed by public opinion. During the ensuing few years some endeavours were made to check the Socialistic Agitation. A paragraph in the Press Law submitted to the Reichstag in 1873, framed with this object, was rejected by a Liberal majority. The Social Democrats persevered in their anti-governmental polemics, and the Ministry, in 1875, again recommended to Parliament a supplementary enactment (*Press-*

gesetz) for their repression, which was again rejected by the Liberals. Thenceforth the Communistic Party of Revolution went unhindered on its way until, in 1878, it aroused feelings in the operative world which found expression in the attempts made upon the Emperor's life in May and June of that year.

From that moment dates the revival in Bismarck's mind of his reformatory ideas. His first duty, however, was to take strong repressive measures against the evil that had assumed such enormous proportions. To this end he brought forward a Bill, towards the end of May, 1878, which fell a victim to the resistance of the Liberal majority of the Reichstag. Dissolution of the latter followed, and the new elections returned a more sensible Assembly, which accorded its sanction to a measure for the repression of Socialistic excesses. During the debate on this Bill the Chancellor spoke as follows:

"I have already stated that I am ready to further any effort positively directed towards ameliorating the working-man's lot, such as, for instance, the establishment of an Association for enabling him to obtain a larger share of industrial profits and for reducing his hours of labour, as considerably as may be compatible with the limits imposed by competition, and the state of the manufacture markets. Associations of this class are no innovation in Germany. Five centuries ago they were as active as they are now, with varying success. But they invariably aimed at the attainment of positive results; and the notions of infringing the rights of third persons, of interfering with property, and of undermining belief in God and the Monarchy occurred to no man. Even during the terrible outrages of the Peasants' War, in which the most violent and ignorant covetousness ran riot—if you will read the treaties concluded by the peasantry with individual nobles of sufficiently evil repute,

you will find that the property of these latter was never confiscated to an unjustifiable extent. The Communist of those days did not dream of interfering with the possessions even of their enemies. . . . As soon as the Social Democrats shall put forward a practical scheme for improving the lot of the working classes, I, at least, will not refuse to consider their proposals in a benevolent and conciliatory spirit; nor will I shrink from the theory that the State should help those who help themselves. . . . But how do matters stand now? We find ourselves face to face with negation—with a resolve to pull the house down, and no suggestion on the part of anybody as to what is to replace our present roof when it shall have been torn off. We have had the advantage of sitting with Social-Democrats in this House for eleven years; can you recall any one of their lengthy orations in which was to be found the faintest shadow of a positive idea or proposition concerning the future—of the programme which those persons intend to carry out when they shall have battered down existing institutions? I know of none; but I also know why they do not tell us how they mean to arrange the world when they shall be its masters. It is because they do not know it themselves, not having discovered the philosopher's stone. They can never keep the promises with which they lead people astray. . . . I do not know if any of you have found the time to read Moore's 'Veiled Prophet,' who hid his face because, as soon as his veil was raised, he stood revealed in all his loathsome hideousness. The infuriate demagogues into whose hands a vast number of our working men, formerly so well conducted, has fallen, remind me of that Veiled Prophet of Khorassan. Their dupes have never seen Mokanna's face; should they ever catch a glimpse of it they will be appalled, for it is as the face of a corpse."

"That these men of vague promises have found support amongst people dissatisfied with their circumstances, and capable of expressing their dissatisfaction with true German energy, is not to be wondered at. If you hold out brilliant prospects to people who can read, but cannot understand what they read (and, though the ability to read is much more general with us than in France and England, the capacity for practically judging the matter read is less common than in those countries); if you teach them scornfully and mockingly, verbally and in print, that all they have hitherto held sacred is nothing but humbug, lies, hollow phrases and a swindle; if you take from them their belief in God and our Kingdom, their attachment to their native country, families, property, their right to transmit their earnings to their children, it is by no means difficult to bring men of restricted intelligence to such a frame of mind that they shall clench their fists and exclaim, 'Curse hope, curse faith, and above all curse patience!' What remains to men thus spiritually poor and naked, but the frantic pursuit of sensual enjoyments—the only pleasures capable of reconciling them to existence?"

"If we ask how it has come to pass that this Gospel of negation has found such favour in Germany, we must look back attentively to the time of its introduction. Up to 1870 it mattered not where the leaders of the International League resided—in London or Geneva—their real field of experiment and action was France, where they had in readiness an army capable of fighting the Commune's battles and of making itself master of the capital for a time. When they were actually the rulers of Paris, did they propound a positive programme, setting forth how they proposed to utilise their power for the benefit of the poorer classes? I know of none. They did nothing but murder, burn, outrage,

destroy national monuments—and if they had converted all Paris into one huge heap of ashes, they would have gazed at it blankly without in the least knowing what they wanted. All they could say was 'We are dissatisfied; there must be a change; but to what, we do not know.' That is where they would have stuck. Well, as soon as they had been energetically put down by the French Government, they perceived that they must quit that field of experiment, as it was watched by an angry, resolute and stern sentinel. So they looked about them in Europe to see where they should set up the tents they had been compelled to strike in France. I am not at all surprised that they determined to transfer their agitation to Germany. What could be more attractive to them than a country with such merciful laws, such good natured judges, such a strong predilection for criticism (especially in connection with its Government); a country in which an attack upon a Minister is reckoned a praiseworthy feat—in which grateful recognition of anything done by Government passes for servility—in which Socialism's bases of operations, the large towns, had been very carefully prepared by the Progressists for the adoption of Communistic principles—in which Progressist agitation had achieved extraordinary success in discrediting the authorities and State institutions? It is a fact that the International Socialists, when they invaded Germany, found respect for those institutions destroyed in this country, where the tendency to treat them with scorn—scorn over which every Philistine chuckles, though he is glad enough to be protected from its consequences—had undergone an amazing development. In a word, they recognised the country of which they could confidently say: 'Let us build our huts here!'"

"Every German is possessed by an intrinsic tendency towards discontent and by boundless ambition. The baker

who sets up shop does not merely aspire to become the wealthiest baker in his town; no, he wants to be a house-owner, a private gentleman, a banker, a millionaire. There are no limits to his ambition. This peculiarity of his has its good side; it is true German assiduity, which never places its goal too near, but which is also extremely adverse to public contentment—especially to that of all subordinate officials—and the consequence of which is that nearly all our subaltern *employés* are infected by the Socialistic plague. Well, how were the Socialists' anticipations fulfilled in Germany? The International agitation transferred itself to that Promised Land, in which it still abides. About that time we had introduced quite new arrangements in different directions, which suddenly withdrew a vast number of workmen from the small towns and agricultural districts and imported into the cities a fluctuating population, whose productive capacity was dependent upon the varying conditions of trade and industry in the great cities. Sometimes these people got plenty of work, and sometimes not; but none of them had any inclination to return to country life. The amusements of great cities are very attractive; railway communications facilitate the movements of those who yield to attractions of that nature. . . . Then we brought in the new Press Law, which abolished the caution money and the newspaper stamp. Hitherto a certain amount of capital, carrying with it possibly a certain amount of intellectual cultivation, had been requisite and forthcoming for the creation of a newspaper; nowadays such an enterprise can be undertaken with from five to seven pounds, and there is no need of education, for all that has to be done is to copy the matter supplied by the agitators; and newspapers of this class, which appear once a week and are for that reason all the more read by and circulated amongst

the operatives in small country towns—these appeals to the common man and his most dangerous instincts—this variety of agitation, in a word, was formerly not so easy. It has been materially promoted by our Press-Law and by the mercifulness of our Penal Code; moreover, the conviction that sentence of death will not be enforced, contributes in no small degree to the commission of such hideous crimes as these attempts to assassinate the Emperor. . . . Seeing, too, that the extraordinary impulse imparted to business during the years immediately succeeding the war has been followed by an utter collapse, and that many people who formerly earned a great deal of money now earn none at all; nobody can be surprised that our danger has risen to its present height, and that we now have here in Berlin between sixty and a hundred thousand men, well organised and brigaded in Associations, who openly avow their resolve to fight *against* established order and *for* the programme with which we are acquainted. Under these circumstances it is quite natural that manufacture, credit and trade should suffer in Berlin; for, to the apprehension of anyone proposing to invest his capital here, or to the troubled fancy of a wealthy proprietor, this organisation of from sixty to a hundred thousand men presents itself as a hostile army, encamped in our midst, which has only not as yet found the opportune moment to deal with the imprudent proprietor or capitalist in question, in such sort as either to deprive him altogether of his honestly earned property, or to restrict him in disposing of it, at the very least. The fear (in which I do not share) that the ideas of Schiller's Robbers have been uncompromisingly adopted by our operatives, the very backbone of the people, has deeply depressed public confidence. In order to stimulate it once more I deem it necessary that the State should shatter the power of these agitators. Now-

adays Socialistic agitation is a trade like any other; men become agitators and popular orators as they formerly became smiths or carpenters; they take to the new business and find themselves a good deal better off in it than they did in the old one. We must defend ourselves against this class of tradesman, and the sooner we take measures to do so the more likely we shall be to finish the job without seriously prejudicing the liberties of other people or our own safety and domestic peace."

The Reichstag fulfilled the Chancellor's expectations, granting (by a majority of seventy-two) extraordinary powers to the Government to suppress the excesses of Social-Democracy in an effective manner. Material concessions were made on either side, for it was quite clear to Parliament as well as to the Cabinet that the main object of the Bill was to make a clean sweep of existing abuses as a preliminary step to the introduction of State measures framed for the purpose of realising justifiable social aspirations.

The Socialist Law was enforced throughout all the States of the Empire. Firstly, the Social-Democratic clubs and newspapers were suppressed; secondly, the professional agitators were expelled the realm; then a State of Siege was proclaimed in Berlin and Leipzig, involving the restriction of the right of holding meetings, prohibition of the sale of newspapers in public thoroughfares, expulsion of persons likely to disturb public tranquillity, and certain limitations of the right to own, carry or sell arms.

In Parliament, the Liberals had thitherto remained indifferent to the interests of the working classes, whose representatives in the Progressist and National-Liberal parties professed the doctrine of the Manchester school, i.e. that *laissez aller* was the true principle of all economic transac-

tions. The strict observance of the Sabbath as a day of rest for the working man, and especially of relief to overworked youthful operatives, had been made law in spite of the energetic opposition of Progressist orators in the Diet. Nothing further in the direction of benefiting the working classes was done by the Liberals; but the Chancellor took the initiative in bringing about a reform inspired by the idea entertained by him so far back as 1871, viz. that it is the duty of the State to care for the well-being of the operative classes.

His first step in this direction was to prepare a Bill for insuring workmen against the consequences of accidents, which was submitted (April, 1881) to the Federal Council and handed over by the latter to the Reichstag for discussion. It proposed to establish an Imperial Insurance Office in which every operative employed in all sorts of mines and manufactories whose earnings should not exceed 2000 marks (£100) a year should be compelled to insure. The insurance was to cover all manner of accidents, whether caused by the fault of the employer or the workmen himself, or by pure mishap. In case of gross neglect on the part of the employer, however, he was to be answerable to the Imperial Office for all expenses accruing; whilst wilful carelessness on the part of the injured operative would render the latter liable to lose half the indemnity secured to him by his premium. (Here follow at great length the details of the Bill which, as it failed to pass, are of little practical interest, and have therefore been suppressed in the English version of "Unser Reichskanzler."—Translator's Note.)

The Chancellor's project opened up a new field of legislation; it was the first practical attempt to do away with the social question by subjecting economic life—as modified by

modern inventions, especially by the utilisation of steam-power for manufacturing and communications—to an organic transformation. Should experience have justified this experiment, it might have been followed by others, as, for instance, Imperial arrangements for workmen's Life and Old Age Insurance. The broader the gulf between Capital and the Proletariate, the more imperative became the duty of State Legislation to endeavour to bring them together. There were many reasons why the State should take the weaker of the two under its protection. It was obviously unfair to pension army invalids and to allow the invalids of labour to die in misery after a life of toil—to compel them to become paupers or mendicants. It was highly desirable that our existing poor laws should be replaced by a sensible, practical organisation; indeed, this was not only the duty of the State towards the poorer working-classes, but a measure dictated to it by the instinct of self preservation, as calculated to conciliate the most numerous class of the whole population.

At the time when the above measure was on the *tapis*, the Chancellor observed to me:—"Anybody who has before him the prospect of a pension, be it ever so small, in old age or infirmity is much happier and more content with his lot, much more tractable and easy to manage, than he whose future is absolutely uncertain. Mark the difference between a domestic servant and an office messenger or Court lackey; these last are much readier to do their work and display much more attachment to their service than the first, because they have a pension to look forward to. In France even the common man, if he can possibly put by anything, provides for his future by purchasing *Rentes*. Something of that sort ought to be established for our working folk. People talk about State Socialism, and think

they have settled the matter; as if such things were to be disposed of with a phrase! Socialism or not, it is necessary, the outcome of an urgent requirement. They say, too, the Bill would entail enormous expenditure, a hundred million of marks, at least—perhaps twice as much. As for me, three hundred millions would not alarm me. We must find some means for relieving the unindebted poor, on the part of the State and not in the form of alms. Contentment amongst the impecunious and disinherited classes would not be dearly purchased by an enormous sum. They must be made to understand that the State is of some use—that it does not only take, but gives to boot. And if the State, which does not look for interest or dividends, takes the matter in hand, the thing is easy enough. If the worst came to the worst, we might meet the expense with the Tobacco-Monopoly. You need not put that suggestion forward, it is our last trump. A more comfortable future for the poor may be assured by raising taxation upon such luxuries as tobacco, beer and spirits. The English, Americans, and Russians have no monopoly; but they derive enormous revenues from taxing luxuries heavily. As the least taxed people in Europe we can bear with a good deal in that direction; and if the result enable us to secure the future of our operatives—uncertainty respecting which is the chief cause of their hatred of the State—the money will be well invested, for by spending it thus we may avert a social revolution which may break out fifty years hence, or ten, and which, however short a time it last, will assuredly swallow up infinitely larger sums than those we now propose to expend. Some of the Liberals see the force of these proposals; of course they are bound to criticise them, in order to show that they understand the question better than we do. They don't want the man who has dealt with it to

have the credit of it, but would like to take it in hand themselves, for the sake of popularity. They will probably quash it in Committee, as they have of late years done with several useful measures. But something must be done soon, or the Socialist Law will not avail us much."

The Chancellor took occasion to deliver himself with respect to this project of reform during the debate on the Draft Bill in Parliament, when it was opposed by Deputies Bamberger and Eugene Richter.

"The field of Legislation—justly pronounced by Deputy Richter to be one commanding a vast perspective—opened up by this measure has to do with a question which, in all probability, will not vanish from the orders of the day very speedily. For the last fifty years we have been talking about the social question. Since the Socialist Law was passed I have been repeatedly reminded, in high quarters as well as low, of the promise I then gave that something positive should be done to remove the causes of Socialism. Hints of this sort have been imparted to me *toto die;* but I do not believe that our sons, or even our grandsons, will be able to finally solve the question; indeed no political questions can ever be mathematically settled, as books are balanced in business; they crop up, have their time, and give way to other questions propounded by history. Organic development wills that it shall be so. I consider it my duty to take up these questions without party-feeling or excitement, because I know not who is to do so, if not the Imperial Government. Deputy Richter has pointed out the responsibility of the State for what it is now doing. Well, gentlemen, I feel that the State should also be responsible for what it leaves undone. I am not of opinion that *laissez faire, laissez aller*, "pure Manchester policy," "everybody take care of himself," "the weakest must go the wall," "to

him who hath shall be given, from him who hath not shall be taken away," can be practised in a monarchically, patriarchically governed State. . . . The legislation we propose does not go far enough for Deputy Richter. Well; if he only have patience enough, we shall be able later on to meet his expectations and wishes; but not too quickly or all at once. Such laws are not founded upon the basis of a theoretical whim, but have a genesis, an antecedent history of their own, from which they directly emanate. The reason that we come forward to-day with a Bill for Insurance against accidents is that this method of assisting the poor and weakly had already been warmly recommended at a time when I was looking closely into the whole question. I found all manner of suggestions and schemes to hand with respect to this measure, which seemed by documentary evidence to be most urgent; and I gave my attention to it. I felt at first that, in proportion to the theory it represented, it was not nearly comprehensive enough. I was tempted to substitute the words "every German" for "every working-man" in the first paragraph, dealing with compensations for accident. But the Insurance question is surrounded by serious difficulties—for instance, when it touches the independent workman, who suffers injury when he is working on his own account—and the first thing that we had to think about—it troubled us a good deal more than the two hours' speech of a Deputy does—was: How far should this measure extend, without involving us in a blunder at the very inception of our legislative experiments? As a landowner, the question interested me keenly: can it be extended to agriculture, in which the majority of labourers in the Eastern provinces is engaged? I will not renounce my hope that this may be possible; but I must say a few words about the difficulties which arrested

us in that particular direction. It is obvious that agricultural labour—as far as it is connected with machinery and elementary forces—cannot be excluded from legislation of this kind. But the other and more general sort of agricultural labour has a great deal to do with machinery that is not worked by elementary forces, but by horses and manual toil, and thus possibly involves danger to life and limb. It is however, extraordinarily difficult to fix the percentage of the labouring population employed in that manner. Deputy Richter had his statistics all cut and dry respecting the exact percentage of each branch of human occupation, and imparted it to us with great positiveness. I should be grateful to him if he would acquaint us with the source whence he derived that valuable information. We did our best; our prefatory studies were compiled most carefully from authentic *data*, not imaginary ones based upon conjecture; and if we had lighted upon the statistics which Deputy Richter seems to have discovered with a mere glance of his more perceptive eye—if they had been accessible to us and we had found them correct—we might have gone further in our proposals than we have actually done." . . .

"For my part, I should not have the courage to proceed with this measure if the outlay it involves were to be exclusively borne by industrials; were State assistance, in every form now obtaining, to be shut off from it, I should not venture to assume the responsibility of imposing the Bill upon German industry. We may limit the State subvention to a period of three years, or otherwise, as you please; but, without having made any experiment by which we can appraise what is before us, I do not feel justified in saddling our industrials with the whole cost of these State institutions, or in burdening them more heavily than here-

tofore with the outlay for injured operatives that has hitherto been defrayed by local Poor-Relief, and will at some future time be disbursed to a greater, completer, and more dignified extent by the insured themselves in partnership with the State. There is no question here of creating new burdens, but of transferring old ones from local relief-associations to the State. I do not dispute that the burden of the giver and the advantage of the operative will both be increased by the difference between what local relief has heretofore been able to do for the injured operative and what will be done for him in the future. That difference will have to be made good by the State; the question is whether or not it is worth while, at that cost, to provide the injured operative with more efficient attendance, instead of compelling him to go to law in order to obtain his rights, and with the moderate supplementary compensation which he will be entitled to demand from the State? I say it is. The invalid workman is saved from starvation by the measure we now advocate. That however is not sufficient to make him look forward contentedly to old age; and the Bill is animated by a desire to keep alive the sense of human dignity, which I hope the poorest German will preserve, and which prescribes that he should not be forced to accept eleemosynary assistance (to which he has no right) but should be entitled to something of which nobody can dispose but himself, and of which nobody can deprive him; that doors, hitherto closed to him, should open readily when he knocks, and that better treatment should be accorded to him in his place of refuge by reason of the additional means he brings into it with him. Whosoever has looked closely into the state of the poor in large towns, or into the arrangements made for paupers in country communes, and has seen for himself how—even in

the best managed villages—a poor wretch is sometimes treated when weakly and crippled, must admit that any healthy operative, contemplating that spectacle, is fully justified in exclaiming 'It is simply horrible that a human being should be treated worse than a dog in his own house!' I say, therefore, our first object in bringing forward this Bill is to ensure kindlier treatment to this class of the poor; and next year I will do my best to give Deputy Richter full satisfaction as to the extent of the provision proposed to be made by the state for the better usage of the unemployed. For the present this measure must be regarded as an experiment—an attempt to find out the depth of the financial water into which we ask the country to plunge". . . .

"An appropriate title for our enterprise would be 'Practical Christianity,' but *sans phrase*, we do not want to feed poor people with figures of speech, but with something solid. Death costs nothing: but unless you will put your hands in your pockets and into the State Exchequer, you will not do much good. To saddle our industry with the whole affair—well, I don't know that it could bear the burden. All manufacturers are having hard times."

(The remainder of Prince Bismarck's speech, or, at least, the greater part of it, is devoted to elaborate refutations of the arguments brought forward against his Workmen's Accidental Insurance Bill by Messrs. Bamberger and Richter. It teems with administrative technicalities and local details possibly of great interest to German economists, but probably of so little to English readers that it has been here omitted.—Translator's Note.)

Although thus pleaded for by the Chancellor, his Draft-Bill suffered such changes at the hands of Parliament that,

although it was passed on June 15, 1881, the Federal Council refused to sanction it in its altered form. Its opponents were; 1. the Liberal Free-Trade *doctrinaires;* 2. the Particularists; 3. the Ultramontanists; 4. a few leading manufacturers. Free-Traders regard business as the main object of human life, to which all others must be subordinated According to their theory trade must be carried on by individual initiative, not to be influenced, managed or restricted in any way by the commonwealth or the State. For the disciples of this creed every kind of Socialism (including State-Socialism) means the end of civilisation; and Herr Bamberger did not hesitate to designate the first day of the discussion on the Bill as the *dies nefastus* of the German Empire, destined to substitute an enslaved State for one of free development. The Free-Traders' objections are of two kinds; firstly, that Bismarck's measure was dangerous; secondly, that it was futile: i.e. dangerous because its fundamental idea was calculated to lead to complicated and hazardous experiments; futile, because its several prescriptions would prove impracticable. The error they commit is to condemn Socialism, body and boots, instead of making a distinction between true and false Socialism. The broadest interpretation of Socialism is that it augments individual property. In the case of a measure which not only recognises property but protects and develops it there can be no question of Socialism, if the above interpretation be the correct one; and if, on the other hand, any restriction of individual property by public duties, or by regulations concerning its disposal, be Socialism, why then Socialism pervades every legal enactment, and the State itself is an out-and-out Socialistic institution.

Burke says: "It is extremely difficult to define what the State should undertake to direct, and what it should leave

to individual endeavours with as little interference as possible." Wisdom and experience expressed itself thus modestly and distrustfully with respect to this ticklish subject. How confident and peremptory, on the contrary, is the opinion pronounced upon it by Free Trade sagacity! Because it is not difficult to discover, in the history of the past, instances of unwise interference with economic matters on the part of Governments, these *doctrinaires*, in their scorn of what they term a "patriarchal *régime*," have declared any and every administrative attempt to regulate such matters inadmissible. According to the Manchester Catechism it is a settled and irrefutable dogma that Government shall have as little as may be to say or do in this direction. Its business is to protect speculators, keep the peace, coin money and leave everything else to "the People." "Let us not be too much governed!" is the cry raised by English prophets of the new faith, and echoed (with variations) by German Free Traders. This phrase, could they have their way, would become the watchword of the statesmen directing the affairs of the Empire and the several States of Germany. Like the Gods of Epicurus, they should sit aloft, contemplating sub-lunar affairs, and trusting to the natural course of events to prove invariably beneficial and infallibly hit the right nail on the head. It would be easy to govern a country upon such principles; no reflection would be requisite, and there would be an end to responsibility. The doctrine *à la mode* runs thus:—"Individual interests necessarily concur with public interests, seeing that the public is only an agglomeration of individuals. Individuals always understand what suits them better than the Government does; therefore let them alone to do what they think fit. The ignorant and prejudiced masses, the weak, unthinking and inexperienced must not receive any im-

pulsion, assistance, or protection from their intelligent rulers, and any law framed with that object is a bad law. Men must not be treated like children, but like adults; they must acquire wisdom by experience."

If we consider actual facts without prejudice or excitement we shall readily recognise the hollowness of this theory, and perceive that State interference in private affairs is of unavoidable necessity to the maintenance and development of civilization in numberless respects; and that there is no general rule determining the limits of that interference. In what direction have Governments not interfered, with respect to the rights of property, necessarily and beneficially? The State concludes Treaties of Commerce and Navigation with Foreign Powers, regulates the transfer of estate, controls marriage-contracts, provides for the instruction of youth, constructs roads, railways and telegraph-lines, manages the postal service, keeps bridges and canals in good order, builds lighthouses, constructs harbours, coins money and regulates mines, enforces an uniform system of weights and measures, grants patents and guarantees authors' rights rewarding the labour of invention by investing it with a limited time monopoly. By insisting upon the registration of every patented discovery or improvement it prevents secrets of that class from dying out with their inventors and thus being lost to the public for ever. It expropriates for the common good, regulates the trade in shares and takes measures for the protection and amelioration of public health. It looks after apothecaries, averts (by quarantine regulations) the importation of pestilences, keeps cities clean and enforces vaccination, fixes cab-tariffs, provides for the poor and insane, compels emigration agents to act fairly by emigrants, encourages higher instruction, art and science, and—although in principle it tolerates all religions

and beliefs—does not permit any form of worship prejudicial to public morality.

In exercising all these functions the State restricts individual liberty for the benefit of the general public. But it extends its protection to the ignorant and helpless classes of the population in many other ways. In Prussia it has regulated the working-hours of tenant labourers on estates and abolished vassalage. It protects children and persons of tender years, lunatics and even spendthrifts by appointing guardians to them, prohibits the truck-system, regulates the employment of women and children in industrial establishments, keeps a watchful eye on pawnbrokers, punishes usurers, and forbids the sale of adulterated and unwholesome victuals. Important contracts, to be valid, must be made in writing and, in many cases, legalised by a notary. In order to obviate error or fraud, the law prescribes the form to be observed in drawing up wills. It requires that articles in the precious metals should be marked by a State official for the protection of the purchaser, who would otherwise be unable to ascertain to a certainty their genuineness, or the contrary. It regulates legal charges and lawyers' fees, the rights of emigrants on board ship, and the seaworthiness of trading and passenger vessels. It compels practising physicians to prove that they have sufficiently studied the science of healing. Experience shows that the average intelligence of the public is inadequate to guard it against the enterprises of quackery. Our laws formerly checked charlatanism and the sale of costly specific remedies by making them punishable; but recent legislation, under the pressure of Manchester's doctrine of "unrestricted competition," has revoked those precautionary statutes, to the infinite prejudice of the credulous.

Here we have a few instances of the measures taken by

the Governments of civilised States to aid and protect the populations of their respective countries—measures ascertained to be indispensable to public security and welfare, and the abolition whereof would be a step backwards from civilisation to barbarism. But the Free-Trade *doctrinaires*, if they dared to be consistent, would endeavour to bring about the revocation of all these laws. As it is, they would like to see all those abolished which at present close the door against extravagant speculation, of which they are the champions and advocates. Were this done, the poor, weak and foolish would soon be stripped of all they possess by the rich, powerful and cunning. "And what harm would that do?" they answer; "who asked such people to be poor, weak and foolish? The State must conform to our infallible theory, which adjusts itself in practice and ultimately cannot fail to make everybody happy. Absolute Free-Trade is our watchword and sole object; we are not to be diverted from it by any sentimental flowers of rhetoric."

Compared to the above, what is Government interference with economic affairs; what is State Socialism? Simply the concentrated action of general society's wisdom and power upon a given point—a mutual class agreement that certain things must be done or left undone for the common good, and the enforcement of that convention. How has it ever been possible to assume that this latent but most energetic force can be either ineffective or injurious? Because people must be taught by experience—that is, they must be manifestly and unmistakably menaced and imperilled before they will learn. Nothing but the power of a Government is capable of keeping society together and hindering the process of dissolution which would result from "a natural state of things;" and, great as are the benefits we have hitherto derived from that power, still greater ones

still await us in the form of laws framed to content the working classes; for which laws we shall have to thank Our Chancellor.

The opposition offered to the Bill above referred to by the Particularists is easily comprehensible; for the reform it proposed to introduce would have invigorated the Empire, by teaching a numerous class of the population to recognise a benefactor in the State, on the one hand, and, on the other, by giving a new concrete expression to German Unity in the shape of the Imperial Insurance Office. The Particularists, however, did not wish the population to experience any attachment to the Empire or any confidence in its aid. It was their desire that the Empire should hang together loosely, and be invested with as few attributes and powers as might be. Of a similar character were the objections entertained to the Bill by the Ultramontanists; true, they were opposed to the theory of individual enterprise, but then they wished the work of reform to be exclusively entrusted to the hands of the Church. Finally, the manufacturing faction which took up arms against the Chancellor's project, regarded the Accidental Insurance system as the forerunner of State interference in their business, to be followed by other and more comprehensive measures.

After the rejection of his first Bill the Chancellor (May 8, 1882) brought forward another plan for insuring operatives against the consequences of accidents, having a short time previously laid before parliament a Draft Law for insuring workmen against loses incurred through illness, which measure, having undergone certain alterations, was passed by the Reichstag and is now in force. The new Accidental Insurance Bill, on the contrary, was not conclusively dealt with last year; but we may hope that it will pass the House during the coming session. With respect to the organisation

of insurance its principles differ from those of the former Bill, substituting the action of insurance associations for that of bureaucratic centralisation—a great improvement, inasmuch as such associations can ascertain the particulars of each individual case far more accurately than a Central Board can. A Board of this kind will, however, be required to hold the balance between the two parties concerned, employers and employed, as each represents interests diametrically opposed to those of the other. It is also desirable that those Deputies who may be inclined to support the Chancellor's social policy should refrain from insisting on the maintenance of private insurance offices as a fundamental principle of the Bill. What Prince Bismarck, in his above quoted speech, said about these institutions cannot be controverted. Nor, on the other hand, can it be shown that the interests at stake are of a class calling for protection at any price. "Had these companies invested capital in gigantic enterprises, the suppression of which would annihilate that capital, the question might arise whether it would be justifiable to obliterate such an amount of public property. But Insurance Companies do not require a large capital for their business. As far as they are concerned, we only have to ask: shall they be permitted to carry on a lucrative business in which it is not necessary to invest much capital? Their suppression even would inflict no positive loss upon them. Nobody has a right to count upon the perpetuation of profits, the opportunity of acquiring which is furnished by temporary legislation." (*Grenzboten*, 1883, No. 30.)

The insurance of workmen against losses through illness is the first storey of the edifice which the Chancellor proposes to erect upon the *terrain* of social policy. Insurance against the consequences of accidents is the second. That

the third—insurance against destitution in old age—will be speedily added to these two is doubtful. The chief obstacle to this measure lies in the difficulty of setting limits to it. "While inability to work is clearly indicated by the accident itself, no hard and fast line can be drawn respecting the production of that inability by age. Who is to decide whether an operative in advanced years be capable of work, or should be supported out of the Relief Fund? This obstacle will exist as long as we adhere to the notion that relief to aged operatives should be exclusively extended to such as are incapacitated from doing work by senility. It has been recently proposed that insurance of this particular class should take effect in such sort that assistance should be granted to every operative at a certain time of life, whether he be or be not capable of working. This assistance would then, in the case of those still able to work, supplement their wages, thus enabling them to live more comfortably. By this arrangement the obstacle above referred to would be removed; but the relief afforded to operatives incapacitated from work by age would be materially lessened, and it would then be a question whether the institution would adequately fulfil its real object—the diminution of social misery. Still the idea is worthy of consideration. In the case of laws that have to contend against such formidable internal difficulties it must never be forgotten that an imperfect enactment, which is practicable, is decidedly preferable to one aiming at perfection, but which is impracticable."

However, this may be, the Chancellor is full of confident hope. "The State must take the matter into its own hands" he remarked to me on the 26th of June, 1881, "not as alms-giving, but as the right that men have to be taken care of when, with the best will imaginable, they become

unfit for work. Why should the regular soldier, disabled by war, or the official, have a right to be pensioned in his old age, and not the soldier of labour? This thing will make its own way; it has a future. When I die, possibly our policy will come to grief. But State Socialism will have its day; and he who shall take it up again will assuredly be the man at the wheel."

CHAPTER VI.

BISMARCK AS AN ORATOR AND HUMORIST.

ELOQUENCE—the gift or art of expressing one's thoughts correctly, fluently and effectively—the faculty of exercising a persuasive and decisive influence upon the feelings, convictions and resolves of others—has been variously judged. D'Alembert remarks :—"The miracles often wrought by the eloquence of an individual and the effects thus produced by it upon an entire nation constitute perhaps the most brilliant testimony to the superiority of one human being to others." Such, also, is the opinion of the American philosopher Emerson, who says : "Eloquence is the appropriate organ of the highest personal energy ;" by which he probably means that no exertion of the human mind calls for a rarer combination of capacities than that of the orator in its highest developments. Although there is a good deal to be said against this view of the subject—as, for instance, no one could rank a great general or statesman upon a lower level of intellectual energy than a great orator, inasmuch as the demands made by circumstances upon the former are much more momentous than those to which the latter's powers are subjected—the value of oratory as an active power is more questionable than its importance as a gift. Probably no people has ever been stirred to more vehement emotion in connection with State affairs than

were the Athenians by the orations of Pericles; and was not the decline of Athens mainly due to the eloquence of that great speaker? Was Demosthenes, no less oratorically gifted, able to avert its fall? Mirabeau's surpassing eloquence was incapable of laying the maleficent spirits of the 1789 Revolution. In the Frankfort Paulskirche were gathered together greater numbers of talented orators than the British Parliament had produced since the days of Pitt and Burke; and what was the result? Ephemeral successes culminating in a miserable *fiasco.* George von Vincke was an able speaker and ready debater; of what use was he to the State, or even to his own party? He talked the latter down by degrees, until, from having been the most powerful fraction in the Upper House, it ended by only disposing of about a dozen votes.

Macaulay, in his "Gladstone on Church and State," asserts that active political life is scarcely compatible with intellectual profundity, and observes:—"The politician is constantly bound to speak and act without reflection and study. He may be very badly informed upon a subject, his acquaintance with which is perhaps vague and superficial; but he must speak upon it, and, if he be a man of talent, tact and determination, he will soon discover that it is possible to speak successfully, even under those circumstances. He will become aware that the effect of words written down and polished up in his quiet library is very different from that of words spoken to the ear, with due accompaniment of gesture and emphasis. He will find that he may make mistakes without risk of detection and draw sophistical conclusions unrebuked. It will become apparent to him that, in connection with complicated commercial or legal questions, he may earn enthusiastic plaudits and produce the impression of having made an

admirable speech, without having read ten pages or thought quietly for ten minutes upon the matter."

German thinkers of the first class have gone even further than this. Immanuel Kant has stigmatised eloquence as a traitor, because it secures the last word for æsthetic feeling in questions which require to be settled by common sense. Gœthe, in one of his letters from Venice (1786) declares himself "a mortal foe to wordiness." The German Chancellor, too, is no great admirer of rhetorical arts; nor is the Muse who patronises and confers them particularly well disposed towards him. Of this he is well aware.

In reply to Dr. Gneist he once said in the Lower House (February 4, 1866), "I have already pointed out that I am no orator. I cannot work upon your feelings or render facts obscure by playing with words. My speech is simple and plain."

After the debate in the Reichstag (February, 1870) on the admission of Baden to the North German Confederation, he observed to me, referring to Deputy Lasker:—"These eloquent gentlemen are like a good many ladies with small feet, who always wear shoes too small for them and stick out their feet to be looked at. When a man has the misfortune to be eloquent, he makes speeches too often and too long."

In Versailles, a year later, he said to us:—"The gift of eloquence has done a great deal of mischief in Parliamentary life. Too much time is wasted because everybody who fancies he knows anything will insist upon speaking, even if he has nothing new to say. There is too much empty loquacity, and too little is said to the point. Everything that is really to be done is settled beforehand in the fractions, and the speeches in the House are delivered for the public, in order to show what you are capable of, and still more for

the newspapers, in the hope that they may praise you. It will come to this—that eloquence will be regarded as a misdemeanour, and long speeches will be punishable by law. There is the Federal Council, now, which makes no display of eloquence and yet has done more than anybody for the cause of Germany. I remember that at first it made some experiments in that direction; but I cut them short by saying: 'Gentlemen, there is nothing to be achieved here by eloquence or persuasive speeches, because every one of you brings his convictions along with him in his pocket, that is, his instructions. Oratory is only a waste of time. Let us limit ourselves to statements of fact.' And they did so. Nobody made a long speech after that; and so we got on quickly with our business."

At an earlier date (May 12, 1869) he had alluded to the shady side of eloquence, whilst protesting against investing deliberating Assemblies with too much power, influence and importance. Upon that occasion (in the North German Parliament) he said:—"Under the influence of the magnificent speech to which we have just listened you are about to come to a decision in the excitement of the moment; whereas, if you were to read that speech at home or to listen to its controversion by a speaker as ingenious as the last, you would probably hesitate and think to yourselves. 'There is, after all, a good deal to be said on the other side.' The gift of oratory is a very dangerous one; it carries people away, like music and improvisation. There must be something of a poet in every orator capable of moving his audience. But is the poet or *improvisatore* exactly the sort of man to whom the helm of the State, which requires cool, considerate manipulation, should be confided? And yet it is he upon whose eloquence Parliamentary decisions are immediately dependent; this is the case in any receptive

Assembly. I may recall to memory the example of a celebrated statesman, now deceased—Herr von Radowitz—I never knew any speaker exercise so overwhelming an influence upon an audience as he, and those who have heard him will bear me out that his hearers were profoundly moved by certain of his speeches, as much so that they forthwith voted in accordance with them. I observed that one of my colleagues, sitting near me on one occasion, shared the emotion of the whole assembly to such an extent that he shed tears, and, when I coolly asked him 'What are you crying about?' replied indignantly by accusing me of heartlessness. On the following day, when 30,000 copies of the speech in question had been printed (it had put a stop to all discussion upon its subject) I asked that very same gentleman what I ought to have cried about, supposing I had possessed such a thing as a heart; and he answered 'I don't know how it is, but the speech does not make the same impression upon me in print.' He could not even tell me its contents, or thereabouts; but the expression of the orator's face, his voice and overwhelming personality, had completely carried my friend away."

The Chancellor told us the same story at Versailles, in connection with a characteristic he had observed in our Gallic neighbours. "With Frenchmen," he observed, "all that is required is a grand attitude, pompous language and an imposing demeanour, just as in the theatre. If a speech only sounds well and holds out some prospect, its contents are all one. Thus it was with the Potsdam house-owner who once told me that a speech of Radowitz had affected him deeply. I asked him to mention a passage that had particularly appealed to his feelings, or had struck him as exceptionally fine. He could not remember one. I afterwards looked through the speech for the emotional

passage; and lo! there was nothing moving or even exalted in it from beginning to end. What had upset him was nothing but the orator's mien and attitude which implied that what he was saying must be profound, momentous and emotional—the thoughtful look, the reflective eye, the resonant and powerful voice. It was the same with Waldeck, although he was not nearly as clever or as imposing in appearance as Radowitz. What chiefly told, in his case, was his long white beard and strength of conviction."

Addressing the Reichstag on April 29, 1881, the Chancellor said:—"I appeal to your own experience. You have all, doubtless, felt that you know a good deal more than the best speaker amongst you. Perhaps even to-day you have firmly made up your mind to tell him so; but, just as you were about to have it out with him, he fell foul of some other Deputy with such conspicuous vigour that you said to yourself, 'Perhaps I had better not tackle him to-day.' It is the same thing everywhere. The strongest wrestler, even in the field of oratory, cows the others. But the orator is not always the best judge of politics. To be a good speaker you must have the gift of improvisation. We have all of us often witnessed public entertainments—music, varied with extempore declamation—at which a subject with which the *improvisatore* was totally unacquainted was given to him, and he delivered such a brilliant oration upon it as, but for my *entourage*, would almost have succeeded in convincing me for the moment. All I mean to say is that we cannot—with open eyes, at least—confide the guidance of public affairs to masters of mere eloquence any more than to professional improvisers; still less can we trust to them as party leaders or Ministers. I only mention this in order to point out that eloquence is a gift which is now-a-days over-estimated,

and exercises greater influence than is its due. A good speaker must be somewhat of a poet, and therefore cannot adhere mathematically to the truth. He must be *piquant* and exciting—easily inflamed, that he may be inflammatory—wherefore, to my mind, a good speaker can but seldom be a safe statesman. Sensibility, not sense, must predominate in his nature; and I believe it incompatible with the physical constitution of humanity that any man should be at once a good speaker and a cool judge. Eloquence frequently and to a perilous extent outweighs discretion; but a man of cool reflection and sure, exact calculation, to whom the management of important business may be confidently entrusted, can scarcely be an accomplished orator. Whether there be any remedy against the evils of eloquence in our present state of high civilisation I know not; but it is half the battle to recognise those evils for what they are, and we should steadfastly keep in mind the well-known example of King Frederick William I., who listened to the successive pleadings of two barristers opposed to one another, remarking after each speech, "this fellow is in the right," and then fell into such a furious passion with the effects of eloquence that both orators got into serious trouble (the monarchical *régime* being what it then was) through the very excellence of their persuasive powers. I would advise you all to remember this anecdote of the old King when you hear anybody speaking with such elaborate eloquence that he can have had but little time to spare for other occupations, even though he display that absolute mastery of his subject which a man obtains who has spoken and written in newspapers upon one theme for weeks at a stretch. It is thus that he acquires certainty; he requires no prompter; a better turn of phrase occurs to him this week than he had thought of

last week. One day, during my Parliamentary youth at Erfurt, I was expressing my admiration of a speech delivered by a Heidelberg professor, when one of his friends said to me, "you should have heard him speak that speech last year; he was quite fresh at it then; it sounded quite different." Let me warn you against wasting so much time as heretofore upon exhibitions of eloquence in our Parliamentary work, which gives us enough to do as it is. I repeat that speeches are useful as means of conveying information; but they must not be allowed to govern. The elector has a right to be represented by a person who is independent of eloquence, neither stimulated nor terrorised by it."

From the Chancellor's point of view, the orator is merely a pleading advocate; to produce an effect is his sole aim, and truth is altogether indifferent to him, or, at best, but a secondary consideration. A fluent and careful speaker, he tacks ready-made half-truths to one another, which he inflates sentimentally or pathetically in his peroration. His object is to impress and move people, to work upon their feelings; he wishes to triumph, make a show and be admired, more or less like a comedian. Bismarck on the other hand, is endowed with much genuine eloquence; that at least, is the view which will be taken of his public utterances by those who are capable of distinguishing the inner from the outer form. He is certainly no orator in the ordinary sense of the word—no *virtuoso* of speech; chiefly because he has ideas of his own. His Parliamentary deliverances go straight to the point of their subject, are flavoured by the actualities of life from which they spring, and glow with vitality in their every sentence. In them we admire the profundity and prescience of their author. He is too conscientious and proud to bid for Parliamentary or

journalistic applause with seductive phrases, more or less futile and empty; too fond of the truth to play sophistry's false cards; too full of ideas to entertain and impose upon his hearers with smoothly-rolling torrents of words. He is often embarrassed by the wealth of new ideas and perspectives suggesting themselves to him, and has resort to parentheses, ellipses, awkward elaborations and restricting provisoes; to relatives lacking their antecedents, and to the omission of connecting sentences. In addition to all this he is extremely nervous; and his voice leaves much to be desired.

Roessler, in his 'Count Bismarck and the German Nation,' happily remarks: "Bismarck's speeches reveal the extraordinary genius of their author, even when he conceals his special object under a display of dialectics. But he is no orator . . . . The political truths that are plainly apparent to his eyes are far distant from the illusions entertained by the majority of his contemporaries, and are, indeed, fatal to those illusions . . . . Bismarck frequently encounters the Legislative Bodies with a class of argument which may be styled diplomatic. Its diplomatic character does not consist of reticence, or of allegations intended to mislead. Negotiations between State and State are always partly based upon international obligations and partly upon the actual position of each State. Transactions with our Liberal representatives cannot be conducted in this manner. These gentlemen start from an ideal point of view and regard as non-existent everything that is opposed thereto. . . . Another of Bismarck's Parliamentary strategical methods is to expose practical difficulties and contradictions in the reclamations of his adversaries without making known his own final decision. In consequence of this speciality of his the extraordinary opinion prevailed for a

long time that he was incapable of concealing his projects. The artifice in question has never been so successfully practised as by him. His speech upon the reception of Baden into the North German Confederation (Feb. 24, 1870) was a striking exemplification of this Bismarckian "method." Whilst the convincing truth of the arguments advanced against the proposition could not but be generally recognised, the Chancellor made it manifest that he had not spoken his last word, and was only engaged in a brilliant and lively sham-fight."

"My speech covered an important advance movement which these good people did not notice," observed the Chancellor to me on the 27th. "It was a hint that, under certain circumstances, we should neither adhere to the Austrian nor to the French view respecting the non-admission of Southern Germany or any Southern State to the Northern Confederation. I merely put out a feeler; nothing can be done in the matter, of course, until I know how my hint was taken in Vienna and Paris."

Looking through the Chancellor's speeches, old and new, it is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that his oratorical style is stiff, ponderous and painfully laboured. But, in contiguity with clumsy and sometimes almost shapeless sentences, one frequently comes across others of admirable construction, expressing his thoughts simply and clearly—terse, genial sayings, happily chosen images, and out-of-the-way expressions briefly summarising the question under discussion. He constantly uses foreign words and phrases, not so much because he is often called upon to speak French and sometimes English, as because those languages are more sharply defined than our own, and contain the verbal concretions of a long political existence, which is not the case with German. Thus, in one of his

speeches he said "I must beg you to leave this matter to the *appreciation* of the Government," and "The vague construction of this measure allows us a certain *latitude* of enforcement." On another occasion he used the expression "outside the *enceinte* of the Federal Council;" and again "Such complaints, pronounced in Parliament, obtain a wide *retentissement*." On June 19, 1879 he exclaimed, "I cannot deem it desirable to put the Government *en demeure*" and spoke later on (May 8, 1880,) of somebody's *for intérieur*, meaning his conscience. In a speech delivered on Feb. 4, 1881, he used the French idiom *au fur et à mesure*, instead of the German *nach Massgabe*; and a few days later quoted the motto of Béranger's 'Roi d'Yvetôt,' i.e., "*bien dormir et pas trop faire*." On another occasion, in Parliament, he said "*J'en ai fait mon deuil*." (I've made up my mind to it) and 'if he possessed *tous les trésors de l'Inde*." An expression frequently used by him "to take things tragically," takes its rise in a French idiom; and when he observed to an "interviewer":—"These doctrinaires are looking for midday at two o'clock," he was only paraphrasing the French proverb "*Ils cherchent midi à quatorze heures*."

I subjoin a few examples of Bismarck's remarkable facility in spicing his public speeches with original and drastic metaphors. Speaking in the Prussian Diet (Sept. 24, 1849) of the Liberal doctrines imported into this country from the West, he said:—"As far as France, the Fatherland of all these theories, is concerned, it might be surmised that her example is not a particularly seductive one, and that the French just now can scarcely be regarded as the happiest people in the world. I fail to perceive in France's present condition any temptation to us to clothe our healthy body in the Nessus mantle of French State-Doctrines."

Shortly afterwards (Oct. 15) he gave utterance to the following ingenious simile:—"I would venture to point out that phraseology constitutes the chief adornment of a Constitutional *régime*, thus resembling the veil drawn over the picture of Sais. Tear it down, and you will reveal to the eyes of many persons hitherto uninitiated in the profounder secrets of Constitutionalism that the idol we worship in this temple is not altogether what they expected to find behind the veil." On another occasion he observed:—"A war made by Prussia to establish the Union would remind me of the Englishman who fought and overcame a sentry in order to hang himself in the sentry-box—that being a right which he considered it his duty to vindicate on his own behalf and that of every free-born Briton." Again, in answer to Deputy Tellkampf, he remarked (Dec. 21, 1853):—"The last speaker's views of European policy remind me of those entertained by an inhabitant of the plains whilst making an Alpine tour for the first time. Seeing a peak in front of him, he fancies that nothing can be easier than to ascend it. He does not even want a guide; for there is the mountain facing him, and the upward path appears to him free from obstacles. But he has scarcely commenced his ascent when he encounters rifts and precipices, to surmount which the finest oratory will not help him much." He characterised the German Great Powers as "the glass-house which protected the Confederation from European draughts," and exclaimed to the Opposition in the Diet:—"You are like Archimedes with his circle, who did not notice that the city had been captured." . . . "I look upon a collegiate Ministry as a blunder," he observed two years later; "two hard millstones grind badly, but eight a good deal worse." . . . After the victories in Bohemia he remarked, "The game is

not won yet; we have only doubled the stakes." Again, he described Parliamentary rhetoricians as "courageous navigators upon the ocean of speech." In 1867, addressing the North German Reichstag, he said:—"If we had a Parliament sitting in the North of Germany and another in the South, the two could not be kept apart much longer than were the waters of the Red Sea after the Israelites had passed through them." His are the *dicta:* "The poor man says that the State coach is greased with his fat," and "plucking the flower of popularity." "Ministers, if they acted in accordance with Progressist fads, would have to regard the District Judge as their family physician, to be consulted in every emergency." "The Government will not stumble over legal spiders-webs in fulfilling its duty, viz., to look to the peace of the State, nor will it lower that task to the vegetable-basket level."—"King Duncan's Chamberlain, drunk with sleep, did not perceive Macbeth's dagger; but the mission of a great country's Government is to be wakeful and keep its eyes open."—"Coriolani are not rarities in Germany, but they lack Volscians; were there Volscians, they would soon unmask themselves. But all the matrons of Kassel and Germany would not be able to bring about a final reconciliation."—"We merit your thanks when we consent to pursue noxious reptiles into their very caves in order to watch their proceedings."—"We cannot hasten the ripening of fruit by holding a lamp under it; and if we meddle with unripe fruit we only hinder its development and spoil it. It seems to me that the machinery of the Confederation has worked very well and smoothly for two years, so well indeed, that you are almost weary of it. You experience a longing just to wind up the clock once in a way, in order to see whether you can make it go even better."

With respect to the proposed abolition of the Mecklenburg Constitution he said in Parliament (April 22, 1869): "A Constitution which has grown together with the circumstances of a country for a century and more cannot be stripped off like a worn out coat; it is become, so to speak, a skin which must be loosened with surgical precautions, if maladies are to be averted." On Feb. 24, 1870, addressing the Reichstag, he said:—"I think we should not do well to exclude the Grand Duchy of Baden from the national development; in a certain sense to skim off the cream and leave the rest of the milk to go sour."—"When I first read Deputy Lasker's motion it struck me that its author must have felt something like Hotspur, as described by Shakespeare when complaining of the tiresomeness of his life just after he had slaughtered half-a-dozen Scots. Nothing was going on; a little vivacity had to be imported into the situation. Similarly here, the foundation of State communities, reforms on a grand scale, thoroughgoing legislation—all these achievements do not assuage your thirst for action. Something or other has got to be done." Complaining (Feb. 1872) of the Liberal Opposition's ill-will, he observed:—"The Government is treated like a dangerous animal, which cannot be chained up too tightly and must never be allowed any freedom of movement, because certain to make a bad use of it forthwith." With reference to the leader of the Central party he remarked:—"Dr. Windthorst participates copiously in the Debates; the oil of his words, however, is not of that sort with which wounds are healed, but of that which feeds the flames."—Referring (May 14, 1872) to Cardinal Hohenlohe, whom Pius IX. would not receive as an Envoy, the Chancellor said:—"An Envoy, after all, is only a vessel which acquires its full value when filled with a Sovereign's instructions;

but it is of course desirable that the vessel should be of good quality and agreeable to contemplate—one, like an old crystal goblet, incapable of holding poison or gall without revealing the nature of its contents." He spoke of tobacco as "one of the best and most practicable articles for taxation, so buoyant that he expected it to bear up other matters as well as itself."—Upon the subject of a proposed abolition of a certain tax he remarked:—"A Field-Marshal once hurled his *bâton* over the wall of a hostile city in order to express his conviction that he should eventually capture the place and recover possession of his *bâton*."—During the Debate (Oct. 9, 1878) upon the Repressive Bill he said:—"Speaking from an agricultural point of view, Progressism is capital manure wherewith to prepare the soil for a crop of Socialism, which thrives admirably thereupon."

Several of the Chancellor's sayings quoted above have a witty or humorous flavour, which is still more marked and effective in others containing metaphors that are apt, pregnant and, above all, funny. Some are ironical or sarcastic—others bear the stamp of true humour, which is invariably *naif*—all impress the reader as the output of a thoughtful and genial spirit. His notions are always original, sometimes coarse and rough, but never vulgar like the jokes with which his adversaries entertain the public. Drastic as are many of his expressions and similes he invariably remains a man of distinction, who does not choose to lower himself or to commit a breach of good taste in order to please the multitude. Dealing with an oratorical deliverance of the Goliath of the Progressist Philistines, which filled twenty columns of the Parliamentary Reports, the Chancellor observed:—"I have often had the pleasure of listening to specimens of his eloquence, which have always impressed me as resembling a performance of

the 'Maid of Orleans,' the interminable triumphal procession in which at first surprises you. When it goes by for the third time, however, you exclaim, "Good God! why, these are the same people in the same dresses as before, marching across the stage again!'"—Here I may recall the figure of speech Prince Bismarck once used in the Reichstag:—"I cannot accord an influence upon the Government, greater than that exercised by the National Liberals, to a party endowed with an inborn majority, and which does not demand that the drop of Democratic oil required for the anointing of the German Emperor should swell to a gallon."—Addressing the champions of Progressism (Hænel in particular) on February 24, 1882, he said. "It is readily to be understood that the King occupies an exalted place in your estimation; so high, indeed, as to be quite up in the clouds, where nobody sees him, or, through sheer veneration, takes any notice of him. You do not hoist him up to those heights in order to get rid of him, of course, but because you entertain such profound respect for the Monarchy; so that you would finish by showing him once a year upon earth, like the Emperor of Japan, standing upon a grating and displaying nothing of himself to his subjects but the soles of his feet."

In private conversation the Chancellor does not always give his thoughts expression fluently and in well arranged, smooth sentences, especially when serious matters are in question. But he is an admirable *raconteur*. The rich humouristic vein that runs through his nature, his keen perception of the comic aspects of men and things, a certain frivolous turn, sometimes *naif* and sometimes sly, his capacity for taking a semi-ironical, semi-jovial view of circumstances, events and persons, make him the most agreeable *causeur* that ever entertained a company *inter*

pocula or by the fireside. Many of his letters are real gems of fanciful narrative and description.

I subjoin a selection of his utterances, illustrating the above characteristics, which will prove that as a humorist, Bismarck need not fear comparison with the best of his cotemporaries in that line. He has no faculty for punning, much practised by our Jewish jesters and appreciated by the masses, but in reality, a very distant connection of true humour. His humour is rather that of the people; but he is not averse to *jeux de mots*, for he takes notice of the Berlin comic papers, and frequently alludes to their jokes in conversation.

Once, when a referendary, he observed with reference to some unfair expropriation, "No money will compensate me for the conversion of my father's park into a carp-pond, or, of my deceased aunt's grave into an eel-swamp."—The position of certain Pomeranian districts being under discussion, he said:—"The principality of Cammin hangs over that of Belgard like a pair of breeches."—During one of his Parliamentary evening parties he remarked:—"Whilst I was sitting opposite the Emperor Napoleon for nearly an hour in the parlour of the weaver's cottage at Donchéry, I felt exactly like a young man at a ball who has engaged a girl for the *cotillon*, has not a word to say to her, and heartily wishes that someone would take her away."—As I was taking leave of him for some considerable time in March, 1873, he said to me:—"My health, indeed, is by no means good. Last year I was away for nearly six months, but to no purpose. I am not what I was of old—only the Ziska-drum, you know, nothing but skin and noise."—Whilst we were fishing one afternoon at Varzin the Prince, pointing to me, said to Privy Councillor Tidemann:—"Stuff in the loop of his coat-collar that is sticking out; he looks as if he

ought to be hung up by it, which he has not deserved to be."—In April 1878, when the Chancellor wished to resign office he indicated his feelings towards his projects of economic and social-political reform as follows:—"I am like a weary hunter who has been following the chase all day long without result, and who, worn out and faint with fatigue, sinks to the ground and resolves to give up sport altogether. All of a sudden the beaters light upon a couple of splendid boars; forthwith his old passion revives in his breast; he springs to his feet as fresh as ever, and hurries off to the chase anew. It is thus with me just now. Weary of business that I cannot get transacted, and worried by unproductive colleagues, I would fain have done with the whole thing and go home. But, were any of the departmental Ministers to bring me a really good scheme, I would take to my work again with renewed vigour and energy."—Speaking to me (March 1880) about the Russian attempt to conspire against us with the French Government through General Obrutscheff, he observed:—"But the French would not have it, and told us all about it, just as a virtuous woman tells her husband when anybody makes indecent proposals to her." With reference to a personage supposed to be a candidate for the Premiership of a Ministry *in nubibus*, he said:—"There are plenty of candidates for the Chancellorship, because it is such an easy post to fill! That reminds me of what happened when the Elector of Hesse sent his body surgeon to Bernburg to find what was the intellectual condition of the last reigning Duke. The Doctor found His Highness worse than he had expected, and reported on his return that the Duke had become an idiot. 'Good God! an idiot;' exclaimed the Elector, 'why then he is incapable of reigning.' 'Oh, he can reign well enough for all that!' rejoined the doctor.'' He

then reverted to the opposition offered to him on all sides during his eighteen years' tenure of office: "Sometimes they attacked me several at a time, and from all quarters. My position was like that of Gerstæcker, as depicted in a comic paper, when an anaconda, a lion, a crocodile and a bear were all making for him simultaneously, and he was exclaiming 'What a capital article for the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung!*' But, seriously speaking, I am not good enough for these people, who fancy they know every thing better than I do, and think my successor would manage things so much more cleverly. *Contenti estote*, make the best of your black bread!"

I could add to the above many striking remarks made by the Prince in the course of conversations with me, but must keep them by me, with other matters of the sort, until they shall become powerless to harm any one.

A fountain of wit and humour sparkles in many of Bismarck's letters, as well as throughout his speeches. He wrote to Manteuffel in December, 1854:—"It is not easy to keep touch with General von Reitzenstein; he sits stiffly upon his Lieutenant-General's horse, and is much exercised respecting the independence of his position." A year later he wrote to Gerlach:—"Unless we get hold of the helm of German politics forthwith, the ship will be driven into a French harbour by the breeze of Austrian intimidation and the tide of Western influence, we playing the part of a mutinous cabin-boy." Again, writing to Manteuffel upon the subject of Austria's policy, he observed:—"The Vienna Cabinet will play the part of Don Juan to all the other Cabinets, if it can secure the services of so sturdy a Leporello as Prussia; true to that *rôle*, it will always contrive to get out of scrapes at our cost, and leave us in them." In 1859 he wrote as follows to a Prussian diplomatist with relation

to a Franco-Prussian war, which at that time seemed probable:—"If we get the worst of it the Federal States will fall off from us, like withered plums in a breeze, and every German Prince in whose capital French troops shall be billeted, will save himself patriarchally upon the raft of a new Rhenish Confederation. Perhaps a coalition of the three great neutral Powers may be brought about; but our armaments are too costly to allow of our waiting for success as patiently as England and Russia; and our intermediation will scarcely square the circle by bringing to light a basis of peace equally acceptable to France and Austria."

A few years ago the Schoenhausen peasants wanted a new burying-ground, and selected a spot called "die hohe Wurth." They wrote to the Prince, asking whether he would like a hereditary grave reserved for him there. He replied by thanking them handsomely for their thoughtfulness, adding that the situation, no doubt, had its advantages, but that it was too windy for him.

Bismarck's correspondence with the ladies of his family teems with droll stories and descriptions, comical comparisons and witty *tournures de phrase;* e.g. his account of the sham hunt in Schoenhausen woods which he sent to his sister:—"We sally out in the pouring rain with Ihle, Bellin and Karl, surround with every sportsmanlike precaution, silent, and observant of the way the wind blows, a fir-copse respecting which all of us, even my father, are immutably convinced that there is not a living creature inside it except a few old women gathering sticks. Then Ihle, Karl, and two dogs traverse this copse, making the most amazing and horrible noises conceivable—especially Ihle. My father stands motionless and dumb, with gun in readiness, just as if he believed some sort of game were really about to be flushed, until Ihle, standing right in front of him, shouts at

the top of his voice. 'Hoo, la, la, hey, ha, fass, hey, hey!' Then my father asks me quite unconcernedly whether I have seen anything go past us; and I answer, with a carefully assumed air of genuine astonishment, 'No, nothing at all!' Then, cursing the weather, we go on to the next covert, which Ihle is wont to speak of with finely-acted conviction as crowded with game, and resume our performance *dal segno.* And so it goes on for three or four hours, without in the least damping the sporting ardour of my father, Ihle, or Fingal."

A real cabinet picture is his ironical description (also written to his sister) of his sojourn by the seaside in the island of Nordeney.

"I have been intending for a fortnight past to write to you, but have been prevented from doing so by pressure of business and pleasure. Should you be curious to learn what the business in question may be, I fear that my limited time and note-paper will not permit me to describe it to you in full, for its order and character suffer all sorts of modifications daily, as the tide ebbs and flows. We bathe only at high water, when the breakers are at their best; a time which is an hour later every day between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. and enables me to enjoy in pleasing alternation the advantages of a windy, chilly, rainy summer morning *al fresco* with accompaniments of sand and salt water, or of a bed five feet long in the house of my host, Mousse Omne Fimmen, with all the sense of comfort which lying upon a mattress stuffed with sea-weed is wont to awaken in my breast. Similarly, the *table-d'hôte* hour oscillates between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.; its *menu* consisting of haddocks, beans, and mutton on the odd days of the month, and of soles, pease and veal on the even days, supplemented by sugared groats with fruit-syrup in the

former and raisin-pudding in the latter case. In order that my eyes may not be jealous of my palate, a Danish lady sits next to me, whose aspect fills me with sadness and nostalgia, for she reminds me of Pfeffer at Kniephof when he was particularly emaciated. She must have a fine disposition, but Fate has been unjust to her; her voice is soft, and she begs me to partake twice of the contents of any dish that happens to be in front of her. Opposite me sits old Minister ——, one of those awful beings that appear to us in dreams, when we have the nightmare; a fat frog without legs, who at every mouthful opens his mouth to his shoulders like a portmanteau, so that I am obliged to hold on to the table through sheer fright. My other next-neighbour is a Russian officer built like a boot-jack—a long thin body and short crooked legs."

In a third letter to his sister, complaining of all sorts of country-life grievances, he says:—"There is Johann outside steadfastly whistling an infamous Schottische out of tune and I am not hard-hearted enough to tell him to leave off, because he is doubtless endeavouring to assuage the pain of his love-sorrows by music. The ideal of his dreams was recently persuaded by her parents to marry a wheelwright." On another occasion he wrote to the same person:—"Yesterday I looked on at a dance in Plathe and drank a lot of Montebello; the former gave me acidity in the stomach, the latter cramp in the calves." Again, complaining of being coerced into taking his family to the sea-side, he wrote:—"Johanna (his wife) who is just now reposing in the arms of Lieutenant Morpheus, will have told you what awaits me. The boy yelling in the major, the girl in the minor, two singing nursemaids all over wet napkins and feeding-bottles; myself in the character of an affectionate paterfamilias. I fought against it long, but, as

all the mothers and aunts were agreed that nothing would do poor little Mary any good but salt water and sea air, had I positively refused I should have been compelled to listen to reproaches for my meanness and paternal barbarity—such as 'You see how it is! If the poor child had only been allowed to get the benefit of the sea!' every time my daughter might happen to catch a cold up to her seventieth year."

Concerning a trip on the Danube between Gran and Pesth in the summer of 1852, he wrote to his wife: "Picture to yourself Odenwald and the Taunus close together, and the interval filled up with Danube-water. The shady side of the voyage was the sunny side; for it was burning hot enough to make Tokay grow upon the deck, and there was a crowd of passengers; but, only imagine, no English. They cannot have discovered Hungary yet." Writing the same evening from the Royal Castle at Ofen, he observed: "May angels watch over you! In my case a bearskinned grenadier is doing so. I see six inches of his bayonet sticking up above the windowsill, two arms' lengths off. He is standing on the terrace overlooking the Danube, and probably thinking of his Nanny."—In Amsterdam the chimney-pots struck him as resembling "men standing upon their heads and stretching out their legs wide apart," and Holland itself as "a vast meadow, always flat and always green, upon which bushes grow, cattle feed, and towns cut out of old picture-books stand." From Pskoff he wrote (1859) to his wife:—"Russia has become elastic beneath our wheels; the versts have all had young ones." "Green," he writes from Moscow, "has every right to be the Russian national colour, as it is. I slept through forty of the hundred (German) miles hither; but the remaining sixty were all shades of green. Bushy brakes dotted with

beeches cover the swamps and hills—luxuriant grass, long green meadows—such is the country, for ten, twenty, forty miles at a stretch. Moscow, viewed from the heights, resembles a pasturage; the zinc of the roofs is green, the cupolas are green, the soldiers are green, and I have no doubt that the eggs now before me were laid by green hens." Writing from Vienna (July 22, 1864) he observed:—"I was wet through and listened to music in the Volksgarten to day for two hours. The people stared at me as though I had been a new hippopotamus for the Zoological Gardens. I sought consolation in some capital beer."

His dislike of shams and humbug, conceit and mock pathos, has found expression in many satirical word-sketches of courtiers, diplomatic colleagues, generals, deputies, men of science and the like, extremely amusing, but far from flattering for the personages in question. In a letter addressed to Manteuffel from Frankfort he wrote: "With the exception of a few subordinate intrigues connected with the fortresses, the press and the Federal Exchequer, we have been living a non-political idyll here since the 21st ult."—In the autumn of 1858 Prince Hohenlohe was placed at the head of State affairs; and it was reported that the new Liberal Ministry would recall Bismarck from Frankfort and appoint him to another post. About that time he wrote to his sister:—"If they wish to get rid of me in order to oblige place-hunters, I will retire under the guns of Schoenhausen and watch how Prussia can be governed with the support of majorities of the Left, endeavouring meanwhile to do my duty in the Upper House. Variety is the soul of life, and I hope to feel myself younger by ten years when I again take up the position in the order of battle which I occupied in 1848–9. As soon as I find the *rôles* of gentlemen and diplomatist

incompatible with one another, the pleasure or trouble of spending a large salary handsomely will not weigh in the balance with me for a moment. I have as much as I wan to live upon; and if God will, as heretofore, keep my wife and children well, I shall say *vogue la galère*, no matter on what waters. Thirty years hence it will be all one to me whether I now play the part of a diplomatist or of a country squire; and up to the present time the prospect of a free, fair fight, unhampered by any official restraints, has had just as great a charm for me as that of a protracted regimen of truffles, despatches and Grand Crosses. . . . My chief joy just now is the Confederation. All these gentlemen who, six months ago, demanded my recall as necessary to German Unity now tremble at the mere thought of losing me. Schleinitz acts as a dread reminder of 1848, and they are all like a flight of pigeons that have caught sight of a hawk, panic stricken by visions of Democrats, barricades and Schleinitz. . . . Rechberg falls into my arms, quivering with emotion, squeezes my hand convulsively, and ejaculates 'We shall once more be brought together.' The Frenchmen and Englishmen naturally look upon us as incendiaries, and the Russians are afraid that their Czar will be diverted from his plans of reform by our example. Of course I tell them all, 'Keep quiet, and everything will come right'; to which, I am glad to say, they answer, 'If you stay here, we shall have a guarantee; but Usedom!' If Usedom's ears do not ring with echoes from Frankfort just now, he cannot have any drums in them. Within a week—in the imagination of his eventual colleagues—he has suffered degradation from a respectable Liberal-Conservative to a flaming red, tiger-striped acolyte of Kinkel and D'Ester. The Bamberg diplomatist talks of a Continental insurance against Prussian arson, of a Triple

Alliance against us, and of a second Olmuetz 'with actual operations.' In a word, matters are beginning to become less wearisome in the political world. My children are shouting 'Pietsch is coming' in their joy over my Schoenhausen servant of that name; and it would really seem that the advent of Pietsch and the comet are not altogether devoid of significance."

We were talking one day at Ferrières (Sept. 1870) about the way the Federal Diet dealt with the Schleswig-Holstein question in the fifties; and Count Bismarck-Bohlen, who had joined us, remarked that it must have been the sort of proceeding to send one to sleep. "Yes" observed the Chancellor, "the Frankfort people slumbered with their eyes open. It was, indeed, a sleepy dull lot, until I flavoured it with my own pepper." I asked about the famous cigar incident. "Which one do you mean?" "That in which your Excellency, finding Rechberg smoking, lit up a cigar too." "You mean Thun. Yes, that was a simple matter enough. He asked me to wait a minute. I did wait some time; when I began to feel bored, however, as he did not offer me a cigar, I took one out of my pocket and asked him for a light, which he gave me with astonishment depicted upon his countenance. But there is another story of the same sort. At the sittings of the military committee, when Rochow represented Prussia at the Federal Diet, Austria alone smoked. Rochow, who was an inveterate smoker, would have gladly done the same, but did not dare to. When I arrived, seeing no reason to the contrary, I asked the presiding Power to oblige me with a light. This request was apparently regarded by the chairman and the other gentlemen with amazement and displeasure. Obviously it was an event. As matters then stood, only Austria and Prussia smoked.

But the others considered it a question of such importance that they reported upon it to their respective Governments. Somebody must have written to Berlin about it, too; for an enquiry reached me from His late Majesty, who was not a smoker, and probably did not find the occurrence to his taste. The incident called for serious consideration at the smaller Courts, and six months elapsed, during which only the two Great Powers smoked. Then Schrenkh, the Bavarian, began to vindicate the dignity of his position by smoking. Nostitz, the Saxon, had doubtless a great mind to do as much, but had not received permission from his Minister. When, however, at the next sitting he saw the Hanoverian, Bothmer, light up, he must have come to some arrangement with Rechberg (Nostitz was under Austrian influence, having two sons in the Imperial army), for he took a cigar out of his case and puffed away vigorously. The only ones left were the Wuertemberger and the Darmstaedter, neither of whom smoked. But the honour and importance of their States imperatively required that they *should* smoke, and so next time the Wuertemberger (von Reinhard) also produced a weed—I think I see it now, a long, thin, pale yellow thing, the colour of rye straw—and smoked it with sullen determination half through, as a burnt sacrifice for his Suabian Fatherland. The only one who altogether refrained from tobacco was the representative of Hesse-Darmstadt."

One evening during tea at Versailles Count Hatzfeldt was telling us about a not over amusing *soirée* he had attended at the King's palace. "The Russian Councillor of State Grimm," he remarked, "told us all sorts of uninteresting stories about Louis XIV. and Louis XV., and the Grand Duke asked us questions that nobody could answer." "Radowitz was a good hand at answering ques-

tions of that sort," interrupted the Chancellor. "He unhesitatingly supplied you with exact information about everything imaginable, and thus achieved the greater number of his successes at Court. He told the late King once, right off the real and with the greatest assurance, how many men and horses, to a head, the Austrians had posted against us in Northern Bohemia, and he was always able to say exactly what the Maintenon or the Pompadour had worn on such a day a hundred or a hundred and fifty years ago. She had on such or such a necklace, her hair was adorned with birds of Paradise or grapes, she had on a pearl-gray or parrot-green gown with falbalas or lace—just as if he had been on the spot and seen it. The Court ladies were all ears and quite charmed with the dissertations upon toilettes which flowed from him so freely." Later on (May, 1883) the Chancellor spoke of Radowitz to me, in connection with Frederick William IV., as the "wardrobe-keeper of the King's whims."

The conversation then turned upon Alexander von Humboldt, also a courtier, but not of an amusing sort. Bismarck said :—"At the late King's evening-parties I was the only victim when Humboldt undertook to amuse the company after his fashion. He used to read aloud, often for hours at a stretch, from the biography of some French scientist or architect, in which no living soul but himself took the least interest. Whilst reading he stood upright, and held his book close to the lamp, lowering the volume from time to time, in order to make a learned comment upon its contents. Nobody listened to him, but he went on all the same. The Queen sewed away steadily at her embroidery, not hearing a word of his lecture. The King looked at pictures—copperplates and wood-engravings—and made as much noise as he could in turning over the leaves. The

young people on either side of the room and in the background chatted away to one another quite unrestrainedly, giggling, and altogether rendering the reading utterly inaudible. But it went on all the same, incessantly, murmuringly, like a brook. Gerlach sat upon his little round stool, over the edges of which his fat hung in flaps all round it, and slept, snoring with such vehemence that the King upon one occasion awakened him, saying :—'Gerlach, don't snore!' I was Humboldt's only patient listener; that is to say, I held my tongue as though I were attending to his lecture, and occupied myself with my own private thoughts until the time came for cold cakes and white wine. The old gentleman used to be horribly annoyed when he could not have all the talking to himself. I remember that once there was somebody at the King's who took up the conversation, and quite naturally—for he could talk in an agreeable manner about things that interested every one present. Humboldt was beside himself. Growling, he filled his plate with a pile of goose-liver pie, fat eels, lobster-tails and other indigestible substances—a real mountain! It was quite astounding what the old man could put away. When he could positively eat no more, he could no longer keep quiet, and so made an attempt to get the conversation into his own hands. 'Upon the peak of Popocatepetl,' he began—but it was no use; the narrator would not be cut short in his story. 'Upon the peak of Popocatepetl, seven thousand yards above' . . he resumed, after coughing and raking up his throat to attract attention; but again he failed to get his oar in, and the narrator calmly went on. 'Upon the peak of Popocatepetl, seven thousand yards above the level of the Pacific Ocean.' . . . he exclaimed in a loud agitated voice, shaken by grief and indignation; but all to no purpose, the other man talked away as steadily as

before, and the company listened to him and to him only. Such a thing had never been heard of! Humboldt sat down in a fury and plunged into profound meditations upon the ingratitude of courtiers. The Liberals made a great deal of him and reckoned him as one of themselves; but he was a man to whom the favour of Princes was absolutely indispensable, and who only felt comfortable when basking in Court sunshine. But that did not prevent him from discussing the Court with Varnhagen and telling all sorts of unsavoury stories about it. . . . Nevertheless he could talk amusingly enough when you were alone with him, about the times of Frederick William III., and more especially about his own first sojourn in Paris; and as he liked me, because I always listened to him attentively, I got a good many capital anecdotes out of him. It was the same with old Metternich. I staid once with him for a couple of days at Johannisberg. Later on, Thun said to me, 'I don't know what you have done to the old Prince; he looks upon you as a precious vessel, and says, if you don't get on, he doesn't know who will.' 'I can tell you why' I replied; 'I listened quietly to all his stories, now and then just pulling the bell to make it ring again. That is what pleases garrulous old people.'"

Upon another occasion the Chancellor gave us a very funny account of his first meeting with Heinrich von Gagern; a shining light amongst the Liberals of past days. "It was in 1850 or 1851 that Manteuffel had been directed to try to bring about an understanding between Gagern's lot and the Prussian Conservatives—at least to the extent to which the King intended to go in the German cause. Manteuffel selected Gagern and myself for the purpose, and invited us one evening to sup with him *à trois*. At first politics were but little discussed, but presently Manteuffel

invented some pretext for leaving us together. As soon as he was gone I began to talk politics, and very soberly and practically explained my standpoint to Gagern; you should have heard him! He assumed the mien of Jove, raised his eyebrows, ran his fingers through his hair, rolled his eyes and turned them up skywards till they all but cracked, and addressed me in high-flown phrases as if I had been a public meeting. That did him no good, naturally, as far as I was concerned. I answered him coolly, and we remained strangers to one another, as before. When Manteuffel came back and Jupiter had taken his leave, the former asked me—"Well, what did you arrange together?" "Nothing whatever," I replied. "That is a stupid fellow. He took me for a popular assembly. He is a mere watering-pot of phrases. There is nothing to be done with him."

Referring to his interview with Favre at Haute Maison, the Chancellor remarked:—"When I mentioned something about Strassburg and Metz he made a grimace, as though I had been cutting a joke. I might have told him what the great furrier in Berlin once said to me. One day I went to his shop to look out for a new fur-coat, and he asked me a long price for the one which best pleased me. 'You are surely joking, my dear sir?' I observed. 'No,' he replied '*never in business!*' Favre repeatedly told me that France was the land of freedom, and that Frenchmen had always been endowed with the most liberal institutions, whilst despotism reigned over Germany. It is really uncommonly funny to hear Frenchmen talk in this way—especially Favre, who always belonged to the Opposition. That, however, is how they all are. You can administer five-and-twenty lashes to any Frenchman, if you will only make him a fine speech all about the freedom and dignity

expressed in those same lashes, making such gestures as may be appropriate to your oration; he will forthwith persuade himself that he is not being flogged at all."

In February, 1871, when Paris was thrown open again, the Chancellor told us one evening that he had met a number of people with furniture and bedding that afternoon between Versailles and St. Cloud, probably villagers who had thitherto been shut up in the besieged city. "The women looked amiable enough," he continued; "but the men, as soon as they caught sight of our Prussian uniforms, assumed a gloomy expression and heroic bearing. It reminded me of the *ci-devant* Neapolitan army, in which one of the words of command was 'Faccia feroce!'—make a ferocious face!" How little such grimacing meant Bismarck experienced during the partial occupation of Paris by our troops. "I could not," he said, "resist the temptation of riding a little way into town. The people at the gates must have recognised me, for they glared at me savagely and threateningly, particularly the men. But I knew all about them; so I rode up to one, who looked especially truculent, pulled out a cigar, and asked him civilly for a light. Forthwith he handed me his short clay pipe with the politest of bows."

During the Franco-German war Bismarck gave us a word-sketch of Waldeck, formerly the leader and idol of the Progressist Democrats. "In character he resembled Favre; always consistent and true to his principles; ready beforehand with his views and resolves; a fine figure, a white venerable beard, a chest note of conviction, even about trifles, all very imposing. He would make a speech about a teaspoon with such profound solemnity and confidence that the spoon could not do less than stand upright in the cup; and would proclaim that anybody who did not believe

in that fact was a villain; so all his admirers punctually believed in it, and sang the praises of his energetic nature in every imaginable key."

Speaking of the ex-Minister, Arnim Boitzenburg, his former chief at Aachen, he observed:—"He was an amiable, clever person, but not inclined to steady business or energetic action. He resembled an india-rubber ball, which hops and hops and hops, but more feebly every time, and at last comes to a full stop. At first he would have an opinion; then he weakened it by self-contradiction; then, again, an objection to the contradiction occurred to him; until at last naught remained, and nothing was done in the matter on hand." Delbrueck was praising the notorious Count Harry Arnim as well informed and witty, but added that he was "unsympathetic and indolent." "Yes," remarked the Chancellor, "he has no propelling force in his rear." During the historical summer night (1866) when General Manteuffel was about to cross the Elbe and enter the Guelphic Kingdom, Bismarck telegraphed to him; "Treat them as fellow country-men; homicidally, if necessary." When Vogel von Falkenstein, during the Franco-German War, had Deputy Jacoby arrested as a French sympathiser, and Bismarck had in vain interceded for his liberation, the Chancellor observed—"If Vogel had eaten him up, like a rhinoceros cutlet, I should have had no objection; but what was the use of shutting up an old dried-up Jew in prison?"

In his youth Bismarck was much addicted to practical joking. When an auscultator attached to the Berlin Urban Court he was engaged one morning in taking down the deposition of a genuine Berliner, whose audacity and impertinence so irritated him that, all of a sudden, he sprang to his feet and exclaimed, "Sir, take care what you say, or I'll

throw you out of the room!" The Urban Court Councillor who was present tapped his fiery young colleague on the shoulder, saying mildly, "I beg your pardon, but the throwing out is my affair." The deposition was then resumed. It had not gone on long before Bismarck, again provoked by the deponent's insolent answers, jumped up again and thundered out, "Sir, be careful what you are about, or I'll get the Urban Court Councillor to throw you out of the room!"

About that time he gave a practical lesson in the duties of punctuality to a dilatory boot-maker in the Kronenstrasse. Crispin had already disappointed him several times when, early one morning, a messenger appeared at the shop, rang the bell, and asked, "Are Herr von Bismarck's boots ready?" The bootmaker replied in the negative, and the messenger departed. Ten minutes later another appeared with the same enquiry; and so they went on, all day long, ringing and asking, until at night-fall the boots, finished and brilliantly polished, were conveyed to Bismarck's lodging.

Bismarck played many practical jokes some forty odd years ago when he had turned his back upon the State-service and was farming at Kniephof. His guests now and then underwent strange and startling surprises. One day, whilst he was chatting to his fair cousins, the door of the drawing-room suddenly opened and four young foxes rushed in, jumping upon the sofas and chairs and tearing their coverings to tatters. Male visitors had need of steady nerves; for it not infrequently happened that when they had fallen asleep, soothed by a comfortable nightcap lined with porter and champagne, they were suddenly aroused from their slumbers by pistol shots, and the bullets, striking the ceiling above their heads, brought down showers of plaster upon them.

A lively specimen of his peculiar humour at that period was related to me by the Chancellor himself. Once he had a young lieutenant of hussars staying with him at Kniephof, who was called upon to pay a visit to a worthy old uncle in the neighbourhood—a venerable gentleman extremely tenacious with respect to etiquette and elegant manners, who had invited a party of relatives and friends of his own kidney to a grand birthday feast. On the eve of this occasion Bismarck persuaded the youthful warrior to drink a great deal more than was good for him; and next morning conveyed him in a springless cart to his uncle's castle. The roads were not good at any time; but heavy rains had transformed them into mud lakes, so that the two gentlemen arrived desperately besplashed. The lieutenant's moral and physical condition was a dismal one, for the consequences of his debauch overnight had been seriously aggravated by the shaking and jolting of the cart, and expressed themselves in somewhat alarming symptoms. The company that greeted them on their arrival, consisting of about forty persons—the ladies *en grande toilette*, the gentlemen in tail coats and white ties—contemplated them with mingled amazement and horror. The hussar soon became invisible; but Junker Otto, despite the loathing with which the highly proper, stiff and respectable people regarded him, sat down to dinner with them as coolly and cheerfully as though nothing out of the way had taken place. Everybody said how astonishing, how extremely astonishing it was that he had no notion, not the shadow of a notion, what an unpleasant person he was.

I relate the following anecdote, although I doubt its authenticity, as an illustration of the view taken by the people round Kniephof of "Junker Otto's" fancies and freaks. One day, so says the story, he went out snipe-

shooting with a friend. They had to traverse a verdant morass, into which Bismarck's companion, a short, stout, ponderous gentleman, suddenly sank up to his armpits. After struggling for some time to extricate himself and reach firm ground, he called aloud for help; and, seeing his friend picking his way slowly towards him, looking about all the while to see whether a stray snipe would get up, he fervently implored him to let the confounded snipe alone and drag him out of the vile bog-hole, the muck of which was fast rising to his mouth and nose. "My beloved friend," answered Bismarck with the utmost calm, "you will certainly never be able to scramble out of that hole; and it is quite impossible to save you. It would pain me extremely to watch your futile struggles, or to see you slowly stifle in that disgusting filth. I'll tell you what, my boy; I'll spare you a protracted death-agony through suffocation by lodging a charge of shot in your head. Thus shall you die with promptitude and dignity." "Are you beside yourself?" shouted the other, making frantic efforts to wriggle out of the swamp; "I don't want either to suffocate or to be shot; so help me out, in the name of three devils!" Raising his gun to his shoulder and taking careful aim, Bismarck replied in mournful accents, "Keep still for one second. It will soon be over. Farewell, dear friend; I will tell your poor wife all about your last moments." Stimulated to superhuman exertions by the danger threatening him so imminently, the unlucky sportsman contrived somehow to wrench himself out of the mud, and crawled on all-fours to *terra firma.* As soon as he felt himself safe he burst out into a torrent of vehement reproaches. Bismarck, smiling, listened to him a while; then, simply remarking, "You see I was right; every one for himself," turned his back upon his infuriated

companion, and strolled off leisurely to look for more snipe.

After he had resumed his official career, and was serving as referendary to the Potsdam Government, one day his chief, ignoring his presence in the office, walked to the window and began to drum with his fingers upon one of the panes. Forthwith Bismarck betook himself to the window also, and performed the "Old Dessauer's March" on another pane for the special entertainment of His Excellency the President of the Government. This was the amiable official who one day made his referendary wait in the antechamber for an hour, and then, calling him in, asked him roughly, "What do you want?" Bismarck replied, "I came to ask for a few days' leave; now I beg to notify my resignation."

Regarded from a certain stand-point there was a great deal of practical humour in the way he misled Benedetti and Napoleon III. in 1866 with respect to his willingness to fall in with French projects of aggrandisement, induced the Ambassador to shew his hand, and, when the opportune moment arrived, brought his Comedy of Errors to a close by publishing the document recording Napoleon's secret plans, of which he had obtained possession by dexterous manœuvring. He began by bamboozling Bonaparte into believing that he was not "un homme sérieux;" then he amused himself for several years with Napoleonic delusions; finally, he duped him and caused him to make a fool of himself. All this constituted the comic *lever de rideau* preceding the great war-tragedy.

In Ferrières the King had prohibited shooting in the park behind Rothschild's *château,* which contained several thousand pheasants. Unaware of this, I asked the Chancellor one evening why he did not sally forth, once in a

way, and shoot a few of these toothsome birds for our table. "Why not, indeed?" he replied with a smile. "True, shooting is strictly prohibited; but what can they do to me if I turn out and knock over a brace or two? I can't be taken up, for there is no one to do it." An entry in my diary upon Sept. 28, says: "To-day the King drove out to visit the cantonments before Paris. At midday I had a communication to make to the Prime Minister; but in the ante-room they told me he was not at home. 'Ridden out, I suppose?' 'No; the gentlemen have gone out to shoot a few pheasants. Engel (the Chancellor's *chasseur*) was told to follow them!' 'Have they taken their guns with them?' 'No; Podbielski sent them on ahead!'" At 2 p.m. the chief was back. He, Moltke and Podbielski had been shooting pheasants in the coverts adjoining the park, so as not to sin against His Majesty's commands. A strain of *naif* humour ran through the whole incident.

Another example of Bismarck's practical humour was afforded by the method he adopted of enlightening the major-domo of Ferrières with respect to the virtue of hospitality. Baron Rothschild, the hundred-fold millionaire —who, moreover, had been Prussian Consul-General in Paris up to the outbreak of the war—had instructed his major-domo to refuse us the wine we needed, which would have been paid for like other provisions supplied to us. Summoned before the Chancellor, this audacious fellow persisted in his refusal. First of all he denied that there was a drop of wine in the house; then he admitted that he had "a couple of hundred bottles of thin claret in the cellar" (there were seventeen thousand), and finally declared that he would not let us have any of it. The Chancellor began by pointing out to him how rudely and shabbily his

master acknowledged the honour conferred him by the King's condescension in using his house; then, as the stubborn major-domo seemed about to become insolent, he asked him curtly whether he knew what a straw-halter was. The man seemed to guess at his meaning, for he turned as white as chalk. He was then informed that a straw-halter was a thing with which stiff-necked and impertinent major-domos were bound in such sort that, when laid upon the ground, their faces were not uppermost—he might imagine the rest. Next day we had all we wanted, nor had we subsequently any reason to complain; on the contrary, a daily improvement became manifest in the behaviour of the previously recalcitrant major-domo. He even supplied our table with champagne. Practical humour had effected his complete conversion.

"Oh, Keudell," exclaimed the Chancellor suddenly, one day at Versailles, "it just occurs to me that I must get some plenary powers from the King—in German, of course. The German Emperor must write nothing but German; his Minister may be guided by circumstances. Official intercourse with diplomatists must be carried on in the language of the country, not in a foreign tongue. Bernstorff was the first who tried to bring this about at home. He wrote in German to all the Foreign Representatives in Berlin; and they all answered him in their respective mother tongues—Russian, Spanish, Swedish and I know not what besides, so that he was obliged to have a whole swarm of translators at the Ministry. That was how I found matters when I took office. Soon afterwards Budberg sent me a note in Russian. I could not stand that. If the Russians wanted to take their revenge upon us they should have made Gortchakoff write in Russian to our Envoy at Petersburg. That would have been all right. But, to

answer my German letter in Russian at Berlin was not fair. So I settled that whatever should reach us written in any language but German, French, English or Italian, should be relegated to a cupboard. Budberg, however, went on writing reminder after reminder, always in Russian. At last he called upon me in person, and asked why I did not answer him. 'Answer?' I ejaculated, with an amazed look; 'answer what? I have not seen any communication from you.' 'Why, a month ago, I wrote so and so to you, and have reminded you of it several times since.' 'Oh, of course, now I remember,' I rejoined; 'there is a whole bundle of papers in Russian character lying down-stairs; your letters will be amongst them. But not a soul here understands Russian; and everything that reaches us in an incomprehensible idiom is put away.'"

One anecdote more, relating to a mysterious arrangement in the building added to Varzin Castle. The Chancellor had just been showing me his new study, and we passed into his adjoining bed-room, just opposite which a few steps lead down into a bath-room on the right hand in the dimly lighted corridor. Close to the bath-room door is another, hidden in the wall, and opening upon a dark winding staircase. "The castle dungeon?" I enquired. "My sally-port," replied the Prince. "By these stairs I steal off quietly and unobserved, and get safe into the park by an underground passage when undesirable visitors come in sight. In the park I have a nook of refuge, where my people let me know when the coast is clear. We call the arrangement Senfft-Pilsach, because his garrulity is so wearisome." How far the secret passage went on subterraneously, or where it returned to the upper air, I never learnt; and if I knew I would not tell, for to do so would be to frustrate its purpose. Let my partial revelation serve as a warning to those who

may still feel themselves alluded to by the Chancellor's term "undesirable." It no longer applies to Herr von Senfft-Pilsach, who has departed this life, and is now probably a peculiarly hallowed member of the Old-Conservative party in the heavenly Parliament, whom "indiscreet books" can no longer vex or annoy.

CHAPTER VII.

PRINCE BISMARCK IN PRIVATE LIFE.

It is a pleasing trait in the character of modern mankind, and especially of the Germans, that they desire to make acquaintance with that portion of their great cotemporaries' lives which is averted from publicity—to know what sort of husbands and fathers they are, what is their attitude towards literature, art and science, what are their special talents and inclinations, and how they are off with respect to pecuniary circumstances. This desire smacks of inquisitiveness, but of an amiable sort, being generally combined with the wish to be assured that a genius, successful in great matters, may be happy in small ones within the four walls of his own home. It is not easy to gratify this desire of the public so long as the person lives who has to be described and characterised; for nobody likes to be analysed and "copied from nature." Even tact and discretion do not insure us against disapprobation and reproach when we undertake to follow a genius or hero into the privacy of every-day life, and to deliver him up to publicity, so to speak, in his shirt or dressing gown. However carefully we may refrain from touching more than casually upon matters bearing the character of secrecy, our achievements have always something in common with the action of peeping through a key-hole; and even praise is not invariably welcome to its objects. Nevertheless, the characteristics and circumstances recorded

in this chapter are indispensable to the completion of our sketch of the German Chancellor; many of our readers, especially the ladies, would be justified in complaining, did we entirely suppress them; finally, Bismarck himself and his near relatives have supplied the material from which our last chapter has, with a tolerably clear conscience, been compiled.

Luther, surrounded by "Kaethen" and a crowd of children, listening to music or performing jovial Christmas-tree rites, is every whit as interesting a picture as that in which he figures burning the Pope's Bull of Excommunication, or defending his cause before the Emperor and Princes of the Realm. We are glad to make acquaintance with those whom Schiller loved as a husband and father. We study with absorbing interest Goethe's connections with the women who scattered roses on his path of life. How deep is the sympathy felt for blind Milton and his daughters, even out of England! Stories told about our grey-beard Emperor in his grand-paternal capacity are always eagerly and gratefully listened to. We find something wanting in Frederick the Great, who lived more than half his life childless and friendless; and it strikes us as unnatural, uncomfortable and almost terrible that a surpassing genius should be forlorn of those relations. He seems to us grand, but dry, one-sided, incomplete, distant and cold.

It therefore rejoices us heartily to learn that the mighty statesman who has politically reconstructed our nation, took to him betimes a wife who has made him happy and has adorned his home-life with many graces and charms. Born in 1824 (therefore nine years younger than her husband) and married to him in 1847, Frau von Bismarck was the daughter of the Nether-Pomeranian landowner Heinrich von Puttkamer, who died in 1872 at a good old

age. Her betrothal to Bismarck was at first opposed by her parents—especially by her mother—as his irregularity of habits did not seem to promise well for the future of a daughter of a pious house. "All right," wrote the wooer to his sister, Malvina von Arnim, when he at last obtained the consent of Herr and Frau von Puttkamer; and he and his wife may well have reiterated those words when, whilst celebrating their Silver Wedding at Varzin (July 28, 1872), they looked back into their conjugal past. The Princess was brought up in the fear of God, but is of a quick, lively disposition, endowed with a good share of mother-wit, sensibility and good taste. Fond of music and an excellent pianist, she is also a careful and judicious housewife, and skilled in the use of drugs, after the manner of noble dames in the olden days. She has made her husband's home comfortable and intelligently shared his cares and hopes—even to a certain extent, those connected with politics, although she is not one of those ladies who busy themselves with affairs of State. Judging by his letters to her, the intercourse between them when business compelled him to leave her for a time has always been of a lively and affectionate character. In his correspondence he addresses her as "my heart" and "my beloved heart;" he sends her jessamine from Peterhof, heather-bells from Bordeaux and edelweiss from Gastein; on the sixteenth anniversary of their wedding-day he reminds her that she "brought sunshine into his bachelor-life." From Ofen he wrote to her "Good night from afar. Where did I hear the song that has been haunting me all day long—'Over the dark blue mountain, Over the white sea foam, Come, thou beloved one, Come, to thy lonely home'?" In his letters to his wife and sister we frequently encounter the expression of his longing for his family and quiet home:—"I really yearn for the country,

the woods and idleness, supplemented by loving wives and well-behaved, clean children. Whenever I hear one of these hopeful beings squalling in the street, my heart is filled with paternal feelings and educational axioms. How do our successors get on together; and are mine pretty orderly?" In another letter to his sister written from Zarskoe Selo (1860) he observed:—"After knocking about ever since the commencement of 1859, the sensation of living with my own people again, anyhow and anywhere, is so comforting that I can hardly tear myself away from the house." To his wife he wrote from Biarritz:—"My conscience smites me for seeing so much that is beautiful without you. If you could be suddenly carried hither through the air, I would straightway take you off to San Sebastian." Writing from Nuernberg he said:—"I should have liked to go from Vienna to Salzburg, where the King is—our wedding-tour over again." In a note from Babelsberg (1863) he assured his wife that he should be delighted "soon again to see her assuming command of the empty apartments at Berlin. Meanwhile I hope you will get over the hammering and rummaging which inevitably results from your return home, and that when I return I shall find everything in its place." From the pavilion of Stanislaus Augustus near Warsaw, he wrote:—"The wind blows recklessly over the Vistula, and works such havoc in the chestnut and lime trees surrounding me that their yellow leaves hurtle against the panes; but sitting here with double windows, tea, and thoughts of you and the children, I can smoke my cigar quite comfortably." On another occasion, whilst shooting in the wilds of Smaland, he expressed the wish for "a castle, peopled by my dear ones, hard by one of the quiet lakes, surrounded with coverts and heather, of this Swedish landscape."

Many other passages in his letters denote how dear his

wife is to him and how often he thinks of her and his children. They also indicate that the pious lady he espoused has brought herself in time to share his energetic way of thinking and feeling. Two days after the fall of Sedan the Chancellor read aloud to us an extract from one of her letters praying, in Scriptural language, that the French might be destroyed. "May I ask how the Countess is?" enquired Prince Albrecht (Oct. 29, 1870) whilst dining with the Chancellor at Versailles. "Oh," replied the latter, "she is all right, now that her son is getting better; but she is still suffering from her grim hatred of the Gauls, whom she would like to see shot and bayoneted, every man Jack of them, even the tiny children, who really cannot help having been born of such abominable parents." A few days later he imparted to us a remark made by her conceived in a not much milder spirit than the above—"I fear that you will not find any Bibles in France, and therefore shall send you the Psalm-book, so that you may read the prophecy against the French: 'I say to you the godless shall be exterminated.'"

The Prince has three children; a daughter, Countess Marie, born in 1848 and married about five years ago to Count Rantzau, and two unmarried sons, Counts Herbert and Wilhelm, younger than their sister. The former is in diplomacy, and has been attached to several Legations and Embassies. He is now at the Embassy in Petersburg. The latter, physically very like his father, adopted the legal career, and has been in Parliament. Both fought in the last war as privates in the Dragoons; the Chancellor looked after them carefully and rode out with them whenever circumstances permitted. In the cavalry charge at Mars la Tour Count Herbert was rather severely wounded. Both the Chancellor's sons are frequently employed in their father's

office, as well as their brother-in-law. Whilst Bismarck was Prussian Envoy at Petersburg he assiduously superintended his children's education. Every Saturday they came to him with their school-books, and had to give an account of all they had learnt during the last week. He then examined them, exhibiting a minute scholastic knowledge from which their tutors derived many valuable hints as to the proper method of teaching. After 1871 the Prince especially occupied himself with completing the instruction of his second son, whom he urged to study the Polish language—a course, by the way, which he also once recommended to the Crown Prince at Versailles. I cannot say whether or not Count Wilhelm has followed his father's advice earnestly, steadily, and perseveringly.

It may also be mentioned that Bismarck rejoices in the possession of three grandsons, Otto, Christian and Heinrich; sturdy little fellows who occasionally visit him in his palace in the Wilhelmstrasse, the eldest boy always wearing the foraging-cap of the Yellow Cuirassiers, his grandfather's regiment. The Prince himself is a striking example of the atavism displayed in many families. Formerly—in personal appearance and love of field-sports—he strongly resembled his great-grandfather, Colonel August Friedrich von Bismarck, who was killed in battle under Frederick the Great, during the Silesian war. Intellectually, he takes after his mother, a highly intelligent woman of frigid disposition; his sensibility and warmth of heart he obviously got from his father.

His relations to his two sisters, as well as to his own immediate family, are of a very affectionate character. That he is a tender and attached brother appears from his letters to his sister Malvina, whom he sometimes addresses as "my angel," "my adored one," and "my much-beloved

one," and sometimes as "dear little girl" and "dearest Creusa." "He treated her as if she had been engaged to him," say the old folks at Schoenhausen.

In his younger years Bismarck was also very susceptible of friendship. Amongst his schoolmates were Oscar von Arnim (who became his brother-in-law in 1844), Hans von Dewitz and Moritz von Blankenburg, the former leader of the Conservatives in the Prussian Lower House, to whom he was deeply attached, but with whom he unfortunately quarrelled a few years ago about the miserable Diest-Daber difficulty. During his stay at the University he became intimate with Count Kaiserlingk from Courland, and with the American John Lothrop Motley, the celebrated author, formerly U.S. Minister at Vienna. Councillor Dietze of Barby, one of our richest and most intelligent agriculturists, ranks amongst his friends of twenty years' standing. During the French campaign he said of this gentleman:—"He is the most delightful person of my acquaintance, and his house is the most hospitable and comfortable I have ever stayed at; good shooting, admirable living and a charming wife. He displays an inborn, natural heartiness—*politesse de cœur*—nothing put on; what I should designate the politeness of benevolence, good-nature in the best sense of the word;" expressions which disclose the disposition of the praiser as well as of the praised. Only he who is himself inspired by the "politeness of the heart" can recognise it in others. I have many reasons for doubting that Herr von Keudell can be described as a friend of the Chancellor; I would rather say that, in a certain measure, he has for years past been Prince Bismarck's *confidant.* On the other hand, Lothar Bucher's value to the Chancellor was greater than that he possessed as a well informed, faithful, unselfish and indefatigably industrious

amanuensis. In 1873 the Prince mentioned him to me as "a real pearl," and that in a tone and with a look that spoke of a good deal more than mere business utility.

The Chancellor's extreme sensibility reveals itself in many of his written and spoken utterances, as well as his strongly developed love of nature, of life in forest and field, of country pleasures and beautiful landscapes. He speaks of himself as "an enthusiast for Nature," and says that he loves the sea like a mistress; he has, moreover, the faculty of reproducing what he sees and admires in characteristic word-pictures of extraordinary charm, so full of warmth that they produce the effect of lyrical poems.

When, during his sojourn at Frankfort, it was first proposed to appoint him Prime Minister, he told an acquaintance that he wished to be an Envoy for ten years, a Minister for as long, and then to end his life as a country gentleman. In August, 1863, he wrote to his wife:—"I wish some intrigue would bring another Ministry into power, so that I might honourably turn my back upon this interminable flow of ink and live quietly in the country." During the campaign in France, and even as lately as 1883, he repeatedly expressed his yearning for retirement in the most uncompromising terms, saying that nothing prevented him from gratifying it but his reluctance to forsake the venerable Emperor. When he is residing upon his estates in Pomerania or in the heart of the Sachsenwald not a day passes during which he does not make an excursion in the neighbouring beech-woods and pine forests, or to some hill or river. He used often, when dinner-time summoned them home, to say to Bucher, who occasionally accompanied him: "Let us first ascend that height further on; it commands a delightful view." I have heard him say at Friedrichsruh—"What I like best is to be in well-greased

top-boots, far away from civilization;" and he has a name for every handsome tree at Varzin. The latter is his favourite place of abode; he loves to stroll about his park in the moonlight, during sleepless nights, and often dreamt of its woods, illumined by the rays of the setting sun, whilst in France during the war.

In the letters written to his wife and sister during his journeys abroad are to be found many highly descriptive literary sketches, full of colour and feeling; such as his view from Ofen Castle of "the dull silvern Danube and the dark mountains upon a pale-red ground—mountains waxing bluer and bluer, and then reddish-brown in the evening sky glowing behind them." I subjoin his lively descriptions of life on the Hungarian steppes between Danube and Theiss, and of the wilderness at Tomsjonaes.

"Picture to yourself a vast lawn, as smooth as a table, upon which as far as the horizon there is nothing to be seen but the tall, lank levers of the wells dug to supply the wild horses and cattle with water, thousands of whitey-brown oxen with horns a yard long, as flighty as deer, and of shaggy ill-favoured horses, looked after by mounted, half-naked herdsmen with sticks like lances, as well as enormous droves of swine—amongst them, here and there, a donkey carrying on its back the shepherd's sheepskin and sometimes the shepherd himself. Then great flocks of bustard, hares, a brackish pond covered with wild geese, ducks and plovers—these were the objects that we passed during our three hours' drive to Ketskemet. At five o'clock I arrived at Szolnok, where a parti-coloured crowd of Hungarians, Slovacks and Wallachians enlivens the streets, shouting out the wildest, maddest gipsy-melodies, the strains of which reach me here, in my room. Between whiles they sing—through the nose in sickly, whining minor discords—ballads

about dark eyes and the heroic death of some robber, in tones that remind me of the wind when it howls Lithuanian ditties in the chimney-pots. The women are generally well grown, some are extraordinarily beautiful, all have coal-black hair hanging down in heavy plaits behind them, tied with red ribbons. The married women wear upon their heads bright green and red kerchiefs or red velvet caps embroidered in gold, and on their shoulders very handsome yellow silken scarves, short black frocks and saffron-coloured high boots. Their faces are a yellowish brown; their eyes large, lustrous and black. On the whole, a group of these women displays a variety of colour that would please you, every individual hue asserting itself as energetically as possible."

His description of the Swedish landscape above referred to runs as follows:—"Not a town, not a village to be seen afar or near—only isolated settlers, wooden huts, and a few patches of barley and potatoes, scattered about amongst dead trees, lumps of rock and clumps of bushes. Picture to yourself a hundred square miles of heath, varied with strips of short grass and moorland and planted, sometimes so thickly as to be impenetrable, sometimes very sparsely, with birches, willows, alders, juniper, firs and oaks; the whole district bestrewn with countless stones, some of enormous size, and smelling of wild rosemary and resin; every here and there strangely shaped, still lakes, environed with heather-clad hills and woods."

From Peterhof he wrote:—"This is a charming place; Petersburg is so stony. Picture to yourself the heights of Oliva and Zoppot laid out like parks and studded with a dozen castles interspersed by terraces, fountains and ponds, with shady walks and turf right down to the sea; blue skies, white clouds and warm sunshine, beyond the green

lawns the sparkling sea, specked with sails and sea-gulls. I have not been so happy for a long time." Writing from Zarskoe Selo he said: "Across the table my window commands a view over the tops of birch and maple trees, the leaves of which display more red and yellow than green; further down the grass-green roofs of the little town, dominated by a church with five gilded towers shaped like onions; further still an endless plain of copse, meadow and forest, behind the brown-blue-grey tints of which the Church of St. Isaac at Petersburg may be espied with a telescope."

He thus describes the view, at nightfall, from the pavilion he occupied at Archangelski:—"On the other side of the water lie broad moonlit plains; on this side lawns, hedges and orangeries; the wind howls and the flames flicker in the chimney; old pictures stare at me from the walls, and statues peep in at the windows."

His word-pictures from France and Spain are as lively, highly coloured and full of feeling as those portraying Northern and Oriental landscapes; to wit, his sketches of Chambord Castle, of the country between Bordeaux and Bayonne, and of San Sebastian's Bay. Writing of the Legitimist stronghold to his wife from Bordeaux, he observed: "I have seen several fine châteaux hereabouts, amongst them Chambord, the desolation of which corresponds to the destiny of its owner. The Duke of Bordeaux's playthings constitute the entire furniture of those stately halls and splendid saloons in which Kings held Court with their mistresses and huntsmen. The courtyards lie as peacefully in the sunshine as forsaken graveyards. From the towers there is a fine view of silent woods and heaths, stretching away to the horizon; not a town, village or farmhouse near the castle nor in the whole district. Purple heather is the only flower in the Royal

gardens; swallows are nearly the only living things in the house. It is too lonely for sparrows." He describes the landscape between Bordeaux and Bayonne thus:—"Continuous pine forests, heather and moor—sometimes like Pomerania, as in the coast-woods behind the sand hills, sometimes like Russia. But when I looked at it through my glasses the illusion vanished. Instead of the pine it is the long-haired fir and a mixture of juniper trees and bilberry bushes that covers the ground, as well as all kinds of unfamiliar plants bearing leaves like those of the myrtle and cypress. The splendour with which the heather here develops its violet-purple blossoms is amazing; it is interspersed with a broad-leaved yellow bloom; the whole plain looks like a gaudy carpet. The river Adour, upon which Bayonne lies, frames in this heath, which aggravated my home-sickness by its tender idealisation of a northern landscape." From San Sebastian he wrote:—"The road from Bayonne hither is magnificent; on the left the Pyrenees with their varying panorama of peaks, on the right the sea with a coast like that near Genoa. The transition to Spain is startling; in Behodie, the last French town, one could believe oneself to be still by the Loire—in Fuentarabia one came upon a steep street, twelve feet wide, every window provided with a balcony and curtain, every balcony displaying dark eyes and mantillas, beauty and dirt; on the market-place drumming and fifing, whilst several hundred women, old and young, danced together, their husbands looking on, wrapped up in cloaks. The country hereabouts is extraordinarily beautiful—green valleys and wooded slopes, above the latter lines upon lines of fantastic fortifications, narrow sea-creeks penetrating far into the land and resembling the Salzburg lakes that lie at the bottom of mountain-cauldrons. From my window

I can see just such a creek, cut off from the sea by a rocky islet and surrounded by steep mountains studded with woods and houses. After breakfast we crawled through the heat up the citadel-mountain, and sat there for a long time on a bench, the sea some hundred of feet beneath us, and hard by us a heavy battery guarded by a singing sentry." From Luchon he wrote during the same tour: "Yesterday we climbed the Col de Venasque. First of all we journeyed for two hours through splendid beech-woods full of ivy, rocks and waterfalls; then came a *hospice;* then two hours more of stiff climbing on horse-back in the snow, enlivened by views of tranquil deep lakes lying between the cliffs; and then, at a height of 7,500 feet, a narrow portal in the rugged comb of the Pyrenees opens the way into Spain. The land of chestnuts and palms reveals itself here as a mountain-cauldron, walled around by the Maladetta, facing us, the Pic de Sauvegarde and Pic de Picade; on the right streams flow downwards to the Ebro, on the left to the Garonne, and as far as eye can see, in front of us, are glaciers and snow-clad peaks, one behind another, far away into Catalonia and Aragon."

Extremely happy is his description of Gastein, the last I shall quote. "I saw it for the first time in all its beauty during a delightful morning walk. Moritz von Blankeburg would call it a gigantic saucepan, narrow and deep, filled with cabbage and rimmed with white of egg. Steep walls several thousand feet high, flecked with firs, turf and cottages up to the snow-line, the whole ampitheatre wreathed around with the white lace and ribands wrought out of the snow during five rainy days, and the lower limits of which are hourly carried higher by the heat of the sun. Dozens of silvern threads traverse the green slopes—brooklets that dash down-hill hurriedly, as though they

feared to be too late for the huge waterfall which, together with the Ache, they make up right before my house."

From the above extracts we gather that Bismarck, whilst on his travels, took a deep interest in his fellow-men and exhibited no small talent as a *genre* painter. But nature unadorned, quiet green woods, lonely heaths and isolated lakes were still more sympathetic to him. So was the sea, of which he says, in a letter from Brussels (August, 1853):—"I left Ostende with regret, and am still longing to return thither, where I lighted upon an old love, as fascinating as when I first made her acquaintance. I feel our separation keenly just now, and impatiently await the moment when I shall see her again at Nordeney and fall upon her heaving bosom. I can scarcely understand how it is that I do not always live by the sea, or why I have allowed myself to be persuaded to spend two days in this straight-lined heap of stones."

Besides the love of nature revealed above, he is characterised by a strong liking for dumb animals and plants, a passion for field-sports and riding, a fondness for a country-gentleman's life, far away from the turmoil of cities, and a great partiality for agriculture and forestry. Like the Emperor William, he has his favourite flower; the Kaiser's is the corn-cockle, Bismarck's the heather, which he speaks of as "the plant I love best." Talking once at Versailles about his cowherd, Brand, "one of those old pieces of furniture with which the memories of my youth are indissolubly bound up," he observed:—"Whenever I think of him I am reminded of heather-bloom and buttercups." When he lived in Kniephof his huge Danish hound was renowned throughout the whole neighbourhood as a "favoured personage," and several young fox-cubs were attached to his household. These were succeeded in

Petersburg by a couple of young bears, which he allowed to range about the apartments of the Legation, like dogs, until—when they reached maturity—he presented them to the Zoological Gardens of Frankfort and Cologne. "Mischka" used to make his appearance at dinner-time, to the great amusement of his master's guests, and walk about gingerly enough upon the table amongst the plates and glasses, now and then clutching at the footmen's calves. "But for R—— and the sorrel mare," Bismarck wrote to his wife soon after his appointment to the Premiership in 1862, "I should sometimes feel lonely here, though I am never alone." At Varzin in 1877 a large Ulmer hound, given to him by Count Holnstein, always slept in his room, and with Floerchen, "its spouse," accompanied him in all his walks and rides, until some skulking vagabond brutally slew the faithful, harmless creature, which Bismarck was wont to feed with his own hand. As lately as last year a portrait of this four-footed friend was amongst the knick-knacks upon the Chancellor's writing-table. The actual "Realm-Hound" is not of so amiable a disposition as his official predecessor, but rather an ugly customer where strangers are concerned; nevertheless he stands in high favour with his master. Bismarck even reserved a corner in his heart for the rooks in Varzin Park, and it was pleasant to hear him tell how "they taught their children to fly, took them down to the coast to put them on a worm-diet, and withdrew during the winter, like people of fashion, to their town-residence in the towers of Stolp and Schlawe."

From his earliest youth up to his sixtieth year the Prince was an uncommonly good shot, an eager horseman and a sportsman no less assiduous than lucky. Later on, having lost strength, he by degrees gave up all these pleasures and accomplishments, one after another. As a young man he

became so expert with the pistol that he was wont to decapitate with a bullet duck after duck swimming on the Kniephof ponds. His rifle and fowling-piece were equally fatal to all sorts of furred and feathered game. As a steady and quick shot he earned renown in well-nigh every European country, and accumulated trophies, in the way of antlers and skins, with which the walls and floors of his house are adorned—spoils of his native forests, of the Taunus, Ardennes, Alps, of Rothschild's park at Ferrières, of Swedish mountains and Russian steppes. His skill and success in bear-, wolf- and elk-shooting were proverbial in the upper circles of Petersburg society. I could narrate half-a-dozen of his remarkable achievements in this line, which are "nothing but truth," although sportsmen are apt to exaggerate. He once started, with six other gentlemen, from Petersburg on a bear hunt. On their return somebody asked one of the party, "Well, how did you get on?" "Very badly, *batiouschka*," was the reply. "The first bear came trotting towards us; the Prussian fired, and Bruin fell dead. Presently another bear turned out; I fired and missed, and Bismarck knocked him over, almost at his feet, with a capital shot. All of a sudden a third bear broke out of the bushes. Colonel M—— fired twice and missed twice. Then the Prussian shot the bear right under his nose. So you see, he shot all three, and we never saw another one afterwards." On another occasion, besides stags and roedeer, he shot five elks, one of which measured 6 ft. 8 in. to his withers and carried a tremendous head. I saw the skin of this enormous brute in 1870 in the billiard-room of Bismarck's official residence in Berlin, where it was spread out upon the floor like a carpet.

During his younger years Bismarck performed many remarkable feats as a bold and untiring horseman. He

thought little of following the hounds across country for thirty to forty miles at a stretch. But even later, long after he became Prime Minister, he could do a good spell in the saddle when necessary, as, for instance, during the battle of Koeniggraetz, when he sat his horse for twelve hours, and the day after the fall of Sedan, when he was riding about from 6 a.m. till midnight. He was not always lucky on horseback; on the contrary, by his own confession, he has come down with his horse or been thrown some fifty times in his life, and more than once very badly—as once at Varzin, when he broke three ribs.

It is well known that Bismarck, whilst a student at Goettingen and Greifswald, was a skilful and vigorous fencer, and proved his expertness in thirty duels or so. That, later in life, he became an excellent swimmer is evident from his letters to his wife about long bouts of swimming in the Rhine, Danube and Theiss. In July, 1851, he wrote :—" On Saturday I drove with Rochow and Lynar from Frankfort to Ruedesheim. There I took a boat, rowed out upon the Rhine, and swam in the moonshine, just keeping nose and eyes above water, to the Mouse Tower at Bingen, where the wicked Bishop came to grief. There is something strangely dreamy in lying in the tepid water on a quiet warm night, swept along slowly by the current, gazing at the starry sky, the wooded hill-tops and ruined castles, and hearing nothing but the slight plashing caused by your own movements. I should like to swim thus every day." Still more conclusive than the above, as far as Bismarck's strength and skill as a swimmer are concerned, is the following incident. In 1842, then being a lieutenant of Landwehr, he was told off to exercise near Lippehne with the Stargard squadron of lancers. He was standing with some other officers upon the bridge that crosses the

Lippehne lake, when his groom Hildebrand, who was watering one of his horses, slipped from the saddle near where the gentlemen were posted, and vanished from sight. Bismarck at once threw away his sabre and plunged into the lake. He soon caught hold of his groom, who, however, clung to him so tightly in fear of drowning that, before he could shake him off, he was compelled to dive down again with him. Everybody present had given up master and man as lost, when Bismarck rose to the surface, dragging up the insensible groom with him, and swam to the bank, where Hildebrand presently came to himself again. The little town got into a great state of excitement over this gallant deed, which displayed such extraordinary physical strength, dexterity and presence of mind in its performer; and the local clergyman called upon Bismarck in full canonicals to congratulate him upon the Divine mercy vouchsafed to him. Later on the King conferred the medal for saving life upon the courageous young gentleman—his first decoration.

It would seem that the talent for learning foreign languages is more developed in the east of Europe than in the west. The French are least endowed with it; the Poles and Russians most so; the Germans stand about mid-way. We manage with tolerable ease to understand a book or newspaper in the idiom of a neighbouring country; but most of us experience great difficulty in speaking foreign tongues correctly and fluently, and are bad hands at mastering the accents of non-German languages. The Chancellor constitutes a brilliant exception to this rule. Speaking German absolutely purely, he has also made French his own tongue so completely that even a Genevese or Petersburger of the upper classes could scarcely find fault with his pronunciation. He also speaks English with admirable facility, and under-

stands Italian well enough to read the Italian newspapers. He is acquainted with Polish, and during his four years' sojourn by the Neva he studied Russian so assiduously that he can converse freely in that tongue. The late Czar Alexander was much impressed when Bismarck, one day, addressed him in his own language, no trifling feat for a German. The great mathematician, Gauss, once found it necessary to take up some abstract study as a relief to his special occupation. The choice was offered to him between the Russian language and the vast, complicated Linnæan system of botanical classification. He decided upon committing the latter to memory, and eventually succeeded in doing so. Russian, with its enormous wealth of forms and innumerable exceptions to every grammatical rule, appeared to him too difficult. The Chancellor is not so well up in the dead as in the living languages. "When I was in the first class at school," he told me at Ferrières, "I could write and speak Latin very well. Nowadays I should find it difficult to do either; and as for Greek, I have forgotten all about it."

Amongst the sciences, Prince Bismarck has always entertained a predilection for history, geography, and political economy. He is posted up in their literature and reads new historical works, such as Taine's admirable account of the rise and fall of the first French Revolution, with keen interest. In the matter of *belles lettres* he accords the palm to Goethe and Shakespeare. He says that he could pass many a year upon a desert island with some of Goethe's works for his sole companions. Schiller is less sympathetic to him, probably by reason of his pronounced dislike to a pompous and declamatory style; he regards the apple-shooting episode in 'William Tell' as unnatural, and the premeditated murder of Gessler from an ambuscade as unworthy of a hero.

Modern German literature is still less to his taste; he prefers the English and French novelists of the present day to the German writers of romances. "Send me a French novel," he wrote to his wife during the campaign in Bohemia, "but only one at a time." Seinguerlet makes "an English author" say that he saw huge piles of French light literature upon the Prince's writing table; but this may be doubted, and so may the assertion, on the same authority, that "Feydeau, Edmond de Goncourt and Flaubert are his favourite authors, and he has recently perused with interest the realistic creations of Emile Zola."

I cannot with precision define the Chancellor's attitude to the plastic arts. In Frankfort he associated a good deal with painters and sculptors, especially with Professor Becker, who has painted his portrait. But I remember nothing in his letters referring to these matters, and I have but seldom heard him mention artistic subjects or personages. Once during the French war, we were talking about the Brandenburg Gate, which he spoke of as "handsome in its way," observing that it would look better without the lateral colonnades, the Guard-House and the building opposite this latter. Moreover, his apartments in Berlin, Varzin and Schoenhausen by no means abound in artistic adornment, unless photographs, lithographs, and steel engravings may pass as such. A few oil-paintings decorate his study at Berlin; but up to 1877 there was not a single picture in his Schoenhausen sanctum, and the new buildings in Pomerania and the Sachsenwald have been fitted up in the simplest possible style. I infer from these facts that he does not take any very great pleasure in painting, sculpture, and architecture, not that he has no taste for them. Even were that so, it would not signify much. Lessing was a wretched Librarian, although a learned innovator and

highly respectable critic. Kant once observed: "A man may be a great philosopher and yet not play the flute well." Stein's scientific and literary education was a very poor one. Schoen wrote about him to Burgrave von Bruenneck:—"In the month of August, 1808, his poetic culture was at so low a level that he had not read any of Goethe's works. His friends teased and chaffed him for being over prosaic until he was induced to consent to read 'Faust,' a copy of which he obtained about 10 a.m. and sent it back to its owner shortly after 4 p.m., asking for the second part, which had not then been printed. I spent the evening of that day at Councillor Schaeffner's with Stein; and soon perceived, by his answer to my enquiry, 'How he liked "Faust,"' that he looked upon it as nothing more than a story-book. But he told me that he considered it an indecent work, not to be even mentioned in polite society. Nothing seemed to have struck him but the scenes in Auerbach's cellar, and upon the Blocksberg." And yet Stein was a man of rare intuitive talent and forcible character, in short, a first-class intelligence.

Nowadays the Chancellor visits theatres and the opera very seldom, if at all. Formerly it was otherwise. In 1852 he wrote to his wife from Vienna:—"I have just returned with old Westmoreland" (then British Minister at the Austrian Court) "from the Opera, where we heard 'Don Giovanni' performed by a good Italtan company, which made me feel more than ever how miserable the Frankfort Theatre is." I cannot recall to remind that during the French war or in later years he has once referred to the stage and its celebrities in conversation. Once, I believe, he said a few words about Helmerding, the comic actor.

The Prince, however, takes a great interest in music, which he learnt to appreciate through Count Kaiserlingk

during his student life at Berlin. The classical composers, with Beethoven at their head, are his favourites. He does not play any instrument, but delights in the playing of others. Writing to his wife in 1851, he described his condition as "sound and hearty, but tinged with melancholy, home-sickness, yearnings for forest, ocean, desert, you and the children, all mixed up with sunset and Beethoven." In another letter he said:—"Yesterday after dinner I sat alone with Keudell in the blue drawing-room, and he played." Two years later he wrote from Baden: "This evening a quartet-party at Count Fleming's with Joachim, who really plays the fiddle wonderfully." In Versailles Herr von Keudell, the accomplished pianist and Councillor of Legation, played soft fantasias to the Chancellor on the drawing-room piano whilst we were taking coffee. On my asking him subsequently whether the chief took much pleasure in such performances, he replied—"Yes, although he is not musical;" adding: "You will have remarked that he hums all the while; that is good for his nerves, which are a good deal upset to-day." In the autumn of 1881, as the Prince and I were walking together along the winding paths of the park behind his Berlin palace, and talking about the newly-elected Reichstag, he began to hum the air of the student-song "Wir hatten gebauet ein statltiches Haus," and a little later on he began talking about the 'Luck of Edenhall,' to which he compared the German Constitution. The melody obviously suggested to his mind the simile and the idea connected therewith.

Immediately before the outbreak of the war in Bohemia Bismarck was driven to set a great stake upon one card—Prussia's position as a Great Power and his own fate. But neither in that nor in the ordinary sense of the word is he partial to games of hazard. He never participated in any

manœuvres on 'Change, as many another man of high station has done (not only in France, Italy and Austria), and for years past he has not touched a card. When a young man he was fond of whist, of which game he once played twenty rubbers running, remaining seven hours at the card-table; and at that time games of chance also had charms for him. "But," he remarked once, whilst talking on this subject, "they only interested me when played for high stakes, which was not the thing for a father of a family." It is true that as late as the summer of 1865 he took part in a game of *quinze*, but exclusively for a political purpose and with a diplomatic *arrière-pensée*. "It was," so he told us in Versailles, "when I concluded the Treaty of Gastein with Blome. Although I had given up play long ago, I played so rashly upon that occasion that all the others were lost in astonishment. But I knew well enough what I wanted. Blome had been told that *quinze* afforded the best possible opportunity for judging men's characters, and wished to try the experiment. I said to myself—'You shall find out all about it.' So I lost a couple of hundred thalers, which I might have claimed from the Government, as expended in His Majesty's service. But I led Blome astray; he deemed me rash and venturesome, and gave way."

As is but natural for a diplomatist, Bismarck keeps a good table; but he entertains no aversion to simple edibles and potables. For instance, he is very fond of pure corn-brandy, which he lays down together with the finest cognac in his cellars at Schoenhausen, to mellow with age and improve "for the benefit of his grandchildren." In Varzin, as he himself says, nothing comes to his table—except the wine, of course—that he does not grow or produce upon his own estates. Like Frederick the Great, he is a hearty eater when in good health; but it must be

remembered that as a rule he only eats once a day, at 6 p.m., and that people who think and work hard have to take a good deal of nourishment. Formerly an inveterate smoker, who smoked in the railway carriage all the way from Cologne to Berlin, lighting each successive cigar at the stump of its predecessor, he gradually gave up this enjoyment after 1870, on account of his health; the long pipe replaced the fragrant weed, and three years ago he told me one evening that he had left off smoking altogether, as it did not agree with him.

For many years past, viz: since his residence in Petersburg, the Prince's health has been far from good, although he does not look ill as a rule. He has repeatedly been attacked by severe and painful illnesses, such as shingles and neuralgia. That he should suffer from nervousness is scarcely to be wondered at. For more than twenty years the most momentous portion of German history has passed through his head, as well as no little of the history of neighbouring countries, with its enigmas, problems, confusions, tensions and dangers; and he has taken into consideration all these matters in serious earnest. In April 1878 one day at dinner he spoke of himself as "an old man;" the Princess interposed, "Why, you are only sixty-three," and he rejoined, "Yes; but I have always lived hard and fast;" then, turning to me, added, "By hard I mean that I always did what I had to do with all my might; whatever really succeeded I paid for with my health and strength." Next to the nervous irritability, accompanied by periodical sleeplessness, which is his chief complaint, his sufferings are mainly attributable to a stomach constantly out of order; besides which he is worried from time to time by a varicose vein in one leg, which alternated last February with neuralgic pains in the face. Wrath is very injurious

to his health. He is, however, kept copiously supplied with causes for anger by the stupidity and malignity of parliamentary parties, Liberal as well as Conservative, and of certain cliques at Court, which, during the struggle with the Ultramontanists and before the outbreak of the late war, strove to cross his plans by all sorts of intrigues and machinations, and to bestrew his path with stones.

The Chancellor is somewhat short-sighted, but does not require glasses when reading or writing; his hearing is uncommonly good. Like all nervous people he is partial to warm clothing and heated rooms. In Varzin and Friedrichsruh, as soon as the weather gets at all chilly, every room in the house, including the empty bedrooms and antechambers, is kept thoroughly warm. He is of a choleric disposition; the least vexation is apt to provoke him to volcanic outbreaks of temper. But the eruption rapidly subsides, and is never succeeded by sulkiness or rancour. On April 1, 1870, being summoned to his presence upon business, I congratulated him upon the recurrence of his birthday anniversary, expressing the hope that I should remain with him for a long time to come. He replied, "I hope so too. But it is not always agreeable to be with me; only people should not attach too much importance to my irritability." In reality the Prince's nature is a kindly one, compassionate and helpful. He has always been the poor man's friend, not only in words, like the Pharisaical Progressists and their political kinsmen and allies, but in deeds. He never oppressed or dealt hardly with his tenants and servants. In Bar le Duc he cut a thick slice of bread with his own hands, late at night, and took it out to the hungry sentry on guard before his door. After the battle of Beaumont I saw him giving brandy from his flask to marauding Bavarian camp-followers, and sharing

the contents of his cigar-case with them. After Sedan he sent me with good store of cigars to the wounded in the ambulances at Donchéry, remarking, "They like smoking even better than eating." He often visited the sick in the hospitals at Versailles, enquired how they got on, what sort of nourishment was supplied to them, and whether in sufficient quantity; made sure that the slightly wounded had amusing books to read, and, upon one occasion, having promised a soldier who longed for apple-sauce that he would send him some, ordered our cook to make it and had it conveyed to the invalid. He contributed unasked to a collection got up by the Princes and other illustrious personages at Royal Head-quarters for the purpose of giving a Christmas treat to the wounded and sick in the different lazareths of Versailles. He has been spoken of as an embittered man, a cynic and misanthrope, a satirist and backbiter. These are calumnies. He only hates and despises that which is unmanly in men; he only jeers at them when they make themselves ridiculous. It is not his fault that this is frequently the case. If it appear that Bismarck is incapable of picturing to himself human beings free from selfish aims and objects, his view of humanity is probably the outcome of experience, which has rendered him particularly susceptible to mistrust and suspicion and apt to the detection of deceit and pretence, of vile motives and evil practices. I could quote dozens of examples, the results of personal observation or derived from sources of unquestionable authenticity, in support of my assertions, viz., that nowhere under the sun are to be found more hypocrites, intriguers and liars; more vanity, falsehood, malignity, double-dealing and envy—than within the sphere of diplomacy and in the higher circles of Court-life, where prudence is the chief of all the virtues, and exalted

personages do well to be ever mindful of the Golden Rule, "Trust nobody who is visible to the naked eye."

Prince Bismarck draws no salary as a Prussian Minister. In his official capacity as Chancellor of the German Empire he receives £2,700 per annum. The rest of his income is derived from his estates, the acreage of which is very considerable. Owing to the prevailing low prices of grain and timber, however, they only yield a comparatively small revenue. Were Bismarck an ordinary nobleman, or even a Count, he might be considered wealthy; being a Prince, he can only be accounted moderately well off. Up to 1867 he only owned the Schoenhausen estate in the Altmark, about 2,800 *morgen* in extent, and mostly capital land. That year he purchased the Varzin property in Nether Pomerania with the endowment of £60,000 granted to him by the Prussian Diet. Varzin, to which he has since added the Sedlitz and Thorow estates, comprises some 30,000 *morgen*, consisting in great part of unproductive soil, some of which is not even suitable for fir-plantation. Four years later the Emperor, exercising his rights at Sovereign Duke of Lauenburg, bestowed upon his Chancellor the Sachsenwald domain, situate near Hamburg, and, at one extremity, abutting on the Elbe; an estate of 28,000 *morgen*, chiefly magnificent beech forests, and devoid of arable land as well as of any residential dwelling. To this the Prince has recently added the contiguous estates of Schoenau and Silk, as well as a large farm, which has not proved a profitable investment. The timber from the Varzin woods is disposed of to three manufactories of ligneous paper situate on the Wipper river; that felled in the Sachsenwald is sold to a great powder-mill standing on the Prince's land close to the Elbe, and is also worked up into posts and planks in some newly-established sawmills. Schoenhausen, Varzin

and the Sachsenwald all enjoy the advantage of being traversed or skirted by railroads, so that their products can be readily and cheaply conveyed to various markets. The residences on these three estates are neither roomy in size nor stately in appearance; but they are comfortably fitted up, and Friedrichsruh, where the Chancellor has turned an old house, formerly used for accommodating Hamburg summer-excursionists, into a sort of *château*, is a pretty spot enough, with its *entourage* of beeches and pines, amongst which a streamlet winds its way along. The Sachsenwald, by which it is surrounded, is worth—counting in the two adjoining estates—a little over £150,000, but does not at present yield an income of much more than £5,000 a year.

The Chancellor is an adept in farming and forestry, and has practised those sciences upon his estates successfully and profitably. In Schoenhausen he has planted about five hundred *morgen*, in part with oaks, which have thriven well. In Varzin he has busied himself with replanting an extensive beech forest, which the former owner of that property, misjudging the quality of the soil, had cleared and converted into arable of a lamentably unproductive character. Similarly, in other parts of the estate he has planted firs upon ground thitherto growing nothing but sand-oats and heather. He has also introduced all sorts of agricultural improvements upon the six estates which constitute his miniature realm in Pomerania, thus developing their productive capacities. At Friedrichsruh a park has been laid out behind the house; the Aue stream, running through it, has been regulated and cleansed; an oak forest situate on its right bank, which cannot thrive by reason of the excessive dampness of the soil, is being cut down, and will be replaced by a plantation of trees more suitable to the nature of the ground. With respect to all these alterations and innovations, the Chan-

cellor applies to nature the same rule he has enforced in many other directions (amongst others in that of politico-economical reforms) i.e.—"She must, whether she will or no." By ingenious manœuvring and indomitable perseverance, Bismarck compels Dame Nature, as far as in her lies, to submit to his rule and suffer herself to be improved.

Looking back to the last few pages of this chapter, the view they afford us of Bismarck as a horseman, sportsman, swimmer, &c., is doubly refreshing at a time like the present, when anemic, colourless, hysterical and abstract existences multiply daily in the upper classes of society. We also see him surrounded on every side by the actualities of life, utilising and contributing to them. He is at once farmer, forester, manufacturer, soldier, diplomatist and parliamentarian; he owns and manages breweries, distilleries and sawmills; he means to turn paper-maker as well. From both points of view he reminds us of Goethe, who—in the most extravagant *rococo* epoch of Gessner's idylls and Watteau's pictures—was so stout a horseman that, with Duke Karl August, he rode in one day from Leipzig to Weimar on the infamous roads of that period, and was, moreover, a dancer, mountain climber, skater and marksman, a pedagogue, naturalist, financier and handicraftsman; in a word, an altogether concrete man, keeping touch, in a hundred ways, with the actual living world.

I will now conclude this chapter—and with it the book—by a brief reference to a few of the portraits of Bismarck, taken at different periods of his life. In the year 1837, when he was two-and-twenty, his cousin Hélène von Kessel made a sketch of him, which is still in existence, and reproduces a luxuriant head of hair offering a striking contrast to the three hairs with which the Berlin caricaturists are wont to portray the Chancellor. A highly

successful counterfeit presentment of His Highness (which was hanging in the Princess's room up to 1877, but is now at Friedrichsruh) dates from his sojourn in Frankfort, and was painted by Professor Becker, a frequent guest about thirty years ago in the villa then occupied by Bismarck and his family in the Bockenhemer Land-strasse. The best latter-day portrait of the Chancellor is unquestionably Franz Lenbach's, which adorns the National Gallery at Berlin. Of the eight or ten sketches made by this artist preparatory to executing the oil-painting—sketches which have been published in a photographic form—the most admirable, to my taste, is that which represents the Chancellor *en profile*, gazing into the distance. It is extraordinarily like him, and his features wear a prophetical expression, perhaps attributable to the circumstances under which the likeness was taken. "We were engaged in conversation at Friedrichsruh," so the Prince himself told me a short while ago, "and I happened to look upwards at a passing flight of birds. Suddenly Lenbach exclaimed, 'Hold on! that will do capitally; keep quite still!' and forthwith made the sketch." The latest photographs of Prince Bismarck (taken in February 1883) portraying him with the full white beard he wore for a few weeks, about that time, are as good as photographs can be. But in one respect they are faulty. The beard hides the energetic chin which is as characteristic of the Chancellor as are his piercing eyes with their bushy brows.

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MORAL OF THE BOOK.

Into the frog-pond with the wilful blind
Who fail to recognise a master-mind.